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MoFA photo

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya hands over HH Amir's letter to UK Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner.

## Amir sends letter to British Premier

LONDON, Nov 7, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a letter to British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, concerning the prospects of strengthening the historical relations and friendship between both nations in all areas.

The message, also dealing with the latest developments in the Middle East region and international issues of common concern, was handed over by Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya to UK Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner on Wednesday.

Leading a Kuwaiti delegation, Minister Al-Yahya started an official visit to the UK earlier Wednesday.

## Kuwait revokes 930 citizenships

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7, (KUNA): The Supreme Committee to Investigate the Kuwaiti Citizenship held a meeting on Thursday under chairmanship of the Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, also the head of the commission.

The Ministry of Interior said in a statement that the commission decided to strip 930 individuals of Kuwaiti citizenship, indicating that the decision would be submitted to the Cabinet.

### NewsWatch

**CAIRO:** Secretary General of the Organization Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) **Jamal Al-Loughani** on Wednesday called for boosting efficiency of energy usage and diversifying resources in the Arab region.

The energy efficiency is not merely a good word, it's rather a significant strategy aimed at cutting and rationalizing energy consumption without affecting the output, Al-Loughani said, also mentioning some challenges namely the mounting demand for energy.

Al-Loughani was speaking at a training course, organized by OAPEC in coordination with the Engineering for the Petroleum and Process Industries (ENPPI) company (Nov 4-6).

He expressed his opinion that investments in research and development in the energy efficiency and renewable energy technology must be in tandem with boosting investments in the oil and gas sectors. (KUNA)

**WASHINGTON:** A military judge has ruled that plea agreements struck by alleged Sept. 11 mastermind **Khalid Sheikh Mohammed** and two co-defendants are valid, voiding an order by Defense Secretary **Lloyd Austin** to throw out the deals, a government official said.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity Wednesday because the order by the judge, Air Force Col. **Matthew McCall**, has not yet been posted publicly or officially announced.

Unless government prosecutors or others attempt to challenge the plea deals again, McCall's ruling means that the three 9/11 defendants before long could enter guilty pleas in the U.S. military courtroom at **Guantanamo Bay, Cuba**, taking a dramatic step toward wrapping up the long-running and legally troubled government prosecution in one of the deadliest attacks on the **United States**.

The plea agreements would spare Mohammed and two co-defendants, **Walid bin Attash** and **Mustafa al-Hawsawi**, the risk of the death penalty in exchange for the guilty pleas. (AP)

**NEW YORK:** Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) **Philippe Lazzarini** called on the UN member states to defend the aid agency against the recent Israeli measures.

Unless the international community steps in, the UNRWA will collapse and will be no longer able to provide essential assistance to millions of Palestinians, he warned in a briefing to the UN General Assembly on UNRWA activities on Wednesday.

Lazzarini made the comments days after the Knesset (the parliament of the Israeli occupation) passed two legislations to ban UNRWA from working in the occupied Palestinian territories and criminalize any contacts with the UN aid agency. (KUNA)

# Kuwait takes down four-member cash-for-sick leave forgery gang

### Raid yields suspected narcotics, intoxicants

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The General Department of Residence Affairs Investigations has dismantled a ring of forgers — a Kuwaiti citizen, two Iranians and a bedoun — who are accused of forging official documents, reports Al-Seyassah daily.**

According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Interior, the suspects were forging sick leaves with backdated approvals from a well-known medical center and the Medical

Licensing Department, despite patients not being physically present. These documents were allegedly issued in exchange for monetary payments.

Following extensive monitoring and surveillance, the authorities secured a warrant from the Deputy Public Prosecutor, leading to the arrest of the suspects.

During the raid, investigators found various tools and seals used for forgery in addition to substances suspected to be narcotics and intoxicants.

The Ministry emphasizes its commitment to cracking down on forgery and ensuring accountability, as part of broader efforts to maintain public security and integrity.

## Biometrics pending for 530,000 expats

By Munif Naif  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The Ministry of Interior has urged all residents who have not yet completed the biometric process to do so before the deadline of December 31.

It explained that residents can book an appointment for biometrics registration either through the Sahel app or the Meta platform. Failure to complete the biometric process will result in the suspension of government and banking transactions.

According to the latest statistics, approximately 530,000 residents have not yet completed their biometric fingerprinting. The number of residents who have already completed the procedure is around 2.1 million. In total, over 3.03 million people have completed the procedure since its launch last year.

The Ministry of Interior stated that it has exerted tremendous efforts to facilitate the biometric process for both citizens and residents.

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In this composite image shared by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) on its X platform, expatriates in Kuwait are reminded to complete their biometrics by December 31, 2024.

## Court sets Nov 13 to review appeals against KCCI Law

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The Constitutional Court has set Nov 13 for deliberations on three direct appeals challenging the constitutionality of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry Law, filed by Muhammad Al-Saqr, Dabbous Al-Dabbous, Hamad Al-Omar, and others, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Additionally, the court will consider an appeal against the constitutionality of specific articles in Law No. 72 of 2020 concerning competition protection.

In the previous court session on September 11, led by Counselor Fouad Al-Zuwaid, the government, represented by

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### Day by Day

ONE of the most unpleasant sights in Kuwait is the occupation of sidewalks by awnings of different designs and colors which only exacerbate the issue.

This is particularly evident in many residential areas, especially the remote areas where oversight is minimal.

Why doesn't the Kuwait Municipality implement a unified architectural design and a specific color for all awnings across the country?

The current awnings are unattractive and detract from the aesthetic value of residential areas.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

## Kuwait ramps up aid to Lebanon amid conflict

BEIRUT, Nov 7, (KUNA): In a display of unwavering support and solidarity, Kuwait has ramped up its humanitarian efforts to assist Lebanon as the country grapples with the devastating effects of ongoing Israeli aggression. The arrival of Kuwait's second relief plane at Beirut's Rafic Hariri International Airport on Thursday marked a significant milestone in the Gulf nation's commitment to providing crucial aid to its Mediterranean ally.

The latest shipment, carrying approximately 40 tons of supplies from the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, touched down at the recently damaged airport, which bore the scars of Israeli bombardments that occurred just a day earlier. Despite the challenging circumstances and visible damage to parts of the terminal facades, the humanitarian mission pressed forward, underlining Kuwait's determination to support Lebanon in its time of need.

Abdullah Al-Shaheen, Kuwait's Chargé d'Affaires and Minister Plenipotentiary in Lebanon, emphasized that this air bridge initiative is a direct result of instructions from Kuwait's supreme political leadership. The supplies, including food, medical equipment, and blankets, are set to be handed over to Lebanon's Supreme Relief Authority, bolstering the country's capacity to address the urgent needs of its population.

This second delivery follows closely on the heels of the first Kuwaiti shipment, which arrived on Wednesday and was promptly handed over to the Lebanese Ministry of Health. The swift succession of aid flights underscores the efficiency and commitment of Kuwait's humanitarian response.

The significance of Kuwait's support was not lost on Lebanese officials. Ahmad Ibrahim, representing the Lebanese authorities, expressed profound gratitude for Kuwait's consistent backing during times of crisis.

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Abdullah Al-Shaheen, Kuwait's Chargé d'Affaires and Minister Plenipotentiary in Lebanon, welcomes the arrival of Kuwait's second relief plane at Beirut's Rafic Hariri International Airport on Thursday.

## Kuwait to enjoy moderate weekend weather



Photo by Samer Shiqer

A couple relaxes on a bench by the beach as Kuwait's mild Thursday weather sets the stage for a pleasant weekend.

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7, (KUNA): The Kuwait Meteorological Department has forecasted moderate weather conditions for the upcoming weekend, with daytime temperatures expected to remain mild and cooler temperatures at night. Director of the Meteorological Department, Dharar Al-Ali, informed KUNA that the country will experience an extension of a high-pressure system accompanied by a dry air mass and light to moderate northwesterly winds, which may become active at times.

On Friday, the weather is anticipated to be hot to moderate during the day, with northwesterly winds blowing lightly to moderately at speeds ranging from 12 to 42 km/h. Scattered clouds are expected, with maximum tem-

peratures projected to be between 28 and 31 degrees Celsius. The sea conditions will be light to moderate, with wave heights occasionally reaching between 2 and 6 feet.

As night falls on Friday, temperatures will drop to a moderate to cool range, accompanied by partly cloudy skies. The northwesterly winds will continue at light to moderate speeds of 12 to 40 km/h, with a slight chance of scattered light rain. Minimum temperatures are expected to range from 18 to 21 degrees Celsius, while sea conditions will remain light to moderate with waves between 2 and 6 feet.

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## KNPC sets goal to increase fuel sales to local market

By Najeh Bilal

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) is planning to increase its fuel sales to the local market following a 2.7 percent decline in sales in the last fiscal year to 7,408,700,000 liters from 7,613,700,000 liters in the 2022/2023 fiscal year.

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According to informed sources, KNPC, as part of its efforts to boost fuel sales, is seeking to increase the number of mobile fuel stations from six to 15 between 2025 and 2026. Three new fixed fuel stations will be constructed in the year 2025. There are plans to build another ten fixed stations in the 2025/2026 fiscal year.

## Event explores war's eco toll

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7, (KUNA): The Ministry of Defense's anti-Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) department marked on Thursday the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict.

The event, organized by the Kuwait Environment Protection Society (KEPS) and the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) represented by Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), focused on the effects of landmines on the environment.

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**3** Al-Arabi Club president jailed 3 months for insulting official



**8** NBK hosts workshop on 'FinTech' for College of Business Administration students

**9** Menzies Aviation extends MACH system roll-out to 28 new stations



## Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 04:44    Asr ..... 14:36  
 Sunrise .. 06:05    Maghrib .. 16:58  
 Zohr ..... 11:32    Isha ..... 18:17

# Local

## Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Rather hot and partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-42 km/h with a slight chance for scattered light rain later on.

**By Night:** Mild to rather cold and

## Weather

partly cloudy with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-38 km/h with a slight chance for scattered light rain.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	31	19
Kuwait Airport	31	20

Abdaly	31	18
Bubyan	34	19
Jahra	31	20
Failaka Island	33	21
Salmiyah	28	20
Ahmadi	30	18
Jal Aliyah	30	17
Nuwaisib	30	20

## Kuwait keen to fight corruption, employ UN and global expertise

VIENNA, Nov 7, (KUNA): The Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) participated on Wednesday in a specialized panel in Vienna, Austria, to discuss the effectiveness of the measures taken to implement the United Nations Convention against Corruption.



Buyabes

In a statement to KUNA, Observer of International Organizations and Conferences at Nazaha, Dhari Buyabes, said that Kuwait's participation came during his attendance of the UN's 15th second resumed Session in response to an invitation from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Buyabes pointed out that his interventions in the discussion panel stressed the importance of establishing appropriate

international mechanisms to determine the extent of implementation required by the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

In addition to evaluating and following up on the effectiveness of the measures taken nationally within the framework of implementing the international recommendations resulting from the review sessions. He explained that these international meetings happen near conclusion of the second session of the UN Convention against Corruption, with the entry of a new phase, where the UN Convention Implementation Review Group meets periodically to share opinions and exchange views.

He also stressed that Kuwait is keen to meet the information, visions and data required by the groups emanating from the Convention and the UN's Office on Drugs and Crime, in order to strengthen cooperation with countries and international organizations and to represent Kuwait in the best light in international forums related to combating corruption.

## British-Kuwait Friendship Society awards '24 top author in London

LONDON, Nov 7, (KUNA): The British-Kuwait Friendship Society held its annual ceremony in London to announce the winners of the 26th Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah Prize for the best English books on the Middle East.

The event, sponsored by the Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah Foundation, took place in the British capital on Wednesday.

The top award was presented to Professor Nasser Rabbat, an Islamic architecture scholar in the US for his book, Writing Egypt: Al-Maqrizi and his Historical Project, published by Edinburgh University Press, it explores the historical project of Egyptian historian Taqi Al-din Al-Maqrizi.

Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Sabah, representing the foundation, highlighted the importance of the prize in promoting Middle Eastern and Islamic culture and fostering knowledge across various disciplines.

In a statement to KUNA, Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Sabah emphasized the prize's role in fostering a better understanding of the Middle East and the

Islamic world.

The 2024 prize coincides with the 125th anniversary of the strategic Kuwaiti-British partnership, encompassing cooperation in security, science, trade, and culture.

To encourage research and knowledge on the Arab and Islamic worlds, the prize's value was doubled this year.

The British-Kuwait Friendship Society established the award in 1998, with honorary chairmanship held by Sheikh Dr. Sheikh Sou'ad Al-Sabah and, previously, King Charles III during his tenure as Prince of Wales.

Sheikh Mubarak noted that the foundation receives around 50 applications annually, reflecting the academic community's high regard for the award, and he thanked current and former jury members for their dedicated service.

Sheikh Mubarak also recognized last year's winners, Professor Janet Afary and Professor Kamran Afary, for their book Molla Nasreddin: The Making of a Modern Trickster, which went uncelebrated last year due to event cancellations.



KUNA photo  
 Sheikh Mubarak honors the winner of the award, Professor Nasser Rabbat.

## Indonesia marks 79th Independence Day



Indonesian Ambassador to Kuwait Lena Maryana and Kuwait's Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Hadi Al-Huwailah during the cake-cutting ceremony.



Colorfully dressed Indonesian women render a scintillating performance at the ceremony.

### Joint effort needed to boost trade

## Indonesia-Kuwait ties poised to grow with time: Maryana

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Kuwait Lena Maryana praised the Indonesian-Kuwaiti relations affirming that cooperation between the two countries is constantly growing in many areas at the bilateral, regional and international levels.

Maryana made the statement at the celebration of the 79th Indonesian Independence Day and 56th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Kuwait which were officially established on Feb 28, 1968.

The celebration was held at the Regency Hotel recently with Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Hadi Al-Huwailah and a large number of heads of diplomatic missions in attendance. Maryana also announced that the Indonesian Investment, Trade and Tourism Promotion Forum will be held on Nov 7-9 with the support of the Central Bank of Indonesia. She said Kuwait's investments in Indonesia have been increasing over the past five years according to data from the Indonesian Investment Coordination Board.

She added that in 2019, Kuwait's investments amounted to \$145,700 and recorded \$480,500 in 2023. "In the first half of 2024, the total volume of Kuwaiti investments amounted to \$132,800. Both countries need to exert more efforts to increase Kuwaiti investments in Indonesia," she asserted.

She confirmed that the oil and gas sector still dominates Kuwait's investments in Indonesia. "Recently, Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC) acquired two major blocks in the first bidding round in Indonesia in 2024. The first is in the Amanah Operation Area (land) in South Sumatra Province, and the second is in Melati Operation Area (land and sea) in the provinces of Southeast Sulawesi and Central Sulawesi. Kuwait is a strategic trade partner for Indonesia, so we continue to work towards increasing our trade volume with Kuwait," she elaborated.

She went on to say that in 2023, the trade volume between the two countries

reached \$488.1 million. "As of July 2024, the trade volume reached \$304.4 million -- an increase of 4.83 percent compared to the same period in 2023. We are working hard with the Kuwaiti government and businesspersons to increase our bilateral trade. Indonesia has strong capabilities to develop our oil and gas industry. PT Bukaka Teknik Utama, one of the leading private companies in Indonesia, is ready to enter the Kuwait market with Pump (Pompa Anguk) and Passenger Boarding Bridge (Garbarata). PT Bukaka has a strong domestic market in Indonesia, as well as the overseas market in India and Oman. We hope it will be able to enter Kuwait soon."

She pointed out that as part of the efforts to increase the volume of bilateral trade, Indonesia and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) agreed on July 31, 2024 to start negotiations on the Indonesia-GCC Free Trade Agreement (IGCC FTA).

In terms of cultural cooperation, she stated "we are very optimistic that the good relations between Indonesia and Kuwait, especially in preserving the culture and heritage of the two countries, will continue and grow stronger. As the most popular 'halal' tourism destination, Indonesia always welcomes Kuwaitis to visit and experience the beautiful places with warm hospitality."

She confirmed that the Kuwaiti government offers two scholarships for Indonesian students at Kuwait University each year, hoping this number will increase in the future considering the nation receives at least 500 applications every year.

"In order to explore more possibilities of cooperation, the two countries decided to hold the second bilateral cooperation meeting in Jakarta next year. The first round was held in Kuwait in 2019," she added.

On the Indonesian community in Kuwait, she affirmed that Kuwait has become home to more than 5,000 Indonesians. "Some of them spend most of their time in Kuwait. Most of them work in the health, oil, gas, hospitality and manufacturing sectors," she revealed.

She expressed her deep appreciation for the Kuwaiti government for fully supporting the Indonesian government's efforts to provide better protection for all Indonesians in Kuwait.

# Job stability eyed as minister halts transfers, secondments

MoE move to enhance educational, admin output

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei Thursday issued a decision to suspend all directives related to transfer or secondment of employees within the Ministry of Education. This decision is part of the ministry's efforts to promote job stability and ensure efficient workflow in line with the public interest.**

Al-Tabtabaei's decision confirmed the suspension of all decisions related to transfers and secondments in the ministry's general office, educational zones, and independent departments, with the exception of cases that are presented to and approved by the minister.

The ministry has called on all its sectors and departments to adhere to this decision, affirming that no decisions contrary to it should be issued from the date of the circular's release.

The decision also included sending a copy to the educational zones, legal affairs departments, and other relevant parties for implementation. This move is part of the ministry's plan to streamline administrative work and ensure the stability of its workforce, which will in turn enhance both educational and administrative performance.

Meanwhile, Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei conducted a visit on Thursday to Rayhana Bint Zaid Elementary School for Girls in Riqqa area under Ahmadi Educational Zone.

During the visit, he toured the school's facilities, met with the administrative and educational staff, and reviewed the school's preparations for receiving students and implementing the educational plans.

He also visited several classrooms, attended some of the classes, and interacted with both students and teachers to assess the progress of the educational process and the extent of commitment to the established study plans.

Al-Tabtabaei praised the efforts exerted by the educational staff in creating a supportive environment that motivates students to learn and excel.

The minister expressed his appreciation and gratitude for the efforts of the teachers and administrators at the school.

He affirmed that these field visits will continue as part of ongoing efforts to monitor the progress of work in schools, assess their needs, and ensure the delivery of high-quality education for all students.

The minister's visit was warmly welcomed by the administrative and educational staff, who expressed their happiness and pride in the visit. They viewed it as a valuable opportunity to highlight the ongoing efforts to achieve the best possible educational outcomes.

## 'Protect environment for sustainable development'

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7, (KUNA): Kuwait stressed, Wednesday, the importance of raising awareness to protect and preserve the environment to the international community, as it constitutes an important pillar to sustainable development and the source of life for future generations.

This came about in a statement by the Foreign Ministry on the occasion of the International Day for the Prevention of the Exploitation of the Environment in Wars and Armed Conflicts, which was adopted as a United Nations General Assembly Resolution at the initiative of Kuwait.

The Resolution No. 56/4, was submitted and adopted in 2001.

Kuwait places great importance on highlighting armed conflicts and their dire impacts on the environment, ensuring a clean environment at the national and international levels.

Meanwhile, Dr. Bader Al-Mutairi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs, has emphasized Kuwait's ongoing efforts to strike a balance between development and environmental protection, in line with global sustainability goals, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This is being achieved through the implementation of environmental programs and plans that align with international best practices.

During his participation in the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) on climate change held in Azerbaijan, Dr. Al-Mutairi highlighted Kuwait's commitment to addressing environmental issues and cooperating internationally to tackle the repercussions of climate change.

He also pointed out the importance of cooperation between countries and religious leaders, especially using Islamic values, to raise community awareness of environmental matters. Islamic teachings, he said, encourage sustainability, moderation, and environmentally friendly practices, which align with environmental protection efforts.

Dr. Al-Mutairi reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to strengthening international environmental partnerships, pursuing integrated policies, and collaborating with global organizations to combat climate change and develop innovative solutions to environmental challenges.



Photo by Samer Shaqair  
 Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi is briefed on the latest state-of-the-art equipment as senior medical officials look on.

### MoH gears up for outdoor casualties

## 'Need to train local experts to handle medical emergencies'

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi has emphasized on the continuous efforts to enhance all areas of emergency medicine, particularly through the adoption of the latest global systems and protocols, aligning with the strategic goals of the 'New Kuwait 2035' vision.

He made these remarks during his opening speech at the workshop which was held under the title 'Emergency Medicine in Wilderness Areas', which was hosted by the Ministry of Health and featured distinguished speakers from Kuwait, the United States, the UAE and Oman over the course of two days.

Dr. Al-Awadhi stated that the workshop marks the beginning of a new chapter in environmental emergency medicine, positioning Kuwait as a leader in applying medical innovations to real-world scenarios.

He highlighted that this initiative is the first of its kind in the Middle East, aiming to expand the field of emergency medicine beyond hospitals and centers into the realms of wilderness, both terrestrial and marine.

The minister further explained that the

workshop is designed to foster cooperation and knowledge exchange to enhance the quality of health services in Kuwait.

This specialized area of medicine is crucial as it addresses the need for emergency care during outdoor activities like camping, hunting, and sea trips, where accidents and injuries are common.

In terms of development, Dr. Al-Awadhi noted that the Ministry of Health had opened an emergency clinic on Umm Al Maradim Island in August and had trained doctors to handle emergency cases in unconventional environments.

These efforts are part of a broader initiative to prepare medical teams to provide care tailored to the specific conditions of the surrounding environment.

Speaking to journalists after the workshop's opening, Dr. Al-Awadhi reiterated the Ministry's commitment to attracting both local and international expertise in environmental emergency medicine.

The Ministry is also focused on developing local talent, expanding knowledge in this field, and offering training opportunities to doctors and healthcare professionals to improve the delivery of integrated health services.

## Diabetes uncured may lead to kidney failure, heart diseases

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7, (KUNA): The Ministry of Health in Kuwait, through its Health Promotion Department, has initiated a diabetes awareness campaign to commemorate World Diabetes Day, observed annually on November 14. This year's campaign, themed "Breaking Barriers and Bridging Gaps," aims to enhance the health and well-being of individuals living with diabetes.

Dr. Abeer Al-Bahwah, Director of the Health Promotion Department, shared with KUNA that the global focus for World Diabetes Day until 2026 will be on "Diabetes and Quality of Life." This theme underscores the importance of providing appropriate care and health support for those affected by diabetes.

### Key points of the campaign include:

- Raising awareness about diabetes as a global health issue
- Promoting measures for diagnosis and prevention
- Addressing the rise in diabetes cases due to poor health habits

Highlighting the potential complications of untreated diabetes, such as kidney failure and cardiovascular issues.

Dr. Al-Bahwah emphasized that diabetes affects one in 10 people worldwide, with



KUNA photo  
 Dr. Abeer Al-Bahwah and a number of participants in the campaign.

death rates from the disease increasing by 3% between 2000 and 2019. She also noted that diabetes-related kidney disease caused an estimated two million deaths globally in 2019.

### The campaign stresses preventive measures for Type 2 diabetes, including:

- Maintaining a healthy diet
- Keeping a normal weight
- Regular exercise
- Avoiding tobacco use



# diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## Audit Bureau toothless with restrictions imposed by gov't

"IN A recent statement, I lauded several major government measures, including the third fingerprint decision and the withdrawal of fake nationalities, which have notably reduced the number of fraudulent accounts," Ahmad Yaqoub Baquer wrote for Al-Jarida daily.

"However, I also highlighted the delay in implementing key government decisions that were disclosed but not yet acted upon.

"These include the decision to remove street names of individuals and restore original street numbers, the cancellation of fake educational certificates and the decision to reconsider residency restrictions for those over sixty years of age.



Ahmad Baquer

"Despite being discussed with relevant government agencies, these measures have yet to be finalized, and I urge the government to expedite their implementation.

"Additionally, I raised concerns regarding the government's recent decision that, in my view, marginalizes the Audit Bureau -- an essential body that has served Kuwait since 1964.

"The Audit Bureau plays a crucial role in overseeing public funds, ensuring proper revenue collection, and uncovering financial violations.

"However, the new government decision restricts its ability to perform its duties effectively. As legal experts and specialists, we believe this decision undermines the Bureau's power to conduct thorough audits, particularly by preventing it from publishing final reports, which were previously discussed openly in the National Assembly.

"The Bureau's reports have been pivotal in uncovering embezzlements and financial violations, such as the theft of Ministry of Interior's funds and have led to the recovery of millions of dinars for the state.

"Therefore, the restrictions imposed on the Bureau appear unjustified and counterproductive to transparency and accountability in government."

