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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Kuwait under the eyes and ears of the Rescuing Amir

GREAT leaders are known for closely monitoring all matters, whether big or small, to stay informed about the situation and take corrective actions, when necessary, by issuing clear directives to their officials.

They also recognize and reward hard work, especially when it involves acts of philanthropy.

A prime example of this is young Kuwaiti volunteer Yousef Al-Omran, who was warmly received by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad to be congratulated for his outstanding volunteer efforts.

This recognition will not only encourage Al-Omran to continue his contributions but also inspire young Kuwaitis to serve their country in various ways.

Kuwait has been plagued by political unrest

for nearly 50 years, which has paralyzed institutions and hindered effective oversight. As a result, neglect grew, institutions became disengaged, and officials performed carelessly. Even youth initiatives were discouraged and lacked support.

This environment led to a lack of motivation for volunteers, as authorities and organizations failed to fulfill their duties, leaving them at the mercy of individual officials.

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His Highness the Amir



Sultan Haitham bin Tariq

Kuwait Amir congratulates Oman on 54th National Day

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Sunday sent a cable of congratulations to Sultan Haitham bin Tariq of Oman on the occasion of his country's 54th National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir commended the solid and historical ties between Kuwait and Oman as well as the outstanding achievements that Oman has accomplished under the wise leadership of the Sultan.

His Highness the Amir also wished the Sultan of Oman good health and further progress and

prosperity for his country under his wise leadership.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable on Sunday to Sultan Haitham bin Tariq of Oman, congratulating him on the occasion of his country's 54th National Day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished the Sultan well-being and the people of Oman further progress and development under his wise leadership.

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Amir receives Crown Prince

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah after he headed Kuwait's delegation to the extraordinary Arab-Islamic Summit in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and the 29th Conference of Parties on climate change (COP29) held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Also on Sunday, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Amir honors historic bond with Morocco

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah congratulated on Sunday Moroccan King Mohammed VI on the advent of his country's 69th Independence Day.

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A.I. CAMERAS SET TO TRACK REAL-TIME ROAD OFFENSES Kuwait deports 497 in 4 days

Child front-seat fine jumps to KD 50

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Some 385 people were arrested and 497 were deported in the last four days due to residency violations, the Ministry of Interior announced on Sunday.

In a press statement, the ministry said that security forces carried out operations throughout the country between November 11 and 14, apprehending and arresting the aforementioned numbers.

The ministry affirmed that it would continue its security campaign against those violating residency laws including individuals bringing in workers and laborers illegally.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior has announced the deployment of advanced artificial intelligence (AI) cameras to enhance road safety and enforce traffic regulations across Kuwait, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Colonel Abdullah Bu Hassan, Assistant Director of the Traffic Awareness Department, revealed in an interview with Al-Akhabar Channel that approxi-

mately 252 AI-powered cameras are being installed on public roads throughout the country. These state-of-the-art devices are specifically designed to detect and record violations related to seat belt usage and mobile phone use while driving.

"The installation process has already begun, and the cameras will become operational as soon as they are in place," Bu Hassan stated. He emphasized that this technology represents a significant step forward in traffic law enforcement.

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Three decrees issued to revoke citizenship of 8

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: The Official Gazette Kuwait Alyawm has published three decrees (192, 193, and 194 of 2024) in its latest issue on Sunday, announcing the withdrawal of Kuwaiti citizenship from eight individuals, along with their dependents. The decisions were made in accordance with Decree Law No. 15 of 1959 governing Kuwaiti citizenship, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Salah Al-Fadala, Head of the Central Agency for Affairs of Il-legal Residents, stated that the agency is currently working to address the legal status of those affected by the citizenship revocations.

In a video message during a Diwaniya visit, Al-Fadala explained that once the names of those affected are officially listed, state agencies are instructed to halt transactions involving these individuals until they provide the required information on prescribed forms which are especially prepared for this purpose.

Al-Fadala emphasized that each case is reviewed individually and decisions are based on the information obtained from the relevant sources.

While legal determinations are pending, basic humanitarian services, such as medical treatment, remain available to those concerned individuals whose nationalities have been revoked.

He also disclosed ongoing discussions with the Ministry of Social Affairs to examine the legal circumstances of individuals with revoked nationalities.

In his remarks, Al-Fadala expressed gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef for their guidance and support, acknowledging the tangible outcomes of their efforts.



A specialized presentation demonstrating expertise in riot control operations at the Military Police Command. The event was attended by Brigadier General Mishal Fahad Al-Sabah, Commander of the Kuwaiti Military Police, and Major General Rashid Al-Hajri, Commander of the Qatari Military Police. — See Page 2

Attendance goes smart with MEW's phone app

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: According to informed sources in the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, the team responsible for the fingerprint attendance system, in collaboration with the Information Systems Center, launched the smart fingerprint application for smartphones on November 11. This marks a major development in the comprehensive fingerprint project, which began implementation in August 2021.

This application is part of a plan to update and modernize the fingerprint attendance system and related devices, which will be applied to all 35,500 employees in all sectors of the ministry.

Programming, testing, and developing the application took two full months. It underwent practical experiments with a selected segment of users to ensure its efficiency before the official launch. It was designed to keep pace with the latest technical standards and meet the needs of employees in sensitive locations.

The technical team of the fingerprint attendance system is currently present at the Doha West Station to activate the application on the ground. The team is working to familiarize workers with the application, and to program the system to ensure smooth operation and distinctive experience that facilitates daily tasks.

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9 KFH wins Straight Through Processing Excellence Award from Citibank



10 Gulf Bank wins Mastercard Award for 'Highest tokenized debit portfolio in Kuwait'

10 Zain Group wins three awards at MEA Business Magazine Technology Achievement Awards '24

Kuwait promotes low-sugar choices in school canteens

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Deputy Director General of the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) Dr. Shaima Al-Asfour confirmed that work is underway to amend the school canteen food regulations issued in 2021 to be in line with Kuwait's vision and to keep pace with global devel-

opments in this field.

She made the statement at a press conference that PAFN organized Sunday to announce the launching of a public awareness campaign on the dangers of added sugar, help manufacturing companies improve the components of their products and reduce sugar levels, and highlight their role in formulating

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'Workshop' to address Jleeb pressing woes

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: The Municipal Council's Environmental Affairs Committee is set to host a workshop under the title "Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh Environmental System ... Community Participation between Situation

Continued on Page 5

Naval force live ammo drill Monday, Tuesday

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti naval force would be running a live-ammunition exercise on Monday and Tuesday from 07:00 am to 06:00 pm local time, said the army on Sunday.

The Kuwaiti Army's public relations department said in a statement that the exercise would take place 16.5 nautical miles east of Ras Al-Jalia's coast extended to Garuh Island and six nautical miles east of Ras Al-Zour coast extended to Umm Al-Maradim Island.

The statement called on citizens and residents alike to avoid the area of the exercise during the specific dates and times.

Newswatch

Hezb spokesman killed in airstrike

BEIRUT, Nov 17, (AP): A rare Israeli airstrike on central Beirut killed Hezbollah's chief spokesman on Sunday, an official with the militant group said. Earlier, Israeli strikes killed at least 12 people in the Gaza Strip, officials said, where Israel has been at war with the Palestinian Hamas for over a year.

The latest in a series of targeted killings of senior Hezbollah officials came as Lebanese officials were considering a United States-led cease-fire proposal.

RIYADH: GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi received on Sunday the Sudanese Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Dafallah Al-Hajji Ali at the General Secretariat in Riyadh.

During the meeting, Al-Budaiwi stressed the importance of preserving the sovereignty, security, stability and territorial integrity of Sudan, said a Secretariat statement. Al-Budaiwi also confirmed the necessity of prioritizing dialogue, unifying ranks and alleviating the suffering of the brotherly Sudanese people. (KUNA)

7,700-year-old craftsmanship

Kuwait unearths ancient workshop, rare clay head

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17, (KUNA): A Kuwaiti-Polish archaeological mission has made significant discoveries at the prehistoric Bahra 1 settlement in Kuwait's Subiya desert, including what appears to be a 7,700-year-old

jewelry workshop and a rare clay human head figurine.

Mohammad bin Redha, Assistant Secretary General for Antiquities and Museums at the National Council for

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Artefacts being examined at the prehistoric Bahra 1 settlement in Kuwait's Subiya desert.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:51 Asr 14:32
 Sunrise... 06:13 Maghrib .. 16:52
 Zohr 11:33 Isha 18:12

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Rather hot and partly cloudy with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 08-32 km/h.

By Night: Mild to rather cold with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind,

Weather

with speeds of 08-28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear with a chance for fog forming over some areas.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	30	21
Kuwait Airport	32	19

Abdaly	31	17
Bubyan	26	22
Jahra	32	19
Failaka Island	28	22
Salmiyah	27	22
Ahmadi	30	17
Jal Aliyah	30	17
Nuwaisib	30	16

Public investments total \$200 million

Tunisia-Kuwait explore ways to upgrade ties

TUNIS, Nov 17, (KUNA): The fourth Tunisia-Kuwaiti high committee meeting, on November 18-22, will be exploring venues for cooperation and collaboration, which in turn furthers ties between the two Arab countries.

Tunisian and Kuwaiti relations date back to the early 1960s when both countries signed a deal to establish diplomat ties in 1963.

Kuwaiti investments in various fields in Tunisia began in 1976, a development displaying deep-rooted ties.

Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) gained the trust of the Tunisian market through ventures in telecommunication, pharmaceuticals, the car in-



Al-Yahya

dustry, and the financial and tourist sectors.

During the 162nd meeting for the Arab League ministerial council, held in Cairo last September, Tunisian Foreign Minister Mohammad Nafti met with Kuwait counterpart Abdullah Al-Yahya both stressed the importance of the upcoming meeting, which hopefully reflect both leaderships and peoples' desire for more cooperation.

During the third committee meeting, which was held in Kuwait back in 2015, eight agreements and MoUs were signed between Kuwait and Tunisia, leading to more enhanced ties.

In this regard, former Tunisian Foreign Minister Ahmad Wanis commended the exemplary relations, saying that at the moment, ties were witnessing several dynamic activities supervised by the leaderships of both countries.

The upcoming fourth high committee meeting would be another milestone, which would add to

the astonishing ties between both countries.

On his part, former diplomat Abdullah Al-Obaidi pointed out that there were several agreements signed between two countries in various fields and hopefully the upcoming fourth committee meeting would looking into ways to enhance them as well as signing other agreements and MoUs.

He mentioned that the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) had contributed to development in Tunisia.

He revealed that the amount of Kuwaiti public investments in Tunisia where at around USD 200 million in addition to private investments that covered several sectors.

Kuwait and Tunisia have signed thus far 50 agreements since diplomatic ties began some 53 years ago and the upcoming meeting will explore ways to take relations to the next level.



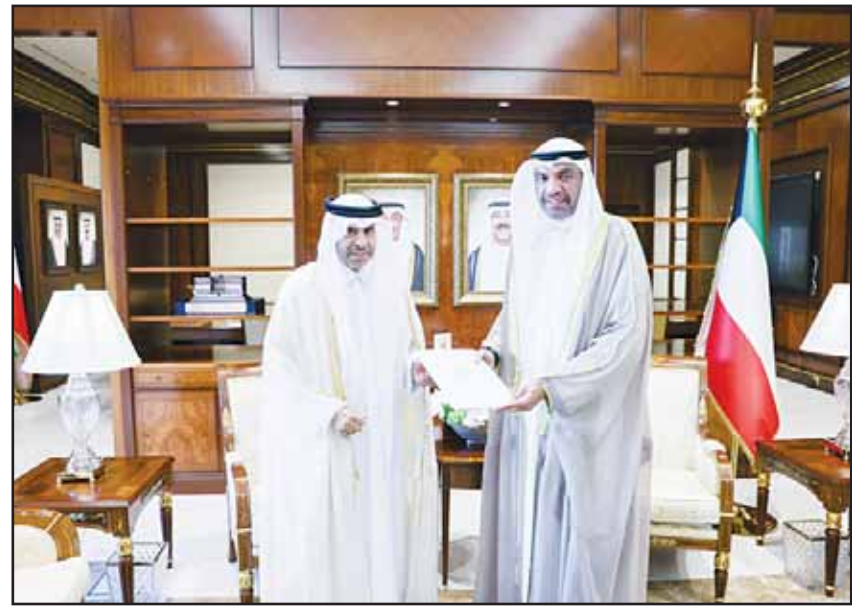
KUNA photo
 Representative of His Highness the Amir and the Minister of Foreign Affairs heads to the UAE to deliver an invitation from His Highness to the Emirati President to attend the Gulf Summit in Kuwait.

Awqaf waiting for Bedoun Hajj nod, quota not known

Saudi embassy urged to hike quota by 3,000

By Mohammad Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff



KUNA photo
 The Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya receives a written message from the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar about the fraternal relations between the two countries.

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Mohammad Al-Wasmi supervised the sorting of Hajj pilgrimage applications to choose 8,000 pilgrims who met the conditions.

In a press statement following the press conference in the ministry on Sunday with representatives of Kuwait Hajj Caravans Union in attendance; Al-Wasmi revealed that the sorting process for those who registered on the platform to perform Hajj for the year 1446 (Islamic calendar) was carried out in a smooth and transparent manner. He affirmed there were no errors in the sorting process. "We are here to overcome obstacles. Every year, we work hard to develop the registration mechanism to ensure ease of sorting," he added.

Asked about increasing Kuwait's pilgrims quota, he said "the number of Hajj applicants on the electronic platform reached 34,700 citizens and 8,000 pilgrims were selected. In cooperation with our brothers in Saudi Arabia, we are hoping to increase the number; which is possible, but not yet confirmed." He said the Kuwaiti caravans are known for their excellence in service provision, given their long experience in the field.

Increase

Meanwhile, Director of the Hajj and Umrah Department Sattam Al-Muzain said the ministry submitted a request to the Saudi Ministry of Hajj to increase Kuwait's quota by 3,000.

Regarding the Hajj of Bedouns, he disclosed the ministry is waiting for official approvals. He clarified the quota for this category has yet to be determined and it will be known once the approvals are obtained.

He stated that 7,700 slots were allocated for the Sunni and Jaafari sects, and 300 for the religious and medical teams accompanying the caravans.

He explained the sorting mechanism was based on three age groups, as it was done by prioritizing the oldest age in each group. He said the first group consisted of those 60 years old and above, the second group consisted of those aged 35 to 59 years old, and the third group consisted of those 34 years old and below.

He added those who were accepted will receive messages and notifications through the Sahel application, urging them to register for the caravans within five days to ensure their names are not deleted from the platform.

He confirmed there is a link with the Ministry of Interior to verify the pilgrims' data and compliance with the requirements of Saudi Arabia, indicating that all those who were accepted have not performed Hajj before.

"After amending the Hajj regulations, the fees for Hajj are now down to a total of KD1,650; compared to the price range of KD3,500 to KD4,000 prior to the amendment," he concluded.

Lowest bidder wins pact to build purification plant

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: After preparing the valuation budget for the submitted bids and in response to the Ministry of Public Works' request, the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) decided in its meeting last Wednesday to award the contract for the construction, operation, and maintenance of a purification plant in South Mutlaa City to the company with the lowest bid. The project, with a total cost of KD 149.6 million, will be implemented within five days.

According to sources, the project involves the construction of a purification plant and a pumping station with a capacity of up to 400,000 m³/day to treat wastewater from South Mutlaa City. It also includes the establishment of an electrical conversion station with a capacity of 16 MW, as well as administrative buildings, laboratories, and infrastructure services for the sewage treatment plant. The project will also address the treatment of sludge to generate electrical energy.

In addition, the project includes a control and distribution system for treated water (DMC), treated water lines for irrigation in South Mutlaa Housing City, and a connection to the Abdali farms irrigation network.

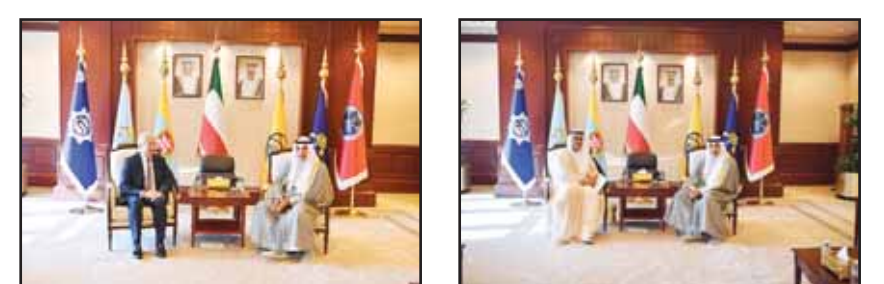
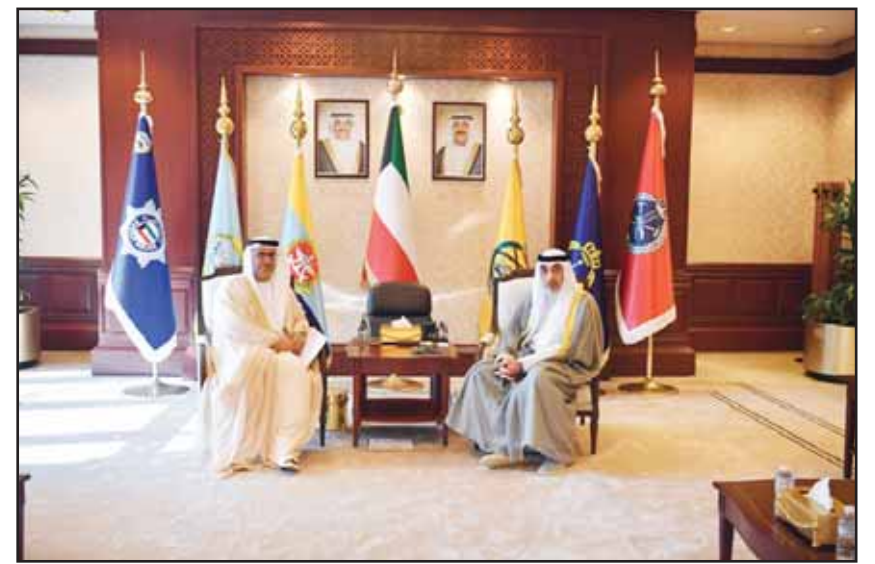
The sources highlighted that the Ministry of Public Works is committed to collaborating with all relevant government agencies, in line with the directives of the Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mishaan. This includes supporting housing projects and their infrastructure needs, such as sewage treatment and purification stations, as these are critical components of the city's overall development.

Summit call delivered to UAE Pres

ABU DHABI, Nov 17, (KUNA): Representative of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, delivered on Sunday on invitation from His Highness the Amir to

UAE President Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

The invite is to the Gulf Cooperation Council Supreme Council meeting, for Gulf heads of state, set to be held in Kuwait on December 1.



KUNA photos
 Top and above: Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah meets the ambassadors to boost relations.

Acting PM meets foreign ambassadors, discusses ways to strengthen relations

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17, (KUNA): Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah discussed ways to strengthen relations and cooperation with a number of ambassadors to the country on Sunday.

The latest regional and international topics were also discussed during the meetings, a Defense Ministry statement said.

The Acting Prime Minister separately received Oman's Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Saleh Al-Kharousi, UAE's Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Matar Al-Neyadi,

Egypt's Ambassador to Kuwait Osama Shaltout, Jordan's Ambassador to Kuwait Sinan Majali, and Morocco's Ambassador to Kuwait Ali bin Issa.

He also separately received Bosnia and Herzegovina's Ambassador to Kuwait Nusret Tsharshar, Georgia's Ambassador to Kuwait Noshrevan Lomtadize, South Korea's Ambassador to Kuwait Park Chong-Suk, Brazil's Ambassador to Kuwait Rodrigo de Araujo Jabesh, Spain's Ambassador to Kuwait Manuel Gamallo, and Czech Republic's Ambassador to Kuwait Juraj Chmiel.



KUNA photo
 Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Major General Pilot Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad, during his attendance at a military parade of units from the Military Police Command.

Deputy Army chief all praise for disciplined and committed MP

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17, (KUNA): Major General Pilot Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, emphasized the exemplary discipline and commitment of Military Police (MP) members during a special parade and inspection on Sunday.

The event, held at the Military Police Command, was attended by Brigadier General Mishal Fahad Al-Sabah, Commander of the Kuwaiti Military Police, and Major General Rashid Al-Hajri, Commander of the Qatari Military Police, who was visiting with his delegation.

During the parade, military police forces conducted a specialized presentation demonstrating their expertise in riot control operations. The event also

featured demonstrations of advanced skills and martial arts techniques focused on securing personnel during movement.

Major General Sabah Al-Sabah praised the Military Police members for their dedicated efforts and the critical tasks they perform. He expressed his wishes for their continued success, emphasizing their important role in serving the nation under the leadership of His Highness the Amir, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and His Highness the Crown Prince.

The visit underscores the Kuwaiti military's commitment to maintaining high standards of professional excellence and readiness across its specialized units.

Other Voices

Sustainability and building Earth

Dr. Jaber Eid Al-Wandah
 International Consultant,
 Sustainable Development
 Deputy General Manager –
 Al-Najat Charity

In previous articles, we briefly discussed the definition of sustainable development, its three main areas, and the mistake of focusing on just one aspect of sustainability, such as financial sustainability. Instead, we emphasized the need to activate and achieve all aspects of sustainability. We suggest, quite simply, adding the word "sustainability" to any concept or issue an institution is concerned with and then working towards achieving and activating it. For example, by attaching "sustainability" to "organization," we strive for "organizational sustainability." Similarly, with "operational sustainability," "improvement sustainability," and "institutional sustainability" – all of which need to be realized.

We previously mentioned the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the role of countries or institutions in engaging with them positively. But what does positive engagement mean? How do we begin to interact with these goals? Do we have to accept the SDGs exactly as they are written? To answer these questions, we'll discuss two key points:

1. How do we positively engage with these goals from our understanding of the importance of sustainability within our culture and Islamic teachings?

2. What reservations might we have about the wording of certain goals or their interpretation from a human and logical perspective?

If we examine the primary domains of sustainability – economy, environment, society, and governance – we will find that these were emphasized

and systematically activated in our civilization and historical trajectory. This indicates that these global ideas and institutional directives will naturally find their place in our reality if we approach them correctly. Their importance or usefulness won't require much explanation but will need activation in people's lives and an emphasis on revitalizing and re-focusing on them.

Our civilization and culture have defined and built an integrated methodology for how individuals and institutions deal with these sustainability domains in their modern sense. This methodology serves as a guiding framework, regulating and directing human actions, rooted in the understanding that humans are stewards of the earth. Our task is to develop it, not destroy it. We must live in harmony with natural laws and not according to harmful desires that lead to the destruction of our environment, economy, or society. As Allah has commanded: we are meant to build and cultivate the earth, not exploit or ruin it "He produced you from the earth and settled you in it" (Surat Hud, 61).

This civilized methodology aims to foster a mindset in individuals and institutions that drives them toward leaving a lasting impact, maintaining continuity, and making a difference in the environment, economy, and human life. From this perspective, we can understand the consistent condemnation of corruption in the earth and the strong disapproval of those who spread it. We also see the encouragement for development, growth, and sustainability, even in the most difficult and uncertain circumstances. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) famously said: "If the Hour (the Day of Judgment) is established and one of you has a sapling in his hand, if he is able to plant it before the Hour is established, then let him plant it."

This prophetic teaching emphasizes the importance of positive action and sustainability, even in moments of crisis, highlighting the value Islam places on continuous efforts to improve and sustain life on Earth.

To be continued



Dr. Al-Wandah

diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Spread of AI will widen the gap between rich and poor nations

"WHETHER we like it or not, artificial intelligence has become a dominant feature in the direction and vision of governments and countries worldwide," columnist **Dr. Issa Al-Omairi** wrote for *Al-Anba* daily.

"This is due to its advantages and benefits for human society, as it represents the coming technological revolution that will transform the world, shifting it from east to west and opening new frontiers."

"However, amidst this global race and competition in the field, we must recognize that every positive development carries with it negative aspects. Nothing in this world is perfect. While the positive side of artificial intelligence is almost universally acknowledged, it is the negative side that is the focus of this article."



Dr. Issa Al-Omairi

"What I believe is that the issues surrounding modern technological advancements should not be viewed through a single lens or based solely on emotional perspectives."

"These matters require an objective, effective approach because they are multifaceted, with many details hidden within. The negative aspects lie in these details."