**Also:**

"On the first anniversary of the 'Al-Aqsa Flood' incident, an Israeli school organized discussion groups about the events of October 7, under the title 'The October 7 Massacre', with one group in each class," columnist **Dr Abdul Latif Ben Nakhi** wrote for Al-Rai daily.

"However, an incident took a drastic turn in one class when a 13-year-old Palestinian student, after listening to her classmates' contributions on the event from an Israeli perspective, shared her own view from the Palestinian side.

"She pointed out the suffering of displaced and hungry children in Gaza, emphasizing that they, too, were victims of the ongoing conflict.

"The conversation soon turned hostile, with her classmates surrounding her, hurling insults and throwing objects. The teacher, instead of intervening to protect the student, left the classroom, leaving the Palestinian student alone. Only after the intervention of another teacher was the situation diffused.

"Following the incident, the school administration, in coordination with the Ministry of Education, decided to suspend the student for three days, launching a rumor campaign and even calling for her citizenship to be revoked.

"On the humanitarian side, Shai Sagi Hoover, an Israeli teacher from another school, sent a message of support to the student through an article in the Israeli newspaper Haaretz.

"In her article, Hoover praised the Palestinian student's bravery and criticized the culture of fear within Israeli institutions, which led to the attacks on the student and the failure of the educational system to foster dialogue and understanding.

"Hoover pointed out the deep flaws within the Israeli education system, which failed to allow space for different voices to be heard, preventing students from seeing the full complexity of the situation.

"In a parallel reflection on education in Kuwait, the article highlighted the same flaws present in Israel's educational approach. It emphasized the importance of allowing students to explore multiple perspectives, guiding them through the complexities of the world, and creating an environment where they feel safe to express their views.

"The article ended with a call to educators in Kuwait to confront these educational defects, quoting the prayer: 'O God, show us the truth as truth and grant us the ability to follow it.'"

"About 50 years ago, elections were held in Britain and the candidates included Harold Wilson, James Callaghan, and a third individual, about whom an English newspaper wrote, 'Weak-faced due to which he lost the election' and I agreed with this assessment," columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"Similarly, analysts claimed that Donald Trump seemed more convincing than Kamala Harris in the presidential race, largely because he possesses charisma, which is the ability to influence others. Trump himself highlighted Kamala's weakness, saying, 'Can you imagine Kamala facing President Putin or the Chinese President?'"

"What he means is that she would not be able to face leaders like them. His words hold some truth. Kamala Harris has often been seen laughing during of-

icial meetings. At a campaign rally in Pennsylvania, Trump mocked Harris's laughter, saying, 'She avoids communicating with the media because she can't stop laughing, even when discussing serious topics. He added, 'Did you hear her laugh? Journalists ask questions, but this is not a comedy show, but she bursts out laughing.'

"Trump believes that voters are not just choosing a president, but a leader who can effectively tackle America's economic and security challenges.

"Voters often question the ability of a candidate to handle crises. Many among them consider Trump as a strong leader capable of standing up to foreign powers that are hostile to America, such as Iran, Russia, North Korea, and China. This perception has earned him significant support from voters who view him as someone who can impose American strength on the international stage.

"In addition, there are two issues that most Americans consider critical: inflation and immigration, which are issues that Trump consistently focuses on. The economy, which directly affects people's livelihoods, is undoubtedly a major concern, and Trump's stance on limiting immigration resonates with many Americans, as they see it as directly linked to national security.

"Kamala Harris's position weakened when she expressed support for building a wall along the Mexican border to curb illegal immigration.

"She also publicly declared that she kept a gun in her home and would not hesitate to use it against potential thieves. These positions led some to perceive her as aligning with Trump's views. As a result, many voters may prefer to support the original rather than the imitation.

"According to the polls, it was expected that both Republican candidate Donald Trump and Democratic candidate Kamala Harris would receive a similar number of votes, but on the election day, Trump ended up garnering more votes than Harris.

"Arab Americans were divided in their support. Before the events in Gaza, many had leaned towards the Democratic Party. However, many came to support Trump after he promised to stop the suffering and destruction in Lebanon and end the war in Gaza.

"After the liberation of Kuwait, there was a saying: 'If the Democratic Party had been in power, the country would not have been liberated.'"

"We have dozens of charity societies in the country, but it is unfortunate that most of them are affiliated with two main organizations: the Islah Society, which is the headquarters of the Muslim Brotherhood Group, and the Society of the Revival of Islamic Heritage, which represents scientific Salafism," columnist **Hamad Salem Al-Marri** wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"The large number of these charity societies, and the competition among them to secure donations, alms, and Zakat, has created a chaotic environment.

"In this regard, the Muslim Brotherhood Group attempted to legitimize their influence by establishing an entity called the Union of Charity Societies. Their goal is to maintain control over the lion's share of financial donations and to give the illusion of coordination and cooperation among all charity societies in the country. In reality, only the Muslim Brotherhood Group's affiliated societies, or those aligned with their ideology, have joined this union.

"I am aware that my statements will likely draw criticism, with questions raised about my intentions. However what I say is the truth. I am exposing the sources of power that these groups derive from donors' money, which they use to strengthen their presence both within the country and in the regions where they conduct their charity activities.

"This also extends to the hundreds of civil society institutions, many of which serve as mere fronts for various ideologies such as feminism, sectarianism, liberalism, or the Muslim Brotherhood Group, as well as other partisan groups.

"The proliferation of these associations has led some to form agreements with external parties without consulting the state. Some have even begun to meddle in the country's foreign affairs, while others interfere in the affairs of neighboring countries. A number of them supported the movements and demonstrations during the so-called Arab Spring.

"In contrast, most Arabian Gulf states do not have such a large number of charity and civil associations, yet they continue to develop in all areas while maintaining security and political stability.

"Here in Kuwait, despite the high number of these organizations, we face financial and administrative corruption, lag in progress, and political instability. This is largely due to the interference of these associations in the state's affairs, and the use of their influence as pressure groups to advance the interests of their own factions.

"We hope the government will consider dissolving all charity associations, regardless of their names, and then reorganize the charity sector to place it under direct control and supervision of the state. Those working in this sector should be government employees, with salaries and operating budgets provided by the state, subject to its oversight. They should also benefit from the same provisions granted to other public employees."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes / Mahmoud Attiyeh



Dune buggies for rent.



Makeshift baqala by roadside.

## Entry ban group arrested in surprise raids

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7. (Agencies): Jahra security forces conducted a surprise campaign in the Al-Subiya and Al-Mutlaa areas, leading to the arrest of seven individuals who were banned from entering the country. This operation, carried out by Jahra Security, aimed to track down residency violators, apprehend wanted individuals, and curb reckless driving.

According to security sources quoted by Al-Rai, the campaign resulted in the arrest of nine wanted persons and missing individuals, in addition to the

seven entry-banned individuals. Authorities also detained 13 street vendors, confiscated six vehicles wanted for judicial seizure, and seized 70 rental vehicles across various locations, including the Subiya area and Jaber Bridge.

The security forces have outlined a strict plan to manage the influx of people to desert areas, especially near spring camps where large numbers gather. A dedicated security checkpoint will be established at the end of Jaber Bridge to closely monitor the se-

curity situation in northern regions and ensure quick response to incidents.

Separately, a reckless driver was arrested and referred to Traffic Court for endangering students in the Farwaniya area. The incident, captured on a widely shared social media video, shows the driver dangerously maneuvering near a school, posing a severe threat to student safety. Following an investigation, the vehicle was located in Omariya and impounded, with legal actions initiated against the driver.

# Al-Arabi Club president jailed 3 months for insulting official

Ex-minister faces law in funds scam

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The Misdemeanor Appeals Court has sentenced Abdel Aziz Ashour, the President of Al-Arabi Club, to three months in prison on charges of insulting a judicial official. According to the Public Prosecution, Ashour, along with others, was accused of undermining the respect owed to a judge of the Court of First Instance. The charges stemmed from a video interview shared on Ashour's Instagram account, in which statements were made that allegedly questioned the judge's integrity and adherence to legal principles.

**Ex-minister ...** : In a significant legal development, the Court of Appeal accepted a challenge filed by a large group of Kuwaiti citizens against a former minister, reopening an investigation into accusations of real estate fraud and money laundering amounting to 100 million Kuwaiti dinars.

The funds were allegedly misappropriated under the guise of an investment in a hotel overlooking the Holy Mosque in Makkah. The case, which had been closed by the public prosecutor earlier, will now proceed with further investigation.

**Fraud case adjourned:** The Criminal Court postponed the hearing on the case of the former head of Kuwait Fencing Federation, who was charged with fraud and money laundering through the organization of tournaments and camps, until Dec 18 in order to summon witnesses.

The Public Prosecution ordered the director general of the Public Authority for Sports (PAS) to submit the list of the federation's delegations from July 1, 2021 to Dec 31, 2023; including the expenditures on each delegation and dates. Attorney Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan attended the session on behalf of the Kuwait national team members for the individual fencing game and filed a claim for KD 5,001 as temporary civil compensation.

The prosecution charged the defendant with laundering KD1,181,529 through forgery of official documents. He received checks issued by the federation amounting to KD1,053,516 through his account in the National Bank of Kuwait. He also used two other accounts at the same bank to receive checks amounting to KD128,013. He forced the bank to deliver the money to him in cash and through bank transfers to his account in order to conceal the illegal source of these funds, as indicated in the investigations.



Passports and documents found in possession of the two men.

## Duo held in crackdown on work visa peddling

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The Ministry of Interior in its ongoing fight against fraudsters and visa traders, has announced the arrest of two persons for their involvement in a range of serious crimes, including human trafficking, visa trade, money laundering, fraud and deception, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The arrests were conducted by the Criminal Security Sector, specifically the Hawalli Governorate Investigations Department within the General Department of Criminal Investigations.

Following intensive investigations, the authorities discovered that the accused were illegally bringing workers into Kuwait for financial gain, with no legitimate connection to the company listed on their residency documents.

Reliable confidential sources provided detailed information that enabled investigators to track the suspects and apprehend them. Upon interrogation, both suspects confessed to the allegations filed against them. The Ministry has begun summoning all collaborators involved in these activities to complete the legal procedures necessary for prosecution.



KUNA photo  
Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Mishal Al-Sabah inaugurates the Ministry of Defense camp in the presence of the Deputy Chief of the Army General Staff, Major General Pilot Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

## MoD launches expanded spring camp

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense, Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Mishal Al-Sabah, announced the opening of this season's expanded Ministry of Defense Spring Camp, aimed at meeting the recreational needs of ministry personnel and their families, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Speaking at the camp inauguration in Sabhan, the senior official highlighted the ministry's commitment to providing a welcoming environment that promotes relaxa-

tion and social well-being. He said the camp is a significant initiative supporting the social and recreational aspects of the ministry's members.

Deputy Chief of Staff Major General Pilot Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad also underscored the Ministry's commitment to enhancing morale and fostering a supportive environment for military personnel and their families, while at the same time lauding the collaboration between military and civilian staff that made the camp possible.



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## Nama'a launches 'Teach Me & I Will Reward You' project

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The Nama'a Charity, part of the Social Reform Society, has launched the "Teach Me and I Will Reward You" project in collaboration with the Awqaf Fund for Scientific and Social Development at the Awqaf General Secretariat, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The initiative aims to support orphaned students and those from low-income families by covering their tuition fees for the academic year 2024-2025, enabling them to continue their education.

Walid Al-Bassam, Head of the Projects and Development Sector at Nama'a Charity, explained that the project is designed to reduce school dropout rates

and offer sustainable educational opportunities to deserving students.

Last year, more than 900 students benefited from the initiative. Al-Bassam emphasized that education is a fundamental right and a critical tool for development.

Supporting outstanding students and easing their educational journey, he added, plays a key role in improving the living conditions of impoverished families.

Al-Bassam further highlighted Nama'a Charity's commitment to providing educational support to needy groups in Kuwait, aligning with the organization's vision of empowering individuals and strengthening community solidarity.



Group photo during the Holy Quran memorization competition awarding ceremony.

# Kuwait's PIFSS boosts GCC social protection

Retirement systems strengthened

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) of Kuwait took part in the 23rd Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) meeting of civil retirement and social insurance leaders held in Qatar from November 4 to 5, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The meeting aimed to enhance collaboration and share expertise among GCC countries to improve retirement systems and ensure social protection.

Key topics discussed during the meet included progress on the technical committee's work plan, governance and insurance seminars, along with evaluating the unified system's implementation for extending insurance protection.

The emphasis was placed on identifying workers not yet enrolled in the unified system. Kuwait's commitment to social care in the GCC is underscored by 13,365 Gulf citizens working in Kuwait



KUNA photo Acting Director General of Social Insurance of the State of Kuwait Ahmed Al-Thunayan takes part in the 23rd GCC meeting.

under the insurance protection system and 420 insured Kuwaitis working in GCC countries.

The PIFSS acting Director General, Ahmed Al-Thunayan, expressed appreciation for Qatar's hospitality and extended an invitation for the next GCC meeting in Kuwait in November 2025.

## KU set to host Student Talent

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The Kuwait University is set to host the Student Talent and Innovation Forum and Exhibition on November 12-13 at the College of Arts at the Sabah Al-Salem University City, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This event, held under the patronage of Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Dr. Nader Al-Jalal, aims to empower young innovators and entrepreneurs to drive the country's development and align with Kuwait Vision 2035 and the United Nations' sustainable development goals.

Dr. Jassim Al-Hamdan, Dean of Student Affairs, highlighted the forum's role in achieving the university's mission and supporting Kuwait's future.

At a recent press conference, he emphasized that this initiative is a result of dedicated efforts by the Deanship of Student Affairs and its partners, who recognize the importance of investing in young talent and fostering innovation.

Dr. Intisar Al-Mudhahka, Advisor to the Deanship of Student Affairs and General Coordinator of the Forum, said the event will include interactive workshops and lectures across diverse fields.

## Tribute to resilience and faith

# Nafisa Charity honors 22 blind Holy Quran memorizers in GCC

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: Nafisa Charity Foundation honored 22 Holy Quran memorizers who won in the first edition of the Al-Baghli Quran Competition for the Blind at the level of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammed Al-Wasmi sponsored the competition, along with the generous support of Board Chairman of the foundation Ibrahim Taher Al-Baghli.

As part of its activities this year, the foundation organized the competition, in collaboration with Kuwait Blind Association and the participation of blind associations in GCC countries.

Al-Baghli affirmed that "we are honored to support the competition and contribute to promoting Islamic values; while encouraging the blind to memorize the Holy Quran. This will help them integrate into society, and enhance their participation in cultural and religious events. We are working hard to provide community support for them, strengthen fraternal and friendship ties among the blind in the GCC, and help them establish the foundations of social, humanitarian, voluntary and charitable work in the beloved State of Kuwait. Our sons -- whom Allah granted insight, light of heart, intelligence, strong will and purity of conscience -- are an integral part of our human wealth that we are proud of. We believe that the strength of a person lies in his insight, not his sight. Those who lack the blessing of sight have strong insight to coexist and adapt in society, and even excel and make themselves distinguished. We have witnessed all these through their outstanding participation and performance in this competition."

He expressed appreciation and gratitude to the minister for supporting and gracing the competition, affirming the latter's presence added distinction to the ceremony.

He thanked Chairman of Kuwait Blind Association Fayed Lafi Al-Azmi and members of the Board of Directors for their efforts in a national humanitarian march to support children who are determined and accepted the challenge.

He appreciated their important contributions to social and cultural activities in the interest of the nation, as well their tremendous efforts in organizing the competition.

"We thank all members of the blind associations in the GCC countries. We are proud of their distinguished work. We consider it a motivation for us to continue working hard to achieve the desired goals under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, may Allah protect them," he added.

Meanwhile, Director of the Technical Affairs Department at the ministry Dr. Bader Aba Dhiraa stated in his speech on behalf of the minister: We celebrate a group of memorizers of the Book of Allah from all the Gulf states who honored us in their second country, Kuwait, in a competition in the best of what is memorized, taught and studied, which is the Holy Quran. We say to those in charge of this competition, may Allah reward your efforts and increase the number of people like you, as you are the safety valve for societies. The memorizers of the Book of Allah are lamps for people in darkness; that is, if they apply the Book of Allah and recite its verses and act upon them according to a moderate approach and call to Allah Almighty with wisdom."

He confirmed that "we, at the ministry, are honored to be among the servants of the call to Almighty Allah in this good and blessed country and in serving His Holy Book and the houses of the Almighty, which Kuwait always prioritizes, represented by the wise leadership -- His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, his faithful Crown Prince, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, and all government institutions"

"By holding the biggest local and international competition for memorizers of the Book of Almighty Allah, they have triumphed over every obstacle to serve the Book of Almighty Allah through the institutions specialized in this field, headed by the ministry and its sectors, which have taken upon themselves to serve the Book of Almighty Allah. We also ask Allah Almighty to bless the winners of this competition," he added.

He thanked Al-Baghli, employees of the foundation and the association for their efforts to guarantee the success of the competition.

On the other hand, Al-Azmi spoke on behalf of the Board of Directors of the association. He thanked the minister and Al-Baghli for fully supporting the competition from beginning to end. He affirmed it is a remarkable work in the hands of Almighty Allah. "We ask Allah Almighty to make it in the balance of their deeds on the Day of Judgment," he stressed.

He expressed gratitude to the foundation for facilitating procedures related to the competition, covering the expenses and ensuring the comfort of the participants.

"We had a fruitful cooperation with the foundation, whose members and head worked hard to ensure the success of the competition -- from allocating prizes and providing for the arrival of the participating teams and their accommodation here," he asserted.

He pointed out this kind of work is not surprising for Al-Baghli and all those at the foundation. He also congratulated all the winners.

Moreover, Secretary of the Supreme Committee for the Promotion of Moderation and Director of the Center for the Promotion of Moderation at ministry Dr. Abdullah Al-Sharika said: Memorizing the Holy Quran is one of the greatest blessings that Allah bestows upon whomever He wills among His servants, as the Prophet stated that "the best among you is he who learns the Quran and teaches it."

"Whoever strives to memorize and learn the Quran, contributes to teaching it, or encourages it by holding competitions are covered by the Prophet's saying. It has been proven that the Prophet informed us that whoever loses his eyes and is patient, Allah will compensate him with paradise by His grace and generosity. Today, we are witnessing the honoring of the winners of this blessed Quranic competition for our blind brothers; may Allah protect them, who, even though they have lost their sight, Allah has given them insight and bestowed it upon them. The Quran illuminates the inner and outer aspects of a person. Happy is the one who learns it, teaches it, and acts upon it. We ask Allah to make us and you among them," he stated.

He expressed his appreciation and gratitude to Al-Baghli for his generosity in holding this unprecedented competition and covering all its expenses. "May Almighty Allah reward him with the best and most complete reward, and make it a treasure for him, his parents, and his children," he added.



KUNA photos Chairman of the Board of Directors of Nafisa Charity Association Ibrahim Al-Baghli, surrounded by the guests of honor and winners.

## New Jahra overpass entrance proposed

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: Municipal Council member Abdullah Al-Enezi on Wednesday submitted a proposal to construct an overpass entrance from Jahra Road 80 to turn left and go down to Mursheed Al-Shammari Road, citing Kuwait Municipality Law No. 33/2016 in the preamble of his proposal.

He explained that his proposal aims

to facilitate traffic movement and reduce pressure on the entrances to residential areas from Jahra Road 80, as well as to ensure smooth movement of road users entering the area.

He pointed out the construction of such an overpass as an entrance to the area is considered a futuristic solution that contributes to reducing traffic congestion at the entrances to the areas adjacent to Jahra Road 80, especially in light of the increasing number of vehicles.

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## Key UNGA transparency measures endorsed

## Kuwait pushes for reforms in UN structure, funding commitments

NEW YORK, Nov 7, (KUNA): Reforming the structure of the UN and its main principal organs requires funding of the budget and commitment of member states to their financial obligations, said a Kuwaiti diplomat late Wednesday.

Speaking to the UN meeting, which discussed item 121 concerning the activities of the General Assembly,

Diplomatic attache at the Kuwaiti Permanent Mission to the UN headquarters in New York, Ziyad Abuhaimeed asserted that safekeeping the transparency and productivity was a responsibility of all members.

He indicated that Kuwait, through the decades, had been active and interested in supporting the UNGA as a reflection of its commitment to the global community.

Kuwait supports the UNGA in addressing challenges whether it was addressing and solving armed conflicts, aiding during natural disasters, or fighting poverty and climate change, he said.

The Kuwaiti diplomat said that his country adopted and supported the "Vote Initiative" in accordance to UNGA 76/262, which called for more transparency in the UNSC

concerning voting on resolutions.

He also expressed pride in Kuwait joining the "Danish initiative", which called for securing funding to the general budget in a timely and predictable manner.

He touched on the Summit for the Future and its positive outcome that would hopefully reflect positively on reforms in the UN and built a better world.



Lee Byung Kwan, Park Chong-Suk and Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah

## Goals for deeper collaboration

## Ahmadi Governor meets Korean diplomats to explore cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received in his office at Ahmadi Governorate's headquarters the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Kuwait Park Chong-Suk, and the Counselor and Deputy Head of Diplomatic Mission to Kuwait Lee Byung Kwan.

According to a press release issued by Ahmadi Governorate, the meeting involved friendly discussions about the strong ties between the leaderships and people of both friendly countries, and ways to enhance these relations in all fields.

The meeting also touched on the opportunities available to

develop the existing cooperation and exchange experiences between the two countries, particularly in administrative and local systems.

Sheikh Hamoud expressed his hope for continued success in further strengthening the friendship and cooperation between the two nations.

Meanwhile, the Korean Ambassador expressed his happiness and gratitude for the warm reception by the governor.

He conveyed his deep appreciation for the care and attention the Korean diplomatic mission and citizens receive both at the official and public levels in Kuwait.

## GCC transport ministers set agenda for regional mobility

## Kuwait accelerates green energy plans

DOHA, Nov 7, (KUNA): The 26th Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Meeting of the Committee of the Ministers of Transport kicked off Thursday in the Qatari capital, Doha, with the participation of Kuwait.

The recent years have seen a paradigm shift in the joint work across various fields, achieving many positive results and successes in the process, said Qatar's Minister of Transport Jassim Al-Sulaiti during his speech.

The directives of the GCC leaders have resulted in GCC countries having advanced and eco-friendly transportation infrastructure supported by the latest technology systems that help reduce carbon emissions, he added.

For his part, the Secretary General of the GCC Jassim Al-Budaiwi said in his speech that the transportation sector plays a key role in economic, social, and urban development, directly impacting growth and employment, stressing that GCC governments have made great effort developing it.

In light of the Supreme Council's keenness on the cooperation of the GCC countries, the concerned authorities in the member states have



Group photo during the 26th meeting of the GCC Ministers of Transport Committee.

worked with the GCC to develop the transport sector as an integrated system among the GCC states in land, sea, air, and rail transport, he added.

He pointed out the many achievements the ministerial meeting achieved, among them the GCC railway project, which aims to link all GCC countries by rail, facilitating intra-trade, and easing movement of citizens.

## Facility aims to set new standards

## MoH commits to advanced care with addiction treatment center

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7, (KUNA): Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi stressed on Thursday the importance of completing the Cooperative Center for Addiction Treatment project, according to the highest international standards.

In a statement after his visit to the construction site, Al-Awadhi said that the ministry is dedicated to supporting and treating all who suffer from addiction, in its framework to improve the health of the citizens and protect them from addictive substances.

The visit aims to ensure the readiness of the center and meet the health and technical specifications required to become an integrated and specialized facility, he added.

The building will include a range of integrated health and psychological facilities, and can accommodate 208 patients.

The visit was accompanied by the Ministry of Health's Undersecretary Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, Assistant Undersecretary for Engineering Affairs, Engineer Ibrahim Al-Naham, as well as MoH's engineers.



Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi in a group photo during his visit to the Cooperative Center for Addiction Treatment project in the Sabah Health District.

## Project to benefit 15 countries

## Kuwait advocates Arabic for ICDO website at 26th General Assembly

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: During the 57th session of the Executive Council and the 26th General Assembly of the International Civil Defense Organization (ICDO) held in Egypt, the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) presented Kuwait's project on the translation of the website of the International Civil Defense Organization (ICDO) into Arabic language.

According to a press release issued by KFF, the project is aimed at designating Arabic as an official language alongside other languages, in accordance with the relevant article in the organization's charter. The project will benefit 15 member

countries, and enhance civil defense awareness in the region.

Kuwait was represented by the National Liaison Officer to the ICDO Lieutenant Colonel Mohammad Qasim Mohammad, and Head of the Foreign Affairs and Protocol Department Major Abdullah Walid Mohammad. Also present was the Head of the External Relations and Protocols Department Captain Abdullah Walid Mohammad.

During the event, Lieutenant Colonel Qasim was honored with the International Officer's Medal in recognition of Kuwait's significant contribution to the advancement of the ICDO.



Kuwait's National Liaison Officer presents the Arabic translation project at ICDO 26th General Assembly.

## Science collaboration strengthened

## KUNA, KFAS chiefs hold coordination talks

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7, (KUNA): Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Dr. Fatmah Al-Salem held talks on Thursday with Dr. Amina Farhan, her counterpart

at Kuwait Foundation for Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), on cooperation between the news agency and the scientific establishment.

Dr. Al-Salem, during the meeting,

lauded the eminent role undertaken by the foundation for promoting scientific culture and innovative technology in the State of Kuwait, noting that KFAS effectively contributes to

supporting scientific research and overhaul of the national resources and potentials, ingredients for enhancing sustainable development.

KUNA's director general affirmed the keenness on shedding light on activities and initiatives that enhance scientific awareness, promoting scientific research, knowledge and innovation in Kuwait, indicating that KFAS in this vein funds the scientific researches, organize advanced training courses and establishes partnerships with research and scientific establishments, locally and abroad.

Dr. Farhan, along with her accompanying delegation, touched on KFAS' role for securing a stimulating environment for scientific and technological innovation, thus contributing to the sustainable development through empowering the national cadres and elevating the level of their scientific capacities.

The foundation's side affirmed support for the national media cadres, noting that KUNA's personnel partake in specialized training courses organized by the foundation in cooperation with renowned foreign universities.

The two sides during the meeting agreed on activating direct coordination mechanisms to facilitate media coverage of the scientific initiatives and projects at the national level.

Crescent Society has been actively providing aid to thousands of Lebanese families forced to flee their homes due to Israeli attacks, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to relief that reaches those most in need.

The continuation of Kuwait's aid mission in the face of recurring Israeli attacks is particularly noteworthy. Despite the risks posed by recent strikes near the airport, which caused damage to the terminal and tarmac, Lebanese authorities have managed to maintain regular operations at the facility, allowing for the crucial influx of international aid.

The inaugural flight of Kuwait's air bridge on Wednesday set the stage for this sustained relief effort. Carrying medical and hospital supplies, it was warmly received by Lebanese health officials, including Fadi Sinan, Director General of the Lebanese Ministry of Health. Sinan highlighted the long-standing support of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development in establishing and renovating numerous government hospitals throughout Lebanon, underscoring the depth of Kuwait's commitment to Lebanon's healthcare infrastructure.

As Lebanon continues to face the challenges posed by the ongoing conflict, the promise of additional aid flights from Kuwait in the coming days offers a glimmer of hope. This sustained support not only provides immediate relief but also reinforces the strong bonds between the two nations, demonstrating Kuwait's role as a steadfast ally in times of crisis.



Group photo during the visit of the Director General of Kuwait News Agency Dr. Fatima Al-Salem to the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences.

## Biometrics pending

## Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, a security source affirmed that all government transactions for expatriates who have not completed their biometrics registration will be suspended after the deadline at the end of December, including residency renewals.

He urged all residents to book appointments and complete their biometrics at the security directorates in all six governorates, and in the designated fingerprint centers for companies in Umm Al-Hayman and Jahra, reiterating that failure to do so may result in the suspension of their government transactions.

## Kuwait to

## Continued from Page 1

Looking ahead to Saturday, Al-Ali stated that daytime weather will again be hot to moderate, with winds shifting from northwesterly to variable directions. Wind speeds will range from 8 to 35 km/h, and scattered clouds are expected. Maximum temperatures for Saturday are forecasted between 29 and 32 degrees Celsius. The sea will remain light to moderate with waves between 2 and 5 feet.

Saturday night is predicted to be moderate to cold, with winds continuing from northwesterly to variable

directions at speeds of 8 to 30 km/h and some scattered clouds. Minimum temperatures are expected between 19 and 22 degrees Celsius, while sea conditions will continue to be light to moderate with waves ranging from 1 to 3 feet.

## KNPC sets

## Continued from Page 1

KNPC has a plan to build 100 fuel stations and is currently working on obtaining the necessary approvals to move forward with it. However, the company's ultimate goal is to construct more than 200 fuel stations by 2040. The implementation will be carried out in multiple stages, with priority given to new areas that lack fixed fuel stations. The focus will be on meeting the needs of new residential cities, and covering most residential, investment, and highway areas.

The sources revealed that the company aims to increase the number of electric vehicle charging points at its fuel stations, with a target of reaching 600 charging points in the future.

## Event explores

## Continued from Page 1

In a statement, the Ministry of Defense said that the event included a workshop on the repercussions of mines on the environment and the important

role played by the Defense Ministry's anti-WMD department in demining operations, evacuating affected individuals, and implementing all necessary measures to prevent collateral damage.

## Court sets

## Continued from Page 1

the Fatwa and Legislation Department, had presented a memorandum advocating for the rejection of the appeals.

Meanwhile, the KCCI's legal representatives requested a postponement of the appeals to allow time for addressing concerns regarding the law passed by the previous National Assembly in November 2023 and published in the official gazette Kuwait Alyawm newspaper later that year.

## Kuwait ramps

## Continued from Page 1

He recalled Kuwait's steadfast support during previous challenging periods, including the aftermath of the Beirut port explosion in 2025 and the 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon. Ibrahim stressed the critical nature of this aid, given the displacement of an estimated 1.5 million people due to the current conflict.

Kuwait's humanitarian efforts extend beyond government-to-government assistance. The Kuwait Red



VP concedes presidential election to Trump

Sometimes the fight takes a while, that doesn't mean we won't win: Harris

WASHINGTON, Nov 7, (AP): Faced with a sweeping rejection by American voters, Kamala Harris conceded the presidential election to Donald Trump on Wednesday and encouraged supporters to continue fighting for their vision of the country.



US Vice President Kamala Harris delivers a concession speech for the 2024 presidential election on the campus of Howard University in Washington on Nov 6. (AP)

The Democratic vice president said the battle would continue "in the voting booth, in the courts and in the public square."

"Sometimes the fight takes a while," she said at Howard University, her alma mater, where she had hoped to make a victory speech after the election. "That doesn't mean we won't win."

Harris' decisive defeat shattered hopes that she could rescue Democrats' chances after President Joe Biden's reelection effort stalled and she replaced him at the top of the ticket.

She trailed in every battleground state to Trump, a Republican whom she described as an existential danger to the country's foundational institutions. And Trump appeared on track to win the popular vote for the first time

in his three campaigns for the White House - even after two impeachments, felony convictions and his attempt to

overturn his previous election loss. Despite her stark warnings about Trump, Harris reached for optimism

on Wednesday. "It is OK to feel sad and disappointed, but please know it's going to be OK," she told supporters as some of them wiped tears from their eyes.

Biden released a statement praising Harris after her speech, saying: "She will continue the fight with purpose, determination, and joy. She will continue to be a champion for all Americans. Above all, she will continue to be a leader our children will look up to for generations to come as she puts her stamp on America's future."

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, Harris' running mate, was in the audience with his family. So were Reps. Nancy Pelosi, the former House speaker, and Barbara Lee, both from Harris' home state of California.

Before her speech, Harris called Trump to congratulate him on his victory. She told the crowd that "we will engage in a peaceful transfer of power," an implicit reference to Trump's unwillingness to do the same four years ago.

Some in the audience expressed dis-

appointment that Harris was not able to make history as the country's first Black female president. Harris would also have been first U.S. president of South Asian descent.

Gregory Pate, 38, said he appreciated that Harris said she was "committed to the fight and not looking at this as a permanent defeat, but just another obstacle that we have to go through as Black people."

"I think it was perfect. I think that it was timely, and it was a message that I came to hear," said Pate, of Fairfax, Virginia.

Jay Evans, of Greenbelt, Maryland, said after Harris' spoke that he's wistful for what could have been.

"We're partly sad, because hearing her speak, she would have been an amazing person to bring the country together and to keep us in a better path," Evans said.

After Trump lost to Biden, he directed his supporters to march on the U.S. Capitol, leading to a violent insurrection that interrupted the ceremonial certification of the election

results.

Now Harris is expected to oversee the same certification process to finalize Trump's victory as voters brush off concerns about the future of American democracy and return the former Republican president to the White House.

Biden plans to address the election results on Thursday. The White House said he spoke with Harris and Trump on Wednesday, and he invited the president-elect to meet with him soon.

David Plouffe, a top Harris adviser, said campaign staffers "left it all on the field for their country."

"We dug out of a deep hole but not enough," he said. "A devastating loss."

Harris became the Democratic candidate after Biden, who was already struggling to convince voters that he could serve as president until he was 86 years old, stumbled badly in his June 27 debate with Trump.

He dropped out of the race on July 21 and endorsed his vice president, who swiftly unified the Democratic Party around her candidacy.

Trump's second term could realign US diplomacy toward authoritarian leaders

BUDAPEST, Hungary, Nov 7, (AP): Hungary's fiery, right-wing leader says Donald Trump's victory will help his own battle against immigration and multiculturalism and restore traditional family values.

In Argentina, a president who once bear-hugged Trump at a political conference in Maryland is attacking his critics as rats and parasites, ranting against what he calls a corrupt elite and calling climate change "a socialist lie."

Trump's second term could realign US diplomacy away from traditional international alliances and more toward populist, authoritarian politicians, according to both those leaders and outside observers.

Two days before Tuesday's election, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán made a daring prediction.

"Donald Trump will be president again, and that means by the end of the year, pro-peace political forces will be in the majority in the West," Orbán told state radio.

Orbán has been accused by the European Union of burying Hungary's democracy by dominating media and

building a network of loyal oligarchs. He has worried foreign leaders by drawing closer to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

What Orbán calls "illiberal democracy" has stigmatized civil-society organizations and cracked down on LGBTQ+ rights. It favors retaining power even if that means contravening traditional Hungarian allies' interests.

Trump has avoided publicly criticizing Putin and has consistently spoken warmly about him.

"There is clearly that sort of authoritarian-minded chemistry," between them, said Nigel Gould-Davies of the International Institute of Strategic Studies in London.

That chemistry aligns with Trump's admiration for other authoritarian leaders, some of whom were elected by systems that were once democratic, Gould-Davies said, noting Hungary under Orbán as an example.

Trump has claimed that he will bring an end to Russia's war in Ukraine "within 24 hours," an assertion welcomed by the Kremlin, which

currently holds an advantage on the battlefield as well as roughly 20% of Ukrainian territory.

Moscow may hope that Trump will sow dysfunction in NATO given his demands that other members of the alliance meet agreed military spending levels, and his warnings that Russia could "do whatever the hell they want" to those who fail.

Gould-Davies observed before the election that the Kremlin would welcome Trump's victory because of his apparent desire for the war in Ukraine to end on terms favorable to Russia. Putin and other authoritarian leaders will be encouraged by Trump's reelection, which will mean "much less emphasis in American foreign policy on the importance and value of human rights," Gould-Davies said.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is one of his country's both beloved and polarizing political leaders. Under Modi, Hindu nationalism - once a fringe ideology in India - has become mainstream, and nobody has done more to advance this cause than the 74-year-old leader.



Republican presidential nominee former President Donald Trump waves as he walks with former first lady Melania Trump at an election night watch party at the Palm Beach Convention Center on Nov 6 in West Palm Beach, Fla. (AP)

Scholz plans to lead with minority government

Germany's govt coalition collapses dramatically

BERLIN, Nov 7, (AP): After Germany's government coalition collapsed in dramatic fashion when Chancellor Olaf Scholz fired Finance Minister Christian Lindner of the pro-business Free Democrats, Scholz said he would lead the country with a minority government, despite calls from opposition leaders Thursday for early elections.

The chancellor said the minority government would be made up of his Social Democrats and the Greens until early next year - even as the leader of the biggest opposition bloc in parliament, Friedrich Merz from the center-right Christian Democrats, called for an immediate no-confidence vote and new elections.

Scholz stressed again on Thursday, that he does not want to call a vote of confidence before Jan. 15.

"The citizens will soon have the opportunity to decide anew how to proceed," the chancellor said, according to the German news agency dpa. "That is their right. I will therefore put the vote of confidence to the Bundestag at the beginning of next year."

A meeting with Merz and Scholz at the chancellery around noon Thursday about a possible date for the next election ended after less than an hour with Merz leaving without commenting on the talks.



Federal Minister of Finance Christian Lindner, (from left), joins Bijan Djir-Sarai, Free Democratic Party Secretary General, and Christian Dürr, Chairman of the Free Democratic Party parliamentary group, for a press statement after his dismissal by the Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz, in Berlin on Nov 6. (AP)

Later on Thursday, fired Finance Minister Lindner and two other Free Democrats officials who had resigned - Research Minister Bettina Stark-

Watzinger and Justice Minister Marco Buschmann - were to receive their certificates of dismissal from President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

To ensure a smooth transition, three successors were likely to be named immediately after that. German news agency dpa reported that Jörg Kukies, an economic adviser to Scholz, will become the next finance minister.

Scholz had announced late Wednesday that he would seek a vote of confidence on Jan. 15 that he said might lead to an early election, perhaps as soon as March. The vote had otherwise been due next September.

After firing his finance minister, the chancellor had accused Lindner of breaching his trust and publicly calling for a fundamentally different economic policy, including what Scholz said would be tax cuts worth billions for a few top earners while at the same time cutting pensions for all retirees.

"That is not decent," Scholz said.

The chancellor hopes that his minority government - Scholz's left-leaning Social Democrats with the remaining coalition partner, the environmentalist Greens - will get the support from Merz's Christian Democrats in parliament in the coming weeks, to pass important legislation and plugging the billion-euro hole in the 2025 budget.



Television reporters film as flames from the Mountain Fire consume a home in Camarillo, Calif, on Nov 6. (AP)

Wildfire tears thru S. California community after burning homes

A fast-moving wildfire fueled by heavy winds was tearing through a community northwest of Los Angeles for a second day Thursday after destroying dozens of homes and forcing thousands of residents to flee when it exploded in size in only a few hours. The Mountain Fire prompted evacuation orders Wednesday for more than 10,000 people as it threatened 3,500 structures in suburban communities, ranches and agricultural areas around Camarillo, California Gov Gavin Newsom said in a statement. The fire was at 0% containment late Wednesday, according to the Ventura County Fire Department.

The National Weather Service said a red flag warning, which indicates conditions for high fire danger, would remain in effect until 6 p.m. Thursday. Winds were expected to decrease significantly by Thursday night, the weather service said. Officials in several Southern California counties urged residents to be on watch for fast-spreading blazes, power outages and downed trees amid the latest round of notorious Santa Ana winds. There were more than 30,000 customers without power statewide early Thursday, including about 3,000 in Ventura County and about 4,000 Los Angeles County, according to poweroutage.us. (AP)

Harris loss being blamed on Biden

WASHINGTON, Nov 7, (AP): Joe Biden's name wasn't on the ballot, but history will likely remember Kamala Harris' resounding defeat as his loss too.

As Democrats pick up the pieces following President-elect Donald Trump's decisive victory, some of the vice president's backers are expressing frustration that Biden's decision to seek reelection until this summer - despite long-standing voter concerns about his age and unease about post-pandemic inflation as well as the U.S.-Mexico border - all but sealed his party's loss of the White House. "The biggest onus of this loss is on President Biden," said Andrew Yang, who ran against Biden in 2020 for the Democratic nomination and endorsed Harris' unsuccessful run. "If he had stepped down in January instead of July, we may be in a very different place."

Biden will leave office after leading the U.S. out of the worst pandemic in a century, galvanizing international support for Ukraine in the aftermath of Russia's invasion and passing a \$1 trillion infrastructure bill that will impact communities for years to come.

Dems enter Trump presidency without a plan or a clear leader

WASHINGTON, Nov 7, (AP): Democrats spent billions of dollars warning American voters that Donald Trump posed an imminent threat to democracy, that his economic policies would benefit only his wealthy friends, that he was literally a fascist.

In the end, voters didn't care - or if they did, it didn't matter.

And now, after Kamala Harris' de-

cisive loss, Democrats enter a second Trump presidency with no clear leader, no clear plan and no agreement on what caused them to be so wrong about the 2024 election.

"I think there needs to be a cleaning of the house, there needs to be a new generation of leaders that emerge," said Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., among the few Democrats with presidential ambitions to address the party's future on Wednesday. "There needs to be new thinking, new ideas and a new direction. And, you know, the establishment produced a disaster." With votes still being counted, Trump was on track to become the first Republican in two decades to win the popular vote, although the scope of his Electoral College victory was likely to fall short of President Barack Obama's 2008 performance in which he won 365 electoral votes.

Trump picked up a small but significant share of younger voters, Black voters and Hispanic voters, many of whom were feeling down about the economy, according to AP VoteCast, a sweeping survey of more than 120,000 voters nationwide. The Republican president-elect also made progress among voters without a college degree.

Most of the elected Democrats who are most often mentioned as 2028 presidential prospects - including the governors of California, Illinois, Michigan and Pennsylvania - declined to weigh in when asked. Others canceled scheduled interviews.



Democratic Washington gubernatorial candidate Attorney General Bob Ferguson speaks to supporters at the Washington State Democrats election night party on Election Day on Nov 5, 2024, in Seattle. (AP)



From left: Secretary-General of the Organization of Turkic States Kubanychbek Omuraliev, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov, Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, Turkmenistan's President Serdar Berdimuhamedov, and President of Northern Cyprus Ersin Tatar pose for a photo prior to the summit of the Organization of Turkic States at Yntymak Ordo State Residence in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan on Nov 6. (AP)

50 European leaders assess how Donald Trump will affect their fortunes

BUDAPEST, Hungary, Nov 7, (AP): Around 50 European leaders, including Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, were reassessing their trans-Atlantic relations at a summit Thursday in the hope that Donald Trump's second US presidency will avoid the strife of his first administration.

European officials will also be seeking a strong common stance on Russia at the one-day gathering.

Rutte, who was Dutch prime minister during Trump's first 2017-2021 presidency, said that "I worked with him

very well for four years. He is extremely clear about what he wants. He understands that you have to deal with each other to come to joint positions. And I think we can do that." And he insisted that the common challenges posed by Russia in Ukraine affected both sides of the Atlantic.

"Russia is delivering the latest technology into North Korea in return for North Korean help with the war against Ukraine. And this is a threat not only to the European part of NATO, but also to the US mainland," Rutte said coming into the summit.



## Yoon's approval ratings hurt

## S.Korea prez denies wrongdoing in growing scandal

SEOUL, South Korea, Nov 7. (AP): South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol denied wrongdoing Thursday in a burgeoning influence-peddling scandal involving him and his wife that's severely hurting his approval ratings and providing political ammunition to his rivals.

The political firestorm coincides with South Korea facing a slew of critical foreign policy issues, such as Donald Trump's election win to become the next president of the United States and North Korea's reported entry into the Russia-Ukraine war.

The scandal centers around allegations that Yoon and first lady Kim Keon Hee exerted inappropriate influence on the conservative ruling People Power Party to pick a certain candidate to run for a parliamentary by-election in 2022 at the request of Myung Tae-kyun, an election broker and founder of a polling agency who conducted free opinion surveys for Yoon before he became president.

For weeks, the scandal has been making headlines in South Korea as

Myung's leaked phone conversations show he boasted of his influence over the presidential couple and other top ruling party officials.

Asked about his ties with Myung during a press conference Thursday, Yoon said, "I didn't do anything inappropriate and have nothing to hide regarding Myung Tae-kyun."

Yoon said he has never meddled in any candidate nomination processes at the PPP, and had never asked Myung to carry out surveys for him, though he acknowledged that Myung gave him some sort of help during his presidential primary campaign in 2021.

The main liberal opposition Democratic Party said Yoon's response only showed his "arrogance" and "self-righteousness." The party earlier demanded Yoon apologize, reshuffle top officials and accept an independent investigation into his wife.

The Democratic Party recently shared what it said was an audio file of phone calls between Yoon and Myung on May 9, 2022 - a day before Yoon took office for a single five-year term.

The opposition party alleges that the conversation proves Yoon provided Myung with political favors in return for free surveys.

In the audio file, Yoon can be heard telling Myung that he asked a PPP committee to pick senior party member Kim Young-sun to run for one of the parliamentary by-elections the following month. Kim Young-sun eventually obtained the party's nomination and won the election.

In the file, Myung is heard saying, "I really won't forget this favor for my entire life. Thank you!"

South Korea's election law bars public servants, including the president, from interfering in elections, but applies no such restrictions to a president-elect, so it's unclear whether Yoon violated the law.

Recent surveys showed Yoon's approval rating fell below 20% for the first time since his inauguration. Kim Keon Hee has been grappling with other scandals, such as spy camera footage purportedly showing her accepting a luxury bag as a gift from a pastor.



South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol attends a news conference at the Presidential Office in Seoul, South Korea on Nov 7. (AP)

## Biden retains most of tariffs this year

## China braces for fresh tensions with Trump over trade, tech and Taiwan

TAIPEI, Taiwan, Nov 7. (AP): The first time China faced Donald Trump in the White House, there was a trade war, a breach of protocol involving Taiwan's former leader, and a president-to-president bromance that turned sour.

As President-elect Trump prepares to start his second term in office, China is bracing for unpredictability in its ties with the United States and renewed tensions over trade, technology and Taiwan.

Perhaps the biggest consequence for China - if Trump stays true to his campaign promises - is his threat to slap blanket 60% tariffs on all Chinese exports to the U.S.

Tariffs like that would be a blow to China's already unstable economy, which is suffering from high youth unemployment, a lengthy property slump and government debt. A 60% duty on Chinese imports could shave off 2.5 percentage points, or about half, of China's projected economic growth, according to an analysis published earlier this year by UBS.

During Trump's previous term in office, the US imposed tariffs on more than \$360 billion of Chinese products. That brought Beijing to the negotiating table, and in 2020 the two sides signed a trade deal in which China committed to improve intellectual property rights and buy an extra \$200 billion of American goods. A research group a couple of years later showed China had bought essentially

none of the goods it had promised.

President Joe Biden retained most of those tariffs and added fresh duties this year on imports including steel, solar cells and electric vehicles.

Like last time, tariffs could serve as a tool to force Beijing back to the negotiating table, said Henry Gao, a law professor at Singapore Management University who focuses on international trade.

"Given the weak economic position of China this time, I think there will be more willingness to talk," he said. "Thus, while the tariff might have some short-term effects on the Chinese economy, the situation might improve once they reach a deal."

Factoring into the trade talks could be Trump's appeals to Chinese President Xi Jinping to help negotiate a resolution to the Ukraine war, which Trump has boasted he'll be able to do quickly, without saying how.

Trump previously sought Xi's help in dealing with North Korea's rogue leader Kim Jong Un. That dynamic could repeat itself, with Trump weighing trade grievances against seeking China's support in global crises, according to Wang Huiyao, founder of the Beijing-based think tank Center for China and Globalization.

"China is the largest trading partner of both Russia and Ukraine," Wang wrote in a recent commentary. "These close economic ties give China a unique opportunity to play a



In this June 29, 2019, file photo, US President Donald Trump, (left), meets with Chinese President Xi Jinping during a meeting on the sidelines of the G-20 summit in Osaka, Japan. (AP)

greater role in peace-making efforts."

There is one scenario in which Trump has threatened to impose even higher tariffs - 150% to 200% - on Chinese goods: if China invades Taiwan, a self-ruled democracy that Beijing claims as its own.

The US does not recognize Taiwan as a country, but is its strongest backer and biggest arms provider.

Trump angered Beijing in December 2016 by taking a congratulatory call from Taiwan's then-president Tsai Ing-wen in a breach of diplomatic protocol. No U.S. president had

spoken directly to a Taiwanese leader since Washington and Beijing established ties in 1979.

Trump's move created anxiety in China-watching circles, but ultimately, he stuck to supporting the status quo in relations between Taipei and Beijing.

China expects him to continue to do so, said Zhu Feng, dean of the School of International Relations at Nanjing University.

"Will (he) want to turn to support Taiwan independence? It is unlikely," he said.

As for China's repeated threats to

annex Taiwan, Trump told The Wall Street Journal last month that he would not have to use military force to prevent a blockade of Taiwan because Xi "respects me and he knows I'm (expletive) crazy."

On the campaign trail, Trump sometimes talked up his personal connection with Xi, which started exuberantly during his first term but soured over disputes about trade and the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic.

But Trump has also said that Taiwan should pay the U.S. for defending it against China, likening the relationship to insurance. Taiwan spends about 2.5% of its GDP on defense, and purchased hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of U.S. weapons this year.