"For developed industrial nations and countries with low populations that rely on skilled labor, artificial intelligence can be seen as a blessing -- a practical solution to meet their needs for rare, low-wage labor. But what about the developing countries that rely on cheap labor as a key source of national income and a pillar of their future economic and industrial development ambitions?"

"In light of this question, the world is currently facing a dilemma. It is important to clarify where the problem of artificial intelligence lies for these countries, and how the entire world can benefit from it."

"The new international system, dominated by technology giants and artificial intelligence, will create a scenario where a few winners -- who control everything -- will hold unprecedented wealth, concentrated in the hands of a small number of companies in China, the United States, Japan, and a few Southeast Asian countries that form the new industrial nations, along with a limited number of European Union countries."

"This, in our view, presents a future danger for artificial intelligence's impact on countries that lack it. These countries will become poorer, and face widespread social unrest and political and economic collapse, stemming from the widespread unemployment of workers."

"A significant inequality gap will emerge between nations if artificial intelligence spreads rapidly. As a result, the historical economic advantage that developing countries have -- cheap labor -- will diminish as artificial intelligence takes over industries."

"It is likely that factories powered by artificial intelligence will move from their current locations to areas closer to massive consumer markets."

"Consequently, the gap between those who have wealth at a global level and those who do not will significantly widen, with no clear indicators or measures available to bridge or close this gap."

Also:

"In late 2022, the Executive Regulations of the Companies Law in Kuwait were amended to include a provision requiring joint-stock companies to deduct 1 percent of their annual profits for the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS)," columnist **Dr. Sarah Khaled Al-Sultan** wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"While the amendment aimed to provide financial support for the Foundation, it has sparked a legal debate about the nature of this deduction and its classification as a tax. Below is an exploration of this issue, examining its implications before and after the amendment."

"Established in 1976, KFAS operates as a private institution supporting research, scholarships, and innovation. Historically, Kuwaiti shareholding companies voluntarily contributed a percentage of their profits -- initially 5 percent, later reduced to 1 percent -- to the Foundation."

"For companies that signed KFAS's founding agreement, their obligation was contractual. However, for non-signatory companies, these payments were voluntary, reflecting their belief in the Foundation's mission."

"The recent amendment introduced a mandatory requirement for joint-stock companies to allocate 1 percent of their annual net profits to KFAS."

"The executive regulations enforce this obligation and require companies to transfer the deducted amount to the Foundation. This shift from voluntary contributions to compulsory payments raises the question: Is this deduction a tax?"

"Compulsion -- The amendment creates a legal obligation, mirroring the compulsory nature of taxes."

"Non-recoverability: The deducted amounts are final and cannot be reclaimed."

"Lack of direct compensation -- Companies receive no direct benefit from their payments, aligning with the nature of taxes, which are paid without direct services in return."

"Linked to the ability to pay -- The deduction is proportional to annual profits reflecting a company's financial capacity."

"Given these characteristics, the deduction closely resembles a tax, despite not being collected by the Tax Administration or entering the state treasury."

"Compliance with Article 134 -- Kuwait's Constitution mandates that taxes must be imposed by law, raising questions about the legality of using executive regulations for this purpose."

"Budgetary Principles -- Article 141 prohibits allocating public revenues for specific expenses without legislative approval, further complicating the deduction's legal standing."

"The classification as a tax necessitates its inclusion in treaties to avoid double taxation. Kuwait's adoption of the OECD's Base Erosion and Profit Shifting framework may require integrating this deduction into broader global minimum tax agreements."

"Acknowledging the deduction as a tax influences discussions on corporate tax reform, particularly regarding the cumulative tax burden on companies."

"The legal amendment mandating the 1 percent deduction for KFAS has transformed a voluntary contribution into a de facto tax."

"While it aims to fund scientific advancement, its legal classification raises constitutional and international implications. This development highlights the need for a comprehensive review of corporate taxation in Kuwait to ensure clarity, compliance, and fairness."

□ □ □

"IT is very strange that our national team's match against South Korea in the World Cup qualifiers was not broadcasted on Kuwait TV, and Kuwaitis who wanted to watch the match had to turn to other channels. Were there any technical or financial obstacles that prevented this from being shown on national television? If there are any reasons behind this, they must be addressed to ensure our national team is not seen as neglected by our own national channel."

columnist **Eng. Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for *Al-Anba* daily.

"How can it be acceptable that, we are unable to watch our national team's match during a world championship on our own national TV channel?"

"Even if the intention is to encourage the public to attend the match, this is not a sufficient reason, as only a small percentage of the population can attend in person. Is this really acceptable, dear government?"

"Broadcasting our national team's matches on Kuwait TV, especially those held on our own soil, should be the minimum level of support a ministry can provide. Our national team needs the support of its fans, particularly in the largest world championship where they are striving to compete."

"The truth is that I have noticed a lot of surprise, and even frustration, from those I know, especially those without subscriptions to paid channels. Their inner voice keeps asking repeatedly, 'Where can we watch it?'"

"The Council of Ministers should have taken this matter seriously and ensured that it was addressed, not just for this tournament but for any future ones as well. Our national team, including players, administrators, and fans, should never feel that their efforts to raise Kuwait's name in international sports competitions are being overlooked or undervalued."

□ □ □

"THE suspension of flights to Kuwait, announced by British Airways, is set to take effect in March. This follows similar decisions announced by Dutch and German airlines to halt their services to the country. The move is understood to have technical and organizational reasons behind it," columnist **Eng. Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) must thoroughly investigate the reasons behind these flight suspensions to ensure that history doesn't repeat itself. It is important to make sure that Kuwait's new airport does not end up underutilized, and does not justify its high costs, after a long wait and high expectations for it to become a regional hub for air transport."

"The successive suspensions of flights are undoubtedly disappointing and raise concerns about the future of Kuwaiti air transport. Have we lost our appeal to tourists, investors, and airlines to the extent that major carriers are now halting flights to Kuwait?"

"In a recent statement published in the media, a Kuwaiti expert outlined several technical factors behind the flight suspensions. These are issues that must be addressed promptly by DGCA to ensure that our new airport remains attractive to global air carriers."

"If the expert's assertion is correct that the flight suspensions are in the interest of Kuwait's national carrier, it may not necessarily align with the interests of Kuwait itself."

"In my view, the issue goes beyond just aviation. The attractiveness of air travel is part of a larger picture, which includes the appeal of foreign investment, skilled labor, and tourism. These factors are interconnected, and we must ask whether the components that drive them are in place."

"Kuwait's new airport, with its potential to occupy a prominent regional position, is not solely defined by its facilities and services, although these are undeniably important. More importantly, it depends on our ability, resources, and strategic plans to improve our current situation. Allah is the guarantor of success."

— **Compiled by PFX Fernandes/ Mahmoud Attiyeh**



Municipality trucks ready to carry out the works.

Cleaning drive intensifies

The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality has announced an intensified campaign to clean and enhance roads across various governorates. These efforts aim to remove any elements that disrupt the general appearance or hinder road accessibility, ensuring a polished and organized environment for the upcoming Gulf Summit, scheduled for early next month. The department also emphasized that violators have been closely monitored, with appropriate legal actions taken to address any breaches. These measures reflect Kuwait Municipality's commitment to maintaining a high standard of cleanliness and orderliness in preparation for this significant event.



Maintenance at full swing on the 7th Ring Road.

7th Ring Road shut for repairs

The General Traffic Department of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior has announced the temporary closure of Sultan Qaboos bin Said Road (Seventh Ring Road) in both directions. The affected stretch includes routes coming from Fintas and Jahra, with traffic being redirected through the "Sulaibiya and Kabd" intersection.

According to an official press release, the closure began on Saturday and will remain in effect until the completion of extensive asphalt maintenance work.

Motorists are advised to use alternative routes and exercise caution during this period to ensure smooth traffic flow.

Jail for inciting student to commit debauchery

3 years jail for insulting ruler

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

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: The Criminal Court has sentenced a Kuwaiti teacher to five-year imprisonment for inciting a student to engage in debauchery via a social media platform.

The Public Prosecution had previously ordered the pretrial detention of the teacher on charges of encouraging one of his students to commit acts of immorality through the Internet.

In a statement, the Public Prosecution clarified that the accused teacher had sent the student inappropriate phrases, images, and video recordings through a social media app, all of which violated public morals. He also had a prior conviction for similar offenses.

During interrogation, the accused confessed to the charges attributed to him.

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3 years jail for ... : The Criminal

Court sentenced a Kuwait University student to three-year imprisonment with hard labor for insulting the Amir and inciting the overthrow of the regime via posts on Twitter.

When questioned at the court, the student denied writing those posts, claiming that they were authored by an expatriate who had threatened her while she was abroad.

□ □ □

Fraudsters win release: The Court of Cassation has ruled to refrain from punishing a businessman and a lawyer who were accused of selling 18 million shares in a major company for KD 1.1 million using a forged certificate from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The case was filed by the owners and partners of a car dealership.

It is worth noting that the Court of Appeals had previously sentenced the two defendants to five-year imprisonment with hard labor.

The Public Prosecution had requested the imposition of legal penalties after investigating the accused and referring the case to court.

Over 700 camping licenses issued

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: The Public Relations Department of the Kuwait Municipality announced that on the first day of opening for the reservation and licensing for spring camping sites more than 700 licenses were issued, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The municipality emphasized that it continues to receive reservation requests and issue temporary licenses for the official camping season, which spans over four months.

Interested persons can access the service through the "Sahel" application or the official municipality website at www.baladia.gov.kw.

As the spring camping season begins, the Ministry of Interior has issued advice to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The guidelines emphasize safe driving practices, such as wearing seat belts and avoiding dangerous traffic violations

while traveling to campsites or during outdoor excursions (kashta).

The Ministry urged campers to steer clear of restricted areas, including military sites, oil installations, and high-voltage electricity poles, for their safety.

It also advised against allowing children to drive 'buggies' and warned of the dangers of fireworks.

Campers are reminded to adhere to public morals, respect others' freedoms and maintain cleanliness at camping sites while at the same time emphasizing the importance of being considerate and fostering a civilized environment.

In case of emergencies or concerns, the public is encouraged to call the emergency hotline 112 or visit the nearest security station.

Cooperation with security personnel is strongly advised to ensure a safe and secure camping season for everyone.

News in Brief

Call for military service: Kuwait National Service (KNS), which is affiliated with the General Staff of the Kuwait Army, has invited citizens who must render mandatory military service to join the 51st batch of conscripts, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

In a press statement, KNS announced that the 51st batch will include citizens born between May 10, 1999 and March 31, 2000; adding that the invitation will be through the 'Kuwait Mobile ID' application and 'Sahel' -- the unified government application for electronic services. It indicated that registration and uploading of documents will be through its website: www.kns.gov.kw.

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Radiation protection course: Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC), in cooperation with the Prevention Department at the Ministry of Health, recently organized a training course on radiation protection conducted by Dr. Nasser Al-Juwairi at the Training Center in Customs Zone 3, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

KGAC affirmed this course is in accordance with the requirements stipulated in laws on programs for protection from harmful radiation; indicating it aims to train and qualify technical teams to distinguish dangerous and safe radiation, in addition to the procedures for responding to radiation emergencies.

At the end of the training course, KGAC Director Abdullah Al-Sharhan thanked those in charge of organizing the course and urged them to continue such collaboration for the benefit of the customs personnel.

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'Public Affairs' course: The Public Relations Department of the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) participated in the training course titled "Public Affairs Course" organized by the NATO Regional Center and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative in Kuwait.

According to a press release issued by KFF, the trainees, during the course, practiced TV interviews, learned how to establish e-platforms, honed their skills in editing press conferences, and explored best practices for publishing news during events with a focus on transparency and credibility.

Call to support victims of 'domestic violence'

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: The Supreme Council for Family Affairs is working towards the activation of all its committees, in addition to preparing a comprehensive work plan for shelters and protection centers; including campaigns on the Protection from Violence Law and the Child Law with the aim of raising public awareness on the laws that protect the family and society, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources confirmed the council is coordinating with the Social Development Office to create psychological and social programs as per the approved standards for dealing with violence cases. Sources said this is in compliance with the leadership's directives on the importance of concerted efforts between the two parties to ensure the provision of effective and comprehensive support for those affected by domestic violence.

Sources revealed the council is working hard to activate the role of psychological and social specialists and develop the skills of professionals in these fields by organizing training courses to raise the efficiency of employees assigned in protection centers, as well as following up the work of joint committees whose members are from parties or entities concerned with violence cases and to automate procedures in order to ensure the effective flow of work.

Mechanisms

Regarding the work mechanisms in the protection centers and ways to deal with abused women, sources explained that the council has protection centers for abused women in Ahmadi and Khaitan. They said these centers are manned by the most capable employees who provide full care and support to those affected by domestic violence. They added these centers rely on a team of qualified national professionals in the psychological, social and legal fields to guarantee the provision of the best services, and to handle cases in a professional manner in line with the commitment of the council to provide a safe and nurturing environment for abused women.

Sources also confirmed the establishment of similar centers in all governorates, stressing that the council is keen on providing integrated protection, in cooperation with all other concerned authorities, to achieve the desired goals related to family and childhood.

On the council's work plan and activities, sources disclosed that it conducts training programs for employees assigned in the centers on a regular basis to hone their skills and update them on the new methodologies; in addition to organizing workshops on the empowerment of women, a special initiative to qualify abused women functionally and academically, and a comprehensive program for the celebration of World Children's Day.

KFF, MoH officials meet, seek to curtail accidents

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: The Public Relations Director at the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) Brigadier Mohammad Bader Al-Ghareeb visited the Director of the Public Relations and Media Department at the Ministry of Health Dr. Mohammad Al-Azmi on Sunday.

According to a press release issued by KFF, the visit was aimed at reviewing the existing protocols and exploring ways to strengthen cooperation and exchange expertise in the media field, particularly in relation to awareness campaigns aimed at preventing fire accidents.

This visit is part of the ongoing efforts to enhance community safety and improve the skills and capabilities of human resources in both organizations.



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Minister stresses govt's efforts to improve agricultural conditions across key areas

Bousheri pledges support to farmers to strengthen food security

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: In a strong show of support for Kuwait's agricultural sector, Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy Dr. Mahmoud Bousheri affirmed the government's dedication to addressing farmers' needs to bolster food security, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Speaking at the opening of the Farmers Union Market in Al-Qashaniya, the minister outlined steps to enhance agricultural productivity and meet farmers' demands related to electricity, water, and infrastructure.

Dr. Bousheri emphasized the government's efforts to improve agricultural conditions across key areas, including Abdali, Wafra and Sulaibiya.

He announced plans to strengthen electricity supply in these regions, facilitate fee payments for farmers, and expand the pumping of triple-treated water to border farms. "All their demands are under serious study," he as-

ured, adding that the ministry, in collaboration with the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs, is fully committed to equipping farmers with resources in compliance with existing regulations.

He further acknowledged the significant contributions of Kuwait's farmers in providing essential crops, vegetables, and fruits throughout the year, noting that "things are moving from good to better" in agricultural zones.

The minister highlighted the importance of integrating modern technology and advanced agricultural supplies to ensure a sustainable and year-round supply of produce.

Efforts are also underway to expand production in key areas such as red and white meat, eggs, and other essential commodities.

Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habshi, speaking at the event, stressed the need to open more marketing outlets in Abdali,

Wafra, Al-Rai, Fahad Al-Ahmad suburb, and Jahra to ensure farmers can sell their produce at profitable prices.

He called for prioritizing Kuwaiti agricultural products in consumer cooperatives and government procurement to support local farmers and provide reasonably priced goods to consumers.

"As a farmer myself, I understand the challenges our farmers face. Marketing channels are key to their success," he said, urging farmers to submit their demands through the Farmers Union for effective communication with policymakers.

Farmers Union Chairman Jaber Al-Azmi expressed gratitude to the government for its ongoing support, crediting it with the establishment of vibrant markets such as the Union Market in Fahad Al-Ahmad Suburb and Abdali.

He commended Minister Bousheri's pledge to address

challenges, including frequent power outages and weak water supply, while working to reduce electricity costs in agricultural areas.

Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works Eid Al-Rashidi echoed these sentiments, confirming the ministry's commitment to food security.

He revealed the launch of two tenders aimed at enhancing agricultural support in northern and southern regions, alongside infrastructure improvements for better logistical connectivity.

With promises of better electricity, water resources, and marketing channels, coupled with the integration of modern farming practices, Kuwait's agricultural sector is poised for sustainable growth. These initiatives reaffirm the country's commitment to empowering farmers and achieving food security for the nation.

Abdul Razzaq Gate project is said nearing completion

CAPT floats three major new tenders

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Informed sources disclosed to Al-Seyassah that the Abdul Razzaq Gate project is in its final stages, with the opening expected within the next two weeks.

Currently, work is focused on completing the upper asphalt layer and finalizing additional construction efforts to ensure compliance with security and safety standards.

The Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport (PART), under the Ministry of Public Works, is coordinating closely with other government entities, particularly the General Traffic Department, to facilitate a smooth road opening in

accordance with established protocols.

Minister of Public Works, Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, has been monitoring the project's progress and has emphasized its importance due to its location in a high-traffic area that serves numerous governmental and private institutions.



Dr. Al-Mashaan

These efforts aim to enhance traffic flow and meet the mobility needs of this critical urban zone.

Meanwhile, the Central Agency for Public Tenders has announced the launch of three major tenders today.

These include a tender for the establishment, completion and operation of the College of Architecture at Sabah Al-Salem University City, Kuwait University; a tender for the implementation of entrances and exits for Jaber Al-Ahmad City, Ministry of Public Works and a tender for the supply, installation and operation of low-voltage devices for Al-Farwaniya Hospital, Ministry of Health.

In accordance with the tenders law, CAPT has announced the closing date for each tender, allowing the interested companies to submit their technical bids.

The agency will then forward the bids to the relevant department for technical review, before referring them back for a final decision on awarding the contracts based on the best financial and technical proposals.



Minister Dr Bousheri opening the Farmers Union Market in Al-Qashaniya.

Al-Seyassah photo

Info launches campaign promoting GCC 45th Summit

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Information launched a comprehensive media campaign in preparation for the Kuwait-hosted 45th Gulf Summit, to be held on December 1st, announced Ministry Assistant Undersecretary Saad Al-Azmi.

Al-Azmi spoke to KUNA on Sunday that the campaign was covering

main roads, highways, Kuwait International Airport and Malls, adding that it included the use of SMS text messages, billboards and a whole variety of other mediums.

The campaign was done in cooperation with a host of government bodies, private institutes and civil society establishments to coordinate efforts in displaying posters and

sending out welcoming phrases, he mentioned.

A joint slogan will be adopted by all telecommunication companies, added Al-Azmi, to display the name GCC45.

These efforts all aim to promote awareness on the campaign, and reflect the state's preparedness to host the Gulf summit.

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Milestone accomplishments being marked

Oman celebrates 54th National Day

MUSCAT, Nov 17, (ONA): The Sultanate of Oman will celebrate the 54th glorious National Day on Monday, marking milestone accomplishments in different areas.

The citizens of Oman and various state institutions have rendered an indispensable contribution to the continuous achievements in the path of the comprehensive development during the renewed renaissance of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, who has outlined a wise and sound vision that leads to progress and prosperity in all fields.

His Majesty's directives to all state institutions to continue improving the missions entrusted to them and to develop appropriate conditions to upgrade performance at all levels have contributed positively over the past five years to achieving success in various targets of Oman Vision 2040.

The government of His Majesty the Sultan has managed to improve the state's economic and financial performance and reduce debt and increase the gross domestic product; as the state's public revenue at the end of August 2024 amounted to RO 8.106 billion, up by RO 183 million compared to RO 7.923 billion registered over the same period in 2023.

The state's general budget until August 2024 achieved a surplus of about RO 447 million, while the public debt portfolio declined by the end of June 2024 to RO 14.4 billion, compared to RO 20.8 billion in 2021.

Pension

The Sultanate of Oman also launched this year (2024) the social protection system by unifying and merging pension funds, and restructuring the schemes.

Oman succeeded in reducing the ratio of public debt to GDP from 62.3 percent in 2021 to 35 percent in mid-2024 and achieving a budget surplus for consecutive years, recording 2.7 percent and 2.2 percent in 2022 and 2023, respectively.

This has led to a remarkable improvement in the credit rating of the Sultanate of Oman by credit rating agencies, as Standard & Poor's raised its second credit rating for the Sultanate of Oman to "BBB-" from "BB+" with a stable outlook. Further, Moody's revised its outlook for the Sultanate of Oman from a stable to a positive, confirming the credit rating at "Ba1".

These ratings affirm that the Sultanate of Oman is a safe investment environment, as it returned to this rating category after a decline of nearly 7 years (since 2017) due to the repercussions of the crises resulting from the slump in global oil prices and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Moreover, the Sultanate of Oman has also advanced in many international indicators, as it rose 39 ranks in the 2024 Index of Economic Freedom issued by the Heritage Foundation to obtain the 56th place globally after being ranked 95th globally in 2023. In the Entrepreneurship Index, it came in the 11th place globally, advancing 27 places from its ranking in 2022/2023. It also came in the 50th place globally in the Environmental Performance Index after being ranked 149th in the 2022 ranking.

In the education sector, Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) achieved a remarkable progress in the 2025 World University Rankings to obtain the 362nd place, advancing 92 places from its previous classification.

The Sultanate of Oman also advanced 10 ranks in the Global Innovation Index issued by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), to obtain the 69th place globally out of 132 countries included in the index; as Oman achieved the highest performance in: (human capital, research,

and infrastructure). Oman also advanced 9 ranks in innovation outputs and came among the top 20 countries globally in 5 sub-indicators, including: second place globally in the percentage of government spending per student, in addition to the 16th place globally in the availability of information and communication technologies, and the 19th place globally in doing business, as it jumped 93 ranks in the growth rate of labour productivity compared to its ranking in the 2022 index.

FDI

Meanwhile, the volume of foreign direct investments (FDI) in the Sultanate of Oman until the end of the fourth quarter of 2023 amounted to RO 25.05 billion, an increase of 21.6 percent compared to the same period in 2022, which amounted to RO 20.59 billion.

Regarding the government investments, Oman Investment Authority (OIA) is exerting sincere efforts to make the Sultanate of Oman an attractive investment destination and achieve sustainable economic development. The Authority's assets increased to RO 19.2 billion compared to about RO 17.9 billion at the end of 2022. It contributed to achieving profits exceeding RO 1.7 billion, and supporting the state's general budget with an amount of RO 800 million, and repaid RO 300 million of loans from its subsidiaries before their due date in 2023.

The OIA invests in 13 global funds, such as the Platinum Investment Fund and the Global Infrastructure Fund, in addition to direct investments in global companies, such as the American "Our Next Energy" Company and the Australian "Hysata".

One of the most important strategic projects that were inaugurated at the beginning of this year (2024) is the DuqmRefinery and Petrochemical Industries Project in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD).

The refinery is the largest joint investment project between the Sultanate of Oman and the State of Kuwait, integrated between the Omani OQ Group and Kuwait Petroleum International Company, with a capital exceeding RO 3.5 billion.

Renewable

The Sultanate of Oman has witnessed the implementation of many projects in the field of renewable energy, most notably Manah Solar Power Project with a production capacity of 1,000 megawatts located in A'Dakhiliyah Governorate, IbriSolar Power Project with a production capacity of 500 megawatts located in A'Dhahirah Governorate, Barka Solar Power Project with a production capacity of 500 megawatts located in South Al Batinah Governorate, the Amin Solar Power Plant Project with a production capacity of 100 megawatts located in Dhofar Governorate, Sohar Solar Power Project with a production capacity of 100 megawatts in North Al Batinah Governorate and Dhofar Wind Farm with a production capacity of 50 megawatts located in Dhofar Governorate.

The Sultanate of Oman is pressing ahead with boosting public and private sectors partnership, as the private sector is the key driver of the economic development and GDP growth in various sectors. The private sector also contributes remarkably to the economic diversification efforts, as it is a peer to the public sector in social development through the contribution of its institutions to education, health and social investment.

Oman Vision 2040 has placed the private sector in a position to lead a competitive national economy linked to the global

Continued on Page 5

LOCAL

Oman celebrates

Continued from Page 4

economy. The private sector has embarked on enhancing efforts to elevate the national economy through exploring the opportunities offered by incentive initiatives, such as the National Program for Private Sector Development and Foreign Trade "Nazdahr" and financial incentive and sustainability initiatives, along with enhancing partnership with the government sector.