In a congratulatory message to Trump after his victory, Xi called for the U.S. and China to manage their differences and get along in a new era, according to Chinese state media. History has shown that both sides gain from cooperation and lose from confrontation, Xi said.

Trump has purposely maintained a sense of uncertainty in his relationship with China, said Da Wei, director of the Center for International Security and Strategy at Tsinghua University in Beijing.

"We are clear about the challenges," he said. "As for opportunities, we are yet to see them clearly."

During his first term, Trump began targeting Chinese technology firms

over security concerns, focusing on large companies like the telecoms giant Huawei. Biden continued in that direction by placing curbs on China's access to advanced semiconductors, which are needed to develop strategic industries such as artificial intelligence.

But Trump has criticized Biden's CHIPS and Science Act, a bipartisan bill that earmarked \$53 billion to build up domestic manufacturing of semiconductors. Currently, Taiwan produces nearly 90% of the world's supply of the most advanced chips.

The island's largest semiconductor manufacturer, TSMC, expanded production in Arizona, partly to respond to the CHIPS Act, and to be prepared to withstand any other protectionist policies in the U.S., said Shihoko Goto, director of the Indo-Pacific Program at the Wilson Center.

Trump has promised to do away with the CHIPS Act, though critics say that would undermine his campaign to reindustrialize the U.S. The president-elect has also accused Taiwan of "stealing" the chip industry from the U.S. decades ago.

"Rather than providing a silicon shield, Taiwan's dominance in the chip industry could actually be the source of tension between Taipei and Trump, as Taiwan's successes in the chip sector may be seen as having only been possible as a result of the United States being taken advantage of," Goto said.



In this handout provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Lal-Lo, workers clear a road from a tree that fell due to strong winds from Typhoon Yinxing, locally called Marce, in Lal-Lo, Cagayan province, northern Philippines on Nov 7. (AP)

## Typhoon Yinxing slams into northern Philippine region

A strong typhoon slammed into a northern Philippine province on Thursday as thousands were evacuated in a region still recovering from back-to-back storms that hit a few weeks ago. Typhoon Yinxing is the 13th to batter the disaster-prone Southeast Asian archipelago in 2024.

"I really pity our people but all of them are tough," Gov. Marilou Cayco of the province of Batanes said by telephone. Her province was ravaged by recent destructive storms and is expected to be affected by Yinxing's fierce wind and rain. (AP)

## Presidents of South Sudan and Kenya push for resolution in stalled peace talks

JUBA, South Sudan, Nov 7. (Agencies): South Sudan peace talks, previously held in neighboring Kenya, will resume under a directive from President Salva Kiir and his Kenyan counterpart, William Ruto, who met Wednesday and directed the mediation team to reconvene and resolve all outstanding issues within two weeks.

The talks had stalled after Kiir's

former rival, Riek Machar's party, withdrew in July, citing plans by the mediators to replace the 2018 peace agreement that ended a five-year civil war in which more than 400,000 people died.

While the 2018 peace agreement is yet to be fully implemented, South Sudan postponed elections, scheduled for December 2023 to 2025, to establish

key electoral processes outlined in the agreement.

The Tumaini initiative peace talks, ongoing in Kenya since May, aimed to provide a foundation for the inclusion of non-signatory groups to sustain peace in the east African country plagued by civil war and ethnic violence. However, participants expressed concerns over a new security law that would allow the government to detain people without warrants.

The law was criticized by western envoys and human rights groups who fear it could be misused in the country's fragile political and judicial climate.

South Sudan is going through an economic crisis that has seen civil servants go unpaid for almost one year, after oil exports were disrupted by a damaged pipeline in war-torn neighboring Sudan.

Meanwhile, the UN refugee agency UNHCR on Wednesday welcomed South Sudan's accession to two key treaties aimed at eradicating statelessness.

On Tuesday, South Sudan acceded to the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness -- two UN conventions designed to prevent the occurrence of statelessness.



South Sudan's President Salva Kiir, (right), and Vice President Riek Machar, (left), attend a Holy Mass led by Pope Francis at the John Garang Mausoleum in Juba, South Sudan on Feb 5, 2023. (AP)

## No immediate reports of casualties

## Indonesia's Lewotobi erupts for 2nd time in a week

MAUMERE, Indonesia, Nov 7. (AP): Indonesia's Mount Lewotobi Laki Laki unleashed towering columns of ash into the air on Thursday, in an even larger eruption than the one that killed nine people and injured dozens of others three days ago.

There were no immediate reports of casualties from the latest eruption.

The 1,584-meter (5,197-foot) volcano on the remote island of Flores shot billowing columns of ash 11 times on Thursday, with the latest and largest rising 8,000 meters (26,240 feet), said Hadi Wijaya, the head of Center for Volcanology and Geological Disaster Mitigation.

The volcano had shown less activity since Monday's deadly eruption killed nine people and injured 64 others.

Monday's eruption affected more than 10,000 people in 10 villages. About 4,400 villagers moved into makeshift emergency shelters after the eruption, which destroyed seven schools, nearly two dozen houses and a convent on the majority-Catholic island.

Volcanic materials, including smoldering rocks, lava and hot, thumb-size gravel and ash were thrown up to 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) from its crater on Monday.

While visiting the devastated areas, officials found craters where rocks fell dur-



Mount Lewotobi Laki-Laki spews volcanic materials during an eruption, in East Flores, Indonesia on Nov 7. (AP)

ing eruptions, up to 13 meters (43 feet) wide and 5 meters (16 feet) deep, in several places including a destroyed school.

"It shows a difference in characteristics from the previous eruption in January," said Wijaya, head of the volcanology center. He added that the earlier eruption mostly unleashed volcanic materials around the peak, followed by lava flows.

"We are still analyzing the change

of Lewotobi's eruption character, which will be used by the government to determine a safe relocation site for residents," Wijaya said.

He said his agency has asked the local government of East Nusa Tenggara province to close the only road connecting Maumere, the island's largest city, to the neighboring district of Lantaka, as it passes through the volcano's danger zone.

## Lat/Am

**Hurricane ravages Cuba:** Cuba was left reeling Thursday after a fierce Category 3 hurricane ripped across the island and knocked out the country's power grid. The magnitude of the impact remained unclear through the early hours of the day, but forecasters warned that Hurricane Rafael could bring "life-threatening" storm surges, winds and flash floods to Cuba after ravaging parts of the Cayman Islands and Jamaica.

On Wednesday evening, massive waves lashed at Havana's shores as sharp winds and rain whipped at the historic cityscape, leaving trees littered on flooded roads. Much of the city was dark and deserted.



Canel

As it plowed across Cuba, the storm slowed to a Category 2 hurricane chugging into the Gulf of Mexico near northern Mexico and southern Texas, according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami.

But many Cubans were left picking up the pieces from the night before, with a strange sense of déjà vu after a rocky few weeks in the Caribbean nation. Cuban president is

Miguel Diaz-Canel. (AP)

## Heavy rains kill 5 in Panama:

Heavy rains caused by a recent tropical depression have killed at least five people, including two minors, in Panama, local media reported Tuesday.

The National Civil Protection System (Sinaproc) said four of the five fatal victims were drowned and the other one was killed in a landslide.

On Monday, the National Hurricane Center reported that the tropical depression located north of Panama strengthened into tropical storm Rafael, with winds of more than 63 kph. (Xinhua)

## 4 security officers, 2 schoolchildren killed in bomb and mortar attacks in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Nov 7. (AP): A roadside bomb exploded near a vehicle carrying security forces in restive northwestern Pakistan, killing four officers and wounding five others, officials said Thursday, and the same day two schoolchildren were killed when a

mortar exploded near them elsewhere in the northwest.

The roadside bombing happened Wednesday in South Waziristan district, a former stronghold of the Pakistani Taliban, local police officer Dilawar Khan said.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, but the Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, has stepped up its assaults in the region since its ally the Afghan Taliban seized power in neighboring Afghanistan in 2021.



	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
SAUDI - TASI	+37.48	12,130.83	JAPAN - Nikkei 225	-99.26	39,381.41
DUBAI - DFMGI	+27.89	4,644.17	PHILIPPINES - PSEI	-150.98	7,014.44
EGYPT - EGX 30	+222.21	31,267.47			
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+375.48	92,567.63			

# Business

Within 'NBKConnect' program activities

## NBK hosts workshop on 'FinTech' for College of Business Administration students

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: As part of the activities of the 'NBKConnect' program, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) organized a workshop for the College of Business Administration students on 'FinTech' and the role of advanced technologies in developing the banking business, underscoring its dedication to enhancing the capabilities of Kuwaiti youth in technological areas.

The workshop aims to highlight the innovations brought about by technology in the financial sector such as e-payments, data analytics, artificial intelligence and information security. It also seeks to familiarize students with the majors required by banks need in the future, especially with the rapid digital advancement, and the need for banks to keep pace with it to improve their service quality.

The workshop focuses on the mechanisms of digital banking systems, AI, Big Data, IT Security, Robotics, Programming, and Cybersecurity, as these majors are the future of the financial services industry, making them essential for students seeking to explore the future of the banking industry.

This workshop was attended by a number of College of Business Administration students with a passion for technology and digitization, who were provided with detailed information the majors relevant to the banking sector and the skills required to be developed to stand out as compelling candidates in the future work market.

Commenting on this, Gadeer Al-Kooheji, Head of Talent Acquisition- Group Human Resources at National Bank of Kuwait said: "This workshop represents an effective educational tool that help enhance students' capabilities and develop their practical skills to enable them face the challenges of the rapidly changing labor market."



Gadeer Al-Kooheji with the National Bank of Kuwait Team.

Al-Kooheji: The workshop helps students gain a deeper understanding of the banking business in light of cutting-edge technologies

NBK makes unwavering efforts to extend all means of support to students to enhance their skills and knowledge

"This workshop represented a unique opportunity for the College of Business Administration students to foster their creativity and critical thinking capabilities, explore their career options. It also provides them with the necessary knowledge and skills that help them understand the nature of the banking business in light of the disruptive technologies adopted in the financial sector," she noted.

Al-Kooheji emphasized that NBK makes unwavering efforts to extend all means of support to students to enhance their skills and knowledge to serve as a key source of talent for public and private sector organizations in the future, thus contributing to promoting a sustainable national human capital across all sectors.

It is worth mentioning that NBK is committed to attracting, training and upskilling high-caliber national talent and qualifying them to join the banking sector, in line with New Kuwait Vision 2035 which aims to promote Kuwaitization in the private sector. In addition, the bank has highest employee recruitment and retention rates, and the private sector employer of choice for Kuwaiti fresh graduates.

## Boursa Kuwait closes mixed amid economic uncertainties

Main market index rises 0.10%

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: Boursa Kuwait concluded Thursday's trading session with a mixed performance across its various indices, reflecting the complex interplay of local and global economic factors. The general index experienced a slight decline, closing at 7,183.70 points, down 8.47 points or 0.12 percent from the previous session.**

Trading activity remained robust, with a total of 386.7 million shares changing hands through 17,883 cash transactions. The total value of these trades amounted to KWD 72.2 million (approximately USD 220.2 million), indicating sustained investor interest despite the marginal overall decline.

Breaking down the performance of individual market segments, the main market index showed resilience, rising by 6.28 points or 0.10 percent to reach 6,534.07 points. This segment saw the trading of 272.3 million shares through 10,687 cash transactions, with a total value of KWD 34.9 million (USD 106.4 million).

In contrast, the premier market index experienced a slight downturn, dropping 12.78 points or 0.17 percent to close at 7,702.75 points. Activity in this segment involved 114.4 million shares traded through 7,196 transactions, valued at KWD 37.2 million (USD 113.4 million).

The Main 50 index, mirroring the main market's positive trend, rose by 6.80 points or 0.11 percent, reaching 6,444.15 points. This segment saw 220.9 million shares traded through 7,563 cash transactions, with a total worth of KWD 28.7 million.

Thursday's mixed performance comes on the heels of a significant surge in Gulf stock markets on Wednesday, following Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential elections. The regional markets experienced a collective increase in market capitalization of \$12.1 billion, with Boursa Kuwait contributing 253 million dinars (approximately \$825 million) to this growth. The Saudi Stock Exchange was the standout performer, recording an impressive gain of \$6.7 billion.

The global financial landscape showed varied responses to the US election outcome. The US dollar climbed to its highest level in a year, accompanied by a sharp increase in Treasury bond yields. These movements were driven by speculation that the incoming administration's policies would maintain high US interest rates.

Cryptocurrency markets also reacted strongly, with Bitcoin surging to a record high of \$75,389, representing an 8.6 percent increase.

US stock futures painted a bullish picture, with Dow Jones Industrial Average futures rising by 1,133 points (approximately 2.7 percent), S&P 500 futures climbing by 2.4 percent, and Nasdaq 100 futures increasing by 1.8 percent. This marked the first time since November 2022 that the Dow Jones Industrial Average futures had jumped more than 1,000 points in a single day.

The yield on 10-year Treasury bonds rose to around 4.43 percent, influenced by predictions that Trump's proposed tax cuts and spending plans would widen the budget deficit. These factors, combined with potential tariffs, are expected to contribute to renewed inflationary pressures.

In the commodities market, gold prices hit a three-week low, dropping 3.1 percent to \$2,657 per ounce in spot trading. Oil markets also felt the impact, with Brent crude falling to \$74 per barrel and West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude dropping below \$71 per barrel.

Currency markets saw significant movements as well, with the Iranian rial reaching a historic low, trading at 703,000 rials per US dollar.

## Kuwait oil price plunges to \$74.28 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti oil price fell down by 82 cents to USD 74.28 per barrel Wednesday, compared with USD 75.10 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said on Thursday.

Globally, Brent crude went down by 61 cents to USD 74.92 pb, and West Texas Intermediate crude fell by 30 cents to USD 71.69 pb.

### CEO honored with Personality of the Year Award

## KOTC wins Green Maritime Transport Award

DUBAI, Nov 7, (KUNA): Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) received the Green Maritime Transport Award for environmental protection at regional and international levels from the Dubai-based Maritime Standard (TMS).

The award was presented to KOTC's acting CEO Sheikh Khaled Ahmad Al-Malik Al-Sabah in a ceremony on Wednesday in Dubai. He was also honored with the Personality of the Year Award for his contributions.

This recognition highlights KOTC's success in efficiently managing its modern maritime fleet, which operates with advanced technology and high safety standards, supported by skilled national personnel.

Sheikh Khaled dedicated the award to all employees, emphasizing their vital role in serving the oil sector and enhancing Kuwait's presence in the international maritime industry.



KUNA photo Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) receiving the Green Maritime Transport Award.

### The Conversation

#### 'Inflation concerns intensify'

## 'Iran's currency was already tumbling & then news of Trump's victory broke'

By Nader Habibi

Brandeis University

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

As the world absorbed news of Donald Trump's comeback victory in the 2024 U.S. presidential race, concern in Iran turned to the impact of the election on its own economy amid escalating regional tensions.

Iran's currency, the rial, fell to an all-time low on Nov. 6, 2024 - trading at above 700,000 rials to the dollar.

But how are Trump's win and Iran's economic woes related?

The rial fell to a fresh record low as Donald Trump was claiming victory - trading above the symbolic marker of 700,000 rials to the dollar, according to traders in Tehran, just as results of the U.S. election were coming in.

But it is important to note that Iran's currency has been losing value steadily in recent months. This has mainly been because of high inflation in the country, which throughout 2024 has been above 30% on a year-to-year basis, and because the government has had to run large budget deficits. It has also been caused by the recent escalation of tensions - and a fresh round of missile exchanges - between Iran and Israel.

As a result of these concerns, Iranians have increasingly been converting most of their savings into U.S. dollars or gold. This, in turn, has led to a depreciation of the rial.

Yes, the Iranian economy was already in a perilous state due in large part to the ongoing impact of U.S.-led sanctions on Tehran and ongoing anxiety over the conflict in the Middle East. In fact, the rial hit an earlier low a few days before the election.

In addition, Iran's leaders have been directing more and more of the country's oil revenue toward defense. They recently announced a planned increase in military expenditure of 200%, and some members of the ruling elite have called for setting the defense budget as a fixed share of gross domestic product to ensure adequate funding for military priorities. This proposal has added to the private sector's anxiety about the budget deficit for other government expenditures, which can result in more inflation.

Geopolitical experts expect that a second Trump administration might lead to a shift in U.S. policy on Iran and a return to a "maximum pressure" strategy that included punishing economic sanctions and threats of military action to force Iran to abandon its nuclear ambitions.

While the Biden administration certainly kept the sanctions placed on Iran under Trump - and have even added to them - Washington also engaged in back-channel negotiations with Tehran, which pointed to a diplomatic solution and potentially an agreement that would, one day, ease those sanctions.

And even though the sanctions have remained in place,

the Biden administration partially rolled back the enforcement of some of those prohibitions as an incentive for Iran during these back-channel negotiations. Washington, for example, has not prevented Iran's ongoing indirect oil exports to China in recent years.

Biden's looser approach to sanction enforcement saw Iranian oil exports increase to 2 million barrels a day, with most of that oil going to China. Under Trump's "maximum pressure" policy, Iranian oil exports were down to 100,000-150,000 barrels a day.

Iranians are divided on how the second Trump presidency will affect the Iran-Israel conflict. Some are worried that it will relax any pressure the U.S. has on Israel in trying to contain the current conflict in the Middle East.

The concern is that without this pressure from Washington, Israel will carry out more military operation in Iran. In addition, many Iranians are worried that Trump may give Israel a green light to attack oil assets and Iranian infrastructure - and that would be even more costly to Iran's economy.

These fears were heightened by the fact that Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, was among the first world leaders to congratulate Trump, noting that the victory represented "a powerful commitment to the great alliance between Israel and America."

Many Iranians are also worried that Trump's victory may worsen relations between Washington and Tehran. While the U.S. and Iran don't have direct diplomatic ties, it has been widely reported that under Biden there have been indirect and secret negotiations. The concern is that Trump, who is perceived in Tehran as more unpredictable than Biden, will not pursue the same strategy.

At the same time, some Iranians believe that Trump might try to de-escalate the war in Gaza, and this will also reduce tensions between Iran and Israel. This group points to Trump's repeated expressions of interest in ending both the Ukraine war and the Middle East conflict. If the sentiments of this group of Iranians prevail, the anxiety that has triggered a new decline in the rial's value might be temporary.

Iran has downplayed any impact of the U.S. election on its economy. Fatemeh Mohajerani, a spokeswoman for Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's administration, said on Nov. 6, 2024, that the election of a U.S. president "doesn't have anything specifically to do with us," adding that the "major policies of America and the Islamic Republic are fixed, and they won't heavily change by people replacing others."

But this appears to be posturing by Iran's leaders. They want to minimize the impact that Trump's victory may have on their economy and are trying to reassure the domestic market.

But this might not prove effective - and we might see even more devaluation of Iranian currency in the coming weeks. (AP)

#### Earnings per share fall by 33%

## North Az-Zour reports 29.6% profit decline amid turbine maintenance

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The North Az-Zour First Power and Water Company announced a profit of 6.8 million dinars (approximately \$20.7 million) for the first nine months of 2024, a 29.6 percent decline compared to 9.8 million dinars (about \$29.8 million) in the same period of 2023, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a disclosure to the Boursa Kuwait, the company reported earnings per share of 6 fils, down 33.33 percent from 9 fils per share in 2023.

The decline in financial results was primarily attributed to a decrease in operating revenues due to maintenance work on one of the station's gas turbines.

Established in 2013 and listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange in 2020, North Az-Zour First Power and Water Company's capital is 110 million dinars (approximately \$3.35 billion). The company's primary objectives include the construction, operation, management and maintenance of the North Az-Zour Station (first phase).

## ADNOC Drilling expands Middle East operations, focuses on regional growth

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: ADNOC Drilling, a company listed on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange, is looking to acquire companies operating in Kuwait and Oman as part of its strategy to expand its activities beyond the UAE, reports

Al-Seyassah daily.

According to Yousef Salem, the company's Chief Financial Officer, ADNOC Drilling is focused on expanding within the Middle East, with no plans for deals outside the region.

In a recent disclosure to the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange, ADNOC Drilling and its joint venture partner Alpha Dhabi announced the completion of an acquisition of an additional 42.206 percent stake in Gordon Technologies

through their joint venture, Enersol RSC LTD.

This acquisition is valued at \$270 million, bringing Enersol's total ownership in Gordon Technologies to 64.2 percent.



Action in response to a steady slowdown of the inflation pressures

# Fed set to cut interest rates again as post-election uncertainty grows

WASHINGTON, Nov 7, (AP): Federal Reserve officials were poised Thursday to reduce their key interest rate for a second straight time, responding to a steady slowdown of the inflation pressures that exasperated many Americans and contributed to Donald Trump's presidential election victory.

Yet the Fed's future moves are now more uncertain in the aftermath of the election, given that Trump's economic proposals have been widely flagged as potentially inflationary. His election has also raised the specter of meddling by the White House in the Fed's policy decisions, with Trump having proclaimed that as president he should have a voice in the central bank's interest rate decisions.

The Fed has long guarded its status as an independent institution able to make difficult decisions about borrowing rates, free from political interference. Yet during his previous term in the White House, Trump publicly attacked Chair Jerome Powell after the Fed raised rates to fight inflation, and he may do so again.

The economy is also clouding the picture by flashing conflicting signals, with growth solid but hiring weakening. Even so, consumer spending has been

healthy, fueling concerns that there is no need for the Fed to reduce borrowing costs and that doing so might overstimulate the economy and even re-accelerate inflation.

Financial markets are throwing yet another curve at the Fed: Investors have sharply pushed up Treasury yields since the central bank cut rates in September. The result has been higher borrowing costs throughout the economy, thereby diminishing the benefit to consumers of the Fed's half-point cut in its benchmark rate, which it announced after its September meeting.

The average U.S. 30-year mortgage rate, for example, fell over the summer as the Fed signaled that it would cut rates, only to rise again once the central bank actually cut its benchmark rate.

Broader interest rates have risen because investors are anticipating higher inflation, larger federal budget deficits, and faster economic growth under a President-elect Trump. In what Wall Street has called the "Trump trade," stock prices also soared Wednesday and the value of bitcoin and the dollar surged. Trump had talked up cryptocurrencies during his campaign, and the

dollar would likely benefit from higher rates and from the across-the-board increase in tariffs that Trump has proposed.

Trump's plan to impose at least a 10% tariff on all imports, as well as significantly higher taxes on Chinese goods, and to carry out a mass deportation of undocumented immigrants would almost certainly boost inflation. This would make it less likely that the Fed would continue cutting its key rate. Annual inflation as measured by the central bank's preferred gauge fell to 2.1% in September.

Economists at Goldman Sachs estimate that Trump's proposed 10% tariff, as well as his proposed taxes on Chinese imports and autos from Mexico, could send inflation back up to about 2.75% to 3% by mid-2026.

Such an increase would likely upend the future rate cuts the Fed had signaled in September. At that meeting, when the policymakers cut their key rate by an outsize half-point to about 4.9%, the officials said they envisioned two quarter-point rate reductions later in the year - one on Thursday and one in December - and then four additional rate cuts in 2025.

But investors now foresee rate cuts next year as increasingly unlikely. The perceived probability of a rate cut at the Fed's meeting in January of next year fell Wednesday to just 28%, down from 41% on Tuesday and from nearly 70% a month ago, according to futures prices monitored by CME FedWatch.

The jump in borrowing costs for things like mortgages and car loans, even as the Fed is reducing its benchmark rate, has set up a potential challenge for the central bank: Its effort to support the economy by lowering borrowing costs may not bear fruit if investors are acting to boost longer-term borrowing rates.

The economy grew at a solid annual rate of just below 3% over the past six months, while consumer spending - fueled by higher-income shoppers - rose strongly in the July-September quarter.

At the same time, companies have reined in hiring, with many people who are out of work struggling to find jobs. Powell has suggested that the Fed is reducing its key rate in part to bolster the job market. But if economic growth continues at a healthy clip and inflation climbs again, the central bank will come under growing pressure to slow or stop its interest rate cuts.



Menzies Aviation worker at post.

## Menzies Aviation extends MACH system roll-out to 28 new stations

DUBAI, Nov 7: Menzies Aviation, the leading service partner to the world's airports and airlines, has announced an extension of its partnership with Wipro to roll-out the Menzies Aviation Cargo Handling (MACH) cargo management system to 28 new stations in 2025.

In 2024, working with leading technology services and consulting company Wipro, Menzies' pioneering, end-to-end MACH system has been deployed at 24 locations across four continents, with a further 13 airports on track to go live over the coming months.