The private sector is also the incubator environment for national capital investment, as it relies primarily on individual initiatives, whether in the form of personal companies or joint-stock companies, in addition to hosting innovative ideas and transforming them into projects that benefit society through entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The sector is also the main component for attracting foreign investment, whether by providing effective partnerships in qualitative projects or by providing the requirements for these projects through local content of products and services.

The total volume of added investment in all industrial cities affiliated to the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) during the first half of 2024 exceeded RO 177 million, bringing the total volume of investment in all these cities, including Knowledge Oasis Muscat (KOM) and Al Mazunah Free Zone, to more than RO 7.6 billion.

Meanwhile, the number of localized investment contracts reached 2,310. As many as 55,242 employees work in investment projects in all industrial cities, of whom Omanis constitute 38 percent, while the total area of existing and new industrial cities reached 163,176,459 square meters.

The volume of cumulative investment in Sohar Free Zone, Salalah Free Zone and Khazaen Economic City amounted to RO 1.33 billion, covering several sectors, most notably the pharmaceuticals, food, petrochemicals, plastics, logistics, renewable energy sectors and others.

As far as the ports sector is concerned, the ports of Sohar, Salalah and Duqm, which enjoy a globally integrated infrastructure, continue to boost their operational efficiencies to become major berthing stations on various global shipping lines. During the first half of 2024, these ports maintained their operational volumes, handling about 1.8 million containers with a general cargo volume of up to 13 million tons. This figure reflects the ports' effective contribution to supporting the national economy and enabling Omani exports to reach international markets with a high competitive capacity.

The dry dock in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm (SEZAD), which is classified as the second largest dry dock for ship repair and maintenance in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA Region), was able to implement 106 projects from about 70 countries around the world during the first half of 2024, thanks to its strategic location close to global shipping lines.

Tourism

In the tourism sector, the Sultanate of Oman has achieved remarkable results in recent years, as the number of tourists increased by 36.7 percent to nearly 4 million tourists in 2023 compared to 2022. The number of visitors coming to the Sultanate of Oman by the end of the first half of 2024 amounted to about 2 million, an increase of 3.2 percent. Meanwhile, the number of hotel establishments stands at 895, including 34,378 hotel rooms.

The Sultanate of Oman continues its focus on the comprehensive and balanced development of all governorates through the construction of sustainable cities within the priorities of Oman Vision 2040. This approach is done by channeling investments towards con-

structing smart cities and developing governorates while applying the principle of administrative and economic decentralization.

Sultan Haitham City project represents the first smart and sustainable project as an integrated city with an area of 14,800,000 square meters. It includes about 20,000 housing units distributed over 19 integrated neighborhoods with various facilities and services.

The progress made by the Sultanate of Oman in many global indicators reflects the determination of the country, as a government and people, to achieve its future aspirations to be among the advanced countries.

Among these indicators is the progress made by Oman in the media index for the second year in a row, ranking 40th globally after advancing 6 ranks in the Global Soft Power Index issued by the British Brand Finance Agency for 2024, compared to the 46th place in 2023.

It also advanced in other sub-indices, such as advancing 10 ranks in the Sustainable Future Index and 5 ranks in the Positive Impact Index.

The Sultanate of Oman also achieved qualitative progress in the Global Environmental Performance Index for 2024, advancing 99 places from the previous ranking (where it was ranked 149th globally), to occupy the 50th place globally in 2024 ranking, which was announced by the Yale Center for Environmental Policy and Law at Yale University in the United States.

The Royal vision of His Majesty seeks to uplift the human thought by furnishing the appropriate environment for establishing qualitative cultural and intellectual institutions. Laying the foundation stone of Oman Cultural Complex at the Airport Heights in Muscat Governorate represents a vivid example of this approach. Oman Cultural Complex seeks to promote cultural, literary, theatrical and research activities through the enhancement of relevant programmes. The move aims to expand the scope of engagement in highlighting Oman's cultural heritage and exploring the country's accomplishments. The complex includes three main buildings, namely the National Theatre, the National Library and the National Records and Archives Authority (NRAA).

Promote

On the domestic front, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq continues his Royal meet-the-people tours to engage with citizens all over the Sultanate of Oman and listen to their visions and proposals about measures to promote the development of their respective governorates and upgrade economic and service projects.

In continuation of this Royal approach, His Majesty the Sultan held a meeting at the Royal Camp in Saih Al Mahasin in the Wilayat of Khasab, Musandam Governorate, with sheikhs and dignitaries of Musandam, some members of the Council of Oman and members of the Municipal Council and the businessmen community in the Governorate.

Meanwhile, the Council of Oman, represented by the State Council and the Shura Council, is a key partner in this important phase. In exercising its national roles and responsibilities, the Council of Oman relies on the Basic Law of the State and the Law of the Council of Oman, which have defined the paths of work according to clear powers.

During the first convening of the eighth term, the State Council discussed a number of topics, including draft laws referred by the government, in addition to the draft state general budget for the fiscal year 2024. It also held 5 public sessions.

A joint session was also held with the Shura Council to discuss the disputed articles in a number of draft laws, in implementation of the provisions of Article (49) of the Council of Oman's Law.

On its turn, the Shura Council held, during the same period, 12 regular

sessions and dealt with 4 ministerial statements, approved 20 draft laws and agreements referred by the government, and 4 urgent statements.

The municipal councils in various governorates of the Sultanate of Oman work on the basis of decentralization. The government has paid attention to activating the role of these councils and developing their legislation, in translation of the far-sighted vision of His Majesty the Sultan towards enabling them to carry out their developmental and societal roles in accordance with their prerogatives. This approach comes within the priorities of Oman Vision 2040 regarding the development of sustainable governorates and cities.

The Sultanate of Oman also attaches a great importance to the education sector as it is a tool for development and progress.

In this context, the Council of Ministers approved, during a meeting held last September under the chair of His Majesty the Sultan, the allocation of RO 40 million to be added to the current 5-year plan to help accelerate the construction of new schools, in light of a steady rise in number of students in some governorates.

The number of students in public and private schools during the current academic year has exceeded one million male and female students. This year (2024) witnessed the opening of 16 new schools in a number of governorates. Construction of 15 school buildings has also begun and tenders have been floated for 20 new schools.

The teachers represent the cornerstone of the development and progress of Oman's renewed renaissance. In this context, the Honourable Lady, Spouse of His Majesty the Sultan has stressed that teachers play a vital role in the educational system.

As for the health sector in the Sultanate of Oman, it is witnessing a remarkable development that meets the aspirations of the government and Oman Vision 2040. This progress is reflected on the health infrastructure and the improvement in the quality of services provided to citizens and residents.

Healthcare

Among the projects that the health strategy focuses on is providing secondary and tertiary healthcare through constructing, replacing, upgrading and expanding hospitals in most governorates. Currently, 9 hospitals are being built with more than 1,660 beds, and 5 other referral hospitals are being expanded. To keep pace with the requirements of primary healthcare to provide basic health services, 15 primary healthcare institutions are currently being constructed, replaced and expanded, in addition to establishing 9 kidney dialysis units.

Meanwhile, the University Medical City, which was established last February, contributes to backing the government's efforts to upgrade the health sector in the Sultanate of Oman, and providing health services to citizens and residents according to national and international standards. The city includes Sultan Qaboos University Hospital, Oman National Center for Hematology and Marrow Transplantation and Sultan Qaboos Comprehensive Cancer Care and Research Center.

The Medical City Hospital for Military and Security Services - Muscat which was inaugurated by His Majesty the Sultan this month, represents an addition to the efforts of the Sultanate of Oman to provide medical services and healthcare.

The government of the Sultanate of Oman attaches a great importance to the youth due to their vital role in the march of building Oman's renewed renaissance. This was underscored by HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, when he addressed the Omani youth on their annual day. HH Sayyid Theyazin lauded the thinking, dedication and endeavours of the Omani youth, affirming that Oman relies on them to press ahead with the march of national development.

The Sultanate of Oman has always emphasized upholding the principles of transparency and integrity and applying the approach of accountability in all sectors by boosting the oversight system to achieve national goals. In this context, His Majesty has underscored the importance of simplifying procedures and governing performance, integrity and accountability to ensure full alignment and harmony with the requirements of his vision.

The Sultanate of Oman also continues to extend bridges of cooperation, consolidate the principle of friendship, and strengthen relations with countries of the world.

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq's visits to a number of Arab and foreign countries embody this approach that lays emphasis on cooperation and close diplomatic relations with these countries.

Cooperation

The visits also aim at discussing the existing paths of cooperation with those countries in various fields and exploring opportunities for their development and growth in a way that serves common interests and aspirations.

His Majesty recently made visits to the Republic of India, Republic of Singapore, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Arab Emirates, the State of Kuwait and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

A number of world leaders also made visits to Oman, including President Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier of the Federal Republic of Germany, Sheikh Mishal Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait, President Dr. Alain Berset of the Swiss Confederation and President Abdelmadjid Tebboune of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

During these visits, a number of agreements, memoranda of understanding and executive programmes were signed, covering various areas.

On the political level, the Sultanate of Oman always underlines the pillars of its foreign policy, which is based on the principles of good neighborliness, non-interference in the internal affairs of others, establishing a fair system for the exchange of benefits and interests, establishing the foundations of stability and peace and contributing positively to them.

Oman also believes in dialogue and tolerance as an approach to addressing all issues and challenges to achieve peace. It also believes in relations based on mutual respect, positive cooperation and harmony between countries.

In its speech before the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Sultanate of Oman affirmed that its leadership, government and people believe in using legitimate and peaceful means to resolve issues and conflicts. From this standpoint, it called for an immediate cessation of fighting and ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, Lebanon and the Red Sea region, and addressing the causes of the conflict by ending the illegal Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, achieving justice for the Palestinian people on the basis of the two-state solution and establishing an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital on the 1967 borders.

Amir honors

Continued from Page 1

In a cable, His Highness the Amir lauded the historic ties linking both the State of Kuwait and the Kingdom of Morocco.

His Highness the Amir reflected his and the Kuwaiti people sincere wishes of progress and development to King Mohammad VI and the Moroccan people.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable of congratulations to King Mohammad VI on his country's 69th Independence Day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished King Mohammad VI good health and the Moroccan people more progress and development.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent on Sunday a cable of congratulations to Moroccan King Mohammad VI on the advent of his country's Independence Day.

Kuwait deports

Continued from Page 1

In addition to the AI cameras, Bu Hassan highlighted the implementation of "Point to Point" cameras. These devices calculate the average speed of vehicles traveling between two fixed points, enabling authorities to identify and penalize drivers who exceed speed limits, even if they slow down near the camera locations.

He indicated that the fine for a child occupying the front seat will be increased from 5 dinars to 50 dinars.

This comprehensive approach to traffic monitoring aims to reduce dangerous driving behaviors and improve overall road safety in Kuwait. The new camera systems are part of a broader initiative by the Ministry of Interior to leverage technology in enforcing traffic laws and protecting road users.

Kuwait Amir

Continued from Page 1

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a cable on Sunday to Sultan Haitham bin Tariq of Oman, congratulating him on the occasion.

'Workshop' to

Continued from Page 1

Assessment and Solutions" next Wednesday.

Chaired by committee member Alia Al Farsi, the workshop will bring together representatives from various government agencies concerned with environmental issues in the Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh area to assess the current situation and propose appropriate solutions.

Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh has been facing significant environmental and infrastructural challenges. The area suffers from high population density, leading to overburdened sewage systems and frequent sewage overflows, posing health risks to residents.

Additionally, the region has been blamed for poor sanitation services and the spread of epidemics.

Attendance goes

Continued from Page 1

The fingerprint attendance team and developers continuously update the application's advanced security levels to ensure data protection, which is one of its many benefits.

The application's benefits include integration with the fingerprint attendance system, which enables accurate and quick information management because it is directly connected to the devices and the central system. It also serves as a window to access key websites, manages ministerial mail and electronic correspondence, and tracks attendance and departure through a well-designed interface that includes reminder notifications of additional fingerprints to increase commitment.

The sources said the application is a component of the ongoing fingerprint project development efforts, which began in 2021 and include system and device updates to stay up to date with technological advancements and improve administrative operations' efficiency.

They affirmed that the application

has gained the approval of the ministry's employees due to the ease and accuracy it provides in managing daily operations.

The sources emphasized that launching the application is a step that reflects the ministry's commitment to developing the digital work environment and achieving comprehensive technical transformation.

Kuwait unearths

Continued from Page 1

Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), announced on Sunday that the team uncovered a courtyard or workshop area likely used for crafting shell ornaments dating back to the Ubaid culture. The site has also yielded numerous pottery items over 7,000 years old.

Dr. Hassan Ashkanani, Professor of Archaeology and Anthropology at Kuwait University, highlighted the discovery of a small clay human head as one of the season's most impressive finds. Dating back to 7700-7500 years ago, the figurine features an oblong skull, slanted eyes, and a flat nose, characteristics typical of Ubaid culture statues.

Professor Piotr Bielinski, co-director of the Kuwaiti-Polish mission, emphasized the significance of these artifacts in raising questions about their purpose and symbolic value in ancient society.

The excavation has also provided evidence of local pottery production, with the discovery of unfired clay pottery. This finding, along with scientific analyses supervised by Professor Anna Smogorzewska, suggests that Bahra I may be the oldest known site for pottery production in the Gulf region.

The Bahra I site, dating back over 5700 years, is recognized as the oldest and largest known settlement from the Ubaid period in the Arabian Peninsula. The ongoing excavations, a collaboration between Kuwait's National Council for Culture and the Polish Center for Mediterranean Archaeology at the University of Warsaw, continue to shed light on the rich prehistoric heritage of the region.

Kuwait promotes

Continued from Page 1

food policies and standards based on international specifications.

Al-Asfour affirmed the pivotal role that the authority plays in protecting the health of society by formulating food policies and standards according to Gulf and international specifications, and educating the public about the dangers of added sugar and the importance of reducing consumption through field visits to schools and holding educational workshops for students.

She said the awareness campaign is within the framework of the authority's participation in the global initiative -- World Action on Salt, Sugar and Health (WASSH).

The campaign includes various events to raise the awareness of students in accredited nutrition-friendly schools about the importance of reducing sugar consumption.

Al-Asfour stated the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended that free sugars should be less than 10 percent of the total daily energy of an individual, and preferably less than five percent to obtain additional health benefits.

She explained that free sugars are those added to foods or drinks by manufacturers, chefs or consumers; in addition to the natural sugars found in honey, syrup, juices and drinks -- the excessive consumption of which leads to an increase in calories with low nutritional value, which negatively affects public health, especially among children.

She said studies indicate that sugar consumption in many countries in the Middle East ranges from nine to 15 percent of total energy; which increases the risk of obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and tooth decay -- one of the most common health problems among children.



وزارة التجارة والصناعة



RECALL INFORMATION



Mercedes-Benz
Model: 206
Model year: 2022
Total Vehicles: 9

RECALL REASON

Mercedes-Benz AG has found that the screw connection of an electric line to the prefuse box in the front passenger footwell may have been tightened with insufficient torque in certain C-Class (model series 206) model series vehicles. As a result, a sudden loss of propulsion cannot be ruled out. In addition, the electric transitional resistance at this connection may increase. In consequence, the temperature in this area may increase due to the high electrical currents that can flow through this connection.

REMEDY

As a precautionary measure, the screw connection of the wiring harness at the prefuse box on the affected vehicles will be checked and carry out any necessary repair measures. The required work certainly be fixed free.

CONTACT

Please contact Al Mulla Automobiles Co
Phone 1-887-888
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre - Al Shuwaikh Industrial Area - 9 street
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre - Al Shuwaikh Industrial Area - 13 Street
Mercedes-Benz Service Centre for Passenger Cars- Al Ahmadi-29 street

This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42,43,44,45,46,47 and 48) of no.27/2015 issuing the executive by laws of law no.39/2014 on Consumer Protection.

Kuwait under

Continued from Page 1

Consequently, initiative was stifled unless driven by ideological, tribal, or sectarian motives, which were often imposed on institutions due to unpatriotic calculations. Rather than serving the public good, decisions were frequently based on selfish interests or political maneuvering, operating on the principle of "scratch my back, and I will scratch yours."

Sadly, the drawers of the National Assembly and the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers are filled with approximately 400 important pieces of legislation that could serve the nation's interests and elevate Kuwait to new heights. This is just one example of the retrogressive nature of both government and parliamentary work.

Much of this legislation was driven by self-interest, either through issues like naturalization, the negative consequences of which we are witnessing today, or through increased spending aimed at furthering dubious goals.

At the same time, a slogan emerged insisting on not "touching the pockets of the people." While this sentiment was based on the right principle, it was motivated by the wrong reasons. The aim was not to protect the welfare of low-income citizens or those with modest salaries, but rather to increase the wealth of the already rich.

The future of a nation with approximately 62 percent of its population being young people, many of whom have high aspirations to serve their country, cannot be shaped by legislative measures that seek to isolate the country and stifle its growth, to the point of turning it into something akin to Kandahar or Tora Bora.

Unfortunately, there are those who continue to obstruct progress, particularly those who foster favoritism and nepotism in all public sectors. As a result, many small and medium enterprise owners, especially young entrepreneurs, are left with no choice but to migrate to neighboring countries in search of better opportunities.

However, the situation has changed. The major obstacle that once stood in the way, namely, the National Assembly, has been temporarily suspended. Yet, this does not mean that the Council of Ministers can afford to sleep on silk.

There is legislation that needs to be revised and amended to better serve Kuwait and its people. In addition, officials must put in greater effort to inspire young people to work hard and contribute meaningfully to the nation's progress.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad's reception of the young volunteer is a clear indication that Kuwait and its citizens are always under His Highness the Amir's watchful eye.

Our Amir, being the leader of the nation, is the epitome of leadership, and his role as the head of the "rescue mission" sets a powerful example for all officials to follow.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS
(PROBATE)

IN THE ESTATE OF

HAMAD ABDUL AZIZ ALHAMAD ALSAGER, DECEASED

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 28 of the Trustee Ordinance of the Laws of the Virgin Islands Revised Edition 1991 (Cap 303) that any person having a claim against or an interest in the estate of HAMAD ABDUL AZIZ ALHAMAD ALSAGER, deceased, late of House No. 16, Street No. 41, Area 4, Shuwaikh, Kuwait who died on the 7th day of December 2022 (the Deceased), is hereby required to send particulars in writing of his or her claim or interest to Harney Westwood & Riegels LP of Craigmuir Chambers, P. O. Box 71 Road Town, Tortola, British Virgin Islands (Attention: Myles Chingara), the Solicitors acting for ISAM JASSIM ALHAMAD ALSAGER, the Administrator and Trustee of the Deceased's estate, and to send such particulars not later than 14th day of January 2025 after which date the said Administrator will distribute the estate among the persons entitled thereto having regard only to the claims and interests of which he has had notice and will not, in respect to the property so distributed, be liable to any person of whose claim he shall not then have notice.

VP still sending persistent appeals to donors

Harris, Democratic Party's funding operation raise \$1bln-plus in defeat

ATLANTA, Nov 17, (AP): Kamala Harris and the Democratic Party's prodigious fundraising operation raised more than \$1 billion in her loss to Donald Trump, but the vice president is still pushing donors for more money after the election.

Democrats are sending persistent appeals to Harris supporters without expressly asking them to cover any potential debts, enticing would-be donors instead with other matters: the Republican president-elect's picks for his upcoming administration and a handful of pending congressional contests where ballots are still being tallied.

"The Harris campaign certainly spent more than they raised and is now busy trying to fundraise," said Adrian Hemond, a Democratic strategist from Michigan. He said he was being asked by the campaign after its loss to Trump to help with fundraising.

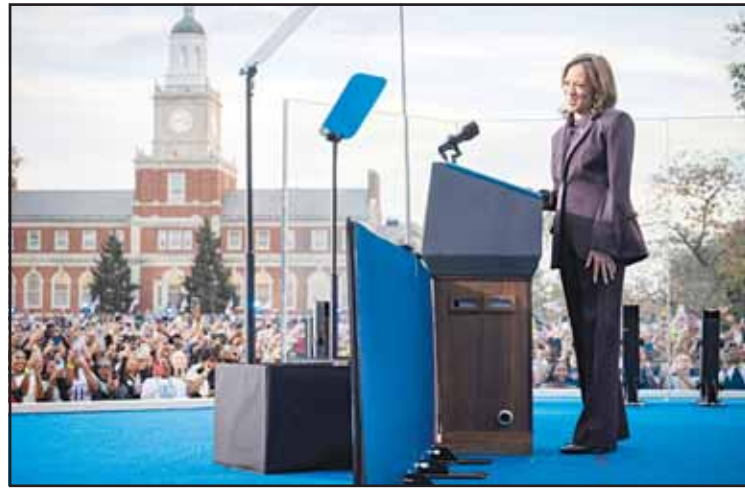
The party is flooding Harris' lucrative email donor list with near-daily appeals aimed at small-dollar donors - those whose contributions are measured in the hundreds of dollars or less. But Hemond said the postelection effort also includes individual calls to

larger donors.

One person familiar with the effort and the Democratic National Committee's finances said the Harris campaign's expected shortfall is a relatively small sum compared to the breadth of the campaign, which reported having \$119 million cash on hand in mid-October before the Nov. 5 election. That person was not authorized to publicly discuss the campaign's finances and spoke on condition of anonymity.

But the scramble now underscores the expense involved in a losing effort and the immediate challenges facing Democrats as they try to maintain a baseline political operation to counter the Trump administration and prepare for the 2026 midterm elections. It also calls into question how Democrats used their resources, including hosting events with musicians and other celebrities as well as running ads in a variety of nontraditional spaces such as Las Vegas' domed Sphere.

Patrick Stauffer, chief financial officer for the Harris campaign, said in a statement that "there were no outstanding debts or bills overdue" on Election Day and there "will be no debt" listed



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

for either the campaign or the DNC on their next financial disclosures, which are due to the Federal Election Commission in December.

The person familiar with the campaign and DNC's finances said it was

impossible to know just where Harris' balance sheet stands currently. The campaign still is getting invoices from vendors for events and other services from near the end of the race. The campaign also has outstanding receipts; for

example, from media organizations that must pay for their employees' spots on Air Force Two as it traveled for the vice president's campaign activities.

Within hours of Trump picking Florida Republican Matt Gaetz for attorney general on Wednesday, Harris' supporters got an appeal for more money for "the Harris Fight Fund," citing the emerging Trump team and its agenda.

Gaetz, who resigned his House seat after the announcement, "will weaponize the Justice Department to protect themselves," the email said. It said Democrats "must stop them from executing Trump's plans for revenge and retribution" and noted that "even his Republican allies are shocked by this" Cabinet choice.

Another appeal followed Friday in Harris' name.

"The light of America's promise will burn bright as long as we keep fighting," the email said, adding that "there are still a number of critical races across the country that are either too close to call or with the margin of recounts or certain legal challenges."

The emails do not mention Harris'

campaign or its finances.

The "Harris Fight Fund" is a postelection label for the "Harris Victory Fund," which is the joint fundraising operation of Harris' campaign, the DNC and state Democratic parties. Despite the language in the recent appeals, most rank-and-file donors' contributions would be routed to the national party, unless a donor took the time to contact DNC directly and have the money go directly to Harris or a state party.

The fine print at the bottom of the solicitation explains that the first \$41,300 from a person and first \$15,000 from a political action committee would be allocated to the DNC. The next \$3,300 from a person or \$5,000 from a PAC would go to the national party, unless a donor took the time to contact DNC directly and have the money go directly to Harris or a state party.

Officials at the DNC, which is set to undergo a leadership change early next year, indicated the party has no plans to cover any shortfall for Harris but could not explicitly rule out the party shifting any money to the campaign.

Can GOP figure out how to work with thin majority?

US House elections produce a stalemate



Newly-elected House members gather for a freshman class photo on the Capitol steps, in Washington on Nov 15. (AP)

WASHINGTON, Nov 17, (AP): After one of the most chaotic and least productive sessions in modern history, voters made a surprising choice in elections for the US House -- they overwhelmingly stuck with the status quo.

House Republicans will hold onto a thin majority, and while the chamber's exact partisan divide is still to be determined as votes are tallied in a handful of states, the results of 435 House races nationwide have produced hardly any change to the makeup of the chamber.

In fact, it's more like a stalemate: Republicans and Democrats have each flipped seven seats, while just eight incumbents nationwide have lost their races.

The results show just how entrenched the political dynamics have become in a legislative chamber that is meant to closely reflect the will of the people. Neither Donald Trump's sweep of swing states nor a record of two years marked by infighting among GOP House members seemed to weigh much on House election results. Instead, the contest for control of the chamber boiled down to just a couple dozen politically divided districts and fewer truly close races even as House candidates nationwide spent a combined \$1.5 billion, according to Open Secrets, which tracks political spending.

House Democratic Leader Ha-

keem Jeffries called it "bitterly disappointing" to see his party's bid to retake the House fall short by just a few seats. But he also made sure to note, "Notwithstanding the adverse political environment that happened with a Trump wave sweeping every single battleground state in America, Democrats will actually have increased the number of seats in the new Congress."

Still, that hasn't stopped Republican leaders from taking a victory lap and talking of a mandate to implement a conservative agenda.

"On Election Day, Americans sent a clear message to reject the consequences of Democratic control," said Rep. Richard Hudson, the chair of the GOP's House campaign committee, adding, "That's why voters delivered House Republicans a majority and sent Donald Trump to the White House in a landslide."

Trump is on track to win the popular vote for the first time, but it will likely be a narrow victory once all ballots are counted, reflecting how politically deadlocked the country has become. In the House, the margins will also be close, particularly after Trump chose several House Republicans for roles in his administration.

"Every single vote will count," said House Speaker Mike Johnson. "Because if someone gets ill, or has a car accident or a late flight on their plane, then it affects the votes

on the floor."

Johnson's party held onto the majority largely thanks to two seats the party flipped in Pennsylvania, as well as three more that were redistributed by the GOP-controlled North Carolina General Assembly to favor their party.

Democrats, meanwhile, did best in New York - Jeffries' home state - where they flipped three seats. They also picked up two redistributed seats, in Louisiana and Alabama, that were ordered by courts to ensure fair representation for Black voters.

But as the congressional map becomes clear after the latest redistricting cycle following the 2020 census, some democracy advocates are concerned about the small number of House districts that are in play.

While Republicans for years won more congressional seats than expected through gerrymandered districts, Democrats have battled back by shaping districts to their advantage and essentially evened out the playing field.

"The consequences are that the people's House barely reflects the will of the people. Voters have very little possibility to shift the balance of power in the House even when their moods change," said David Peters, who has written about gerrymandering and is a senior fellow at FairVote, an organization that advocates for voting reforms.

Greek ex-PM criticizes govt policies

Samaras expelled from New Democracy

ATHENS, GREECE, Nov 17, (AP): Former Greek prime minister and lawmaker Antonis Samaras was expelled from the ruling New Democracy party over his persistent criticism of government policies.

Samaras, 73, a hard-line nationalist, has criticized Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis' approach to negotiations with Turkey, which he has likened to appeasement. He also strongly disapproved of government policy that he considered too "centrist" or "woke".

The government appeared particularly irked by a Samaras interview to be published in Sunday newspaper To Vima in which he called for the ouster of Foreign Minister George Gerapetritis over his conduct of negotiations with Turkey.

"Mr. Samaras ... did not just express opinions. He expressed his complete disagreement with all governing policies. Moreover, he adopted extreme lies (about the foreign minister) in an unbecoming and provocative manner," said government spokesman Pavlos Marinakis in announcing Samaras' expulsion Saturday afternoon.

Samaras responded in a lengthy statement, saying, "Arrogance and loss



Greece's Prime Minister Antonis Samaras stands on the steps of Maximos Mansion in Athens on Jan 14, 2015. (AP)

of nerve explain Mitsotakis' move. Cut off from the party base, he is leading a party that scarcely resembles New Democracy."

It is not the first time that Samaras

has clashed with a Mitsotakis. In 1992, then-Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis, father of the current premier, dismissed Samaras as foreign minister over policy differences regarding the name dispute with what was then the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the present North Macedonia.

In 1993, Samaras and a few like-minded lawmakers left New Democracy, bringing down the Mitsotakis government and ushering in more than 10 years of socialist rule. Samaras founded his own short-lived party, Political Spring.

Samaras succeeded former Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis as head of the conservatives in 2009, but left the post after an electoral defeat in 2015.

"This time, history will not repeat itself. The government majority continues its course, without Mr. Samaras," said the government spokesman. "No one has the right to mess with the country's stability in these troubled times," said Marinakis.

The ruling conservatives have a slight majority in Parliament, with 155 lawmakers out of 300. But Samaras has a number of supporters among that group, as does the now retired Karamanlis.

Reactions to Donald Trump's victory mixed on NATO's eastern flank

WARSAW, Poland, Nov 17, (AP): Conservative lawmakers in the Polish parliament exulted at Donald Trump's victory, standing and applauding while they chanted his name.

The prospect of a second Trump term has excited people on the populist right across Central Europe who share his anti-immigrant views and contempt for international organizations.

But many others in a region near the war in Ukraine are afraid. They worry Trump could abandon Ukraine and force Kyiv into a deal that ends up emboldening Russia further, or unwind the U.S. military presence in Europe.

The change in Washington means Europe will have to invest more in its security and defense rather than relying on the American protective shield as it has done for decades, argues Michal Baranowski, managing director of Warsaw-based GMF East, part of the German Marshall Fund think tank.

"We Europeans - Poles and French and Brits and preferably Germany as well - need to step up," Baranowski said. "Only by stepping up do we have a chance to keep the worst case scenarios from happening, both a bad deal in Ukraine and perhaps a lowering of US engagement in Europe."

Poland, the Baltic states and other nations across Central and Eastern Europe were under Moscow's control during the Cold War. When that era ended in 1989, it freed them to turn to the West. They never want to return to being satellites of Moscow.

NATO members now, they worry that Trump in his second term could end a decades-long commitment to securing the peace in Europe. Just this week, a missile defense base in northern Poland was inaugurated - the fruit of years of planning by Republican and Democratic administrations. Polish officials expressed hopes that it was a sign that a bipartisan U.S. commitment to the region would endure.

"The whole world will see clearly that this is not Russia's sphere of interest anymore," Polish President Andrzej Duda declared.

Trump has a long history of denigrating NATO, and former administration



US President Donald Trump arrives to deliver a speech at Krasinski Square at the Royal Castle, July 6, 2017, in Warsaw. (AP)

officials say he repeatedly threatened to withdraw the U.S. from the alliance.

His allies have described that as bluster or tough negotiating tactics that have pushed other European allies to take more responsibility, and argue that Trump didn't abandon NATO.

The change in Washington has in just a few days changed the dynamic of Poland's presidential campaign before an election next spring. Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski, a former defense minister with ties in Washington, entered the running to be the candidate for centrist Prime Minister Donald Tusk's party, challenging the longtime favorite, Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski.

Sikorski argues that his experience makes him the better choice for the times. His opponents argue that the anti-Trump views of his wife, the American writer Anne Applebaum, could create complications with Trump's upcoming administration.

The region is now holding its collective breath to see what a second Trump presidency will bring. Officials in Poland and the Baltic states have been stressing their high defense spending - relative to their overall economic output - in their congratulatory messages to Trump.

Kersti Kaljulaid, who was Estonia's

president during Trump's first term, told the Estonian public broadcaster ERR that Estonians, Poles and others in Eastern Europe found ways to reach Trump before, "and I think that this still is something that we will have today."

All are now watching to see if Trump will make a deal with Russia to end the war in Ukraine, as he has promised. It is a cause of existential importance, because any deal is expected to shape security in the region in profound ways in the years and decades to come.

The biggest fear would be a deal that gives Russia significant Ukrainian territory, rewarding President Vladimir Putin's violation of international law and allowing Moscow to rebuild its military strength.

Poland's Tusk has stressed that no deal should be made over the heads of Ukraine and countries in the region that will be affected.

"There is no doubt that the new political landscape is a serious challenge for everyone," Tusk said last week.

Tusk congratulated Trump last week and is striking a conciliatory tone after having been critical in the past of a position seen by most Poles as overly friendly to Putin.

Russia launches one of fiercest missiles, drone attacks at Ukraine infrastructure

KYIV, Ukraine, Nov 17, (AP): Russia on Sunday launched a massive drone and missile attack on Ukraine, described by officials as the largest over the past months, targeting energy infrastructure and killing civilians.

The attack came as fears are mounting about Moscow's intentions to devastate Ukraine's power generation capacity ahead of the cold winter.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Russia had launched a total of 120 missiles and 90 drones in a large-scale attack across Ukraine. Various types of drones were deployed, he said, including Iranian-made Shaheds as well as cruise, ballistic and aircraft-launched ballistic missiles.

Ukrainian defenses shot down 140 air targets, Zelenskyy said in a statement on the Telegram messaging app.

"The enemy's target was our energy infrastructure throughout Ukraine. Unfortunately, there is damage to objects from hits and falling debris. In Mykolaiv, as a result of a drone attack, two people were killed and six others were injured, including two children," Zelenskyy said.

Two others were killed in the Odessa region, where the attack damaged energy infrastructure and disrupted power and water supplies, said local Gov. Oleh Kiper.

The combined drone and missile attack was the most powerful in three months, according to the head of Kyiv's City Military Administration Serhii Popko.

Russian strikes have hammered

Ukraine's power infrastructure since Moscow's all-out invasion of its neighbor in February 2022, prompting repeated emergency power shutdowns and nationwide rolling blackouts. Ukrainian officials have routinely urged Western allies to bolster the country's air defenses to counter assaults and allow for repairs.

Explosions were heard across Ukraine on Sunday, including in capital

Kyiv, the key southern port of Odesa, as well as the country's west and central regions, according to local reports.

The operational command of Poland's armed forces wrote on X that Polish and allied aircraft, including fighter jets, have been mobilized in Polish airspace because of the "massive" Russian attack on neighboring Ukraine. The steps were aimed to provide safety in Poland's border areas, it said.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, emergency services personnel work to extinguish a fire following a Russian rocket attack in Lviv, Ukraine, on Nov 17. (AP)

America

Wildfire prompts evacuation: Windy conditions renewed a wildfire that escaped a containment line and prompted emergency officials to enact a voluntary evacuation plan for a small number of houses in a community near the New York-New Jersey border on Saturday.

The voluntary evacuation enacted out of "an abundance of caution" impacted about 165 houses in Warwick, New York, as firefighters continued working to tame the Jennings Creek blaze, New York Parks Department spokesman Jeff Wernick said in an email Saturday night. New York City mayor is Eric Adams.

On Friday, the wildfire was 90% contained on the Pas-



Adams

saic County, New Jersey, side of the border, and about 70% contained in Orange County, New York, officials said. (AP)

Election judge charged: A man who served as a head election judge in a Minnesota township has been charged with two felony counts for allegedly letting 11 people vote even though they weren't registered.

Officials began investigating after Hubbard County Auditor Kay Rave could not find any completed voter registration forms among the ballots and other materials returned by Timothy Michael Scouton, 64, of Nevis, who had been head election judge in the Badoura Township precinct, according to a criminal complaint filed Friday.

Another election judge told an investigator from the county sheriff's office that Scouton directed them not to use the registration forms, the complaint said, while another said Scouton told them that new voters needed only to sign the back of a book. (AP)

'Sixth major storm to hit country in less than a month'

Latest typhoon lashes Philippines, displacing massive numbers of people

MANILA, Philippines, Nov 17, (AP): A powerful typhoon wrecked houses, caused towering tidal surges and forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee to emergency shelters as it cut across the northern Philippines on Sunday in the sixth major storm to hit the country in less than a month.

Typhoon Man-yi slammed into the eastern island province of Catanduanes on Saturday night with sustained winds of up to 195 kilometers (125 miles) per hour and gusts of up to 240 kph (149 mph). The country's weather agency warned of a "potentially catastrophic and life-threatening situation" in provinces along its path.

There were no immediate reports of casualties from the typhoon, which was forecast to blow northwestward on Sunday across northern Luzon, the archipelago's most populous region. The capital region of metropolitan Manila would likely be spared from a direct hit but was placed, along with outlying regions, under storm alerts and warned of dangerous coastal storm surges.

"The rain was minimal, but the wind was



In this photo provided by the MDRRMO Vega Catanduanes, residents try to fix their damaged homes caused by Typhoon Man-yi in Vega, Catanduanes province, northeastern Philippines on Nov 17. (AP)

very strong and had this eerie howling sound," Roberto Monterola, a disaster-mitigation officer in Catanduanes, told The Associated Press by telephone. "Along a main boulevard here, the tidal surges went up to more than 7 meters (23 feet) near the seaside houses. It looked really scary."

The entire province of Catanduanes had no power after the typhoon knocked down trees and electricity posts, and disaster-response teams were checking how many more houses were damaged in addition to those impacted by previous storms, he said.

"We need tin roofs and other construction materials, aside from food. Villagers tell us here that they still haven't gotten up from the past storm and were pinned down again by this typhoon," Monterola said. Nearly half of the island province's 80,000 people were sheltering in evacuation centers.

Catanduanes officials were so concerned as the typhoon approached that they threatened vulnerable villagers with arrest if they did not follow orders to evacuate to safer grounds. More than 750,000 people took refuge in

emergency shelters, including churches and a shopping mall, due to Man-yi and two previous storms mostly in the northern Philippines, Assistant Secretary Cesar Idio of the Office of Civil Defense and other provincial officials said.

The rare number of back-to-back storms and typhoons that lashed Luzon in just three weeks left more than 160 people dead, affected 9 million people and caused such extensive damage to residential communities, infrastructure and farmlands that the Philippines may have to import more rice, a staple food for most Filipinos. In an emergency meeting as Man-yi approached, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. asked his Cabinet and provincial officials to brace for "the worst-case scenario."

At least 26 domestic airports and two international airports were briefly shut and inter-island ferry and cargo services were suspended due to rough seas, stranding thousands of passengers and commuters, according to the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippine and the coast guard.

Xi cautions US to 'make the wise choice' to keep relations stable

LIMA, Peru, Nov 17, (AP): China's leader Xi Jinping met for the last time with US President Joe Biden on Saturday but was already looking ahead to President-elect Donald Trump and his "America first" policies, saying Beijing "is ready to work with a new US administration."

During their talks on the sidelines of the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Peru, Xi cautioned that a stable China-U.S. relationship was critical not only to the two nations but to the "future and destiny of humanity."

"Make the wise choice," he cautioned. "Keep exploring the right way for two major countries to get along well with each other."

Without mentioning Trump's name, Xi appeared to signal his concern that the incoming president's protectionist rhetoric on the campaign trail could send the U.S.-China relationship into another valley.

"China is ready to work with a new US administration to maintain communication, expand cooperation and manage differences so as to strive for a steady transition of the China-U.S. relationship for the benefit of the two peoples," Xi said through an interpreter.

Xi, who is firmly entrenched atop China's political hierarchy, spoke

forcefully in his brief remarks before reporters. Biden, who is winding down more than 50 years of public service, talked in broader brushstrokes about where the relationship between the two countries has gone.

He reflected not just on the past four years but on the decades the two have known each other.

"We haven't always agreed, but our conversations have always been candid and always been frank. We've never kidded one another," Biden said. "These conversations prevent miscalculations, and they ensure the competition between our two countries will not veer into conflict."

Biden urged Xi to dissuade North Korea from further deepening its support for Russia's war on Ukraine. The leaders, with top aides surrounding them, gathered around a long rectangle of tables in an expansive conference room at a Lima hotel.

They had much to discuss, including China's indirect support for Russia, human rights issues, technology and Taiwan, the self-ruled democracy that Beijing claims as its own. On artificial intelligence, the two agreed on the need to maintain human control over the decision to use nuclear weapons and more broadly improve safety and international cooperation of the rapidly expanding technology.



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with US President Joe Biden in Lima, Peru on Nov 16. (Xinhua)



People detained during a government crackdown following anti-government protests against the results of the presidential election, react to their release from the prison in Tocuyito, Venezuela on Nov 16. (AP)

Venezuela releases dozens of prisoners after anti-government protests

TOCUYITO, Venezuela, Nov 17, (AP): Venezuela's government on Saturday released some of the thousands of people who were detained during and after deadly protests that followed the July presidential election. The disputed results have earned officials, including President Nicolás Maduro, international scorn.

The individuals left prison a day after the attorney general, who is loyal to the ruling party, announced the review of 225 cases linked to the aftermath of the election, which Maduro and opposition candidate Edmundo González both claim to have won. Tearful reunions took place outside prisons in various cities.

The Venezuelan-based nongovernmental organizations Penal Forum and Venezuelan Prison Observatory announced the prison releases on X. The former confirmed the release of at least 70 people, while the latter said the government freed the individuals under certain conditions, which it did not explain further.

Members of the armed forces escorted down a pedestrian bridge those who were released from the prison in the northern Venezuela city of Tocuyito. Some of the detainees

kneeled and raised their arms after going down the stairs. Two detainees helped a third one who could not walk on his own and later collapsed into the arms of a relative as they sobbed. "My son, thank you, Lord, thank you!" a woman said as she hugged her son with one arm and lifted the other to the sky.

Images shared on social media by the Venezuelan Prison Observatory showed women tearfully hugging loved ones outside another prison in the South American country. The organization described the releases as a "victory" and demanded that all who remain in prison for their roles in the election and activities in its aftermath be freed.

Maduro's government has come under heavy criticism for the election's lack of transparency and the repression unleashed in its aftermath, including the arrests of political leaders, lawyers, poll workers, election volunteers and protesters, both minors and adults.

The protests erupted after Venezuela's electoral authorities declared Maduro had won the July 28 contest and alleged they could not publish precinct-level results because their website had been hacked.

The Pakistani government directed the provision of the best medical facilities to those injured in the incident. (KUNA)

Afghan police arrest 2 hunters: Police have arrested two persons on the charge of killing a bear in northern Afghanistan's Badakhshan province to ensure wild animals safety and natural beauty, Provincial Director for Environmental Protection Qari Faiz Rahman Ibrahim said Sunday.

After killing a brown bear in the mountainous Darwaz district a week ago, the killers took a picture with the dead animal and posted it on social media, the official said.

The Afghan caretaker government has banned deforestation, hunting wild animals and birds to protect the environment and natural beauty in the country. (Xinhua)

Subcontinent

Terrorist attack kills 7 in Pakistan: Seven Paramilitary personnel killed and 18 injured in southwestern Pakistan on Saturday by a terrorist attack targeted checkpoint in Balochistan province, as reported by local authorities.

In a statement, Prime Minister of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif has strongly condemned the terrorist attack on unarmed civilians and instructed immediate action against the culprits involved and to ensure they receive exemplary punishment.

Police officer Habib-ur-Rehman reported said that the attack continued for several hours and contingent of security forces arrived at the scene and cordoned off the area.

Fiscal crisis

Senegalese vote in parliamentary election

DAKAR, Senegal, Nov 17, (AP): Polls opened in Senegal on Sunday for a parliamentary election that is set to determine if the country's newly elected president can carry out ambitious reforms.

More than 7 million registered voters in the West African country are choosing 165 lawmakers in the national assembly, where the party of President Bassirou Diomaye Faye currently does not hold a majority.

Faye, who was elected in March on an anti-establishment platform, says that has blocked him from executing the reforms he pledged during his campaign, including fighting corruption, reviewing fishing permits for foreign companies and securing a bigger share from the country's natural resources for the population.

In September, he dissolved the opposition-led parliament, paving the way for a snap legislative election. His party is facing the Takku Wallu opposition platform led by former President Macky Sall, alongside 39 other registered parties and coalitions.

Polls will close at 6 pm (1800



A man casts his vote inside a polling station, during the presidential elections, in Dakar, Senegal, Sunday, March 24. (AP)

GMT). The first provisional results are expected to be known by Monday morning, but the final count will only

be published later during the week.

Faye's political party, PASTEF, needs at least 83 seats in order to gain a majority in the assembly. Analysts say it has a high chance of securing that, given its popularity and Faye's margin of victory in the March presidential election.

Faye, 44, was elected with 54% in the first round, becoming Africa's youngest elected leader, less than two weeks after he was released from prison. His rise has reflected widespread frustration among Senegal's youth with the country's direction - a common sentiment across Africa, which has the world's youngest population and a number of leaders accused of clinging to power for decades.

Over 60% of Senegalese are under 25 and 90% work in informal jobs. Senegal has been hit by skyrocketing inflation in recent years, making it difficult for them to get by.

The country is also a major source of irregular migration to Europe, with thousands leaving every year on rickety, artisanal fishing boats in search of economic opportunities.



M23 rebels, who control Rubaya, a mining town in eastern Congo since May 2024 known for producing a key mineral used in smartphones, stand with their weapons in Kibumba, in the eastern of Democratic Republic of Congo on Dec 23, 2022. (AP)

13 killed, more kidnapped by extremist rebels in Congo

At least 13 people were killed and others kidnapped in eastern Congo by extremist rebels linked to the Islamic State group, local authorities said Saturday.

Rebels with the Allied Democratic Forces, which has ties to IS, killed civilians in Mabisio village in North Kivu province, said the area's administrator, Col. Alain Kiwewa, on state television.

Women were among those killed in the attack late Friday evening, and houses were burned and looted, he said.

Eastern Congo has struggled with armed violence for decades as more than 120 groups fight for power, land and valuable mineral resources, while others try to defend their communities. Some armed groups have been accused of mass killings.

In recent years, ADF attacks have intensified and spread towards Goma, eastern Congo's main city, as well as neighboring Ituri province.

Rights groups and the United Nations have accused the ADF of

killing hundreds of people and abducting even more, including a significant number of children.

In August, the ADF killed at least 12 people in several villages in North Kivu.

Meanwhile, the Command of the 6th Infantry Division of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) announced that it had repelled an attack by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on El Fasher, the capital city of North Darfur State in western Sudan. (Agencies)

Market Movements 17-11-2024

Country	Change	Closing pts	Country	Change	Closing pts
SAUDI	↑	TASI	+20.80	EGYPT	↓
			11,811.98		EGX 30
					-210.14
					31,252.07

Business

GCC exports fall to KD 11.9 mln

Kuwait's non-oil exports dip to KD 21.1 mln in Oct

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has reported a decline in Kuwait's total local exports (excluding oil) in October, amounting to 21.1 million dinars, down from 24.4 million dinars in September, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Saleh Al-Azmi, Undersecretary of the International Organizations Affairs and Foreign Trade Sector, provided details to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), highlighting the total certificates of origin issued for Kuwait exports.

For the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, 1,823 certificates were issued last October, valued at KD 11.9 million, compared to 1,781 certificates worth KD 14.6 million in September.

Exports to Arab countries saw a decrease in both the number of certificates and value, with 322 certificates

worth KD 8.3 million issued in October, compared to 370 certificates valued at KD 8.06 million in September.

In Europe, 7 certificates were issued to five countries, down from 9 certificates for six countries the previous month.

The African exports showed a significant drop, with only two certificates worth KD 29,737 issued, compared to four certificates worth KD 54,299 in September.

Exports to the Americas also saw a decline, with 11 certificates issued in October valued at KD 116,363, compared to 6 certificates worth KD 163,862 the month before.

Exports to Asian countries and Australia increased slightly, with 5 certificates issued to three countries worth KD 88,404, compared to three certificates for three countries valued at KD 48,366 in September.

Kuwait Central Bank holds discount rate steady at 4.0% despite Fed cuts

US Fed cuts rates to 4.50%-4.75%, inflation declines

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: According to the weekly report from Al-Shall Center, the US Federal Reserve reduced the benchmark interest rate by a quarter of a percentage point on November 7, bringing it to a range between 4.50 percent and 4.75 percent, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This move was in line with most market expectations and was driven by the continued decline in inflation rates.

The report highlights that the Fed has largely achieved its goal of controlling inflation, which is now on a downward trajectory toward the target of 2.0 percent.

Additionally, there are indications of a weaker labor market, though the unemployment rate remains low.

Despite the tight monetary policies, the US economy has shown resilience, with forecasts suggesting a potential growth of 2.8 percent in 2024 and 2.2 percent in 2025.

These growth expectations outpace those of the Eurozone and its G7 partners (excluding Canada), with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projecting a 2.4 percent growth rate for the Eurozone in 2025.

The report emphasizes that the likelihood of a "soft landing" for the US economy is higher than ever, but it also cautions that the Federal Reserve remains vigilant, monitoring variables to maintain a balance between controlling inflation, sustaining a strong labor market, and supporting economic growth.