Since its launch in November 2023, the new cargo management system has been rolled-out at major locations including Auckland Airport (AKL), Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) and O. R. Tambo International Airport (JNB) and has managed more than 150,000 tonnes. It will ultimately be used by more than 3,000 end users, with over 600 Menzies employees now trained to use the system safely and effectively.

The introduction of MACH repre-

sents a transition to a truly innovative end-to-end cargo management system, revolutionising operations across the Menzies network. Its cloud-based architecture ensures accessibility from anywhere, anytime and on any device, providing real-time insights and data.

Operating from a 'single source of truth,' MACH seamlessly integrates with other systems helping to simplify and standardise all processes. An integral part of the cargo management ecosystem, it improves data accuracy as all electronic information is populated automatically across the system.

Rory Fidler, SVP Cargo Technology, Menzies Aviation, said: "We are very excited to confirm the second phase of the MACH roll-out, which will see the system implemented at an additional 28 locations across the world. The first phase of the programme will be completed over the coming months, which is testament to the successful offering, and sharing the multiple benefits of this pioneering and cutting-edge system to our airline customers across our global network."

# World shares gain after Trump's victory as focus turns to US Fed

HK's Hang Seng gains 2%

HONG KONG, Nov 7, (AP): Shares were mostly higher in Europe and Asia on Thursday after U.S. stocks stormed to records as investors wagered on what Donald Trump's return to the White House will mean for the economy and the world.

Markets also were turning their attention to the Federal Reserve's decision on interest rates, due later in the day.

In early European trading, Germany's DAX gained 0.8% to 19,196.73.

In Paris, the CAC 40 was nearly unchanged, at 7,368.10. Britain's FTSE 100 edged 0.2% higher to 8,182.27.

The futures for the S&P 500 and the Dow Jones Industrial Average were up 0.1%.

In Asia, Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 0.3% to 39,381.41, reflecting worries over the potential for a revival of trade tensions under a Trump administration.

"I think everybody's going to be worried about Trump's tariffs because that's one of the things in his playbook.

And so we'll have to see how things develop in the early stages of his presidency this time," said Neil Newman, head of strategy for Astris Advisory Japan.

South Korea's Kospi finished nearly flat, at 2,564.63. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 rose 0.3% to 8,226.30.

Chinese shares rallied after the government reported that exports jumped nearly 13% in October over a year earlier, the fastest pace in more than two years and far outpacing the 2.4% increase in September.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 2% to 20,953.34. The Shanghai Composite index was up 2.6% at 3,470.66.

Trump has promised to slap blanket 60% tariffs on all Chinese imports, raising them still more if Beijing makes a move to invade the self-governing island of Taiwan.

Investors are adding to bets built earlier on what the higher tariffs, lower tax rates and lighter regulation that Trump favors will mean.

Higher tariffs on imports from China would add to the burdens Beijing is facing as it struggles to revive slowing growth in the world's second-largest economy.

But the impact may be less



Members of media stand near the screens showing the Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI), left, the foreign exchange rate between U.S. dollar and South Korean won and the Korean Securities Dealers Automated Quotations (KOSDAQ) at a foreign exchange dealing room in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024. (AP)

drastic than feared, Zichun Huang of Capital Economics said in a report.

"We expect shipments to stay strong in the coming months -- any drag from potential Trump tariffs may not materialize until the second half of next year," Huang said.

Still, higher tariffs on imports from China, Mexico and other countries would raise the risk of trade wars and other disruptions to the global economy.

Trump's win raised expectations that Beijing may ramp up its spending and other stimulus to counter such trends.

The Standing Committee of China's legislature is meeting this week and is expected to announce further measures by Friday.

Francis Lun, CEO of Geo Securities, said domestic issues were a greater concern than tariffs. "People want the government to spend some money to boost the economy, instead of looking outward," he said.

On Wednesday, the U.S. stock market, Elon Musk's Tesla, banks and bitcoin all stormed higher, as investors made bets on what Donald Trump's return to the White House will mean for the economy and the world.

Among the losers the market sees: the renewable-energy industry and potentially anyone worried about higher inflation.

The S&P 500 rallied 2.5% to 5,929.04 for its best day in nearly two years. The Dow Jones Industrial Average surged 3.6% to 43,729.93, while the Nasdaq composite jumped 3% to 18,983.47. All three indexes topped records they had set in recent weeks.

The impact of Trump's second term will likely depend on whether his fellow Republicans win control of Congress, and that's not yet clear.

Investors see Trump's policies potentially leading to stronger economic growth. That helps push prices down and yields up for Treasuries.

Tax cuts under Trump could further swell the U.S. government's deficit, increasing borrowing and forcing yields even higher.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury jumped to 4.43% from 4.29% late Tuesday, which is a major move for the bond market. It's up substantially from August, when it was below 4%.

Investors expect the incoming president's policies, particularly higher tariffs, to fan inflation and add costs to U.S. household

budgets. Sharp cutbacks in immigration could also leave businesses shorthanded, forcing companies to raise wages for workers faster and putting more upward pressure on prices.

Much of Wall Street's run to records this year was built on expectations for cuts to interest rates by the Federal Reserve, as inflation has headed back down to its 2% target. Easier interest rates help boost the economy, but they can also give inflation more fuel.

The expectation is that the Fed will cut its main rate Thursday, but traders are already paring back forecasts for how many cuts it might make next year.

In other dealings early Thursday, the U.S. dollar weakened against the Japanese yen, slipping to 154.05 yen from 154.62 yen. The euro rose to \$1.0757 from \$1.0730.

U.S. benchmark crude oil shed 8 cents to \$71.61 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, was up 2 cents at \$74.94.

The price of bitcoin slipped to \$74,789.38 after hitting an all-time high above \$76,480 on Wednesday, according to CoinDesk. Trump has pledged to make the country "the crypto capital of the planet" and create a "strategic reserve" of bitcoin.

## Global cos capitalize on China's smart, green transformation

SHANGHAI, Nov 7, (Xinhua): Global investors are eyeing fresh opportunities in China as the world's second-largest economy accelerates its intelligent, green transformation.

With the seventh China International Import Expo (CIIE) set to open on Tuesday, multiple industry leaders from across the world are gearing up to showcase their latest innovations and technologies, aiming to tap into China's vast market potential.

### Tapping smarter manufacturing

Aptiv, a multinational developing automobile parts, made its debut at the seventh CIIE, exhibiting software and hardware products featuring intelligence and electrification.

"The CIIE provides an excellent platform for enterprises from all over the world to exchange ideas and cooperate," said Simon Yang, president of Aptiv for China and the Asia Pacific region. He noted that Aptiv hopes to make full use of the CIIE to showcase its innovative solutions.

The company is committed to its long-term development strategy of "In China for China," and will continue to increase its investment in the Chinese market while expanding business cooperation with Chinese original equipment manufacturers.

Aptiv is one of a number of multinationals gathering in Shanghai to test the pulse of China's smart manufacturing market, which plays an important part in the country's pursuit of high-quality development.

Swedish technology company Hexagon has brought its new solution to help traditional manufacturers become more digital-savvy to this year's CIIE, including cloud platforms for industrial software and smart quality-testing systems.

"The company is ready to ride the wave of the country's pursuit of new quality productive forces, which are high-tech, highly efficient and of a high quality," said Qin Lei, marketing business partner at Hexagon Manufacturing Intelligence (Qingdao) Co., Ltd. Merck Group, Germany's lead-

ing tech company, is showcasing its innovative achievements in the new materials section of the CIIE, which is new to the annual event.

China's great market potential, improving business environment and rich talent pool have reinforced Merck's confidence in its long-term investment in the country, said Marc Horn, executive vice president of Merck and president of Merck China.

### Embracing a greener future

Entering its seventh year, the CIIE has retained its "New Era, Shared Future" theme, which holds special meaning for Christian Bruch, president and CEO of Siemens Energy AG.

"I strongly agree with the theme, as it envisions a sustainable and more decarbonized future that requires collaborative efforts from governments, enterprises, customers, partners and the entire supply chains," Bruch said.

In his view, China's dedication to building a modern energy system creates "extensive market opportunities" for global energy technology companies, including Siemens Energy.

"Together with Chinese customers and partners, we have developed many energy infrastructure projects, continuously invested and expanded our manufacturing capacity in China, in order to meet the growing market demand in China and across the world," he said.

Pledging to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060, China has been steadfast in accelerating its energy transition. Over the past decade, the share of clean energy in the country's total energy use has increased 10.9 percentage points, according to the National Energy Administration.

Dedicated to promoting clean energy in China, Siemens Energy has established 15 manufacturing facilities across the country. It has become an important partner in the country's energy transition, Bruch said.

At this year's CIIE, the company is poised to showcase its cutting-edge decarbonization technologies for the energy sector. Many of its exhibits will be presented for the first time in Asia or China.

## 'Harness Africa's renewable energy potential'

CAPE TOWN, Nov 7, (Xinhua): South Africa's Minister of Electricity and Energy Kgosientso Ramokgopa has called on African countries to harness the potential of Africa's rich renewable energy resources to forge an inclusive and sustainable path for the continent.

He made the call when delivering a keynote address at the opening ceremony of the 2024 African Energy Week, held in Cape Town from Nov. 4 to 8 under the theme "Invest in African Energies: Enabling Growth through an Enabling

Environment."

"Africa's potential for renewable energy is unmatched globally," Ramokgopa stressed in his address. "The continent is rich in diverse renewable resources, each offering a path toward sustainable growth that is less dependent on fossil fuels and more aligned with global climate commitments."

He further noted that Africa's renewable resources offer a solution to energy poverty and a strategic advantage in supporting local industries and value-added

activities.

"If coupled with the right policies, the transition to renewable energy can drive African industrialization by enhancing the beneficiation of critical minerals essential for both the renewable and high-tech industries globally," Ramokgopa said.

"This path also strengthens Africa's geopolitical positioning in the global clean energy transition, making the continent not just a provider of raw materials but a central player in the entire value chain," he added.

The minister also promised that South Africa will use its presidency of the Group of 20 (G20) in 2025 to champion Africa's energy priorities on a global platform.

"In leading the G20, South Africa will focus on strategic interventions to address Africa's unique energy needs and support a resilient, inclusive future," said Ramokgopa, adding that these interventions will position Africa as an active participant in the global energy transition while addressing the continent's development needs.





Photos of the workshop

## Ambassador Chong-suk Park celebrates success of workshop

### Sejong Culture Academy hosts Korean calligraphy workshop

By Paulo Francisco X. Fernandes  
Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The Embassy of the Republic of Korea, the Kuwait University (KU) and the King Sejong Institute Foundation (KSIF) organized the 'Sejong Culture Academy - Korean Language Calligraphy Class' in Kuwait on November 4 and 5 - on Nov 4 at the Kuwait University and at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea premises on Nov 5.

This two-day significant cultural event was designed to provide the people of Kuwait with an opportunity to explore Korean culture through professional courses offered by the King Sejong Institute Foundation.

A distinguished Korean calligraphy expert, Min-yong Park, was invited from Korea to lead the sessions, offering participants a hands-on experience in the art of Korean calligraphy.

The event attracted a diverse audience, including university students and members of the general public, all with a shared interest in Korean language and culture.

In his congratulatory speech, HE Chong-suk Park, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Kuwait, celebrated the event's success and underscored the role of calligraphy in bridging the cultural gap between the Arabic and Korean languages.

He expressed his hope that the participants would develop a deeper appreciation for Korean culture and language through the calligraphy

course, which highlighted the importance of cultural exchange.

The participants, ranging in age from their teens to their 50s, shared their enthusiasm for the event, expressing how much they valued the unique opportunity to engage with Korean language and culture.

Many of those who attended the event, are avid fans of Korean culture, and found the calligraphy course not only educational but also enlightening, offering them a new perspective on the Korean language.

They appreciated the careful planning and collaboration between the Korean Embassy, KU, and KSIF in making the event a memorable and impactful experience.

## Bank highlights key tips to combat phishing and scams

### NBK delivers session highlighting latest forms of 'fraud' to Kuwait Technical College students

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: As part of its ongoing efforts to promote financial and banking awareness among all sectors under the umbrella of the "Let's Be Aware" campaign introduced by the Central Bank of Kuwait, in cooperation with Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) delivered a session highlighting the latest forms of fraud to the students of Kuwait Technical College (K-Tech).

During the session, NBK Social Media team presented highlighted the latest forms of fraud that students should be aware about, emphasizing the importance of customer online safety and the key steps to protect against scams. The team also advised students to be cautious when dealing with suspicious e-mails, as e-mail phishing is typically made using the logos of well-known organizations such as banks, telecom or big companies, so that the user cannot distinguish between real and fake e-mails.

The team also shared key tips to follow when dealing with e-mails, including always verifying that the e-mail sender is from a legitimate organization, as well as checking the grammar and spelling in the e-mail, as many phishing e-mails are poorly

- NBK's team always strives to introduce new innovative methods to enhance the "Let's Be Aware" campaign's content and increase public awareness
- NBK has been initiative-taking insupporting strategic campaigns that benefit the economy and society
- Combating fraud and educating customers are instrumental in NBK's strategy

written, which, of course, would not be sent by an official, well-known organization. They also advised customers to beware of links included in e-mails, by always checking the source before clicking these links.

Students were also advised to always question unexpected emails, messages, or phone calls before sharing personal or financial information, as scammers typically use AI in communications to trick target victims into believing they are from apparently local numbers.

They also stressed that the bank will never ask customers for personal information through phone calls, warning them of responding to these calls which are scams to obtain their banking or sensitive information to steal their money.

The team also called to strengthen security with Two-Factor Authentication (2FA) to add an additional safeguard to online accounts, as well as to always check bank accounts for any suspicious transactions or activities.

In addition, they urged students to stay updated on fraud tactics and keep learning about the evolving methods scammers use to trick people and understand how to avoid them by following the tips shared on the bank's digital channels, as especially in view of the emerging deepfake scams, NBK intensifies awareness by sharing educational content across its social media platforms, as well as reposting CBK's communications.

NBK's team always seeks to promote financial and banking awareness among all sectors of society, including school and university students as well as seniors. It is also

keen to introduce new innovative ways to enhance the content of the "Let's Be Aware" campaign and help educate the public on how to protect their banking accounts and information."

Such visits give the opportunity to help students understand the types of fraud and the new schemes used by scammers to trick victims. These sessions also help students make safer financial decisions in the future, especially in view of the fast-paced digital advancement and banks' reliance on cutting-edge technologies and artificial intelligence, making customers rely on smartphones for the majority of their banking transactions.

As one of the leading financial institutions across the region, NBK firmly observes its responsibilities towards the communities it serves. It has also been initiative-taking in providing all necessary support to important and strategic campaigns, which serve the interests of the national economy and society at large. In this context, the bank's efforts to combat fraud and educate customers are instrumental in its strategy.

NBK employs its strong customer communication capabilities as well as all its sector-leading digital channels to maximize the exposure of the "Let's Be Aware" campaign's objectives among the public.

Launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait, in cooperation with Kuwaiti banks and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), the "Let's Be Aware" campaign is the largest across the GCC region focusing on raising banking and financial awareness among banks' customers. The campaign covers a variety of crucial topics including: anti-fraud tips, maximizing benefit from banking services, promoting savings and investment culture, as well as other related topics.

It is worth mentioning that NBK is a key promoter and partner in all CBK's campaigns and initiatives to increase financial and banking awareness among all sectors. As the leading financial institution in Kuwait, the bank frequently organizes various activities to raise awareness on all topics related to the banking sector.



K-Tech session photo

## 20 winners of KD 1,500 in latest draw

### Kuwait Finance House reveals the winners of 'Al-Rabeh' draw

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of the AlRabeh draw with 20 customers winning cash prizes worth KD1,500 each for the 42nd and 43rd weeks of 2024.

The winners of KD 1,500 are: Khaled Al-Najdi, Ali Al-Rasheedi, Khalifah Al-Mutairi, Mashael Al-Baqer, Fahad Al-Rasheedi, Mohammad Ibrahim, Ali Mohammad, Maha Al-Turki, Meshal Al-Azmi, Fahad Al-Zamil, Amani Abu Qammar, Muneerah Al-Otaibi, Mona Al-Tabtabaie, Badryah Al-Azmi, Hanadi Al-Kandari, Mohammad Radwan, Latifa Al-Tawwash, Aisha Al-Masoud, Tarek Abdelalim, Reem Al-Dari.

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

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

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

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



The campaign visual

their personal accounts. Salary transfer is a prerequisite for customers to enter the draw provided that the transfer of salary to Al-Rabeh account is constant.

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

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

## Draw offers over 400 prizes

### Kuwait Finance House declares Al-Hassad winner of KD 100,000

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced Saad Al-Wahaib as the Monthly winner of Al-Hassad draw, winning KD 100,000 for the month of October 2024.

Al-Hassad account is based on the Wakala investment principle. The Bank invests the entire account balance at an expected profit rate agreed upon in advance with the customer.

Al-Hassad offers weekly, monthly, and quarterly draws, a total of more than 400 prizes. The draws offer KD 1000 weekly, for 10 winners, KD 100,000 monthly and KD 250,000 quarterly in

addition to prizes between 100 to 250 thousand Kuwaiti Dinars worth of value, as well as the year-end profits distribution. The account meets the aspirations of a wide segment of customers who wish to invest their funds through a multi-featured banking account.

To facilitate customer access and provide opportunity to a wider segment of clientele, Al-Hassad account can be opened in KFH branches, KF-Honline, and ATMs.

Customers must hold the balance for a period of 15 days for an opportunity to enter the draws. The customer will have one chance for every KD 50. If the balance is held for 90 days before the draw date, the customer will get two chances for every KD 50, and three chances for every KD 50 if the balance is held for a period of 180 days prior to the draw date. The customer will have a maximum of 30 thousand chances in one draw. Accordingly, KFH will deposit the value of prizes in the winning customers' accounts.

Al-Hassad represents an excellent addition to KFH's comprehensive suite of financial products, offering a unique opportunity for customers in which the deposited amounts are invested in Al-Hassad based on the Wakala principle.



KFH Al-Hassad draw

## Next Alfouz draw set for Nov 11

### ABK reveals winner of KD 10,000 Alfouz draw

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is excited to announce Abdelrahman Abdallah Alsalhi as the winner of the Alfouz KD 10,000 weekly draw on Monday, 4 November 2024. The draw took place in the presence of a Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative, ensuring transparency.

From the highly coveted mega annual draw of a KD 5,000 monthly salary for 10 years to its KD 10,000 weekly prize, the account has attracted significant attention in the Kuwaiti market. Based on the account's great success, ABK decided to go above and beyond to reward customer loyalty.

With a KD 100,000 quarterly draw, in addition to an exciting KD 20,000 monthly draw, the Alfouz account continues to surpass expectations and deliver even more customer satisfaction.

To top it off, ABK has simplified the ability to open the account and win! Customers can enter the draws and get extra entry chances for every KD 10 deposited. The more you save, the higher your chance to be the next Alfouz winner!

ABK encourages everyone to open an Alfouz draw account or increase their balance to participate in the upcoming draw, which is scheduled to take place on Monday, November 11, 2024.

Open an Alfouz account today and enjoy increased opportunities to win the lifestyle you've been waiting for!

To learn more about the Alfouz account and its range of exciting draws and prizes, please follow ABK's Instagram account @abk\_kuwait, visit eahlh.com, contact Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 or visit one of the Bank's branches across Kuwait.



ABK's Alfouz account



## Nykiya Adams shines in coming-of-age drama

# Arnold's 'Bird,' a gritty fairy tale doesn't take flight

LOS ANGELES, Nov 7, (AP): "Is it too real for ya?" blares in the background of Andrea Arnold's latest film, "Bird," a 12-year-old Bailey (Nykiya Adams) rides with her shirtless, tattoo-covered dad, Bug (Barry Keoghan), on his electric scooter past scenes of poverty in working-class Kent.

The song's question - courtesy of the Irish post-punk band Fontaines D.C. - is an acute one for "Bird." Arnold's films ("American Honey," "Fish Tank") are rigorous in their gritty naturalism. Her fiction films - this is her first in eight years - tend toward bleak, hand-held verité in rough-and-tumble real-world locations. Her last film, "Cow," documented a mother cow separated from her calf on a dairy farm.

Arnold specializes in capturing souls, human and otherwise, in soulless environments. A dream of something more is tantalizing just out of reach. In "American Honey," peace comes to Star (Sasha Lane) only when she submerges underwater.

In "Bird," though, this sense of otherworldly possibility is made flesh, or at least feathery. After a confusing night, Bailey awakens in a field where she encounters a strange figure in a skirt (Franz Rogowski) who arrives, like Mary Poppins, with a gust of wind. His name, he says, is Bird. He has a soft sweet-

ness that doesn't otherwise exist in Bailey's hardscrabble and chaotic life.

She's skeptical of him at first, but he keeps lurking about, hovering gull-like on rooftops. He cranes his neck now and again like he's watching out for Bailey. And he does watch out for her, helping Bailey through a hard coming of age: the abusive boyfriend (James Nelson-Joyce) of her mother (Jasmine Jobson); her half brother (Jason Buda) slipping into vigilante violence; her father marrying a new girlfriend.

The introduction of surrealism has the ironic effect of breaking the spell that has marked Arnold's best films. "Bird," which opens in theaters Friday, is, like the writer-director's vivid previous work, a movie only she could make. Arnold has described it as the hardest thing she's ever created, and it's easy to applaud her for grasping at something in "Bird" that ultimately is just out of reach.

A resolutely realistic filmmaker turning to magical realism has the uncomfortable effect of making the whole movie, not just the Rogowski bits, feel inauthentic. Instead of being "too real for ya," "Bird," with its in-your-face poverty and narrative extremes, never feels particularly real at all.

The most incongruous parts of "Bird," though, might not

be the mysterious avian friend. (Rogowski, a compelling performer, only ever feels half in the movie, as if "Bird" can't quite commit to him being there, either.) Keoghan is a reliably arresting actor who here feels out of place. He doesn't seem even vaguely fatherly, and while that might be part of the point, too many other things about Bug feel more performative than genuine.

There's his scheme to use hallucinogenic slime from a toad to pay for his wedding, for starters. Add in some karaoke scenes and the sensation creeps in that "Bird" is being less compelled by its own story than it is by a pursuit of Arnold's previous style.

"Bird" may go down as a rare miss for Arnold but you can still see the keenness of her eye and the nimbleness of her camera, with her regular cinematographer Robbie Ryan. And that's true never so much as when the camera is on Adams, a talent, whose melancholy eyes say more than all the theatrics around her.

"Bird," a Mubi release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "language throughout, some violent content and drug material." Running time: 118 minutes. Two stars out of four.



This image released by Mubi shows Nykiya Adams in a scene from 'Bird.' (AP)

## Film

### Movie combines philosophy and bloodshed

# 'Heretic' is fascinating mix of gore, shifty Grant

LOS ANGELES, Nov 7, (AP): "Heretic" opens with an unusual table setter: Two young missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are discussing contraceptives and why some are labeled as different even though they're all pretty much the same. "What else do we believe because of marketing?" one asks the other.

That line will echo through the movie, a stimulating discussion of religion that emerges from a horror movie wrapper. Despite a second-half slide and feeling unbalanced, this is the rare movie that combines lots of squirting blood and elevated discussion of the ancient Egyptian god Horus.

Our two church members - played fiercely by Sophie Thatcher and Chloe East - are wandering around trying to convert souls when they knock on the door of a sweet-looking cottage. Its owner, Mr. Reed, offers a hearty "Good afternoon!" He welcomes them in, brings them drinks and promises a blueberry pie. He's also interested in learning more about the church. So far, so good.

Mr. Reed is, of course, if you've seen the poster, the baddie and he's played by Hugh Grant, who doesn't go the snarling, dead-eyed Hannibal Lecter route in "Heretic." Grant is the slightly bumbling, bashful and self-mocking character we fell in love with in "Four Weddings and a Funeral," but with a smear of menace. He gradually reveals that he actually knows quite a bit about the Mormon religion - and all religions.

"It's good to be religious," he says jauntily and promises his wife will join them soon, a requirement for the church. Homey touches in his home include a framed "Bless This Mess" needlepoint on a wall, but there are also oddities, like his lights are on a timer and there's metal in the walls and ceilings.

## sfsafsafas

Writer-directors Scott Beck and Bryan Wood - who also combined on "A Quiet Place" - have remarkably set us up for an unexpected theological debate here. Mr. Reed is not unlike an earnest professor of comparative religion set against two naive missionaries armed with talking points who are hiding their own doubts.