A major uncertainty mentioned is the potential impact of a trade war, should President Trump's reelection lead to the implementation of protectionist policies. With the US and China representing roughly 43.1 percent of the global economy, such a development could have significant implications for global trade.

Al-Shall also noted that the US Federal Reserve's rate cuts are positive for the Gulf countries, which had previously raised their interest rates to align with the US to protect their currencies, as their exchange rates are pegged to the dollar.

As a result, the Gulf countries reduced their interest rates for the second time this year by a quarter of

a percentage point, except for Qatar, which opted for a 0.30 percent reduction. These cuts are expected to ease financing burdens and support economic activity.

However, Kuwait remains an outlier in this scenario because when the US Federal Reserve cut interest rates by 0.50 percent on September 18, the Central Bank of Kuwait followed by reducing the dinar's discount rate by 0.25 percent.

However, when the Fed made another 0.25 percent reduction on November 7, the Central Bank of Kuwait chose not to follow suit, keeping its discount rate at 4.0 percent.

Al-Shall considers both decisions to be valid, noting that they have effectively narrowed the interest rate margin between the US dollar and the Kuwaiti dinar from 1.00 percent-1.25 percent before September 18, to 0.50 percent-0.75 percent now. This, in turn, strengthens the Kuwaiti dinar's peg and currency stability.

The report suggests that while the other GCC countries have taken steps to align their rates with the US to support their economies, Kuwait's more cautious approach helps maintain the strength and stability of its own currency.

Other Voices

Oil price target set at \$91

Kuwait's budget deficit projected at \$18 billion

By Kamel Al-Harami

Independent Oil Analyst

THE oil price in Kuwait's budget for next year must reach \$91.00 per barrel. This figure is based on our upcoming fiscal year budget, starting April 1, with a projected deficit of KD 6 billion (approximately \$18 billion). The total budget is set at KD 25 billion, which is KD 2 billion lower than the current year's budget.



Al-Harami

It is worth noting that the government has announced an equilibrium price to balance the budget for the first time. This budget is based on a crude oil price estimate of \$70 per barrel. However, it is unlikely that oil prices will remain at this level, as they are expected to remain within the range of \$75 to \$80 per barrel.

Achieving a balanced budget while reducing expenses will be a significant accomplishment, but it definitely is worth trying. The government's goal is to cut costs, which will be a challenging yet necessary task.

At the same time, the government plans to create over 24,000 new job opportunities in the next 12 months, which will be a true challenge for our new Prime Minister and his administration.

While some figures have been announced and published, the most important number in the budget has not yet been disclosed - Kuwait's crude oil production for the next year or the present level of crude oil production. However, we can

estimate that it is around 2.8 million barrels per day, which could generate KD 22 billion in revenue. This would result in a lower deficit of approximately KD 2.5 billion, or potentially a balanced budget with no deficit, assuming an oil price of \$80 per barrel and production at 2.8 million barrels per day. If oil prices reach the projected \$91 per barrel, it would be a blessing.

Currently, Kuwait is expected to incur a KD 6 billion deficit in the current fiscal year, with more than 55 days remaining to close the books before the fiscal year ends on March 31.

This brings us to the challenge of tackling the KD 6 billion shortage. The options on the table include borrowing from international banks, tapping into our sovereign wealth funds, or thinking outside the box such as privatizing some of the oil companies. The latter could serve as an effective solution, as it would provide immediate cash to the government and also strengthen the private sector. It could promote economic growth by offering job opportunities for our national graduates and encouraging private sector development.

While this is a promising solution, it will require huge efforts from both the government and the private sector to make it work.

The goal is to achieve a positive budget with reduced expenses and a lower deficit compared to previous years. The question remains whether we can maintain this level of expenditure and fulfill our obligations.

We wish the new government and its leadership success in reducing the budget deficit without resorting to borrowing. It is time for a new era.

Email: nafikuwaiti@yahoo.com

Bidding opens Nov 17 for KPC cafeteria tender

KPC postpones tender dates for communication network project

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has announced the postponement of the preliminary meeting and closing of the tender for the supply, operation and maintenance of communication network and support devices for its main building and the Petroleum Training Center.

The corporation said that the preliminary meeting will be held on Nov 21, instead of Nov 12; while the closing date was rescheduled from Dec 10 to Dec 17.

It also announced the launching of a tender for the operation and management of the cafeteria of the oil complex to provide food services. In its announcement in the official gazette -- Kuwait Al-Youm, KPC said the bidding for this tender will be on Nov 17 and the closing date will be Dec 24; adding that this tender is for com-

panies specialized in the field and it is not divisible.

KPC explained it is not permissible for one person or a group to register the classification with more than one name or to submit more than one bid in a tender, except for alternative bids, as per the tender conditions.

According to the corporation, an individual who owns shares in separate companies and each company is independent in terms of legal personality, finances, engineers, employees and general administrative system is allowed to register himself and each of the companies.

Moreover, Kuwait Oil Tankers Company (KOTC) announced the extension of the deadline for submitting bids for the tender for renting computers, printers and accessories, and providing maintenance and technical support services to the company; so the new deadline is Dec 17 instead of Nov 19.

By National Bank of Kuwait

United States

Inflation

Inflation in the US rose in October, with the year-over-year figure rising 2.6%, up from 2.4% the previous month. The month-over-month figure rose 0.2%, meeting expectations and matching the rise seen in the previous month. Meanwhile, core inflation rose 3.3% y/y, unchanged from the previous month. The monthly core price increase stood at 0.3%, meeting expectations and the same pace seen in September. The main contribution to the rise in the figures came from housing and shelter, which accounted to half of the monthly all items increase. Expectations for a rate cut in December are currently around 58%.

US Producer Price Index

In October 2024, US factory gate prices rose by 0.2% month-on-month, following a revised 0.1% increase in September, aligning with expectations. Service prices increased by 0.3% (up from 0.2% in September), driven significantly by a 3.6% rise in portfolio management costs. Other sectors with price increases included machinery and vehicle wholesaling, airline services, computer retailing, outpatient care, and cable services. Goods prices rose slightly by 0.1%, ending a two-month decline, with carbon steel scrap prices surging 8.4% and increases noted for meats, diesel, vegetables, and oilseeds. Year-on-year, the Producer Price Index (PPI) rose by 2.4%, above September's 1.9% and the 2.3% forecast. Core PPI increased by 0.3% monthly (up from 0.2%), and the annual core rate reached 3.1%, surpassing expectations of 3%.

Unemployment Claims

In the week ending November 9th, US unemployment benefit claims dropped by 4,000 to 217,000, the lowest since May, and below the expected increase to 223,000. Continuing unemployment claims decreased by 19,000 to 1,873,000 in late October. This data reinforces the strength of the US labor market despite recent Federal Reserve tightening, giving the central bank flexibility to slow monetary easing if inflation persists. The four-week average for initial claims, which smooths out fluctuations, decreased by 6,250 to 221,000. On a non-seasonally adjusted basis, initial claims rose by 16,735 to 229,478, mainly due to a rise in California offsetting a decline in Michigan.

Retail Sales

In October 2024, US retail sales rose by 0.4% month-over-month, surpassing expectations of a 0.3% increase, following a revised 0.8% gain in September. The largest sales increases were seen in electronics & appliance stores (2.3%), auto dealers (1.9%), and food services & drinking places (0.7%). Gains were also recorded in

ECB signals potential rate cuts in December

US unemployment claims fall to 217K, below expectations

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.0712	1.0496	1.0727	1.0541	1.0500	1.0610	1.0585
GBP	1.2913	1.2594	1.2926	1.2617	1.2595	1.2655	1.2617
JPY	152.66	152.62	156.74	154.34	153.85	155.35	152.53
CHF	0.8756	0.8750	0.8917	0.8880	0.8800	0.8915	0.8789

building materials, nonstore retailers, general merchandise, food & beverage, and gasoline stations. However, sales fell in categories like miscellaneous store retailers (-1.6%), furniture (-1.3%), sporting goods, and clothing. Excluding autos, sales edged up 0.1%. Core retail sales, excluding key categories tied to GDP calculations, decreased by 0.1%.

The US Dollar Index closed the week at 106.69.

Europe

Words From the ECB

The European Central Bank (ECB) indicated a potential move towards rate cuts during its December meeting, driven by expectations of easing inflation, particularly from lower energy prices. However, concerns remain over domestic inflation pressures like strong wage growth and weak labor productivity. Despite a positive inflation outlook, the ECB emphasized the need for more data before making policy decisions. Policymakers highlighted that any rate cut would rely on the economic outlook and clear evidence of reduced inflation pressures, signaling a cautious, data-dependent approach.

The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.0541.

United Kingdom

GDP

The UK economy slowed more than expected in the third quarter, following an unexpected contraction in September as concerns mounted over the Labor government's fiscal plans. According to the Office for National Statistics, GDP rose by just 0.1% compared to the previous quarter, falling short of the 0.2% growth economists had anticipated. In September alone, the economy shrank by 0.1%, contrasting sharply with the forecasted 0.2% expansion. The disappointing figures pose a challenge to Prime Minister Keir Starmer's pledge to boost UK growth to 2.5% annually, aiming to make it the fastest among the Group of Seven economies. AF-

ter leading G-7 growth in the first half of the year and rebounding from last year's mild recession, the UK's growth slowed significantly from 0.5% in the second quarter. The decline appears linked to growing concerns over Labor's fiscal policies, with consumer and business confidence plunging in September amid fears of tax increases. These fears materialized on October 30, when Labor announced £40 billion (\$50.7 billion) in tax hikes, with businesses bearing most of the burden.

The GBP/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.2617

Asia Pacific

Australia's Unemployment

Australia's unemployment rate came in at 4.1%, marking the third month of steady unemployment after reaching 3.5% in June. The participation rate increased to 67.2%, while the underemployment rate remained at 6.3%. Meanwhile, markets are currently expecting no change from the Reserve Bank of Australia, with only 2.5 bps priced in for a December cut.

Australia's Wage Growth

Australia's wage growth showed signs of moderation in Q3 2024, with the seasonally adjusted wage price index rising 3.5% year-on-year, down from 4.1% in the previous quarter. This marked the weakest growth since late 2022 and fell short of expectations for a 3.6% increase. Public sector wage growth outpaced private sector growth for the first time since 2020, at 3.7% compared to 3.5%. Meanwhile, quarterly wage growth remained steady at 0.8%, unchanged from the prior two quarters, and below market forecasts of 0.9%. These figures underline a cooling in wage growth momentum.

The AUD/USD currency pair closed the week at 0.6461

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30760



KIB and Med Cell collaborate to integrate banking and healthcare services.



In its efforts to provide innovative digital solutions to serve all customer segments

KIB partners with Med Cell to launch 'Salamtek' platform

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) signed a strategic partnership agreement with Med Cell, a subsidiary of Mazaya, aiming to launch and develop the 'Salamtek' platform. This advanced digital platform offers a comprehensive range of health services for users. The agreement was signed on behalf of KIB by Vice Chairman and CEO Mr. Raed Bukhameen, and on behalf of Med Cell by Chairman Mr. Eid Al-Rashidi.

This strategic partnership with the 'Salamtek' platform marks an advanced step toward building an integrated ecosystem of solutions that combines banking and healthcare services, specifically designed to fit the lifestyle of each customer segment and support their needs. This initiative aligns with KIB's role as a leading national institution and a trusted financial partner, in line with its main slogan, 'Bank for Life'.

The 'Salamtek' platform aims to facilitate access to a wide range of medical services, includ-

ing nursing, lab tests, imaging, physical therapy, and appointment booking at specialized medical centers and hospitals. Users can also schedule appointments with doctors across various specialties and access online medical consultations for emergencies. Additionally, the platform offers on-demand delivery of medications and medical supplies from partner pharmacies, enhancing the quality of healthcare services available to users.

Mohamed El-Shareef, General Manager of the Digital Innovation and Data Intelligence Department at KIB, expressed his pride in this partnership, which aligns with the Bank's efforts to provide innovative digital solutions to serve all customer segments and meet their evolving needs. He emphasized that this step reflects KIB's commitment to enhancing its digital infrastructure and supporting the financial technology (FinTech) sector.

El-Shareef added that this partnership marks an important step towards enhancing the customer

experience through an integrated digital platform, allowing easy and convenient access to a wide range of healthcare services. He noted that KIB continues to develop 'Banking as a Service' solutions, offering flexible and comprehensive digital platforms that enable customers to access banking and healthcare services in a more seamless and innovative manner, enriching their experience and bringing real value to their lives.

On her part, Med Cell CEO Engineer Salwa Nabil Malhas, stated that this strategic partnership between KIB and Med Cell aims to elevate Kuwait's healthcare sector in alignment with the global shift toward digital transformation across all industries. She explained that the Salamtek app has been developed and launched on both Apple and Android platforms in its final stages, featuring around 200 doctors across various specialties, the top five pharmacies in Kuwait, and over 20,000 medical products.

Total revenues reach USD 475 million, reflecting stable performance

Egypt Kuwait Holding records USD 124 mln net income in 9 months

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Today, Egypt Kuwait Holding Company (EKH) announced its consolidated financial results for the period ending 30 September 2024, prepared in accordance with Egyptian Accounting Standards for the first nine months of 2024, EKH recorded revenues of USD 475 million, maintaining profitability levels throughout the period. Net profit was USD 139 million, with a net profit margin of 29%, while net income attributable to EKH shareholders reached USD 124 million.

In the third quarter of 2024, EKH reported revenues of USD 154 million, a 20% quarter-on-quarter growth, driven primarily by the Energy and Energy-Related segment. Net profit was USD 39 million in the third quarter of the year, with net income attributable to EKH shareholders totaling USD 34 million for the same period.

Commenting on the Group's performance during the first nine months of 2024, Loay Jassim Al-Kharafi, Chairman of EKH, stated that the results underscore the resilience of EKH's investment model and the strength of its operational capabilities. He added that this performance reflects EKH's success in delivering sustainable value to shareholders and advancing its growth trajectory, as the Group maintained strong profitability levels despite economic challenges.

Al-Kharafi noted that management observed signs of revenue recovery on a quarterly basis, attributed to positive factors including gradual price recovery, cost management strategies, and the positive impact of recent investments. These factors have contributed to strong profit margins across EKH's portfolio, reinforcing confidence in the strength and sustainability of the Group's business model.

He further highlighted that EKH has started reaping the benefits of its recent investment expansions in the energy sector. Positive results were achieved at the North Sinai offshore gas concession, where production commenced at the Aton-1 well (the second well in Phase 3B) in the third quarter of 2024 with a production rate of 15 million cubic feet per day. The Group aims to maintain gas production rates at 55 million cubic feet per day until the end of 2026.

Al-Kharafi noted that since acquiring the North Sinai offshore



Loay Jassim Al-Kharafi

Loay Jassim Al-Kharafi:
 ■ The results confirm the resilience of EKH's investment model and the strength of its operational capabilities.
 ■ EKH's strong financial performance reflects its success in creating sustainable value for shareholders and driving continuous growth.



Jon Rökk

Jon Rökk:
 ■ The solid results underscore the company's ability to turn opportunities into tangible outcomes.
 ■ Thoughtful investment and strategic planning are the foundation of EKH's success in overcoming challenges and achieving profits.

concession, EKH has invested USD 247 million in exploration and development activities, adding approximately 223 billion cubic feet to gas reserves.

He added that the Group is focused on maximizing sustainable value for shareholders through a proactive capital recycling strategy. This approach involves optimizing the performance of its investment portfolio by leveraging competitive advantages and export potential, in addition to enhancing collaboration among subsidiaries.

Meanwhile, Jon Rökk, CEO of EKH, expressed pride in the strong results achieved by the Group during the first nine months of the current year, despite the adverse impact of the EGP devaluation against the USD on Group revenues. He noted that the solid results underscore the Group's ability to turn opportunities into tangible outcomes, and that thoughtful investment and strategic

planning are the foundation of success in achieving profits despite challenges.

As the year-end approaches, Rökk stated that the company remains committed to achieving positive growth rates in the coming period. He highlighted that growth is supported by recent expansions, especially amid expectations of price recovery and stability, which are expected to contribute to profit growth and enhance operational efficiency across the investment portfolio.

He attributed the achievements to the diligent efforts of the management team and employees, along with the strategic initiatives undertaken by the company. Rökk expressed confidence in the Group's ability to capitalize on attractive growth opportunities, ensuring continued growth and success amid dynamic operating conditions.

Fertilizers and Petrochemicals Sector

Rökk noted that revenues from the Fertilizers and Petrochemicals sector reached USD 74 million during the third quarter of 2024, while net profit totaled USD 28 million, with a 4-point improvement in the net profit margin to reach 38%.

He pointed out that the Group benefited from an increased stake in Alexandria Fertilizer Company (AlexFert), enabling the company to achieve positive results driven by an 11% quarter-on-quarter increase in urea export prices to USD 335 per ton. He expressed confidence in the company's ability to continue achieving strong results in the coming period, supported by global urea price increases and steady gas supplies thanks to recent Egyptian government efforts. AlexFert recorded revenues of USD 47 million during the third quarter of 2024, with net profit reaching USD 18 million, and

the net profit margin expanding to 38%.

Meanwhile, Sprea Misr recorded revenues of USD 27 million during the third quarter of 2024, reflecting a quarter-on-quarter increase of 3%, supported by gradual price recovery. Net profit reached USD 10 million, with the net profit margin expanding to 38% in the third quarter of 2024.

Energy Sector

On a related note, revenues from the Energy and Energy-Related segment totaled USD 57 million during the third quarter of 2024, marking a year-on-year increase of 12% and a 57% quarter-on-quarter increase. This performance was driven by strong results from both NatEnergy and the North Sinai offshore gas concession. The segment's net profit amounted to USD 15 million, with an increase in the net profit margin to 26%.

NatEnergy reported revenues of USD 42 million in the third quarter of 2024, representing a year-on-year growth of 15%, supported by growth in Kahraba's electricity distribution activities, along with progress by Fayum Gas in its high-pressure steel pipeline project. NatEnergy achieved net profit of USD 10 million in the third quarter of 2024, with positive future prospects supported by anticipated increases in natural gas connection fees and electricity tariffs, which will help improve profit margins.

Furthermore, the North Sinai offshore gas concession generated revenues of USD 15 million during the third quarter of 2024, representing a year-on-year growth of 5% and an 11% quarter-on-quarter increase, driven by successful commissioning of new wells that boosted production volumes. Net profit for the period reached USD 6.5 million, with a net profit margin of 43%.

Insurance Sector

Revenues from the Insurance and Diversified segment amounted to USD 22 million during the third quarter of 2024, supported by the segment's continued strong performance from the previous quarter.

Delta Insurance, the largest contributor to the segment's revenues, generated USD 18 million during the third quarter of 2024, a year-on-year growth of 20%, driven by revaluation of insured assets and rising insurance premiums, along with improved returns on the insurance portfolio supported by high interest rates. Delta Insurance's net profit contribution to EKH grew by 28% year-on-year to USD 4 million in the third quarter of 2024, translating to a growth of over 97% in EGP terms, reflecting the strong fundamentals and significant growth potential of the sector.

It is worth noting that Egypt Kuwait Holding Company, established in 1997 with issued and paid-in capital of USD 282 million and listed on both Boursa Kuwait and the Egyptian Exchange, is one of the Middle East's leading and fastest-growing investment entities. The company's diversified investment portfolio spans five main sectors, including fertilizers and petrochemicals, gas distribution, power generation and distribution, as well as insurance and non-banking financial services.

Boursa Kuwait wraps up on positive note

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait concluded Sunday's trading session on a positive note, with gains observed across all major indices.

The General Index rose by 20.54 points (0.28%) to close at 7,319.38 points. Market activity remained robust, with 433.7 million shares changing hands through 19,967 transactions, totaling KD 72.2 million (approximately USD 220.2 million).

The Main Market Index showed

significant strength, climbing 33.07 points (0.50%) to reach 6,654.92 points. This segment saw 335.18 million shares traded through 14,778 transactions, valued at KD 42.7 million (USD 130.2 million).

The Premier Market Index also advanced, gaining 18.21 points (0.23%) to close at 7,848.92 points. Trading in this market involved 98.5 million shares across 5,189 transactions, worth KD 29.4 million (USD

89.6 million).

Additionally, the Main 50 Index increased by 7.18 points (0.11%) to 6,545.33 points. This index saw 179.11 million shares traded through 8,068 transactions, valued at KWD 27.10 million (approximately USD 82.6 million).

The day's trading reflected a broadly positive sentiment across Kuwait's stock market, with all key indices registering gains.

KFH wins Straight Through Processing Excellence Award from Citibank

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has been awarded the Straight Through Processing Excellence Award (STP) by Citibank Group. KFH was recognized as the best financial institution in the Middle East in the areas for remittances, e-payment services and financial transactions, achieving a perfect score of 100% according to Citibank criteria for this honor.

Citibank Group grants this award to distinguished global financial institutions that utilize advanced systems renowned for their precision development and adherence to international standards. This award underlines KFH's dedication and commitment to meeting the high standards set by Citibank, standing out among numerous financial institutions that maintain active engagement with Citibank in the region.

The award is granted based on a number of criteria, chief among them are precision of remittances, data and information quality, alignment with the regulatory requirements, as well as quick implementation of operations.

On this occasion, KFH Group Chief Operations Officer, Abdulla Mohamed Abu Alhous, said that the award affirms the progress of KFH's technical systems and software. It also highlights the excellence of the Bank's exceptional workforce and the quality of its services. "Citibank is one of the world's largest financial institutions



Abdullah Abu Alhous

Abu Alhous: The award confirms the quality of KFH's digitization, human capital and services



Abdullah AlMarzouq

Abdullah AlMarzouq: The award is granted to prestigious institutions in the region and demonstrates KFH's strong capabilities and efficiency

selects the best institution that adheres to these specs and standards. Having been awarded with this accolade, by scoring the highest rates across these standards, serves as a well-earned achievement and a motivation for KFH to carry on the development and commitment for sustainable success and excellence."

Meanwhile, KFH General Manager Financial Institutions, Abdullah Al-Marzouq, stated that the award, which is granted to prestigious institutions in the region, demonstrates KFH's strong capabilities and efficiency in managing transactions with global financial institutions, as well as the trust of these institutions toward the Bank. Additionally, it also reflects Citibank's confidence in Islamic banking practices, an area where KFH has played a significant role in establishing a solid foundation in both regional and international markets.


He emphasized that this achievement is a result of KFH's vision and strategy of investing in advanced technological systems and human capital to best serve customers with the highest standards. He pointed out that treasury and cash management have evolved significantly, reaching new heights in offering innovative financial banking solutions and digital platforms for customers within the treasury.

"KFH boasts a skilled and experienced team of young national professionals. With their expertise, they can manage comprehensive treasury operations and serve customers, supported by the advanced technological solutions which KFH employs to boost its operational efficiency," added Al-Marzouq.

The Straight Through Processing Excellence Award (STP) marks a significant addition to KFH's track record of achievements, highlighted by the various awards and recognitions it scooped from international and renowned institutions. These accolades acknowledge KFH's excellence of its financial services and solutions in addition to its global leadership in the Islamic finance industry.



citi award



Egypt Kuwait Holding

STRONG FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REFLECTS THE GROUP'S RESILIENCE

9M 2024 Key Performance Indicators

Net Profit

USD 124 Million

Total Revenue

USD 475 Million

Earnings Per Share (EPS)


9.43 US Cent/Share

Total Shareholders' Equity

USD 483 Million

Total Assets

USD 1.5 Billion



www.ekholding.com

During Mastercard East Arabia Business Forum

Gulf Bank wins Mastercard Award for 'Highest tokenized debit portfolio in Kuwait'

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Gulf Bank has received the prestigious "Highest tokenized debit portfolio in Kuwait" award from Mastercard, recognizing the bank's outstanding efforts in advancing digital security and providing innovative digital payment solutions for its cards and services.

This award is an international recognition from Mastercard for Gulf Bank's exceptional achievements in Tokenization – the process of converting sensitive data, such as card numbers, into secure tokens that can be used for digital payments without exposing the original information. This technology reduces security risks and enhances the customer experience by providing an additional layer of protection for digital payments.

After the award presentation at the recent Mastercard East Arabia Business Forum in Singapore, attended by numerous banking industry leaders, Mr. Mohammed Taqi, Assistant General Manager of Consumer Banking at Gulf Bank, said, "We are proud to receive this distinguished award from Mastercard, which reflects our ongoing commitment to innovation and delivering secure, advanced banking solutions to our customers."

Taqi added, "We are always striving to offer the best digital banking services that align with the latest developments in the payment world, and we believe that Tokenization technology is a key component in enhancing the security of electronic payment transactions for our customers."

He continued, "This award marks an important



Mohammed Taqi receiving the award.

milestone in Gulf Bank's strategy to offer modern and secure banking services, reinforcing our posi-

tion as a leading banking institution in Kuwait and the region."

Mohammed Taqi:

■ The award reflects our ongoing commitment to innovation and delivering secure, advanced banking solutions to our customers.

Mastercard is a global leader in digital payment solutions, dedicated to delivering innovative technologies that improve the payment experience while ensuring security and convenience for both online and in-store transactions.

Gulf Bank aims to be Kuwait's leading bank, fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace to deliver exceptional customer service while contributing sustainably to the community.

Through its extensive branch network and innovative digital services, the bank empowers customers to conduct banking transactions conveniently and efficiently, ensuring a seamless experience.

In alignment with Kuwait Vision 2035, "New Kuwait," and its commitment to fostering collaborative partnerships, Gulf Bank is dedicated to driving robust sustainability initiatives across environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions.

The bank is committed to implementing strategically selected and diverse sustainability programs both internally and externally.

Inflation stuck above target

Powell signals slow & cautious rate cuts

WASHINGTON, Nov 17, (AP): Chair Jerome Powell said Thursday that the Federal Reserve will likely cut its key interest rate slowly and deliberately in the coming months, in part because inflation has shown signs of persistence and the Fed's officials want to see where it heads next.

Powell, speaking in Dallas, said that inflation is edging closer to the central bank's 2% target, "but it is not there yet."

At the same time, he said, the economy is strong, and the policymakers can take time to monitor the path of inflation.

"The economy is not sending any signals that we need to be in a hurry to lower rates," the Fed chair said. "The strength we are currently seeing in the economy gives us the ability to approach our decisions carefully."

Economists expect the Fed to announce another quarter-point rate cut in December, after a quarter-point reduction last week and half-point cut in September.

But the Fed's steps after that are much less clear. In September, the central bank's officials collectively signaled that they envisioned cutting their key rate four times in 2025. Wall Street traders, though, now expect just two rate reductions, according to futures pricing tracked by CME Fed-Watch. And after Powell's cautious remarks Thursday, traders estimated the likelihood of a Fed rate cut in December at just below 59%, down from 83% a day earlier.

The Fed's benchmark interest rate tends to influence borrowing rates across the economy, including for mortgages, auto loans and credit cards. Other factors, though, can also push up longer-term rates, notably expectations for inflation and economic growth.

For example, Donald Trump's presidential election victory has sent yields on Treasury securities higher. It is a sign that investors expect faster growth next year as well as potentially larger budget deficits and even higher inflation should Trump impose widespread tariffs and mass deportations of migrants as he has promised.

In his remarks Thursday, Powell

suggested that inflation may remain stuck somewhat above the Fed's target in the coming months. But he reiterated that inflation should eventually decline further, "albeit on a sometimes bumpy path."

Under questioning, Powell also explained why he considers the Fed's role as an independent federal agency to be crucial to its ability to fight inflation. During his first term, Trump threatened to try to fire Powell for not cutting interest rates. And during this year's election campaign, Trump asserted that as president, he should have a "say" on the Fed's rate policies.

Powell said Thursday that the Fed's independence from political concerns has made the public confident that the policymakers will keep inflation low over time. That confidence, in turn, has helped reduce inflation after it had spiked in the wake of the pandemic. When consumers and businesses expect inflation to slow, they act in ways that help hold it down - by, for example, not demanding high cost-of-living raises.

"The public," Powell said, "believed that we would get inflation down, that we would restore price stability. And that's ultimately the key to it."

Powell declined to comment on other political topics, including the potential impacts of Trump's proposals to impose sweeping tariffs and implement mass deport.

Other Fed officials have also recently expressed uncertainty about how much more they can cut rates, given the economy's steady growth and the apparent stickiness of inflation.

As measured by the central bank's preferred inflation gauge, so-called core prices, which exclude volatile food and energy costs, have been stuck in the high 2% range for five months.

On Wednesday, Lorie Logan, president of the Fed's Dallas branch, said it was not clear how much more the Fed should cut its key short-term rate.

"If we cut too far ... inflation could reaccelerate and the (Fed) could need to reverse direction," Logan said. "I believe it's best to proceed with caution."

Firm expands digital services with global OTT partnerships and growth

Zain Group wins three awards at MEA Business Magazine Technology Achievement Awards '24

DUBAI, Nov 17: Zain Group was recently presented with three distinguished awards at the prestigious SAMENA Council-endorsed MEA Business Magazine Technology Achievement Awards 2024, as part of a multi-sector recognition awards program aimed at highlighting significant technology achievements in the ICT industry held during GITEX GLOBAL 2024.

The first award was in the category of 'Innovative Collaborations and Partnerships' in acknowledgement of the launch of the strategic go-to-market agreement ZainTECH and Datanium, a comprehensive customer data enrichment, engagement and retention platform for retailers and healthcare businesses. This collaboration aims to provide innovative solutions that enhance customer data driven growth and retention capabilities for businesses across the Middle East and beyond.

This partnership leverages ZainTECH's extensive regional expertise in implementing compliant cloud infrastructures with DATANUUM's cutting-edge platform, to address the growing need for data privacy and regulatory compliance in the region. This will appeal to businesses looking for robust solutions to handle data securely while optimizing customer relationships, engagement and marketing spend.

The second award was in the 'Financial Technology' category saw TAMAM, Zain's fintech in Saudi Arabia recognized for 'Outstanding Sec-



Zain awards

tor Leadership and Growth Achievements". Tamam is revolutionizing the consumer finance landscape in the Kingdom, providing personalized, data-driven financial solutions that cater to the evolving needs of Saudi customers.

Tamam provides individuals with the opportunity to receive Shariah compliant loans without physically visiting a bank location. The platform's end-to-end application and award process takes just minutes from the time of downloading the app to the loan amount being paid out. Loans are provided to Saudi nationals and resi-

dents, without the requirement of a salary transfer or guarantor.

The third award was in the category of 'Data Platforms' recognized Zain's groupwide API platform DIZLEE for 'Exceptional Products and Services'. As a dynamic API Platform and digital monetization ecosystem, DIZLEE offers innovative entertainment and gaming solutions, direct operator billing, messaging, digital authentication. By exposing its APIs through the Dizlee platform, Zain removes a significant barrier to the development of profitable digital partnerships from across the globe, enhancing the time-to-mar-



ZAIN logo

ket rollout of appealing entertainment and gaming services to our customers. Currently, Dizlee has partnership agreements with more than 42 global OTT and solutions providers offering 213 different digital innovations and processing over 200 million payment transactions that has generated over USD 340 million in gross revenues since launching mid-2018.

SAMENA Telecommunications Council is a tri-regional, non-profit telecoms association that embodies a community of South Asian and MENA regional telcos, manufacturers, regulatory authorities, and academia that focuses on issues pertinent to operators and providing advocacy. MEA Business is the region's first augmented reality business publication committed to reporting positive business developments in the Middle East and Africa with focus areas that include Training and Education, Aviation, Travel, Energy, Hospitality, Travel and Technology.

These three prestigious accolades underscore Zain Group's ambitions to expand the range and quality of business and consumer services made available to its individual, enterprise and government customers across the region.

Protectionist measures threaten global prosperity and development

G20 should lead global economic governance toward fairness

BEIJING, Nov 17, (Xinhua): As world leaders are to gather in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for the 19th G20 Summit, the moment calls for decisive steps toward creating a more just, sustainable, and inclusive global community.

Themed "Building a just world and a sustainable planet," this summit presents a critical opportunity to recalibrate global economic governance and chart a path toward sustainable and inclusive development.

The G20's influence is unparalleled. Boasting about 85 percent of global GDP, over 75 percent of international trade, and two-thirds of the world's population, the G20 possesses both the economic weight and the diversity to drive changes the world urgently needs.

This summit marks the first gathering of G20 leaders since the inclusion of African Union (AU) as a full member, a historic milestone that strengthens the voice of the Global South.

However, inclusion alone is insufficient. The G20 must ensure that the voice of the AU and the wider Global South is not merely heard but also translated into tangible influence.

As a forum representing the world's largest econo-

mies, the G20 has a responsibility to champion the genuine interests of the Global South by concrete steps, including prioritizing infrastructure funding tailored to the needs of the Global South countries and expanding access to green technologies.

Regrettably, in an increasingly divided world, some Western politicians have resorted to a smear campaign against development cooperation between China and Africa. Dismissing the transformative benefits these projects bring to local economies, they are given to baseless criticisms that reveal not only their bias but also a fundamental disregard for the development priorities of the Global South.

This shortsightedness underscores the urgency for the G20 to break away from such divisive rhetoric and foster a more inclusive and equitable global order.

The G20 must also take a strong stance against growing protectionism, which threatens to unravel the hard-earned progress of global prosperity.

Protectionist measures like tariffs, trade barriers, and other unfair practices are often sold as remedies for domestic challenges, but their true cost is borne by the global economy, particularly by developing nations that rely on open markets to fuel growth and

development.

Far from providing solutions, protectionist policies exacerbate inequalities, stifle progress, and obstruct global efforts to tackle shared global crises.

Take as an example Washington and some of its allies' recent bid to suppress China's electric vehicle industry under the guise of addressing so-called "overcapacity." The maneuver not only undermines international cooperation in green technologies but also jeopardizes the global fight against climate change.

By erecting trade barriers, those countries heighten risks of slowing innovation, disrupting supply chains, and restricting access to affordable, sustainable solutions the world urgently needs.

It is self-evident that such steps are short-sighted as they not only harm specific industries but also sabotage the broader pursuit of sustainable development and climate goals.

At a critical time when the world faces a choice between division and cooperation, the G20 can lead by example, proving that global cooperation is not a zero-sum game but a shared effort to build a fairer and more prosperous future for all.



Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, left, speaks to the Dallas Regional Chamber as moderator Catherine Rampell looks during an event in Music Hall at Fair Park Thursday, Nov. 14, 2024, in Dallas. (AP)

China leads global offshore wind power with 39.1 million kilowatts

NANNING, Nov 17, (Xinhua): China has built and connected 39.1 million kilowatts of offshore wind power to its national grid by the third quarter of 2024, ranking first globally, according to a conference on offshore wind power industrial chain cooperation.

China has formed relatively complete technological and industrial chains of offshore wind power, covering design, manufacturing, construction, operations and maintenance, according to the conference held Saturday in Beihai, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Participants at the conference discussed issues such as strategic innovation, key offshore wind power technologies, as well as international cooperation on modern offshore wind

power industrial chains.

Rich in its offshore wind energy resources, China has seen fast development in the industrial chains. China's installed offshore wind power capacity grew from under 5 million kilowatts in 2018 to 37.7 million kilowatts as of 2023, accounting for 50 percent of the global total. The localization rate of offshore wind turbines in China has surpassed 90 percent.

In the future, the offshore wind power industry should innovate in its industrial integration models, strengthen core technology research and deepen coordinated industrial development, so as to form internationally competitive industrial clusters, said Shu Yinbiao, an academican of the Chinese Academy of Engineering.

Austria secure for winter despite Gazprom gas cutoff

Gazprom cuts gas supplies to Austria after OMV stops payments

VIENNA, Nov 17, (AP): Russia's state-owned natural gas company Gazprom stopped supplies to Austria early Saturday, according to the Vienna-based utility OMV, after OMV said it would stop payments for the gas following an arbitration award.

The official cutoff of supplies before dawn Saturday came after Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer on Friday held a hastily called news conference to emphasize his country has a secure supply of alternative fuel for this winter.

OMV said it would stop paying for Gazprom gas to its Austrian arm to offset a 230 million-euro (\$242 million) arbitration award it won from the International Chamber of Commerce over an earlier cutoff of gas to its German subsidiary.

The Austrian utility said in an email that no gas delivery was made from 6 a.m. on Saturday.

OMV said Wednesday it has sufficient stocks to provide gas to its customers in case of a potential

disruption by Gazprom, and said storage in Austria was more than 90% full.



A worker sits on his water tank truck next to the business tower Lakhta Centre, the headquarters of Russian gas monopoly Gazprom in St. Petersburg, Russia, April 27, 2022. (AP)

"Once again Putin is using energy as a weapon," EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen wrote in a post on X, formerly known as Twitter. "He is trying to blackmail Austria & Europe by cutting gas supplies. We are prepared for this and ready for the winter."

Russia cut off most natural gas supplies to Europe in 2022, citing disputes over payment in rubles, a move European leaders described as energy blackmail over their support for Ukraine against Russia's invasion.

European governments had to scramble to line up alternative supplies at higher prices, much of it liquefied natural gas brought by ship from the U.S. and Qatar.

Austria gets the bulk of its natural gas from Russia, as much as 98% in December last year, according to Energy Minister Lenore Gewessler.

Bank offers unique rewards and benefits to Kuwaiti customers

Warba Bank announces winners of Salary Account Campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Warba Bank continued to offer its customers rewards and benefits with its Salary Account Campaign for the year 2024, giving them the opportunity to get an exceptional travel experience, in addition to cash prizes of up to KD 1,000, 25 grams of gold, 35,000 Oasis Club miles from Kuwait Airways, and a cash gift of up to KD 15,000.

The campaign targets Kuwaiti customers with a salary exceeding KD 500, allowing them to automatically benefit from these unique rewards and benefits when opening a Salary Account with Warba Bank, as well as entering the weekly and



Ahmed Al Mutawa

monthly draws.

In this week's draw, three winners were announced. Ms. Hanan Hazam Al-Subaie won a cash prize of KD 1,000, Mr. Ghanem Shayan Al-Otaibi won 25 grams of gold, and Mr. Abdulaziz Turki Al-Otaibi earned 35,000 Oasis Club miles provided in partnership with Kuwait Airways.

Speaking of the campaign, Mr. Ahmed Mohammad Al-Mutawa – Area Manager Retail Banking Group at Warba Bank, said: "We are committed at Warba Bank to offer a unique banking experience through campaigns and exclusive benefits that are tailored to our di-

verse customer base. This year's Salary Transfer Campaign delivers unparalleled rewards and privileges for Kuwaitis earning over KD 500, ensuring a unique and rewarding banking experience."

Al-Mutawa added: "Transferring salaries to Warba Bank provides customers with access to innovative banking solutions, including advanced digital services and cutting-edge payment systems. These services ensure a banking experience that is not only secure and convenient but also premium and seamless."

He further emphasized that this year's campaign benefits were de-

signed to align with customers' needs and seasonal trends, underscoring the bank's dedication to delivering value-driven offers.

Al-Mutawa also highlighted that customers who transfer their salaries gain access to exclusive banking and investment solutions. Additionally, Warba Bank customers benefit from Kuwait's largest banking network, encompassing branches and ATMs, enhancing accessibility and convenience.

He further explained that customers can perform their banking transactions efficiently through Warba Bank's digital platforms, particularly its mobile banking ap-

plication. "We are continuously enhancing our mobile banking app to meet our customers' demand. Today, it facilitates the majority of banking transactions, reaffirming its role as an indispensable tool for our customers," he said.

Having achieved significant milestones in a short period, Warba Bank has acquired a leading position as a provider of innovative digital banking services to individuals and businesses. The Bank is also one of the local banks with the highest number of shareholders, further strengthening its commitment to serving every segment of the local community.

Contest marks Children's Day

Kala (Art) to host 'NIRAM-2024' painting competition on Dec 6

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Kala (Art) Kuwait presents "NIRAM-2024" Children's Day Painting Competition in association with 'American Tourister', will be held on Friday, 6th December 2024 at Indian Community School, Khaitan on the occasion of Children's Day celebration by marking the birth day of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the First Prime Minister of India. Kala (Art) Kuwait is delighted to celebrate 20th Anniversary of "NIRAM" Painting Competition which is opened for all students of Indian schools in Kuwait.

"Children's Day" is a day to remember the great leader, who in his quiet but determined way, laid foundation to convert a nascent nation into a world power. His contributions to India and the world would always be remembered.

The Painting Competition will be conducted in four different age groups. Group "A" from LKG to 1st Standard, Group "B" from 2nd to 4th Standard, Group "C" from 5th to 7th Standard and Group "D" from 8th to 12th Standard. The media for Group "A" and "B" will be Crayons or Color Pencil while Group "C" and "D" are Water Colors. Crayons, Color Pencil

and watercolors shall be brought by the participants. Stamped Drawing papers will be supplied by the Organizers. Clay Modeling Competition also will be conducted for 7th to 12th Standard Students. Clay will be provided by the Organizers. A Marathon Open Canvas Painting for parents, visitors and guests is conducting in a view to display everyone's views and talents through their vivid creations.

Kala (Art) Kuwait, emphasized the exclusive prizes for the winners as first place with gold coin & gold medal, second place with silver medal and third place with bronze medal along with memento & certificate. Besides the 1st, 2nd, & 3rd, there will be 75 participants to Merit Prizes and Ten (10) percent of the participants will be awarded with consolation prizes. Parents also have the opportunity to win prizes for Open Canvas Painting.

The online registration will be continued until 2nd December 2024.

For more details, please visit www.kalakuwait.net, by e-mail kalakuwait@gmail.com and telephone numbers, 67042514, 66015466, 97219439 and 66114364 according to Rakesh, Program Convener, NIRAM-2024.

'Empower, celebrate youth'

IMA's Children Circle to hold 'Children's Fest '24' on Nov 29

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Join us at the Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Children's Fest 2024! A day of fun, learning, and celebrating young talents.

The highly anticipated Indian Muslim Association's Annual Children's Fest 2024 is here! The Grand Event is set to take place on Friday, 29th November at ICSK Junior, Salmiya from 12:30 PM to 7:00 PM. It promises a day filled with laughter, excitement, and a showcase of talent for our little stars!

Exciting competitions await! Young participants can engage in a variety of fun and skillful competitions including:

- Elocution; ■ Drawing; ■ Quiz;
- Nasheed; ■ Azaan; ■ Qiraat; ■

Calligraphy ... and many more, providing a platform for each child to shine!

Carnival games and surprises! Beyond the competitions, enjoy a carnival atmosphere with games, activities, and surprises that will make this day unforgettable for everyone.

Celebrate the future of our children:

This event is all about empowering and celebrating our youth, building confidence, and fostering a sense of community.

Registration and guidelines: For registration and event guidelines visit www.imachildrencircle.org

Contact Us at: 9730 7561 | 6767 1939



Photos from the event.

Malayali community brings Kerala's heritage alive

Indian Embassy in Kuwait celebrates Kerala Day

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

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: The Indian Embassy in Kuwait celebrated Kerala Day with a wide variety of programs at the Indian Embassy auditorium.

The Kerala State Formation Day, commemorated every year on Nov 1, marks the creation of the state of Kerala on the basis of the State Reorganisation Act, 1956.

A number of associations from the Malayali expatriate community showcased traditional,

cultural and folk performances of their respective districts.

The programme started with traditional chendamelam percussion with a pooram festival followed by traditional Kairali martial art Kalari-payattu and a ritual art form Theyyam. Other performances included, but were not limited to, Thiruvathira, Kerala Nadanam, Nadavili, Margam Kali, Duff Muttu, Kolkkali, Kolunth Song, VallamKali, Oppana, and Ghazal.

There were also skits and monologues introducing famous historical Kerala-based char-

acters such as Maharaja Marthanda Varma, Pazhassi Raja Kunjali Marakkar, Annie Mascarene, Dakshayani Narayanan, Ammu Swaminathan, and Herman Gundert.

The Ambassador HE Dr. Adarsh Swaika congratulated the community for having conducted a successful celebration and putting up stunning performances.

Similarly, on Nov 8, the Embassy had also jointly celebrated the formation days of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka with community associations from those states.

Over 85 healthcare professionals offer free services to 500+

UP NRI Forum organizes free medical check-up camp in Kuwait



Photos from the event.

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: Kuwait's premier social and welfare organization, UP NRI Forum Kuwait, in line with its mission to serve the community, organized a Free Health Check-Up Camp on Friday, Nov 8, in collaboration with the Indian Doctors Forum, Kuwait. Held at Salmiya Indian Model School (SIMS), Salmiya, Kuwait, the camp embodied the Forum's commitment to community support and healthcare accessibility, providing over 500 patients with free, comprehensive health screenings and consultations.

The event was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, Mr. Manas Raj Patel, First Secretary representing the Embassy of India in Kuwait, on behalf of His Excellency Dr. Adarsh Swaika, Ambassador of India to Kuwait. UPNRI Forum Kuwait's President, Zeeshan Ullah Khan, and General Secre-

tary, Shafaq Mumtaz, led the organizing efforts, supported by Forum Office Bearers and Executive Members, ensuring a smooth and successful event focused on community care.

The Free Health Check-Up Camp was organized in partnership with prominent medical and community organizations, including the Indian Doctors Forum, Kuwait, the Indian Dental Alliance in Kuwait, the Kuwait Heart Foundation, City Optics, and other healthcare supporters.

Over 85 healthcare professionals, including doctors, dentists, and specialists across various fields, provided essential health screenings in general medicine, cardiology, dentistry, orthopedics, ophthalmology, oncology, and more. Blood pressure and blood sugar testing were also offered, creating a well-rounded array of health services for at-

tendees.

Throughout the health screening of over 500 participants, multiple new health issues were identified, including 3 cases of newly diagnosed hypertension, 4 cases of high blood sugar suggesting potential diabetes, and 2 cases of high cholesterol. Specific cases of conduction abnormalities (LBBB and RBBB) in the heart, chest pain, and back pain were reported. Imaging results revealed instances of fatty liver, gallbladder stones, hydronephrosis, uterine fibroids, and bladder stones, while breast cancer screenings identified 5 women for further evaluation.

UP NRI Forum Kuwait extended its heartfelt thanks to Dr. Mohan Ram, Vice President, and Dr. Raghunandan Rayavaram, Community Secretary, and the entire team of the Indian Doctors Forum Kuwait.

Without their support, this achievement would not have been possible.

A special highlight of the event was the release of UPNRI Forum Kuwait's annual souvenir by Chief Guest Mr. Manas Raj Patel. The souvenir reflects the Forum's mission and community activities. Special thanks go to Editor-in-Chief Mr. Mohammad Razi Khan, whose dedication produced a beautifully designed souvenir that received widespread appreciation from attendees.

The event's success was also due to the dedication of over 120 volunteers who worked tirelessly in event preparations and execution, including a special group of young members and teenagers from the Forum. Their energy and enthusiasm were invaluable in assisting patients and ensuring smooth operations, with many expressing

aspirations to pursue careers in healthcare.

UP NRI Forum Kuwait would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the event's sponsors: Al Mulla Exchange – Platinum Sponsor, Kuwait Maritime & Mercantile Co. (KMMC), Mechanical Engineering & Contracting Co. (MECC), Action Trading Co., Kuwait Swedish Cleaning Services Co., Al Kulaib International Trading Co., Universal Chiller Services, KITCO, Sahara Air Conditioning, Kuwait Import Co., Arabiya Printing Press, and Oxford International Educational Consultancy.

This Free Health Check-Up Camp stands as a testament to UPNRI Forum Kuwait's ongoing commitment to community welfare. Through events like these, the Forum reinforces its mission of service, upliftment, and well-being for the Indian diaspora in Kuwait.

Film

'The Exorcist' and 'Heretic'

Why holy horror can be a 'hit' with moviegoers

LOS ANGELES, Nov 17, (AP) — In the new horror movie, "Heretic," Hugh Grant plays a diabolical religious skeptic who traps two scared missionaries in his house and tries to violently shake their faith.

What starts more as a religious studies lecture slowly morphs into a gory escape room for the two door-knocking members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, underscoring just how well-suited religion can be for terrifying and entertaining thrill-seeking moviegoers.

"I think it is a fascinating religion-related horror as it raises questions about the institution of religion, the patriarchy of religion," said Stacey Abbott, a film professor at Northumbria University in Newcastle, England, whose research interests include horror, vampires and zombies.



Grant

"But it also questions the nature of faith and confronts the audience with a debate about choice, faith and free will."