Mr. Reed knows exactly where the weak points are and thrusts in the philosophical knife. "How do you feel about awkward questions?" he asks before tackling the church's stance of polygamy. "Yeah, it's sketch, for sure," East's Sister Paxton finally admits. Soon the discussion turns on which religions are marketed better. Mr. Reed is, after all, facing a pair of walking and talking advertisements for Mormonism.

So beautifully constructed and acted in the first half is "Heretic" that you won't really notice when it turns into a horror movie. You might be a step ahead of the missionaries, but not by much. Mr. Reed alternates between creepy and funny, well versed in Spider-Man and Voltaire, Radiohead and the Hollies, Wendy's and Taco Bell. Grant has gloriously weaponized his natural charm.

Mr. Reed has his own grand theory about religion and you will learn it. And he may or may not have some creepy stuff in his basement. "It's all terrifying. It is scary. I'm scared," he says adorably, but he's referring to organized religions. You'll find him utterly terrifying, a fanatical heretic in sheep's clothing who can cutely mimic Jar Jar Binks from the Star Wars universe.

Beck and Wood take this fascinating premise as far as it can go before it becomes an airless stage play. By the halfway point, the audience who came for the horror - not the lectures on religious marketing - are baying for blood, and blood they will get. The plot by the end is a murky, muddled and disturbing mess, a combination of too many ideas and no clear ending.

Grant, with his comfy cardigan and candles, is the movie's draw, but there's great work by Thatcher and East, who are trying to not act scared even when



This image released by A24 shows Sophie Thatcher in a scene from 'Heretic.' (AP)



Hugh Grant in a scene from 'Heretic.' (AP)



Chloe East in a scene from 'Heretic.' (AP)

they're terrified. And they're no mere ingenue targets - they bite back with worthy criticism of Mr. Reed's beliefs through shaking teeth.

Producers have added a little market-

ing manipulation with "Heretic," adding to some screenings the scent of blueberry pie along with the gore. Don't be distracted. Keep your eyes on Hugh Grant and just, well,

pray.

"Heretic," an A24 release that opened in theaters Friday, is rated R for "some bloody violence." Running time: 110 minutes. Three stars out of four.

## Variety

**NEW YORK:** Rapper Tekashi 6ix9ine struck a deal to end his current jail stint, agreeing to serve a month behind bars for violating the terms of his release after a felony conviction, prosecutors said Wednesday.

The deal with federal prosecutors was described in a letter partially endorsed by a Manhattan federal judge. It calls for the entertainer to be sentenced to a month in jail, followed by a month of home incarceration, a month of home detention and a month of curfew. He would also be subject to electronic monitoring.

Judge Paul A. Engelmayer said he will sentence the performer whose real name is Daniel Hernandez immediately after he admits to the violations at a Nov. 12 hearing. He said he will require each side to explain why a one-month jail sentence followed by three months of home incarceration, detention or curfew are sufficient for repeated violations of probation.

The terms of the deal also call for Tekashi 6ix9ine to submit to supervision from the court's Probation Department for another year. (AP)



**NANNING:** More than 20 events, including concerts by renowned symphony orchestras from China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand and other ASEAN countries, as well as high-level forums, will take place at a music festival that kicked off Wednesday evening in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

The 13th China-ASEAN (Nanning) Music Festival is taking place in the region's capital city of Nanning, in coordination with the 2nd China-ASEAN (Nanning) Culture Month, the theme country of which is Vietnam this year.

The festival, running from Nov. 6 to 11, aims to highlight the unique ethnic music and cultural characteristics of China and Southeast Asia, while promoting cultural exchange among China, ASEAN countries and the rest of the world, fostering mutual learning and understanding.

Since its inception in 2012, the music festival has grown from a small-scale event featuring performances and seminars into one of the key platforms for contemporary Chinese music creation and presentation of new musical works, according to Zha Danming, an official at Guangxi Art University. (Xinhua)



**NAIROBI:** An international theater festival opened Wednesday in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, providing a platform to showcase the power of performing arts.

The ninth Kenya International Theater Festival (KITFEST) 2024, which brought together theater professionals from across the globe, will also discuss challenges that the theater community has been facing over the years.

In his opening remarks, Kenyan Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs Musalia Mudavadi lauded Kenya's theater community for their resilience over the years.

He underlined the value of theater in promoting critical thinking and raising social awareness, adding that theater is more than just entertainment.

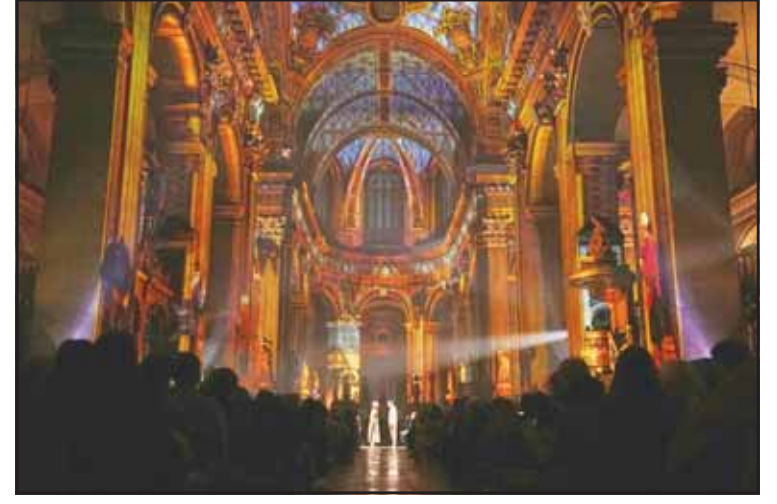
"Theater speaks to what is taking place in the country. It helps you think. It sharpens your ideas and makes you a more analytical citizen," said Mudavadi, who is also serving in an acting capacity as cabinet secretary for culture, gender, affirmative action, and heritage.

KITFEST is an annual event that showcases diverse theatrical traditions from around the world.

This year, 16 countries are participating in the 11-day festival, which includes workshops, master classes, and performances aimed at fostering cultural exchange and collaboration.

Mudavadi urged those in the creative industry to continue using theater to address important national issues. (Xinhua)





Actors and video projections are seen Thursday Oct. 31, 2024 at the Saint-Sulpice church in Paris. (AP)

### Cutting-edge technology and historical drama unite

## Immersive light show brings history to life at Paris church

PARIS, Nov 7. (AP) — As dusk falls over the City of Light, a new spectacle is illuminating Saint-Sulpice church, a monument whose interiors are even larger than Notre Dame's - and arguably just as breathtaking.

The cavernous walls of the neoclassical gem on Paris' Left Bank are coming alive with 360-degree video projections, sparkling cutting-edge technology and actors, all telling the story of the church and its place in French history.

Blending centuries of intrigue, revolution and family drama, the show reimagines the Saint-Germain district during the Fronde, the 17th-century civil war, and the lead-up to the French Revolution.

"Paris Cœur de Lumières" (Paris Chancel of Lights), which runs until Nov. 23, transforms the church's sprawling 6,000-square-meter (65,000-square-foot) interior into

a digital stage through advanced video mapping.

"From a technological standpoint, it's a laser scan of the entire building that allows us to reconstruct the space in three dimensions," director Damien Fontaine explained.

"We then 'unfold' it like origami ... and put it back into 3D to be projected as a single unified image. We have over 45 projectors, each covering a part of the vaults, a section of a pillar, or a piece of the nave. It's ... a mosaic of images to form one large picture."

Projections transform stone carvings into animated storytellers, while immersive soundscapes, paired with an original score, wrap the audience in a sensory experience.

The actors brought history to life. Over 350 performers and volunteers, clad in more than 500 historical cos-

tumes, move among the audience portraying local families and rivalries, threading personal narratives into the broader history.

Many of those who volunteered themselves marveled at learning about little known aspects of French history.

Anne Dubosc, a 65-year-old amateur actress, played Anne of Austria, mother of Sun King Louis XIV.

"She was a remarkable woman, very involved in politics and religion," Dubosc said. "I hadn't realized how important she was. If Louis XIV became the man he was, it was partly thanks to this woman, this mother who was like a tigress, doing everything to protect her son and teaching him to be a great statesman."

Performing in Saint-Sulpice, she added, was extraordinary: "It's exceptional. You lose track of what's happen-

ing, of where fiction ends and history begins."

Her historic costume shaped her performance - literally.

"I have a corset that squeezes me so tightly," she said. "You realize there's a very 18th-century way of holding yourself, of carrying your shoulders and neck, which gives a natural majesty. The costume really impacts how you carry your body, and that posture influences your mind, giving character to this woman of state."

The production underscored a growing trend in Paris of using light technology to show off the city's storied church interiors. A similar illuminations display took place at Saint-Eustache church until September, featuring video projections, lighting effects and spatialized electronic soundtrack.

### Variety

**TOKYO:** Japanese video game maker Nintendo's chief said Wednesday that Switch console sales were still going strong, while he promised its successor is coming.

"The momentum of the Nintendo Switch hasn't stopped," President Shuntaro Furukawa told reporters.

His comments come a day after



Furukawa

Nintendo reported a 60% drop in its fiscal first half profit, largely because of declining sales of the Switch, which now is in its eighth year, as well as Switch games.

Furukawa did not give details on the greatly anticipated upcoming machine but stressed all current game software will be playable on the next Switch.

People may want to keep playing the offerings from the rich lineup already on sale, as well as the games they own, he added, insisting the Kyoto-based maker behind the Super Mario franchise wasn't hemmed in by the idea of a console's "life cycle."

Nintendo is investing in both hardware and software development research, as well as movies, merchandising, amusement parks and music, Furukawa said.

Another Mario movie is set to be released in April 2026, a sequel to last year's hit film, and a Zelda movie is also being planned, although a date wasn't given. Movies boost game and machine sales, and the absence of a movie this year was one reason sales faltered, according to Nintendo. (AP)

**BEIJING:** To understand the present, one must first understand its origins.

With the inaugural World Conference of Classics set to open in Beijing on Thursday, scholars from around the globe are gathering to engage in a cross-cultural exploration of ancient wisdom, opening the door to deeper mutual understanding between China and the West.

Ancient Chinese and Greek philosophies share intriguing parallels. Plato extolled the pursuit of wisdom as a high form of love, an idea mirrored in Chinese philosophy. Zhuangzi marveled at the silent beauty of the natural world, remarking, "The heavens and earth have great beauty, yet say nothing." And Lao Tzu described "supreme goodness" as being like water -- flexible, nurturing and unassuming.

These ideas reveal a common view that true wisdom is the pursuit of harmony and humility -- qualities that transcend cultural boundaries. And this convergence of values extends to ethics and moral cultivation.

Aristotle's cardinal virtues -- prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance -- parallel Mencius' Four Sprouts: Ren (benevolence), Yi (righteousness), Li (propriety) and Zhi (wisdom). (Xinhua)

**THE HAGUE:** Dutch and French authorities conducted a search of Netflix's offices in Paris and Amsterdam on Tuesday as part of an investigation into alleged tax fraud, reported Dutch newspaper De Telegraaf.

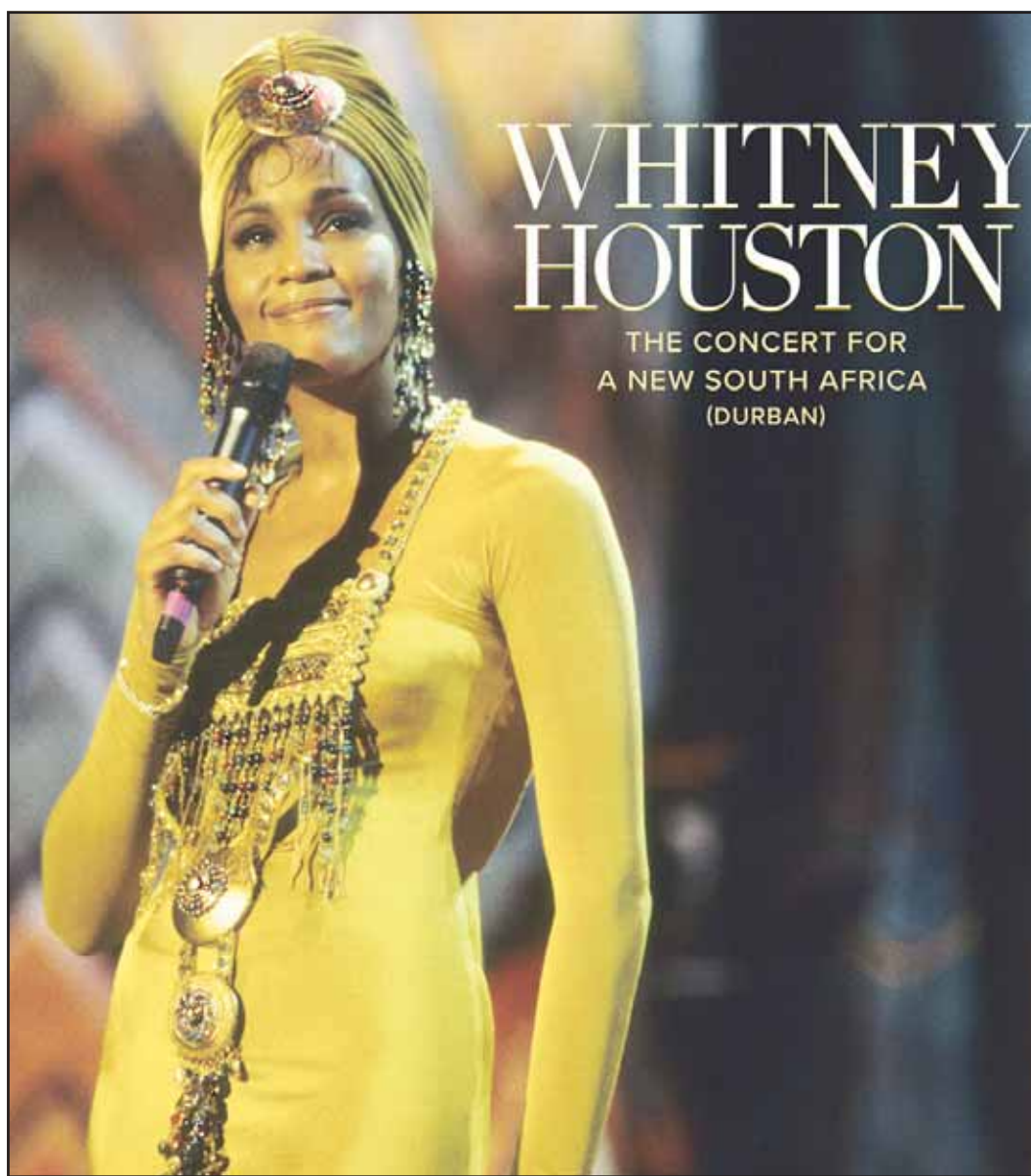
The investigation, initiated by French authorities in November 2022, has involved close cooperation between France and the Netherlands, according to De Telegraaf. Netflix's European headquarters is based in Amsterdam.

The streaming giant has been under investigation in France regarding its tax filings for the years 2019, 2020, and 2021. When news of this investigation surfaced last year, Netflix emphasized its commitment to complying with tax regulations in all countries where it operates.

French investigative media outlet La Lettre reported last year that Netflix's French operations were structured so that all subscribers were registered with a Dutch subsidiary until 2021, which allowed Netflix to reduce its tax obligations in France for 2019 and 2020.

Authorities in the Netherlands and France are now investigating whether Netflix continued similar practices to minimize its reported profits and tax responsibilities. (Xinhua)

### Music



This cover image released by Sony Legacy Recordings shows 'The Concert for a New South Africa (Durban)' by Whitney Houston. (AP)

### Pop diva's iconic talent resonates

## Whitney Houston is some singer on live 'Concert for a New South Africa'

LOS ANGELES, Nov 7. (AP) — "Find your strength in love," Whitney Houston sings near the end of a new live album, "The Concert for a New South Africa (Durban)." She spends a full minute delivering those five syllables.

The song is "Greatest Love of All." At the start of the final line, Houston darts from note to note. On the word "strength," her amazing alto blooms, climbs and adds vibrato. When she reaches the word "love," she playfully skips through several notes and lets the last one linger, the power of its beauty matching the message.

Houston was some singer, and that's reaffirmed by "The Concert for a New South Africa (Durban)." Sadly, the album also shows how the pop diva's incomparable talent was misspent before she died in 2012 at the age of 48.

The album will be out Friday, following the limited theatrical release of a film commemorating the 30th anniversary of Houston's three 1994 concerts in South Africa - in Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town. They celebrated a newly unified nation following apartheid and the election of Nelson Mandela as president.

This album captures the first, held in Durban on Nov. 8, 1994. It is also Houston's first ever live concert album.

"Never have I felt so much love," Houston tells the stadium crowd. Ten of the digital album's 21 songs (there are 24 tracks total, including an intro and three versions of the same song, which include the live track, a previously unreleased studio recording and a remix) feature titles with the word "love" or some variation, and huge hits are sprinkled throughout the set. They include "I Will Always Love You," "How Will

I Know" and "I Wanna Dance with Somebody (Who Loves Me)," all fun to hear in such a festive setting.

Alas, the scale of the event only amplifies Houston's tendency to over-sing. Her delivery seems intended for the top row of the stadium, which is understandable but exhausting when listening through earbuds. Maybe you had to be there.

The vocal theatrics are often a mismatch for inferior material, and Houston wrings lyrics as if to trying to remove the suds. Compounding the excess are her large supporting cast's dated, overcooked arrangements, which range from sappy synths to hair-band guitar solos, although there are quality contributions from the horns and backing vocalists.

The second half of the show achieves moments of grace. Houston dials it down on "Love Is," a lovely ballad that also appears on the album in a previously unreleased studio recording from 1990 and a remix. Houston delivers her persuasive reading of "Greatest Love of All," and a bouncy "Touch the World" meets the occasion.

The best stretch comes when Houston takes the audience to megachurch. "Jesus Loves Me" becomes a children's song for all ages as she displays an uncharacteristic soulfulness in the tradition of Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Ray Charles and Aretha Franklin.

That's followed by "Amazing Grace," and when Houston twists the word "wretch" with violent vulnerability, the lyric sounds as heartfelt as anything she ever sang.

### 'It is a relic'

## The 1st Soviet-era Polish car goes on display after 73 yrs

OTREBUSZY, Poland, Nov 7. (AP) — The very first car produced in Soviet-era Poland after World War II went on display Friday near Warsaw after it was tracked down in Finland during decades of searching and acquired after years of negotiations.

The chunky 1951 Warszawa M-20 bears the serial number 000001 it had when it left the FSO Passenger Car Factory in Warsaw on Nov. 6 of that year, exactly 73 years ago. It is a relic of the period of Poland's post-war subordination to communist-ruled Soviet Union.

"We are extremely proud because now we count among the very few people in the world who have retrieved the very first vehicles of the series made in their countries," said Zbigniew Mikiciuk, a co-founder of the private museum in Otrebuszy.

The car was first given to the Soviet army marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky, who served as Poland's defense minister after the war to seal the country's dependency to Moscow. It eventually was discovered in the possession of the family of Finnish rally car driver Rauno Aaltonen, though the car's history in between remains unclear, Mikiciuk said.

It took more than two years of negotiations to obtain the vehicle from the Finnish owners, he said.

The car's original light color has been painted over with a shade of brown that was fashionable in the

1970s and bears marks of once-intensive use that the museum has preserved to keep it authentic, but it is still "holding together" and is "cool" despite its age, Mikiciuk said.

The now-defunct FSO factory intensively sought the original model during the 1970s in hopes of using it to mark an anniversary. The company even offered a new car in exchange for it, at a time when cars were still a luxury in Poland, but to no avail.

The FSO factory was originally built to make Italian Fiat cars in the late 1940s, but Soviet leaders in Moscow objected to the ties with a Western company during the Cold War. They ordered production to be based on the Soviet Union's Pobeda (Victory) cars, with Moscow providing the technology and the production lines.

The car now joins the museum's many historic vehicles, including a 1928 U.S.-made Oakland brought to Poland before the war by a doctor's family and a 1953 Buick that belonged to Poland's communist-era Prime Minister Jozef Cyrankiewicz. The former leader brought the car to Poland via the Netherlands apparently to avoid a direct connection to the US during the Cold War.

The museum also displays a Volvo that was used by Poland's communist leader, Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, known for having imposed martial law in 1981.



This Warszawa M-20 car with serial number 000001, based on a Soviet Union's model, was the first vehicle to leave a car factory in Poland after World War II, on Nov. 6, 1951 and now, 73 years later, it goes on public display at a private museum in Otrebuszy, central Poland, on Wednesday, Nov. 6. (AP)

### Free expression concerns

## Algeria opens book fair without the winner of top literary prize

ALGIERS, Algeria, Nov 7. (AP) — As one of the Arab world's largest book fairs opens in Algeria on Wednesday, there is one conspicuous absence. French-Algerian author Kamel Daoud, who won France's most prestigious literary award earlier this week, was not invited to this year's event.

This year's Prix Goncourt winner and his French publisher Gallimard - a regular participant - are among those who won't be welcomed at the Algiers International Book Fair. The exclusion of several prominent authors and publishers from this year's event reflects the ongoing limitations on freedom of expression in Algeria.

Daoud's novels and their subject matter often polarize opinions in both France, where he lives, and Algeria, where he was born. His Goncourt-winning third novel Houris (Virgins, in English) centers on the memories of victims of Algeria's "Black Decade." After Islamists won the first round of legislative elections in 1990, Algeria descended into civil war after the second round was canceled by the military-backed government.

Though memories of that history

loom large, Houris will not be among the more than 300,000 titles available at the book fair, which is being marketed under the slogan "Read to Triumph" and billed for having a special focus on history.

Ali Bey, the owner of Algiers' Librairie du Tiers Monde, said he was "delighted" to see Daoud's international recognition but lamented that Algerian readers would not be able to purchase his novels.

The censorship extends beyond Daoud and Gallimard. Koukou Publishing, an independent Algerian house led by former political activist Arezki Ait Larbi, has also been excluded from this year's festival. Koukou - known for publishing works by essayists, novelists and journalists whose writings often challenge official narratives - wasn't invited either, Ait Larbi wrote in a Facebook post.



Kamel Daoud



'Families are worried about children's safety online'

# Australia plans a social media ban for children under 16

MELBOURNE, Australia, Nov 7, (AP): The Australian government announced on Thursday what it described as world-leading legislation that would institute an age limit of 16 years for children to start using social media, and hold platforms responsible for ensuring compliance.

"Social media is doing harm to our kids and I'm calling time on it," Prime Minister **Anthony Albanese** said.

The legislation will be introduced in Parliament during its final two weeks in session this year, which begin on Nov. 18. The age limit would take effect 12 months after the law is passed, Albanese told reporters.

The platforms including X, TikTok, Instagram and Facebook would need to use that year to work out how to exclude Australian children younger than 16.

"I've spoken to thousands of parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles. They, like me, are worried sick about the safety of our kids online," Albanese said.

The proposal comes as governments around the world are wrestling with how to supervise young people's use of technologies like smartphones and social media.

Social media platforms would be penalized for breaching the age limit, but under-age children and their parents would not.

"The onus will be on social media platforms to demonstrate they are taking reasonable steps to prevent access. The onus won't be on parents or young people," Albanese said.

Antigone Davis, head of safety at Meta, which owns Facebook and Instagram, said the company would respect any age limitations the government wants to introduce.

"However, what's missing is a deeper discussion on how we implement protections, otherwise we risk making ourselves feel better, like we have taken action, but teens and parents will not find themselves in a better place," Davis said in a statement.



Albanese

She added that stronger tools in app stores and operating systems for parents to control what apps their children can use would be a "simple and effective solution."

X did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Thursday. TikTok declined to comment.

The Digital Industry Group Inc., an advocate for the digital industry in Australia, described the age limit as a "20th Century response to 21st Century challenges."

"Rather than blocking access through bans, we need to take a balanced approach to create age-appropriate spaces, build digital literacy and protect young people from online harm," DIGI managing director Sunita Bose said in a statement.

More than 140 Australian and international academics with expertise in fields related to technology and child welfare signed an open letter to Albanese last month opposing a social media age limit as "too blunt an instrument to address risks effectively."

Jackie Hallan, a director at the youth mental health service ReachOut, opposed the ban. She said 73% of young people across Australia accessing mental health support did so through social media.

"We're uncomfortable with the ban. We think young people are likely to circumvent a ban and our concern is that it really drives the behavior underground and then if things go wrong, young people are less likely to get support from parents and carers because they're worried about getting in trouble," Hallan said.