Horror has had a decades-long attraction to religion, Christianity especially in the U.S., with the 1970s "The Exorcist" and "The Omen" being prime examples. Beyond the jump scares, the supernatural elements of horror and its sublime nature pair easily with belief and spirituality - and religion's exploration of big existential questions, Abbott said. Horror is subversive. Real-life taboo topics and cultural anxieties are fair game.

"It is a rich canvas for social critique and it can also be a space to reassert traditional values," Abbott said in an email.

Religions and horror tackle similar questions about what it means to be human - how people relate to one another and the world, said Brandon Grafius, a Biblical studies professor at Ecumenical Theological Seminary in Detroit and an expert on Christianity and horror.

Religion

"So much of religion is about how we grapple with the reality of death. ... Helping us make meaning even in the face of that reality," said Grafius. "Horror really serves that same process, as a way to reflect on death."

Not only does Christianity translate well for US audiences, it has a lot of raw material for moviemakers to work with, he said.

"Christianity emerged as a strongly dualistic religion, where forces are either good or evil," Grafius said. "Even though the US is moving away from being a nation dominated by Christianity, we still have that dualism deep in our bones."

Among the more recent religion-themed horror films, "The Conjuring" franchise, including "The Nun" movies, show paranormal investigators battling demons, Abbott said, while "The First Omen" and "Immaculate" offer critiques of patriarchal attempts to control women's bodies.

"These films seem to be a direct response to many of the debates that are happening in the U.S. these days," Abbott wrote in her email. "These different approaches to reli-

gion in horror illustrate the way in which the genre is engaging with a very live debate around religion or more specifically how religion is being used to assert control (which is what 'Heretic' is all about)."

Grant, who plays Mr. Reed in the new movie, told The Associated Press that he shared some of his "Heretic" character's skepticism, although not necessarily from a religious perspective:

"There is a part of me - probably a not very attractive part of me - that likes to smash people's idols. Anyone I feel is being a bit too smug or too pretentious, I don't like to see that. I like to just take them apart a little bit."

Horror can be challenging. It acts as a dark mirror that can reveal things people don't want to admit and fears they don't want to face, said the Rev. Ryan Duns, a Jesuit priest and theology chair at Marquette University in Milwaukee.

If done well, both religion and horror are unsettling, he said.

Violence

"Religion, when it unsettles, asks us am I living up to the person I have been called to be or am I complicit in systems of violence, oppression, injustice, going with the status quo," said Duns, who wrote the "Theology of Horror" and teaches a course on it as well. "In the horror movie, the monster threatens normality - threatens to destroy our status quo."

But they deviate from there. In horror, there is no way out, Duns said. He pointed out that defeating a movie's monster doesn't prevent sequels, hence "Jaws 2," "Terrifier 3," "Return of the Killer Tomatoes" and more.

In Christianity, it is Jesus and the Gospels threatening the status quo, but they offer hope and a way out, he said.

Ti West mixes religion into the narrative of his new movie, "MaXXXine," a horror film about an adult film star trying to break into mainstream movies. West, who also wrote and directed "The Sacrament," a horror movie inspired by the Jonestown Massacre in 1978, said he doesn't actively set out to tell stories with prominent religion narratives, but religion can be ripe for mining.

"It kind of depends on the story," West said. "Anything with morality wrapped up into it, they kind of go hand in hand at times. And it's like religion is such a major part of every culture everywhere that ... I feel like sometimes it's such a major part of life that gets put aside in movies."

Beyond poor storytelling, the mixing of horror and religion can go wrong if the movie is meant to offend the believers of a particular faith, said Lisa Morton, an award-winning horror author whose written books on Halloween and paranormal history.

But it can really go right. Morton's all-time favorite movie is "The Exorcist," a holy horror icon and a peak example of the genre. "The Omen" followed it.

"All of the contemporary bloodlines kind of trace back through those two," said Morton. "It's interesting how they keep getting rebooted over and over."

Abbott agrees religion should be portrayed respectfully, just as she expects accuracy and respect for science in movies, though not every detail needs to be perfect.



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



Miss Denmark Victoria Kjær Theilvig, (right), receives the crown after winning the 73rd Miss Universe Beauty Pageant in Mexico City, Saturday, Nov. 16. (AP)

Denmark's Victoria Kjær Theilvig crowned Miss Universe

Victoria Kjær Theilvig of Denmark has been crowned Miss Universe.

Kjær, an animal protection advocate who works in the diamond selling business, beat out Miss Nigeria at the end of 73rd edition of the competition in Mexico City. Miss Mexico placed third.

It is the first time a Danish contestant has won Miss Universe.

The pageant was held in the Mexico City

Arena, an indoor venue with a capacity for 20,000 people. Supporters inside shouted and waved flags from countries around the world.

The ceremony began with 131 mariachi musicians and singer Taboo of the Black Eyed Peas playing "Mexicana," a song created by Emilio Estefan for the contest.

The gala was hosted by Mario López; Olivia Culpo, Miss Universe 2012; presenter

Zuri Hall; and Catriona Gray, Miss Universe 2018.

Organizers said that there were more than 120 contestants.

This year some countries were represented for the first time, such as Belarus, Eritrea, Guinea, Macau, Maldives, Moldova and Uzbekistan.

This is the third time that Mexico has hosted Miss Universe. (AP)

Indian director Kapadia sees another way

'All We Imagine' redefines cinema

NEW YORK, Nov 17, (AP) — Fiction moves stealthily through Payal Kapadia's films.

The Indian filmmaker's first movie, "Night of Knowing Nothing," is a documentary about the student strike at the Film and Television Institute of India, Kapadia's alma mater, following the appointment by Prime Minister Narendra Modi of a right-wing chairman. The film, though, is threaded through with fictional letters between two students who have split because they belong to separate castes.

Kapadia's first fully narrative film, "All We Imagine as Light," begins more like a documentary, surveying Mumbai, particularly at night, before gently gravitating toward three women, all of them hospital workers, who are juggling their workday realities, and those of India's stratified society, with their own aspirations.

"Real life is more interesting than cinema can be. We just have to pick its fruits," Kapadia says, smiling. "There's a quote from Rilke that I really love: 'If your real life is poor, it means you are not poet enough to draw from its riches.'"

"All We Imagine as Light," which opens Friday in theaters and expands in the coming weeks, is about as rich a movie experience as you'll find this year. The film, which won the Grand Prix (second prize) at the Cannes Film Festival, is an intoxicatingly atmospheric portrait of life in Mumbai - of its dreams, its illusions and its impossibilities.

As "All We Imagine as Light" moves along, it slowly accumulates the magic of fable. Prabha (Kani Kusruti) hasn't heard from her husband, who's working in Germany, in years.



Filmmaker Payal Kapadia, winner of the grand prize for 'All We Imagine as Light,' poses after the awards ceremony at the 77th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 25, 2024. (AP)

Anu (Divya Prabha) is in love with a Muslim man, a relationship they have to hide and that, probably, is doomed. Their slightly older, recently widowed colleague, Parvati (Chhaya Kadam), is being evicted after many years in her apartment.

Constrictions

But when they escape the city - Parvati is forced to move back to her village - the three women shed the various constrictions that grip them. They begin to imagine possibilities and see a light hidden to them by the patriarchal inequalities of Mumbai. "All We Imagine as Light," begun in documentary, turns increasingly fictional, and yet truer.

"I wanted to get closer and closer to a dreamlike state toward the end of the film and then snap back to reality,"

Kapadia says. "I wanted the first part of the film to be very kind of nonfiction, with a documentary beginning. And the second half to feel as if time slows down. The landscape changes and the feeling of light changes."

The luminous phases of "All We Imagine as Light" has made it one of the most acclaimed films of the year - and yet, curiously, not India's submission for best international film at the Academy Awards. In announcing its choice, Kiran Rao's "Laapataa Ladies," Ravi Kottarakara, president of the Film Federation of India, explained that the selection committee felt "that they were watching a European film taking place in India, not an Indian film taking place in India."

"What is Indian? It's a very big continent that we have. There's a lot

of India," Kapadia said in a recent interview. "I'm really happy with the film they chose. It's a really nice film. I liked it a lot. But I feel like these kind of statements, I don't know what purpose they serve. The committee that made the selection was 13 men. Is that very Indian? Then I don't mind so much."

Kapadia, 38, met a reporter at the Criterion Collection offices in New York while "All We Imagine as Light" was playing at the New York Film Festival. Her bag was stuffed with DVDs from a visit to the Criterion closet, including an Agnes Varda box set. Kapadia will chat naturally about arthouse inspirations or social ills but she's an ebullient, easy-going presence. That her film has inspired so much emotion (the festival press screening was the rare one where attendees burst into spontaneous applause at the end) is, for her, the thing that matters most.

"What else would you want as a filmmaker, that people watch it and like it and feel something when they watch it?" Kapadia says. "As somebody who loves to go to the cinema and cry - it's for me the greatest catharsis I can have - I just feel I want to make films where people also cry in the cinema."

"I cry a lot. I'm very easy," she adds. "I'm a bit of a romantic."

Not so unlike her characters, Kapadia is attempting to find another way as a filmmaker, operating outside the studio system of Bollywood. In Cannes, where "All We Imagine as Light" was the first Indian feature to play in competition in 30 years, she argued that Indian cinema is broader than the bigger budget productions churned out by its state centers of industry.

Variety

NEW YORK: A model who has appeared in campaigns for Calvin Klein and Levi's has been formally charged in the stabbing death of a man in New York City, prosecutors said Saturday.

Dynus Saxon was arraigned in Bronx criminal court late Friday in connection with the Nov. 10 killing of Kadeem Grant, according to Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark's office.

Police say they found the 35-year-old victim stabbed in the chest in an apartment in the New York City borough of the Bronx.

They haven't disclosed a motive or any other details surrounding the incident other than to say that Grant was pronounced dead at the scene and that a knife was recovered.

Saxon was arrested Monday on charges of

murder, manslaughter and criminal possession of a weapon.

At his arraignment Friday, the 20-year-old resident of Manhattan's East Harlem neighborhood was held without bail until his next court date on Dec. 3, Clark's office said.

Saxon, who has also appeared in fashion publications such as Vogue Italia and L'Officiel, didn't speak during the proceedings, the Daily News reported.

Prosecutors said he had a large bandage over his right hand because of an injury he sustained while repeatedly jamming the knife into Grant's chest, the newspaper said. (AP)

CHICAGO: 'The Bear' has a mirror image.

More than 50 contestants turned out Saturday in a Chicago park to compete in a look-alike contest vying to portray actor **Jeremy Allen White**, star of the Chicago-based tel-

evision series "The Bear."

Beyond the renown of being named White's unofficial body double, the winner walked away with \$50 and a pack of cigarettes in recognition of the puff-prone character White plays in the series - Carmen "Carney" Berzatto - a young, award-winning chef from the glittery world of fine dining who returns to the Windy City to captain his family's dive sandwich shop.



White

On the show, the character is sometimes referred to as the "Bear," and the chef had dreams of owning a fine dining restaurant that would carry that name.

As hundreds looked on and cheered, the

prize went to 37-year-old mental health therapist Ben Shabad, the Chicago Sun-Times reported.

"This is the coolest thing I've done all week," said Shabad, who was hoisted into the air in the middle of the crowd, a crown perched upon his head, the pack of cigarettes clutched in one hand.

Most of the wannabe doppelgangers were white men, but some women and people of different ethnicities got in on the fun, the newspaper said. There was even a toddler White lookalike. (AP)

Organizers were surprised by the big turnout, which included Jeremy Allen White fan Alexis Kline. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: The United States Postal Service might have found a way to unite a nation bitterly divided after this month's election: It's releasing a Betty White stamp.

The beloved actor known for roles in "The Golden Girls," "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," "Boston Legal," and others will be on a 2025 Forever stamp, USPS announced Friday.

White died in late December 2021, less than three weeks before her 100th birthday. The Postal Service hasn't announced a release date for the stamp.

"An icon of American television, Betty White (1922-2021) shared her wit and warmth with viewers for seven decades," the Postal Service said in announcing the stamp, which depicts a smiling White based on a 2010 photograph by celebrity photographer Kwaku Alston. "The comedic actor, who gained younger generations of fans as she entered her 90s, was also revered as a compassionate advocate for animals."

Boston-based artist Dale Stephanos created the digital illustration from Alston's photo. (AP)

AI pinpoints key resistance genes in bacteria

Machine learning fights antibiotic resistance at its core

By Abdullahi Tunde Aborode
Mississippi State University

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

Antibiotic resistance is a growing public health problem around the world. When bacteria like *E. coli* no longer respond to antibiotics, infections become harder to treat.

To develop new antibiotics, researchers typically identify the genes that make bacteria resistant. Through laboratory experiments, they observe how bacteria respond to different antibiotics and look for mutations in the genetic makeup of resistant strains that allow them to survive.

While effective, this method can be time-consuming and may not always capture the full picture of how bacteria become resistant. For example, changes in how genes work that don't involve mutations can still influence resistance. Bacteria can also exchange resistance genes between each other, which may not be detected if only focusing on mutations within a single strain.

My colleagues and I developed a new approach to identify *E. coli* resistance

genes by computer modeling, allowing us to design new compounds that can block these genes and make existing treatments more effective.

To predict which genes contribute to resistance, we analyzed the genomes of various *E. coli* strains to identify genetic patterns and markers associated with resistance. We then used machine learning algorithms trained on existing data to highlight novel genes or mutations shared across resistant strains that might contribute to resistance.

After identifying resistance genes, we designed inhibitors that specifically target and block the proteins these genes produce. By analyzing the structure of the proteins these genes code for, we were able to optimize our inhibitors to strongly bind to these specific proteins.

To reduce the likelihood that bacteria would evolve resistance to these inhibitors, we targeted regions of their genome that code for proteins critical to their survival. By interfering with how bacteria carry out important functions, it makes it more difficult for them to develop mechanisms to compensate. We also prioritized compounds that work differently from existing antibiotics to minimize cross-resistance.

Finally, we tested how effectively our inhibitors could overcome antibiotic resistance in *E. coli*. We used computer simulations to assess how strongly a number of

inhibitors bind to target proteins over time. One inhibitor called hesperidin was able to strongly bind to the three genes in *E. coli* involved in resistance that we identified, suggesting it may be able to help combat antibiotic-resistant strains.

The World Health Organization ranks antimicrobial resistance as one of the top 10 threats to global health. In 2019, bacterial antibiotic resistance killed an estimated 4.95 million people worldwide.

By targeting the specific genes responsible for resistance to existing drugs, our approach could lead to treatments for challenging bacterial infections that are not only more effective but also less likely to contribute to further resistance. It can also help researchers keep up with bacterial threats as they evolve.

Our predictive approach could be adapted to other bacterial strains, allowing for more personalized treatment strategies. In the future, doctors could potentially tailor antibiotic treatments based on the specific genetic makeup of the bacteria causing the infection, potentially leading to better outcomes.

As antibiotic resistance continues to rise globally, our findings may provide a crucial tool in the fight against this threat. Further development is needed before our methods can be used in the clinic. But by staying ahead of bacterial evolution, targeted inhibitors could help preserve the efficacy of existing antibiotics and reduce the spread of resistant strains. (AP)

Technology

Safer and simpler online logins

Replace passwords with passkeys for easier login experience: expert

LONDON, Nov 17, (AP) — If you're tired of memorizing passwords, then give passkeys a try.

You might have noticed that many online services are now offering the option of using passkeys, a digital authentication method touted as an easier and more secure way to log in. The passkey push started gaining major momentum after Google started accepting them about 18 months ago.

Passkeys are seen as eventual replacements for passwords, but if you're still not sure what they're all about, read on:

Forget about memorizing an optimized 14 character password consisting of letters, numbers and symbols. Passkeys do away with that because you never need to see them. Instead you are using existing biometrics like your face or fingerprints, digital patterns or PINs to access your accounts.

Passkeys are made up of two parts of a code that only makes sense when they're combined, kind of like a digital key and padlock. You keep half of the encrypted code, typically stored either in the cloud with a compatible password manager or on a physical security dongle. The other half is stored on the participating apps, services or accounts you want to access.

When you want to log in to your Gmail account, for example, both parts of the code will then communicate directly with each other and give you entry.

A passkey won't work with any website except the one it has been created for, eliminating the security risks associated with traditional passwords.

That means bad actors carrying out phishing scams won't be able to trick you into entering your details into a copycat login page for your bank. And because passkeys use cryptographic security, they also can't brute force their way into your account by trying passwords exposed in previous data breaches or guessing them.

Some 20% of the world's top 100 websites now accept passkeys, said Andrew Shikhar, CEO of the FIDO Alliance, an industry group that developed the core authentication technology behind passkeys.

Passkeys first came to the public's attention when Apple added

the technology to iOS in 2022. They got more traction after Google started using them in 2023. Now, many other companies including PayPal, Amazon, Microsoft and eBay work with passkeys. There's a list on the FIDO Alliance website.

Still, some popular sites like Facebook and Netflix haven't started using them yet.

Passkey technology is still in the "early adoption" phase but "it's just a matter of time for more and more sites to start offering this," Shikhar said.

I tried setting up passkeys for some of the major online services I use. It was fairly easy for some but confusing for others. Shikhar said his group is constantly working on ways to improve the user experience.

Passkeys

Google users can go to myaccount.google.com and under "How to sign in to Google", click Passkeys and security keys. Upon reaching the setup screen, I received a prompt to create a passkey while simultaneously my password manager's browser plug-in popped up offering to save it. I clicked to confirm and the setup work was all done automatically.

So far, pretty easy. Then, I tried adding more Google passkeys to my Windows-based work laptop and a Yubico physical security key. This time, when I got to the Google setup screen, it asked for my existing passkey to confirm my identity. But then it somehow failed to authenticate through my password manager.

I tried again using other verification methods, including my Google authenticator app that I already had on my iPhone, and it eventually succeeded.

Adding multiple passkeys to my Microsoft account - one on my password manager, another on my Yubico key - involved some head scratching over a few of the prompts, but I eventually figured it out.

Setting up passkeys on LinkedIn and Amazon was much easier. And when I attempted to add a passkey to my WhatsApp account, I discovered I had, apparently, already created one months earlier when I activated the app lock feature requiring

a fingerprint scan.

Once set up, it was a breeze to sign in to some of my accounts with just a click or two. But there was some friction with my PayPal account because its passkeys don't work on some browsers, like Firefox.

When I tried to log in with my Amazon passkey, it asked for a one-time verification code from my authenticator app, which confused me because I thought passkeys were supposed to eliminate the need for multi-factor authentication.

Shikhar said it depends on the site, but, in theory, the passkey already has enough protection built in.

"When the primary factor's unphishable, other factors aren't necessary," he said.

If you've lost the device containing your passkey, that doesn't necessarily mean it's gone. That's because the typical method to store passkeys on phones is a cloud-based password manager from Apple, Google, or third-party providers. So just log back into the password manager from another phone or computer.

Passkeys stored on security dongles, on the other hand, aren't synced to the cloud so there's no way to recover them if they're lost. It'd be a good idea to get a second hardware key and keep it as a backup.

And don't forget you can always mix both cloud and hardware methods to keep multiple passkeys for extra redundancy.

Based on my experience, setting up a passkey can be easy, or tedious and bewildering, depending on the service and what other security technology you want to layer in.

So I wouldn't recommend doing all your accounts right away.

Instead, choose a few of your most important and frequently used services or accounts and focus on a proper setup for those.

In theory, you could delete your old passwords. Some services like Microsoft already offer this option. Shikhar says it should be a "personal preference," because "some people may feel extremely nervous" about going passwordless.

It's fine to keep your password but make sure there's also multi-factor authentication set up for it, he said.

Kenya to launch mpox vaccine trial

US confirms 1st case of new mpox

NEW YORK, Nov 17, (AP) — Health officials said Saturday they have confirmed the first US case of a new form of mpox that was first seen in eastern Congo.

The person had traveled to eastern Africa and was treated in Northern California upon return, according to the California Department of Public Health. Symptoms are improving and the risk to the public is low.

The individual was isolating at home and health workers are reaching out to close contacts as a precaution, the state health department said.

Mpox is a rare disease caused by infection with a virus that's in the same family as the one that causes smallpox. It is endemic in parts of Africa, where people have been infected through bites from rodents or small animals. Milder symptoms can include fever, chills and body aches. In more serious cases, people can develop lesions on the face, hands, chest and genitals.

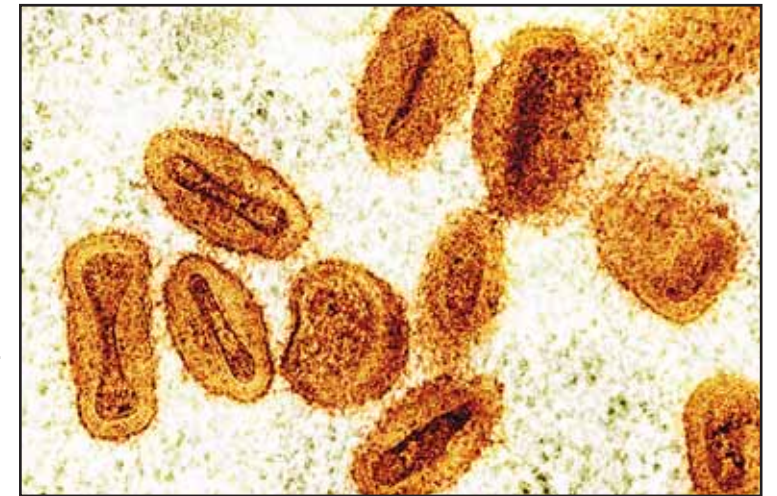
Contact

Earlier this year, scientists reported the emergence of a new form of mpox in Africa that was spread through close contact including through sex. It was widely transmitted in eastern and central Africa. But in cases that were identified in travelers outside of the continent, spread has been very limited, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

More than 3,100 confirmed cases have been reported just since late September, according to the World Health Organization. The vast majority of them have been in three African countries - Burundi, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Since then, cases of travelers with the new mpox form have been reported in Germany, India, Kenya, Sweden, Thailand, Zimbabwe, and the United Kingdom.

Angola reported the first Mpox case



This colored electron microscope image provided by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in 2024 shows Mpox virus particles, orange, found within infected cells, green. (AP)

nationwide in the capital city of Luanda, the Ministry of Health announced Saturday evening.

According to the ministry's statement, the patient, a 28-year-old woman "of Congolese nationality," is in isolation with her close contacts under the health authorities' vigilance.

The ministry said it is implementing measures to disinfect affected areas, identify and trace contacts, and conduct a thorough epidemiological investigation.

The Angolan authorities urge the public to reinforce hygiene practices and seek medical attention if they experience symptoms such as fever, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, lymphadenopathy, or widespread skin rashes or mucosal lesions.

Authorities have also reaffirmed their commitment to keeping the public informed about the epidemiological situation and have called for calm and composure within the community.

Mpox, previously known as monkeypox, was first identified in labora-

tory monkeys in 1958. It is an infectious disease primarily spread through body fluids, respiratory droplets, and contaminated materials.

Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), the country's premier research institution, said Wednesday that it has signed a partnership deal with Tonix Pharmaceuticals, a U.S. biopharmaceutical company, to design and conduct a clinical trial on a vaccine designed to prevent mpox.

KEMRI said in a statement issued in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, that the Phase I clinical trial of TNX-801, an investigational vaccine designed to prevent mpox will take place in Kenya, focusing on assessing the vaccine's safety, tolerability, and immunogenicity.

"The planned clinical trial of TNX-801 reflects our ongoing commitment to advancing scientific research that not only benefits Kenya but also contributes to global efforts to prevent and manage emerging infectious diseases," said KEMRI Director-General Elijah Songok.

Jeddah declaration targets stronger action

Leaders pledge to combat AMR by 2030

JEDDAH, Nov 17, (KUNA) — The fourth high-level global ministerial conference on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), Saturday, urged member States to commit to its pledge and work on achieving goals set in the Political Declaration of the UN General Assembly on AMR by 2030.

This came in the conclusion of the conference, which launched in Jeddah during 14 to 16 of November, where the Kuwaiti Health Minister Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi participated.

Saudi Health Minister Fahad Al-

Jalajel explained that the commitments included in the Jeddah Declaration represent the cornerstone of a program that reflects their decisions in the UN, that enable member states and international bodies to take effective and serious steps to fight antimicrobial resistance.