Child psychologist Philip Tam said a minimum age of 12 or 13 would have been more enforceable.

"My real fear honestly is that the problem of social media will simply be driven underground," Tam said.

Australian National University lawyer Associate Prof. Faith Gordon feared separating children from their platforms could create pressures within families.

Albanese said there would be exclusions and exemptions in circumstances such as a need to continue access to educational services.

But parental consent would not entitle a child under 16 to

access social media.

Earlier this year, the government began a trial of age-restriction technologies. Australia's eSafety Commissioner, the online watchdog that will police compliance, will use the results of that trial to provide platforms with guidance on what reasonable steps they can take.

Communications Minister Michelle Rowland said the year-long lead-in would ensure the age limit could be implemented in a "very practical way."

"There does need to be enhanced penalties to ensure compliance," Rowland said.

"Every company that operates in Australia, whether domiciled here or otherwise, is expected and must comply with Australian law or face the consequences," she added.

The main opposition party has given in-principle support for an age limit at 16.

Opposition lawmaker Paul Fletcher said the platforms already had the technology to enforce such an age ban.

"It's not really a technical viability question, it's a question of their readiness to do it and will they incur the cost to do it," Fletcher told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

"The platforms say: 'It's all too hard, we can't do it, Australia will become a backwater, it won't possibly work.' But if you have well-drafted legislation and you stick to your guns, you can get the outcomes," Fletcher added.

'Drug use surge'

## Superbug-killing virus discovered

SYDNEY, Nov. 7, (Xinhua): Australian scientists have discovered a new virus capable of killing a superbug in a Melbourne waterway, according to a new study published on Wednesday.

Researchers from Monash University discovered two versions of a previously-unknown bacteriophage, a virus that kills bacteria, in the Merri Creek, a waterway that flows through Melbourne's northern suburbs.

They found that the new bacteriophage can kill the antibiotic-resistant superbug *Klebsiella* that is commonly found in hospitals.

The research was conducted in collaboration with a local Aboriginal cultural heritage corporation and the bacteriophage was named by Aboriginal elders Merri-merri-uth nyilam marranattj (MMNM), which translates as "Dangerous Merri lurker" in English.

Trevor Lithgow, leader of the research from the Monash Biomedicine Discovery Institute, said the research found that a single genetic difference between the two versions of MMNM changed how effectively they kill bacteria.

**Ketamine:** Use of the illicit drug ketamine in Australia has risen to a record high, analysis of drug levels found in sewage has found.

The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) on Thursday published the 23rd report from the National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program.

Based on data collected from 59 sites across the country in April and June 2024, the report revealed that there was record-high excretion of ketamine in both capital cities and regional areas in April. Used medically for induction and maintenance of anesthesia, ketamine is also used illicitly as a recreational drug.

**Bird flu:** Albania's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development on Wednesday took measures to prevent the spread of bird flu into the country.

The ministry issued a special order banning imports of live poultry and poultry products from some European countries including Bulgaria, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Sweden.

Live poultry, 24-hour birds, decorative birds, biological material from birds, poultry eggs, poultry meat not thermally treated, and non-thermally treated poultry by-products from these nations will be temporarily banned from entering or transiting through Albania.

### The Conversation

#### Neuroscience and physiology of fear

## Why anxiety makes your heart pound: A psychiatrist explains

By Arash Javanbakht  
Wayne State University

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

**H**ear in your throat. Butterflies in your stomach. Bad gut feeling. These are all phrases many people use to describe fear and anxiety. You have likely felt anxiety inside your chest or stomach, and your brain usually doesn't hurt when you're scared. Many cultures tie cowardice and bravery more to the heart or the guts than to the brain.

But science has traditionally seen the brain as the birthplace and processing site of fear and anxiety. Then why and how do you feel these emotions in other parts of your body?

I am a psychiatrist and neuroscientist who researches and treats fear and anxiety. In my book "Afraid," I explain how fear works in the brain and the body and what too much anxiety does to the body. Research confirms that while emotions do originate in your brain, it's your body that carries out the orders.

While your brain evolved to save you from a falling rock or speeding predator, the anxieties of modern life are often a lot more abstract. Fifty-thousand years ago, being rejected by your tribe could mean death, but not doing a great job on a public speech at school or at work doesn't have the same consequences. Your brain, however, might not know the difference.

There are a few key areas of the brain that are heavily involved in processing fear.

When you perceive something as dangerous, whether it's a gun pointed at you or a group of people looking unhappily at you, these sensory inputs are first relayed to the amygdala. This small, almond-shaped area of the brain located near your ears detects salience, or the

emotional relevance of a situation and how to react to it. When you see something, it determines whether you should eat it, attack it, run away from it or have sex with it.

Threat detection is a vital part of this process, and it has to be fast. Early humans did not have much time to think when a lion was lunging toward them. They had to act quickly. For this reason, the amygdala evolved to bypass brain areas involved in logical thinking and can directly engage physical responses. For example, seeing an angry face on a computer screen can immediately trigger a detectable response from the amygdala without the viewer even being aware of this reaction.

The hippocampus is near and tightly connected to the amygdala. It's involved in memorizing what is safe and what is dangerous, especially in relation to the environment - it puts fear in context. For example, seeing an angry lion in the zoo and in the Sahara both trigger a fear response in the amygdala. But the hippocampus steps in and blocks this response when you're at the zoo because you aren't in danger.

The prefrontal cortex, located above your eyes, is mostly involved in the cognitive and social aspects of fear processing. For example, you might be scared of a snake until you read a sign that the snake is nonpoisonous or the owner tells you it's their friendly pet.

Although the prefrontal cortex is usually seen as the part of the brain that regulates emotions, it can also teach you fear based on your social environment. For example, you might feel neutral about a meeting with your boss but immediately feel nervous when a colleague tells you about rumors of layoffs. Many prejudices like racism are rooted in learning fear through tribalism.

If your brain decides that a fear response is justified in a particular situation, it activates a cascade of

neural and hormonal pathways to prepare you for immediate action. Some of the fight-or-flight response - like heightened attention and threat detection - takes place in the brain. But the body is where most of the action happens.

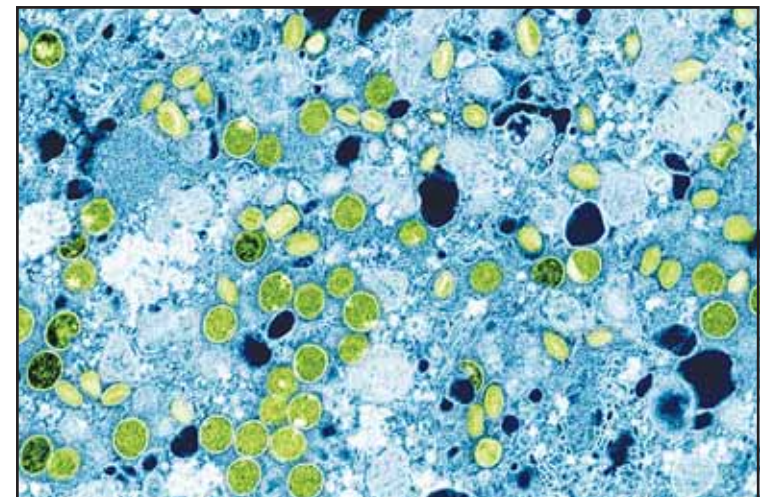
Several pathways prepare different body systems for intense physical action. The motor cortex of the brain sends rapid signals to your muscles to prepare them for quick and forceful movements. These include muscles in the chest and stomach that help protect vital organs in those areas. That might contribute to a feeling of tightness in your chest and stomach in stressful conditions.

The sympathetic nervous system is the gas pedal that speeds up the systems involved in fight or flight. Sympathetic neurons are spread throughout the body and are especially dense in places like the heart, lungs and intestines. These neurons trigger the adrenal gland to release hormones like adrenaline that travel through the blood to reach those organs and increase the rate at which they undergo the fear response.

To assure sufficient blood supply to your muscles when they're in high demand, signals from the sympathetic nervous system increase the rate your heart beats and the force with which it contracts. You feel both increased heart rate and contraction force in your chest, which is why you may connect the feeling of intense emotions to your heart.

In your lungs, signals from the sympathetic nervous system dilate airways and often increase your breathing rate and depth. Sometimes this results in a feeling of shortness of breath.

As digestion is the last priority during a fight-or-flight situation, sympathetic activation slows down your gut and reduces blood flow to your stomach to save oxygen and nutrients for more vital organs like the heart and the brain. (AP)



This colored electron microscope image provided by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in 2024 shows Mpxox virus particles, green, found within infected cultured cells, blue. The virus particles are in various stages of maturity, which accounts for differences in shape. (AP)

### First cluster outside Africa

## UK detects four cases of new, more infectious mpxox variant

LONDON, Nov 7, (AP): British health officials say they have identified four cases of the new, more infectious version of mpxox that first emerged in Congo, marking the first time the variant has caused a cluster of illness outside of Africa. Scientists said the risk to the public remains low.

Authorities announced the first case of the new form of mpxox in the UK last week, saying the case was being treated at a London hospital after recently traveling to countries in Africa with ongoing outbreaks.

This week, the UK Health Security Agency said it had now identified three further cases who lived in the same household as the first patient. They too are now being treated at a hospital in London.

"Mpxox is very infectious in households with close contact and so it is not unexpected to see further cases within the same household," said Susan Hopkins, chief medical advisor of the UK Health Security Agency.

The new variant of mpxox was first detected earlier this year in eastern Congo. Scientists believe it causes milder symptoms that are harder to notice, which makes it easier to spread because people may not know they are infected. Its spread in Congo and elsewhere in Africa prompted the World Health Organization to declare a global emergency in August.

Britain recorded more than 3,000 cases of another type of mpxox during a 2022 outbreak that hit more than 100 countries.

The new variant of mpxox has also caused outbreaks in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. Single cases in travelers have also been reported in Sweden, India, Germany and Thailand.

To date, there have been about 43,000 suspect cases of mpxox in Africa, including more than 1,000 deaths, mostly in Congo.

On Wednesday, WHO said it had allocated 899,900 vaccine doses to nine African countries struggling with mpxox epidemics.

Meanwhile, some health officials say mpxox cases in Congo appear to be "stabilizing" - a possible sign that the main epidemic for which the World Health Organization made a global emergency declaration in August might be on the decline.

In recent weeks, Congo has reported about 200 to 300 lab-confirmed mpxox cases every week, according to WHO. That's down from nearly 400 cases a week in July. The decline is also apparent in Kamituga, the mining city in the eastern part of Congo where the new, more infectious variant of mpxox first emerged.

But the U.N. health agency acknowledged Friday that only 40% to 50% of suspected infections in Congo were being tested - and that the virus is continuing to spread in some parts of the country and elsewhere, including Uganda. While doctors are encouraged by the drop in infections in some parts of Congo, it's still not clear what kinds of physical contact is driving the outbreak.

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### 'Free Palestine' banner elicits official reaction

# French interior minister wants explanation from PSG

PARIS, Nov 7, (AP): A giant "Free Palestine" banner unveiled at Paris Saint-Germain's Champions League match against Atletico Madrid was "unacceptable," French Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau said on Thursday.

The banner unfurled by PSG fans on Wednesday night featured a drawing of a map including Israel, the West Bank and Gaza in the colors of the Palestinian keffiyeh scarf, which has become a symbol of support for Palestinian people.

Also on the banner were a character looking like a masked fighter, a tank and a Lebanon flag.

"War on the pitch, but peace in the world," a message read below the banner.

Asked whether the club should be punished, Retailleau told Sud Radio he does not rule out anything and will ask for explanations from PSG, which has been owned by Qatar Sports Investments since 2011.

"This is unacceptable," Retailleau said. "UEFA rules forbid political messages, and it is a political message."

Yonathan Arfi, the president of the Representative Council of the French Jewish institutions said the banner was "scandalous."

"A map where the state of Israel no longer exists. A masked Palestinian fighter. This is not a message of peace but a call to hatred,"

he wrote on X. "The perpetrators of this banner must be punished! Intolerable!"

UEFA rules ban the use of gestures, words, objects or any other means to transmit a provocative message that is judged not fit for a sports event, particularly provocative messages that are of a political, ideological, religious or offensive nature. Financial penalties are typical for a first offense - 10,000 euros (\$10,700) for a political banner or disturbances.

Retailleau also urged clubs to ensure politics "do not spoil sport, which must always remain a unifying force." Writing on X, he said if such incidents happen again he would have to consider banning tifos of clubs which don't abide by the rules.

The incident came before France hosts Israel on Nov. 14 in the Nations League. This week, pro-Palestinian supporters protested at the French Football Federation to call for the cancellation of the game.

French authorities confirmed last month that the match would go ahead with fans allowed in the stadium after Italy hosted Israel in the same competition without incident despite security concerns.

The match at the Stade de France will be played against the backdrop of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East which has spread to Lebanon after more than a year-long war in Gaza.



PSG's players pose for a team photo before the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Paris Saint Germain and Atletico Madrid at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris. (AP)

# Vital match for Real Madrid



Real Madrid's Jude Bellingham, right, kicks a ball next to AC Milan's Emerson Royal during the Champions League opening phase soccer match at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

## Barca looks to carry on scoring

**MADRID, Nov 7, (Xinhua): Real Madrid faces a vital game in La Liga in the last round of matches before the next international break when they take on Osasuna on Saturday, immersed in arguably their biggest crisis since Carlo Ancelotti returned to the club.**

Tuesday's 3-1 defeat at home to AC Milan, which followed their 4-0 humiliation in the Bernabeu to FC Barcelona, has set alarm bells ringing, not just about results, but also the way Ancelotti's side is playing.

Real Madrid has looked disorganized in defense and midfield, while in attack, Kylian Mbappe is struggling for form, while a lack of pressing from the forwards is creating an imbalance in midfield.

The wake of Tuesday's loss has seen the start of speculation about Ancelotti's future as Real Madrid coach, and he needs both a win and a good performance to enjoy a quiet international break.

Osasuna travels to Madrid fifth in the standings, and Vicente Moreno's well-organized and tough team will be a good test of where Real Ma-

drid currently is in football terms.

FC Barcelona is last up at the weekend with a visit to San Sebastian to play Real Sociedad. Barca continued their rich vein of form with a 5-1 win away to Red Star Belgrade on Wednesday, and Hansi Flick's side has scored 17 goals in their last four games, with Raphinha and Robert Lewandowski seemingly netting at will.

Real Sociedad has a Europa League game in the Czech Republic on Thursday and doesn't have much recovery time ahead of Sunday.

Imanol Alguacil's side has been excellent away from home this season, but their numbers in front of their fans have been dreadful, with four home defeats and their only home win against bottom-of-the-table Valencia.

The weekend kicks off with Rayo Vallecano at home to Las Palmas, with the visitors needing to quickly rediscover their form after a poor performance away to Atletico Madrid last weekend.

Villarreal is currently fourth in the table, despite last weekend's match being postponed due to the flooding in the Valencia region. They entertain an Alaves side that ended a five-game losing streak with a 1-0 win at home to Mallorca last weekend.

Valencia's relegation duel away to Espanyol has been postponed due to the floods, while Sat-

urday ends with Leganes at home to Sevilla in what looks like a close game, with Sevilla not helped by a long injury list that includes the likes of Loric Bade and Chidera Ejuke.

Real Betis plays Celta Vigo on Sunday lunchtime in what should be an open game, while Atletico Madrid travels to play an always-difficult Mallorca in the wake of their miraculous 2-1 win away at Paris Saint-Germain on Sunday.

Goalkeeper Jan Oblak prevented another heavy defeat for Diego Simeone's side before Angel Correa scored an injury-time winner, but the result won't lift doubts over Atletico's recent performances.

Getafe should view the visit of an injury-ravaged Girona, who has 11 players sidelined, as the chance to claim their second win of the season, before Real Valladolid has a must-win game at home to Athletic Bilbao.

Athletic has to play in Bulgaria on Thursday, but despite missing a host of chances against Betis last weekend, they have the firepower to increase the pressure on Valladolid coach Paulo Pezzolano, whose side has just eight points from 12 games.

## Djokovic out with unspecified injury

# Sinner, Alcaraz headline ATP Finals

TURIN, Nov 7, (AP): Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz are poised to add another entry into their rapidly developing rivalry when the ATP Finals open on Sunday without any of the Big Three for the first time in 23 years.

The top-ranked Sinner and No. 3 Alcaraz evenly split the year's Grand Slam titles between them with two apiece and it would be fitting if the pair meet again in Turin.

Sinner and Alcaraz were placed in different groups in Thursday's draw.

The Ilie Nastase Group features Sinner, Daniil Medvedev, Taylor Fritz and Alex de Minaur.

The John Newcombe Group features Alexander Zverev, Alcaraz, Casper Ruud and Andrey Rublev.

After the round-robin stage, the top two finishers in each group advance to the semifinals.

The big name missing is that of defending champion Novak Djokovic, who withdrew on Tuesday due to an unspecified injury.

Not since 2001 has the finals been held without at least one of Djokovic, Roger Federer or Rafael Nadal. This season also was the first since 2002 without at least one Grand Slam title for a member of that trio.

Djokovic has won the ATP Finals a record seven times. He beat Sinner in the final last year.

Federer, who retired in 2022, won the event six times after making his debut in 2002; Nadal, who is retiring after playing in the Davis Cup the week after finals, was the runner-up twice at the finals but never won it.

Sinner withdrew from last week's Paris Masters due to a virus and showed up early in Turin for training. "This is for me the main event of the end of the year," Sinner said.

As an Italian, Sinner will be the main focus of attention in Turin.

It's the first time Sinner is playing at home since it was announced before his U.S. Open title that he tested positive in two separate drug tests this year.

A decision to clear Sinner of wrongdoing was appealed by the World Anti-Doping Agency in September and the Switzerland-based Court of Arbitration for Sport is expected to make a final ruling on the case early next year.

Sinner opened this year by winning the Australian Open to become the first Italian man to win a Grand Slam singles title in nearly a half-century - since Adriano Panatta raised the French Open trophy in 1976.

Alcaraz then claimed the French Open and Wimbledon titles to raise his career total to four Grand Slams.

Sinner responded by winning the U.S. Open.

Alcaraz won all three official meetings with Sinner this year and holds a 6-4 advantage in their career head-to-head rivalry. Last month, Sinner beat Alcaraz in the Six Kings Slam exhibition in Saudi Arabia.

The only two players in the field to have won the finals are Zverev and Medvedev.

Zverev won in London in 2018 and in Turin in 2021; Medvedev triumphed in 2020, the final year the event was held in London.

Zverev enters in solid form coming off a title at the Paris Masters and leapfrogged Alcaraz into No. 2 in the rankings this week.

Fritz is looking to add another big result after his maiden Grand Slam final at the U.S. Open; Ruud was a finalist in 2022; De Minaur is making his tournament debut; and Rublev is making his fifth straight appearance.

If a player wins all five of his matches en route to the trophy, he will earn \$4.8 million - the largest winner's prize on the men's tour.

That's significantly more than what Sinner and Alcaraz earned for their victories at the U.S. Open (\$3.6 million) and Wimbledon (2.7 million pounds or \$3.45 million) this year.

## List hurriedly revised

# Germany mistakenly names player in squad for League

FRANKFURT, Germany, Nov 7, (AP): Germany had to hurriedly revise its squad list for the Nations League on Thursday after accidentally including a player from Latvia.

Listed alongside players like Real Madrid's Antonio Rudiger and Arsenal's Kai Havertz on the German soccer federation website was the name of Dario Sits.

Sits is a 20-year-old forward from Dutch second division team Helmond Sport, where he's on loan from Italian club Parma. Sits made his debut for Latvia last month and the closest he's come to the German national team was playing for Latvia against Germany Under-21s in 2022.

Sits' name was quickly removed and the federation blamed "a technical error in the database" in an emailed statement to The Associated Press.

Otherwise, the squad for games against Bosnia-Herzegovina and Hungary next week contains few surprises. Germany has already qualified for the Nations League quarterfinals next year, and is pushing to win its group.

With Barcelona's Marc-André ter Stegen still injured, Manchester City backup goalkeeper Stefan Ortega could win his first cap for Germany. Ortega has played four times for City this season and is one of three goalkeepers nominated along with Stuttgart's Alexander Nübel and Hoffenheim's Oliver Baumann.

Arsenal forward Havertz and Bayern Munich attacking midfielder Jamal Musiala return after missing Germany's last games with injuries, while the Borussia Dortmund midfield duo of Felix Nmecha and Julian Brandt are each recalled for the first time this year.

# Neymar expected to miss two weeks with an injury

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Nov 7, (AP): Neymar is expected to miss two weeks with an injury, intensifying speculation over the Brazilian's future with Saudi Arabian club Al-Hilal.

Neymar made just his second club appearance following a 12-month injury layoff by coming on as a substitute in the 58th minute of Al-Hilal's 3-0 win over Esteghlal of Iran in the AFC Champions League Elite on Monday.

The former Barcelona star then pulled up after stretching for the ball with three minutes remaining and had to be replaced.

"Unfortunately, it is not a simple injury and he seems to be suffering from muscle pain and it is not a knee issue," Al-Hilal coach Jorge Jesus said Wednesday in a press conference in Riyadh. "He is expected to be out for two weeks."

Neymar took to social media to update his fans. "Hopefully nothing too much..." he wrote. "It's normal that after one year (out) this happens, the doctors had already warned me, so I have to be careful and play more minutes."

Saudi Arabian media speculated that the absence could last as long as three weeks and that Al-Hilal may not register Neymar, whose contract ends in June 2025, for the second half of the Saudi Pro League season.

Neymar has played just seven games for the 19-time Saudi champion since signing in August 2023 for a reported fee of \$90 million. He is not currently registered to play domestic league games as the club has a full contingent of 10 foreign players, but is allowed to play in continental competitions.

A new registration window opens in January.

# Struggling capt Mbappé once again left out of France squad

PARIS, Nov 7, (AP): Struggling to make an impact at Real Madrid, Kylian Mbappé has again been left out of the France squad.

The captain was not included on Thursday in coach Didier Deschamps' list of players for Nations League matches against Israel and Italy. Mbappé was also absent from the previous gathering because of a minor thigh injury.

But this time Mbappé is not injured, and wanted to be selected, Deschamps said.

"It's my responsibility to make decisions. I think it's better that way," Deschamps said.

He would not elaborate on his choice to do without the striker, but said it was not related to recent reports in Swedish media that the former Paris Saint-Germain star was the subject of a rape investigation.

"I'm not going to argue," Deschamps said. "What I can tell you are these two things. One, that Kylian wanted to come. And two, it's not the extra sporting problems that come into play since the presumption of innocence exists and must exist. It's a one-off choice for this gathering."

Mbappé's performances have been below par in recent weeks after he joined Madrid from PSG this summer. His struggles to adapt to his new side's playing style have coincided with a global rough patch of form for the Spanish club.

Mbappé was invisible during the 4-0 loss to Barcelona last month in the clasic and wasn't a factor this week in a 3-1 loss to AC Milan in the Champions League. Mbappé hasn't added to his 48 goals for France since June.

His absence from Deschamps' squad last month turned into controversy when he started a Spanish league

game for Madrid following his omission, amid sharp criticism from fans.

During his time off from club and country, as France beat Israel and Belgium in the Nations League, Mbappé visited Stockholm. Swedish media later reported he was the subject of a rape investigation. His legal team dismissed those reports as false. Swedish prosecutors issued a brief statement on Tuesday saying a rape was reported to police but didn't name any suspect.

Deschamps will also be without Real Madrid midfielder Aurélien Tchouaméni, who sprained his left ankle. In Mbappé's absence, Tchouaméni captained France last month.

France plays Israel on Nov. 14 at home then travels to Italy three days later. Italy leads the group standings after four matches, one point above France. Belgium is third, ahead of Israel.

## France:

**Goalkeepers:** Lucas Chevalier (Lille), Mike Maignan (AC Milan), Brice Samba (Lens).

**Defenders:** Jonathan Claus (Nice), Lucas Digne (Aston Villa), Wesley Fofana (Chelsea), Théo Hernandez (AC Milan), Ibrahim Konaté (Liverpool), Jules Koundé (Barcelona), William Saliba (Arsenal), Dayot Upamecano (Bayern Munich).

**Midfielders:** Eduardo Camavinga (Real Madrid), Matteo Guendouzi (Lazio), N'Golo Kanté (Al Ittihad), Manu Koné (Roma), Adrien Rabiot (Marseille), Warren Zaire-Emery (PSG).

**Forwards:** Bradley Barcola (PSG), Ousmane Dembélé (PSG), Randal Kolo Muani (PSG), Christopher Nkunku (Chelsea), Michael Olise (Bayern Munich), Marcus Thuram (Inter Milan).



# Al-Arabi keeps title race alive

President rewards players with 500 dinars

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: Al-Arabi closed the gap on Kuwait Club in the Zain Premier League after coming from behind to secure a 3-1 victory over Al-Salmiya in their match held at Thamer Stadium on the evening of the ninth round.**

With this win, Al-Arabi moved up to 21 points, sitting second, just 6 points behind leader Kuwait Club. However, Al-Arabi still has a postponed match against Al-Nasr from the eighth round, while Al-Salmiya remained in fifth place with 14 points.

Al-Salmiya took the lead in the 13th minute thanks to a goal from Moaz Al-Aseema, but Al-Arabi responded just before halftime with a goal from

Nigerian forward Anabo Iwala. In the second half, Al-Arabi took control, with Sofiane Bouchar putting them ahead in the 47th minute, and Ali Khalaf sealed the victory with a third goal in the 68th minute.

In recognition of the team's impressive performance, Al-Arabi Club President Abdulaziz Ashour awarded each player 500 dinars following the victory. He also presented the same reward for the team's qualification to the semi-finals of the West Asia region in the Asian Challenge League Championship.

Ashour expressed his satisfaction, saying, "The team continues to deliver convincing performances, and the fans know the players have much more to offer in the future." He also thanked the technical, administrative, medical staff, and players for their hard work and dedication.

Furthermore, Ashour extended his congratulations to Sheikh Ahmed Al-Youssef and the members of the "supplementary" Federation Board of Directors, expressing confidence in the Sheikh's ability to lead the Federation and address the needs of the national team and clubs, particularly in terms of facilities and stadiums.



Ali Khalaf is the best player in the ninth round.



New Orleans Pelicans guard Brandon Boston Jr. (11) passes the ball against Cleveland Cavaliers center Jarrett Allen (31) in the second half of an NBA basketball game in New Orleans. (AP)

## Curry leads Warriors past Celtics

# Perfect Cavaliers make franchise history

NEW ORLEANS, Nov 7, (AP): Donovan Mitchell scored 29 points and the Cleveland Cavaliers defeated the New Orleans Pelicans 131-122 to open 9-0 for the first time in their 55-year NBA history.

Caris LeVert and Jarrett Allen each added 16 points, and Allen grabbed 14 rebounds as the Cavaliers surpassed an 8-0 start by the 1976-77 squad that finished 43-39 under coach Bill Fitch.

Zion Williamson returned from a two-game absence and had 29 points for the Pelicans. He temporarily took himself out after playing 10 minutes, but returned to start the second half and scored 23 after halftime.

Jose Alvarado hit all seven 3-pointers he took and finished with 27 points for New Orleans. Brandon Ingram added 20 points for the Pelicans, who have lost three straight and six of seven.

### Warriors 118, Celtics 112

In Boston, Stephen Curry scored 27 points, Buddy Hield had 16 and the Golden State Warriors beat the Boston Celtics for their fifth straight victory.

Andrew Wiggins also added 16 points for Golden State (7-1). Curry played his second straight after missing three with an ankle injury.

Jayson Tatum led Boston (7-2) with 32 points, and Derrick White had 26 with six rebounds.

Warriors coach Steve Kerr was booed by the TD Garden crowd that showed its displeasure over how he used Tatum at the Paris Olympics.

With Warriors holding a 115-112 lead, Draymond Green hit a free throw with 11 seconds left. Kyle Anderson sealed it with two free throws with 2.4 seconds to play.

Boston forward Jaylen Brown missed his third straight game with a strained left hip flexor. Warriors guard Brandin Podziemski was out with an illness.

### Nuggets 124, Thunder 122

In Denver, Russell Westbrook scored 29 points, Peyton Watson blocked a shot in the closing seconds after missing a pair of free throws at the other end and the injury-riddled Denver Nuggets rallied to beat Oklahoma City to hand the Thunder their



San Antonio Spurs guard Malaki Branham, left, drives around Houston Rockets forward Tari Eason (17) during the second half of an NBA basketball game. (AP)

first loss of the season.

Nikola Jokic finished with 23 points, 20 rebounds and 16 assists as the Nuggets rebounded from a 16-point deficit in the third quarter. Christian Braun added 24.

### Suns 115, Heat 112

In Phoenix, Kevin Durant scored 32 points, Jusuf Nurkic had 20 points and 18 rebounds, and the Phoenix Suns rallied from a 15-point deficit Wednesday night to defeat the Miami Heat and extend their winning streak to six games.

The Suns trailed 79-64 in the third quarter but finished the period on a 15-3 run to cut the Heat's lead to three.

### Grizzlies 131, Lakers 114

In Memphis, Ja Morant scored 20 points before leaving in the third quarter with a right hamstring injury and the Memphis Grizzlies used their 3-point shooting to beat the Los Angeles Lakers.

Rookie Jaylen Wells and Jaren Jackson Jr. also scored 20 points each for the Grizzlies. There was no immediate word on the extent of Morant's injury.

LeBron James led the Lakers with 39 points, while Austin Reaves added 19 despite going 2 for 9 from 3-point range.

The Lakers played without start-

ing center Anthony Davis, who was suffering from left heel soreness. Rui Hachimura was also out with an illness, giving rookie Dalton Knecht from Tennessee his first NBA start.

### Kings 122, Raptors 107

In Sacramento, DeMar DeRozan scored 27 points in a record-setting performance and the Sacramento Kings beat the Toronto Raptors.

Domantas Sabonis added 17 points, 13 assists and 11 rebounds for his third triple-double of the season for Sacramento. He shot 6 for 6 from the field and 5 for 5 at the free-throw line.

Keegan Murray chipped in with 22 points and 12 rebounds, and De'Aaron Fox scored 21.

DeRozan has scored at least 20 points in each of his first eight games with the Kings, breaking a franchise mark established by Chris Webber when he reached 20 in his first seven games with Sacramento during the 1998-99 season.

### Mavericks 119, Bulls 99

In Dallas, Luka Doncic had 27 points and 13 assists, Kyrie Irving scored 17 points and Daniel Gafford also scored 17 playing a season-high 24 minutes as the Dallas Mavericks beat the Chicago Bulls.

The defending Western Conference champions scored the first 13 points of the second half and led by as many as 30 while improving to 2-2 on a five-game homestand.

### Rockets 127, Spurs 100

In Houston, Jalen Green and Fred VanVleet had 21 points each and the Houston Rockets built a huge lead early and coasted to a win over the San Antonio Spurs.

Houston never trailed and had built a 25-point lead by halftime. The Rockets were up by 27 points when coach Ime Udoka cleared the bench with about 6½ minutes remaining.

### Pacers 118, Magic 111

In Indianapolis, Benedict Mathurin scored 20 points, four teammates each had 17, and the Indiana Pacers defeated the Orlando Magic.

Ahead two in the final minute, the Pacers' Tyrese Haliburton sank a 3 and Mathurin made two foul shots. Six of nine Pacers scored in double digits. Haliburton, Myles Turner, Pascal Siakam and Jarace Walker each scored 17. T.J. McConnell had 15.

### Hornets 108, Pistons 116

In Charlotte, Brandon Miller scored off an offensive rebound at the buzzer to lift Charlotte Hornets to a thrilling 108-107 victory over the Detroit Pistons.

Miles Bridges had 27 points and LaMelo Ball added 25 points on five 3-pointers for the Hornets, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Miller finished with 19 points.

### Hawks 121, Knicks 116

In Atlanta, When asked what it has been like to play four NBA games in six days, rookie Zaccharie Risacher had a succinct response.

"I'm tired."

Risacher should have been fatigued after enjoying the biggest night of his young career during the Hawks' 121-116 victory over the New York Knicks. He filled up the box score with 33 points, seven rebounds, three assists, three steals and two blocked shots. The 33 points is the most by a rookie this season and easily bested his season high of 17 points.

## Alonso not too worried

# Leverkusen is struggling to maintain last season heights

BERLIN, Nov 7, (AP): Bayer Leverkusen is struggling to reach the high standards it set for itself last season.

Xabi Alonso's team has already dropped points in five of its nine Bundesliga games, while Tuesday's 4-0 loss at Liverpool in the Champions League was already its second defeat of the season.

The late goals that characterized last season's remarkable Bundesliga and German Cup campaigns - Leverkusen won both without losing a game - seem to have dried up.

Leverkusen has already conceded 15 goals in the Bundesliga. That's only nine goals fewer than it conceded in the league over the whole of last season.

Though Leverkusen drew with Bayern Munich 1-1 away, it also failed to beat relegation candidates Holstein Kiel and Werder Bremen.

The aura of invincibility that Alonso built around the team has evaporated. But it's not for want of trying. Before the Liverpool game, Leverkusen had 19 shots at goal in a scoreless draw against Stuttgart, which was second in the Bundesliga last season.

Missed chances have replaced late goals as the recurring issue, while defense is also a concern.

Granit Xhaka was scathing in his criticism of the last three goals his team conceded against Liverpool, suggesting the side's intensity dropped after conceding the first, though the Swiss midfielder remained confident the team can recover.

"If we keep doing our thing, we'll start winning games again," Xhaka said.

Alonso, likewise, does not seem too worried by his team's results.

"To win against top, top teams, you need to go through tough moments and suffer. We need to learn from this," Alonso said after the loss in Liverpool.

Alonso opted to stay at Leverkusen despite a host of suitors

reportedly keen on acquiring his services in the summer - including former clubs Bayern and Liverpool - and the Spanish coach hasn't tinkered with or changed his title-winning approach.

The squad from last season remained largely intact over the summer. Central defender Odilon Kossounou left for Atlanta, with Leverkusen bringing Nordi Mukiele from Paris Saint-Germain as his replacement. Mukiele hasn't played much so far.

It had looked like defensive chief Jonathan Tah was going to join Bayern, but the clubs failed to agree a transfer fee for a player whose Leverkusen contract is up at the end of this season. Tah has played every minute for the team so far.

Leverkusen is already seven points behind unbeaten Bayern in the Bundesliga. It next faces a short trip to Bochum on Saturday, when new Bochum coach Dieter Hecking will hope to coax some improvement from a team that has lost eight of its nine games. Bochum has a point after a draw with Kiel in September.



Leverkusen's Victor Boniface, left, is challenged by Liverpool's Ibrahim Konate during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Liverpool and Bayer Leverkusen at Anfield in Liverpool, England. (AP)

## Best of the Rest

**River Plate beats Instituto:** River Plate scored three second-half goals to record a 3-2 away victory over Instituto Cordoba in Argentina's Primera Division on Wednesday.

Gregorio Rodriguez gave the home side an early lead but goals from Pablo Solari and Paulo Diaz swung the match in River's favor.

Jonas Acevedo pulled a goal back for Instituto but Facundo Colidio restored his team's advantage with an 82nd-minute strike.

The result leaves River Plate fourth with 33 points, six points behind leader Velez Sarsfield, who has a game in hand. Instituto Cordoba is ninth, four points behind River Plate. (Xinhua)

**America keeps hopes intact:** Club America boosted its hopes of an automatic berth in the Liga MX quarterfinals with a 2-1 home victory over Pachuca on Wednesday.

The visitor took the lead through Arturo Gonzalez's 16th-minute strike before Alex Zendejas equalized with a long-range effort just before halftime.

Alan Cervantes put the Mexico City outfit ahead just after the interval when he rifled a 30-yard drive into the top-right corner. Pachuca failed to capitalize on several chances to equalize in the second half as it fell to its ninth loss of the season.

Club America has now won its past three games and is sixth in the 18-team standings with one match day remaining in the regular season. (Xinhua)

**Guangzhou players banned:** Two Guangzhou FC players have received six-match bans for their misconduct during a Chinese second-tier league game. According to a statement issued on Thursday by the Chinese Football Association (CFA), Zhang Zhixiong and Liu Langzhou were each fined 60,000 yuan for verbally abusing the referee and damaging stadium property during the match between Nanjing City FC and Guangzhou FC on Sunday.

In the 86th minute, the referee disallowed a Guangzhou goal for offside, prompting protests from the Guangzhou bench.

"Zhang Zhixiong cursed the referee and was consequently shown a red card, leading to his expulsion," the CFA said in its statement. On his way to the dressing room, Zhang kicked and damaged a wall in the players' corridor. (Xinhua)

# Ireland and All Blacks clash for the first time since epic Rugby World Cup quarterfinal

LONDON, Nov 7, (AP): Oct. 14, 2023 is a date which will live in infamy for Irish rugby.

The green machine was purring going into a Rugby World Cup quarterfinal in a setting more like Dublin than Paris, and they had the All Blacks right where they wanted them. Ireland was on a 17-match, 15-month winning streak and it had New Zealand's number from winning five of the previous eight contests.

The Irish were confident enough after beating defending champion South Africa in the pool stage to tell the Springboks they'd see them in the final.

But the All Blacks humbled them 28-24. They came out of the gate faster, never trailed, and withstood a last-ditch 37-phase attack to extend Ireland's World Cup curse to eight quarterfinals and eight defeats.

They meet on Friday in Dublin for the first time since the World Cup, memories fresher in Ireland minds than New

Zealand's. The Irish have 17 survivors in the matchday 23 and the same coach, the All Blacks only 10 and a new coach.

"We've moved on since the quarterfinal," Ireland coach Andy Farrell says, and he's right, to a point.

Ireland suffered no World Cup hangover. It retained the Six Nations title and didn't lose a series in South Africa for the first time, an historic feat all the more remarkable without Bundee Aki, Jamison Gibson-Park, Hugo Keenan, Mack Hansen or Dan Sheehan.

All but Sheehan will start against the All Blacks, against which Ireland goes to another level.

Ever since Ireland beat New Zealand for the first time in 2016 - under Kiwi coach Joe Schmidt - after 111 years of trying, the games have become fiery, grudge-laden matches. Ireland's ability to talk the talk and back it up crashes against New Zealand's desperation to restore dominance. New Zea-

land hasn't won in Ireland in eight years.

There's no doubt Ireland will be stewing from the World Cup quarterfinal, especially after some player exchanges following that game were revisited recently by the retired Jonathan Sexton to hype his book. Sexton has returned to the squad as a consultant.

Ireland has also officially added a former Crusaders assistant of New Zealand coach Scott Robertson to its backroom staff, Andrew Goodman, but starts without injured tighthead prop Tadhg Furlong, a blow. But his replacement, Finlay Bealham, finished the win over the Springboks in Durban in July.

That match was a breakthrough for Farrell. He benched Peter O'Mahony, who captained the team in the Six Nations, gave Tadhg Beirne the blindside flank, and No. 8 Caelan Doris the captaincy.

"He's calm, he's taken it all in his stride and that puts

everyone else at ease," Farrell says of Doris. "On top of that, he's not in bad form. He's thriving in the (captaincy) now. He's walking tall."

Like Ireland with Furlong, New Zealand was dealt a blow by losing a concussed Beauden Barrett from last weekend's win over England. He'd brought back assurance to the fly-half role. Damian McKenzie, superb off the bench, was back as the starting 10 with question marks.

"When he's on, he's world class, shows great touches and keeps believing in himself," Robertson says of McKenzie. And when he's not on? "Just trust him."

The rebuilding All Blacks are still looking for a benchmark win this year. Unlike Ireland, they failed to beat the Springboks in South Africa, and Robertson compared this match to the odds facing them in Johannesburg in August. The Boks pounced on a late All Blacks yellow card to score two converted tries and win 31-27.





Duaij Al-Otaibi, President of both the Kuwaiti and Arab Shooting Federations and Chairman of the Supreme Organizing Committee.

# Sports

## All set for the Crown Prince Shooting Championship

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The annual His Highness Crown Prince Shooting Championship will kick off on Saturday, at 8:30 am with the official training session for the "Trap" competition. This will be followed by equipment inspections for both the men's and women's events, culminating in the opening ceremony at 6:30 pm at the Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Shooting Range Complex.

The event will be held under the patronage of His Highness the Crown Prince, with the Governor of Farwaniya, Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser, representing His Highness. Also attending will be members of the

Kuwait Shooting Federation, the Arab Federation for Shooting, various ambassadors, officials, and heads of delegations from the participating teams.

The ceremony will feature a speech by Engineer Duaij Al-Otaibi, President of both the Kuwaiti and Arab Shooting Federations and Chairman of the Supreme Organizing Committee. Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser, representing the Crown Prince, will then officially open the championship. The ceremony will conclude with a documentary film highlighting the development of Kuwaiti shooting, followed by an operetta celebrating Kuwaiti folk arts.

In a statement, Eng. Duaij Al-Otaibi expressed gratitude to His Highness the Crown Prince for his continued patronage of the championship.

"The Kuwaiti shooting family, both male and female shooters, are honored by His Highness's support for this event, which marks the beginning of the new season for the Kuwaiti Shooting Federation," said Al-Otaibi.

He praised the Crown Prince's unwavering support for the sport, which motivates athletes to excel in Gulf, Arab, Asian, international, and Olympic competitions, elevating the Kuwaiti flag at sporting events world-

wide.

Al-Otaibi also thanked Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser, the Crown Prince's representative, for his presence at the opening ceremony.

On behalf of the Kuwait Shooting Federation, the Supreme Organizing Committee, and himself, Al-Otaibi welcomed all guests from national federations, delegations, and athletes participating in the championship. He wished them a pleasant stay in Kuwait and success in the competition, with hopes for excellent results in this prestigious event, which enjoys widespread recognition and support.

## Countdown to Arabian Gulf Cup: Gulf 26 draw takes place in Kuwait

By Hassan Mosa  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: The draw for the upcoming "Gulf 26" tournament will take place on Saturday, at 7:00 pm at the Waldorf Astoria in the Avenues Mall. Kuwait is set to host this edition of the tournament from December 21 to January 3.

This will be the fourth time the event is held under the Arabian Gulf Cup Federation, led by Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani. Eight teams will compete: Kuwait, Qatar, Yemen, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE, and Iraq, with matches scheduled across Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, the new Sulaybiqhat Stadium, and Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium.

The draw ceremony will be attended by Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, President of the Arabian Gulf Cup Football Federation, alongside federation officials, team delegations, and prominent Gulf football stars.

In a recent press release, the Gulf Federation announced that preparations in Kuwait are accelerating, with coordination meetings ongoing between the Gulf Cup Federation and the Supreme Organizing Committee. Additionally, tournament committees will convene on the sidelines of the draw to finalize their leadership roles, members, and work plans.

The Gulf Cup tournament will unfold in two stages: the group stage and the knockout stage leading to the final. The draw will allocate the eight teams into two groups, with Kuwait, as the host, and Iraq, the reigning champion, placed at the top of each group.

According to the tournament structure, the top two teams from each group will advance to the semi-finals. The first-place team from Group A will face the second-place team from Group B, and the first-place team from Group B will compete against the second-place team from Group A. The winners of the semi-final matches will then meet in the final, where the champion will be crowned.



The Arabian Gulf Cup.

### Jovovic praises team performance

## Kuwait Club earns hard-fought draw against Shabab Al-Ahli

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 7: Kuwait Club's Montenegrin coach, Nebojsa Jovovic, praised his players for their performance in the 3-3 draw against UAE's Shabab Al-Ahli in the AFC Champions League 2, at Kuwait Club Stadium in Kaifan during the fourth round of Group D.

The draw brought Kuwait Club's total to two points, while Shabab Al-Ahli moved to seven points, trailing leader Al-Hussein Irbid (9 points), who defeated Uzbekistan's Nasaf Qarshi 2-1 in the same round. Nasaf Qarshi remains at 4 points.

Kuwait Club now needs to win its next two matches and hope for Shabab Al-Ahli to lose in the final two rounds to have a chance at progressing.

Speaking at the post-match press

conference, Jovovic said, "The draw came at a time when it was hard to recover." He emphasized that his team displayed a strong performance against a side filled with professional and international players.

On the other hand, Shabab Al-Ahli's Portuguese coach, Paulo de Sousa, noted that his team aimed for a win against Kuwait Club, but ultimately, the draw was acceptable given the flow of the match.

De Sousa mentioned that his team had a strong start, but as the game progressed, it seemed to retreat, possibly waiting for the match to conclude without further issues. He acknowledged that Kuwait Club took advantage of its home advantage, scoring two consecutive goals. However, he praised his team's resilience, as it worked hard in the second half to level the score.



Kuwait Club and Shabab Al-Ahli players vie for the ball.



Jaber Stadium is ready to host the 'Gulf 26'.

## Barca, Inter and upstart Brest win again in Champs League

Bizarre penalty dooms Aston Villa

LONDON, Nov 7, (AP): Barcelona and Inter Milan won again in the Champions League though both former title holders are looking up in the standings toward upstart newcomer Brest.

Aston Villa started the week atop the 36-team table but its winning run ended after a bizarre penalty was awarded when defender Tyrone Mings picked up the ball in the area at Club Brugge, resulting in a 1-0 loss that sent the English club plummeting to eighth place.

Paris Saint-Germain, in its first season without Kylian Mbappé, trails far behind in 25th after Atletico Madrid scored in stoppage time to seal a 2-1 win for the Spanish team at Parc des Princes.

Barcelona's blistering scoring form continued in a 5-2 win at Red Star Belgrade - a seventh straight win since the start of October at a rate of four goals per game. Robert Lewandowski scored twice and has 21 this season.

Inter Milan stifled Arsenal in a 1-0 win at San Siro sealed by Hakan Calhanoglu's penalty in first-half stoppage time.

Inter is unbeaten on 10 points and in fifth place, one below Brest which won 2-1 at Sparta Prague. The French debutant looks sure to advance to the knockout phase starting in February.

Atalanta won 2-0 at Stuttgart to stay unbeaten on eight points and Salzburg got its first goals and points in a 3-1 win at Feyenoord.

Bayern Munich won 1-0 at home to Benfica in a game that was delayed 15 minutes by crowd congestion and then was played in a muted atmosphere because of a medical incident for a fan.

Shakhtar Donetsk playmaker Heorhiy Sudakov had a fine assist and an even better goal in a 2-1 win for the Ukrainian champion against Young Boys. Shakhtar's No. 10 showed why he is expected to be the club's next big-money sale.

Liverpool, which on Tuesday routed Bayer Leverkusen 4-0, leads the standings at the midway point of the eight-round program.

Liverpool is the only team with four straight wins, while five teams have four losses. They are Leipzig, Sturm Graz, Young Boys, Red Star and



Barcelona's Gerard Martin, left, and Red Star's Silas fight for the ball during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Red Star and Barcelona at the Rajko Mitic Stadium in Belgrade, Serbia. (AP)

Slovan Bratislava.

Two Italian teams - Inter Milan and Atalanta - have yet to concede a goal in four games. Another Italian side, Bologna, is the only team with no goals scored.

Villa had led the standings in the new league-phase format after three straight wins without conceding a goal - and it took a bizarre incident before goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez was eventually beaten.

Mings was punished for picking up the ball when Martinez seemed to restart play with a goal kick passed forward to his teammate. Mings walked a couple steps to gather the ball with his left hand and returned to place it in the six-yard box.

"It's the biggest mistake I witnessed in my career," Villa coach Unai Emery said. "It has only happened one time in all my life. Today." Brugge captain Hans Vanaken placed the 52nd-minute spot-kick to Martinez's left as the World Cup-winning Argentina goalkeeper dived to his right.

It was the standout result of the inaugural week of the new Champions League in September: Bayern Munich



Aston Villa's Yuri Tielemans, background, and Brugge's Hugo Vetlesen jump for the ball during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Club Brugge and Aston Villa at Jan Breydelstadion in Bruges, Belgium. (AP)

9, Dinamo Zagreb 2.

It was the first time a team had scored nine times in a game in the

32-year Champions League era, and Dinamo fired its coach two days later.

Since then? Bayern lost twice, including a 4-1 rout at Barcelona, and Dinamo won twice. At the end of play Wednesday, Bayern was 17th on six points, one place below Dinamo on seven. If those placings hold until January, they meet again twice more in the knockout playoffs round.

The fifth round in three weeks' time has perhaps the stellar attraction of 144 games in the league phase: Liverpool vs. Real Madrid.

That game on Nov. 27 is a rematch of the 2022 and 2018 finals, both won by Madrid, and the 1981 European Cup title match that Liverpool won.

There is another final rematch: Bayern Munich hosts PSG on Nov. 26 in a repeat of the pandemic-season final played in August 2020 without fans in Lisbon. Also, sixth-place Barcelona hosts Brest, a fixture which might have been overlooked when the draw was made in August yet the French team is currently fourth.

Only the top eight teams in January advance directly to the round of 16 in March.