Jeddah Declaration adopted what was included in the International Declaration on AMR issued at the 79th UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting held last September, aiming to interpret international will into practical implementable steps.

The commitments of the Jeddah Declaration highlight the importance of international cooperation and the role of the Quadripartite Joint Secretariat on AMR (FAO, UNEP, WHO, and WAOH) in providing the necessary support to governments.

The declaration also included the establishment of a One Health Learning Center for AMR and a Regional Center for Access to Antibiotics and Logistics in Saudi Arabia, which aim to enhance global cooperation and improve access to essential antibiotics and diagnostics.

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Kansas squeeze past BYU

Klubnik's late TD run helps Clemson top Pitt 24-20

PITTSBURGH, Nov. 17, (AP) — Cade Klubnik wanted to get out of bounds. Needed to get out of bounds.

The clock was running. Clemson was trailing Pittsburgh and all of the Tigers' timeouts were gone. So the junior quarterback broke into the secondary on a designed run and then veered right for the safety of the sideline.

Klubnik never got there. He never had to. A well-timed block from wide receiver T.J. Moore gave Klubnik a lane that offered nothing but green grass and victory. Klubnik's instincts led him to cut up the field for a go-ahead 50-yard touchdown run with 1:16 remaining that lifted the 17th-ranked Tigers past the Panthers 24-20 on Saturday.

Klubnik's dash kept Clemson's outside hopes of reaching the ACC title game alive. The Tigers (8-2, 7-1 ACC) need No. 12 Miami to lose one of its final two games or No. 14 SMU to drop its last two contests to reach the championship game in Charlotte on Dec. 7.

No. 1 Oregon 16, Wisconsin 13

In Madison, Wis., Atticus Sappington broke a tie with a 24-yard field goal with 2:36 remaining and No. 1 Oregon rallied in the fourth quarter to beat Wisconsin.

Jordan James rushed for 115 yards and a tying touchdown on 22 carries to help Oregon (11-0, 8-0 Big Ten) win its first 11 games for the second time in school history. The Ducks also won their first 11 games in 2010 and went on to reach the BCS championship game before losing to Cam Newton-led Auburn.

Tawee Walker rushed for 97 yards on 20 carries for Wisconsin (5-5, 3-4) in its third straight loss. The Badgers fell to 2-15 in their last 17 games against Top 25 teams, going 0-6 mark in Luke Fickell's two-year coaching tenure.

No. 2 Ohio St. 31, Northwestern 7

In Chicago, Ohio State wide receiver Camell Tate celebrated his Chicago homecoming with two touchdown receptions against Northwestern at Wrigley Field.

It was Tate's first game in his hometown since his mother, Ashley Griggs, 40, was killed in a drive-by shooting in Chicago in July 2023.

With the Buckeyes facing a second-and-8 at the North-



Clemson quarterback Cade Klubnik (2) gets past Pittsburgh defensive back Donovan McMillon (3) as he carries for a 50-yard touchdown during the second half of an NCAA college football game Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024, in Pittsburgh. (AP)

western 25 late in the first half, Will Howard dropped back and lofted the ball in Tate's direction down the sideline. The 6-foot-3 sophomore made a diving grab in the end zone for his third TD of the season.

No. 3 Texas 20, Arkansas 10

In Fayetteville, Ark., Quinn Ewers threw for 176 yards and two touchdowns and the Longhorns defense clamped

down on the Razorbacks final two possessions to help secure the win.

Ewers' 1-yard pass to Matthew Golden ended an eight-play, 75-yard drive that provided the Longhorns (9-1, 5-1 SEC, No. 3 CFP) with a two-score lead with 9:05 left. Ewers, who finished 20-of-32 passing, also connected with Golden for the game's first touchdown.

Arkansas (5-5, 3-4) had an opportunity to take the lead

on the possession before Texas stretched its lead early in the fourth quarter as the Razorbacks drove to the Texas 26. The Longhorns' defense stiffened and Arkansas settled for a 44-yard field goal from Matthew Shipley to trim Texas' lead to 13-10.

No. 4 Penn St. 49, Purdue 10

In West Lafayette, Ind., Drew Allar threw for 247 yards and three touchdowns to lead No. 4 Penn State to a rout of Purdue.

Allar, who completed his first 10 passes, connected on 17 of 19 passes for the Nittany Lions (9-1, 6-1 Big Ten) in three quarters. His top target was tight end Tyler Warren, who caught eight passes for 127 yards.

No. 11 Georgia 31, No. 6 Tennessee 17

In Athens, Ga., Carson Beck silenced his critics by throwing for two touchdowns and running for another on a raucous Saturday night between the hedges, leading No. 11 Georgia to a victory over No. 6 Tennessee that gave a huge boost to the Bulldogs' College Football Playoff hopes.

Georgia (8-2, 6-2 Southeastern Conference, No. 12 CFP) bounced back from a 28-10 loss at Ole Miss that left the Bulldogs just outside the provisional 12-team postseason field.

Now, they are positioned for a likely playoff berth - and a shot at winning their third national title in four years - if they can close out the regular season with wins over UMass and Georgia Tech.

Tennessee (8-2, 5-2, No. 7 CFP) could have moved a big step closer to a berth in the SEC championship game, but the Vols' postseason prospects are now a whole lot murkier after what had all the makings of a playoff elimination game.

Kansas 17, No. 7 BYU 13

In Provo, Utah, Jalon Daniels threw for 169 yards, Dylan Neal ran for two touchdowns and Kansas upset No. 7 BYU to hand the Cougars' their first loss of the season.

The Jayhawks (4-6, 3-4 Big 12) beat ranked opponents in back-to-back weeks for the first time in school history. Neal surpassed 4,000 yards rushing in his career, finishing with 52 yards on the ground.

Kolbe tries help Boks inflict another rugby win over struggling England

Hosts suffer 3rd straight loss

LONDON, Nov. 17, (AP) — South Africa winger Cheslin Kolbe hurt England once again by scoring a try in each half to propel the Springboks to a 29-20 win at Twickenham on Saturday, extending the English run of defeats to five.

It was England's third straight loss to a southern hemisphere power in this autumn series, after 24-22 to New Zealand and 42-37 to Australia, and some familiar faces administered the late crucial blows in an engrossing match that was in the balance after an hour.

Kolbe, one of the try-scorers in the Boks' World Cup final win over England in 2019, expertly finished off a crossfield kick for his first try in the 22nd minute and sprinted over for the clinching score in the 63rd following a piercing break by center Damien de Allende.

South Africa pushed two scores ahead thanks to a conversion by replacement flyhalf Handre Pollard, whose last-gasp penalty sealed the Boks' win over England in the World Cup semifinals last year, and the English couldn't respond despite territory and playing against 14 men for the final 10 minutes.

Since repeating as world champions a year ago, the Springboks have won 10 of 12 tests and lost the other two by only a point each. England, meanwhile, has lost six of its last seven tests and has a concerning penchant for finishing tight games weakly.

"What we're seeing is it's such a game of fine margins," England captain Jamie George said. "Large parts of all the last five games, we've looked good at times and the final piece wasn't there."

It is leaving England coach Steve



South Africa's Cheslin Kolbe, left gets past England's Jamie George during the Autumn Nations series rugby union match between England and South Africa, at Twickenham, in London, Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024. (AP)

Borthwick under increasing pressure, especially if his team fails to beat Japan - led by Borthwick's predecessor, Eddie Jones - next week in their last outing of the year.

"Fundamentally, I think we are close," George said. "I know it's ironic saying this on the back of a few losses on the bounce but I think we have the right people and the right sort of characters. I'm optimistic about the future of this team."

A frenetic first half featured five tries, two for England - through Ollie Sleightholme and Sam Underhill - and three for the Boks, via scrumhalf Grant Williams' darting run, flanker Pieter-Steph du Toit's chargedown and

grounding, and Kolbe.

The second half was more tight and tense, with each team having a try ruled out and England taking a 20-19 lead through Marcus Smith's penalty in the 52nd.

England lacked composure with a huge win in its sights and Pollard, on for Mannie Libbok, returned the favor with a trademark penalty from halfway to regain the lead for the Boks.

Kolbe took De Allende's pass and sprinted down the wing to score the try that broke English hearts, and Pollard naturally slotted the extras from the touchline.

Replacement prop Gerhard Steenkamp's 69th-minute sin-binning

for repeated team infringements might have cost South Africa, but its defense stayed strong and England made errors and bad decisions.

"We didn't quite get to play the way we wanted to play," Springboks captain Siya Kolisi said, "but when we needed something, we always found a way to get through. That's the mindset of the team."

"That's the ultimate thing - finding a way to win ... it's all about the will, understanding that you're going to have to go to different places to get the win."

And that's where the English are falling down as they face up to losing three in a row at home for the first time since 2006.

Battle has 21 points and Gonzaga routs UMass Lowell 113-54

Kansas triumphs over Oakland as Storr scores 16 off the bench

LAWRENCE, Kan., Nov. 17, (AP) — AJ Storr had a season-high 16 points off the bench and three starters also reached double figures as No. 1 Kansas easily handed Oakland 78-57 on Saturday.

KJ Adams scored 10 of his 12 points in the first half, Rylan Griffen added 11 and Hunter Dickinson finished with 10. Dickinson led the Jayhawks with nine rebounds.

Kansas (4-0) pulled away methodically in the first half, leading by 22 at halftime. The Grizzlies never got closer than 18 in the second half. Kansas played the final 4:32 with only reserves in the game.

Allen Mukeba led Oakland (1-3) with 19 points, and Tuburu Naivalurua added 12.

Oakland struggled from 3-point range, shooting 6 of 23 (27%), and was woeful at the free-throw line (3 for 12). Oakland: The Grizzlies were no match for Kansas inside during the first half, when the game was decided. They were outrebounded 20-12 and outscored 26-14 in the paint.

Kansas: The Jayhawks have too much depth for a mid-major program like Oakland to overcome. The Jayhawks got points from 11 players. They had 36 bench points, compared to 17 for Oakland.

Gonzaga 113, UMass Lowell 54

In Spokane, Wash., Khalif Battle scored 21 points, including 4 for 4 on 3-point attempts, and No. 4 Gonzaga cruised to a 113-54 victory over UMass Lowell on Friday night.



Kansas forward KJ Adams (24) dunks the ball as Oakland guard Jayson Woodrich, below, defends during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game, Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024, in Lawrence, Kan. (AP)

Nolan Hickman added 14 points and shot 4 for 5 from 3-point range for the Zags (3-0), who are undefeated after three games for the first time since the 2021-22 season.

Braden Huff and Ryan Nembhard had 13 apiece and Dusty Stromer and Graham Ike each had 11.

The River Hawks (2-1) were led by Quinton Mincey with 10 points.

UMass Lowell: In their first loss of the season, the River Hawks shot 3 of 15 from beyond the arc and had 25 turnovers. UMass Lowell shot 16 for 35 from deep and turned the ball over 22 times in its first two games.

Gonzaga: In his first game off the bench since Jan. 11 of last season, Ben Gregg contributed seven points and 10 rebounds. Gregg's production helped Gonzaga's bench outscore UMass Lowell's second unit 48-12.

The Zags went on a 30-2 run midway through the second half that included a fast-break dunk and a transition 3-pointer from Battle on consecutive possessions. Gonzaga's scoring run pushed its lead to 50 points with more than seven minutes remaining.

Duke 86, Wofford 35
In Durham, N.C., Tyrese Proc-

tor scored 15 points and No. 6 Duke bounced back from its first loss of the season with an 86-35 victory over Wofford on Saturday.

The Blue Devils (3-1), who were coming off a 77-72 loss to No. 19 Kentucky in the Champions Classic, led by as many as 51 points in their most lopsided victory of the season.

Isaiah Evans contributed 14 points, Caleb Foster had 13 and Khaman Maluach added 11.

Duke opened a 39-point lead in the first half and held Wofford to 24.6% shooting for the game. The Terriers (1-3) went more than six minutes without scoring in the first half as the Blue Devils rolled into the break up 51-14.

Wisconsin 103, Arizona 88

In Madison, Wis., John Tonje had a career-high 41 points - two shy of the Wisconsin record - to lead the Badgers over No. 9 Arizona 103-88 on Friday night.

Wisconsin (4-0) never trailed, and fans stormed the Kohl Center court after the final horn.

Tonje shot 8 for 14 from the floor, including 4 of 6 from 3-point range, and was 21 for 22 at the foul line. His 21 free throws set a school mark.

Wisconsin's scoring record is held by Frank Kaminsky, who attended Friday's game as part of a ceremony honoring the Badgers' 2014 and 2015 Final Four teams. Kaminsky scored 43 against North Dakota on Nov. 19, 2013.

Sets up BJK Cup semi vs Italy

Swiatek leads Poland's comeback over Czechs

MALAGA, Spain, Nov. 17, (AP) — Iga Swiatek won in singles and doubles to lead Poland's 2-1 comeback against the Czech Republic in the Billie Jean King Cup on Saturday.

Poland will meet Italy in the semifinals after Jasmine Paolini likewise won her singles and doubles matches to lead Italy back for a 2-1 win over Japan.

Marie Bouzkova beat Magdalena Frech 6-1, 4-6, 6-4 to give the Czech Republic a 1-0 lead on the indoor hard court in Malaga's Palacio del Deportes.

The second-ranked Swiatek leveled the score after she held on for a 7-6 (7), 4-6, 7-5 win over Linda Noskova.

The five-time Grand Slam winner then went back on the court after a short break to help Katarzyna Kawa beat Katerina Siniakova, the world's top-ranked doubles player, and Bouzkova 6-2, 6-4.

"Let's enjoy this one. For sure

it was an exhausting day and some really tough matches, but I am really happy we won that last one," Swiatek said.

She added that she hadn't played doubles in three years and praised Kawa's well-placed passing shots in the doubles lane as key to victory.

Swiatek showed no sign that she was worn down by the back-to-back matches that combined for 3 hours, 50 minutes of playing time. The Polish pair converted all four break chances and hit more winners, 29-18, than the Czechs.

Poland is seeking its first title. The Czech Republic is an 11-time champion, second only to the United States' 18 titles.

The fourth-ranked Paolini, a finalist at Wimbledon and the French Open, defeated Moyuka Uchijima 6-3, 6-4 to level the tie 1-1. She then helped Sara Errani beat Shuko Aoyama and Eri Hozumi 6-3, 6-4 to seal the quarter-final win.



Poland's Iga Swiatek returns the ball against Linda Noskova of the Czech Republic during the Billie Jean King Cup Finals, at the Martin Carpena Sports Hall, in Malaga, southern Spain, on Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024. (AP)

Nadal to play in Davis Cup only if he feels good enough

MADRID, Nov. 17, (AP) — Rafael Nadal is ready to skip singles matches at the Davis Cup finals in Malaga if he feels he is not good enough to help Spain succeed in his farewell tournament.

Nadal is retiring after the Davis Cup, the 22-time Grand Slam champion worn down by too many injuries at the end of his 20 years on tour.

"I'll try to prepare as best as possible so I can be available to play, but I want to help anyway I can, playing or not playing," the 38-year-old Nadal said on Saturday from Malaga in an interview published by the Spanish tennis federation.

"First we have to see how I'm feeling in training. If I really don't see myself ready to have a chance of winning in singles, I'll be the first who won't want to play."

Nadal's singles record in 2024 is

only 12-7. His last official competition was the Paris Olympics in August, a second round loss to longtime rival - and eventual gold medalist - Novak Djokovic. Nadal reached the doubles quarterfinals with Carlos Alcaraz. Last month, he played two exhibition matches in Saudi Arabia.

"I have already told (Spain captain David Ferrer) on many occasions not to make any decision based on the fact that this is my last week as a professional tennis player," Nadal said. "The team comes first, and he should not be affected in the slightest by any hype that may come along because of me. He has to do what is best for the team and that is what I want."

Spain will open on Tuesday against the Netherlands, and if it wins it will advance to the semifinals on Friday against Canada or Germany.



Spain's Rafael Nadal takes part in a training session at the Martin Carpena Sports Hall, in Malaga, southern Spain, on Friday, Nov. 15, 2024. (AP)

Two junior, six adult teams participate in event

IFA-K successfully hosts 2024 Futsal League in Abu Halifa



Ambassador Lena Maryana with the participating teams.



Winners team - Vetcher FC



Labor Attaché Mohammad Ivandry with the organizing committee.



Garangan FC and BBK FC

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17: The Indonesian Futsal Association in Kuwait (IFA-K) successfully hosted its annual 2024 IFA-K Futsal League on Friday, November 15 at the Abu Saheel Stadium in Abu Halifa.

According to a press release issued by IFA-K, the event, which ran from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, brought together both junior and adult futsal teams for a day of friendly competition, sportsmanship, and community spirit.

The league featured two junior teams - Andalus FC and Riggae FC, and six adult teams - GARANGAN FC, BBK FC, VETCHER FC, PPI FC, NUSRA FC, and PIP FC.

The tournament followed a league format, where each team competed against every other team. The team with the highest points at the end of the matches is declared the winner. Each match lasts for 15 minutes, with no field changes between games. In case of a points tie, the winner

is decided based on goal difference.

The opening ceremony, which was held from 9:00 am to 9:30 am Kuwait time, was attended by a number of distinguished guests, including the Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to the State of Kuwait H.E. Lena Maryana, who was joined by the Labor Attaché at the Embassy of Indonesia in Kuwait Mohammad Ivandry, the Social and Cultural Information Function of the Embassy Ozeri Nikita Zubana, and local staff.

The event also drew a large crowd of Indonesian citizens in Kuwait, including many migrant workers of various professions, to support the event.

The IFA-K Futsal League is not just about sports but it is also about strengthening ties within the Indonesian community in Kuwait. Throughout the day, attendees were treated to a variety of Indonesian culinary delights, offered

by local food vendors such as Um Tong Tong, Jawi Nurifa, Maryam Hayauna, Mba Wardah, Mba Saima, Minang cuisine, Masakan, and Noorah cuisine.

The event was organized by IFA-K's management team, led by Chief Executive Aziz Zuhadi, and Chairman of IFA-K Yahya Muhiddin, with support from a dedicated group of volunteers: namely Mustiqa Yani, Agus Setiawan, Indrit Kumalasari, Sobana, Lubis, Rohmat, Ryan, Dede, Kaspul, Heru, Clara, Anggun, Made Bagler, and Edra.

The 2024 IFA-K Futsal League concluded with a prize distribution ceremony, which was officiated by the Labor Attaché of the Republic of Indonesia to Kuwait Mohammad Ivandry, along with the IFA-K organizing committee, for the champions of both junior and adult divisions.

Junior Team Results:

1st Place: Andalus FC - Trophy, Gold Medal, and a 15

KD Cash Voucher

2nd Place: Riggae FC - Trophy, Silver Medal, and a 10 KD Cash Voucher

Adult Team Results:

1st Place: Vetcher FC - Trophy, Gold Medal, and a 50 KD Cash Voucher

2nd Place: PPI FC - Trophy, Silver Medal, and a 40 KD Cash Voucher

3rd Place: BBK FC - Trophy, Bronze Medal, and a 20 KD Cash Voucher

4th Place: Nusra FC - Trophy, door prize, and a 10 KD Cash Voucher

The competition, which took place from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm Kuwait time, concluded with a closing ceremony from 4:30 pm to 5:00 pm.

France triumph over All Blacks for a record-tying third straight time

'We are extremely disappointed'

PARIS, Nov 17, (AP): France shook off a slow start to beat New Zealand 30-29 for a record-tying third straight time in a bruising autumn rugby test at Stade de France on Saturday.

The French matched their best winning streak against the All Blacks from 1994-95 in a breathless game that lived up to the hype. The 27 turnovers were testament to ferocious defense on both sides.

"This win will do us a lot of good, that's for sure. It's a prestigious win," France coach Fabien Galthié said. "The good thing is that the players showed a great spirit, even when they were struggling."

New Zealand shot out to 14-3 and 17-10 by halftime. But France flipped the momentum in the new half with converted tries by flanker Paul Boudéhent and wing Louis Bielle-Biarrey, which was the turning point. They sent France ahead 24-17.

From there, France's defense tightened up and New Zealand ball-carriers weren't quite making the meters they were chewing up in the first half. France missed 34 tackles but ended up making 211, 100 more than New Zealand.

France's Thomas Ramos and New Zealand replacement Damian McKenzie traded penalties to the end with the All Blacks always chasing, and within one point with five minutes to go. But they couldn't get out of their half.

"It gives you a lot of confidence to beat a great side like this, especially considering the form they were in and they players they have," France captain Antoine Dupont said. "There were a lot of times when we were struggling in defense. But we didn't panic (when we were behind) because we knew we could turn things around."

The commitment was evident from



France's Antoine Dupont holds the Dave Gallaher Trophy aloft following the Autumn Nations series rugby union match between France and All Blacks at the Stade de France stadium, in Saint-Denis, outside Paris, Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024. (AP)

the second minute when All Blacks flanker Samipeni Finau's head collided with France prop Tevita Tatafu's knee. Finau came off and Tatafu endured only a little longer.

Finau's replacement, Peter Lakai, scored the opening try after Ardie Savea bowled over three defenders. The New Zealand scrum was the platform for its second try, when scrumhalf Cam Roigard stopped No. 8 Grégory Alldritt, stole his intended pass to Dupont and scooted in.

Dupont made little impact until the 33rd when France phases narrowed New Zealand and he picked out Ramos to send fullback Romain Buros

over for a try on debut.

Boudéhent's brace of second-half tries in the 52-12 win against Japan last Saturday earned him a start and his try from a lineout maul in the 44th tied the score.

New Zealand swung back onto attack but a dropped pass on halfway was collected by Ramos who kicked upfield. Bielle-Biarrey then gassed two All Blacks to the ball and scored the decisive try.

France never trailed again.

"We are extremely disappointed," Savea said. "We put ourselves right in there to win the game but we made silly mistakes and turned the ball over

and a quality side will punish you, which they did. Pretty gutted.

"You have to credit them (for their second half performance). We felt like we were in control and we were pretty accurate in the first half. In the second half we just let them into the game. They applied pressure on us and we could not handle it."

Ramos shot six for six at the posts, while McKenzie went four for four after taking over from Beauden Barrett.

France has won the last three contests with the All Blacks all in the Stade de France; 40-25 in autumn 2021 and 27-13 in the Rugby World Cup opener 14 months ago.

Trump watches bout

Jones sends Miocic into retirement with victory

NEW YORK, Nov 17, (AP): Jon Jones sent Stipe Miocic into retirement with a stunning back kick to the ribs and used a series of blows to the head in the third round to retain the UFC heavyweight championship in front of President-elect Donald Trump in the main event of UFC 309 at Madison Square Garden on Saturday night.

Jones posed and played to the crowd on top of the octagon in front of Trump, Elon Musk, picked by Trump to lead a new Department of Government Efficiency, and Robert Kennedy Jr., Trump's choice to lead the Department of Health and Human Services in his incoming administration.

Trump walked out to a rousing ovation in front of 20,200 fans just before the start of the pay-per-view card and seemed to bask in thrill of the fighters that throughout the night gave him props - including Jones.

"I want to give a big, big thank you to President Donald Trump being here tonight," Jones said to a roaring ovation that bled into a "USA! USA!" chant.

"I'm proud to be a great American champion," Jones said.

Widely considered the best fighter in the world, Jones (28-1-0; 1 NC) was the aggressor from the start and landed a series of shots to Miocic's head in the first round. Jones showed he plenty of fight left in the tank.

British heavyweight Tom Aspinall looms as the next challenger for Jones. Aspinall won a fight for the interim heavyweight title last November in the Garden. UFC CEO Dana White had promised Aspinall, who chatted with Arizona Cardinals QB Kyler Murray, would challenge the winner of the main event in a unification bout.

"As far as my future in the octagon, I decided that maybe I will not retire," Jones said. "I know that we have options."

Miocic (20-5) failed in his bid to win the heavyweight crown for a third time

and immediately announced his retirement.

"I'm done," Miocic said. "I'm hanging 'em up."

His last fight was in front of the next president.

White captioned a photo he posted on social media "the boys" that featured him with Trump, Kid Rock and Musk. Trump pumped a fist during an occasional outbreak of "USA! USA!" chants. He was flanked on his front-row seat by White on his right and Musk on his left and politely applauded the fight winners.

UFC fans wore red Trump hats and some waved flags emblazoned with his image during breaks in the action.

In a lightweight bout that made every fan from Kid Rock to Jordan Knight to Anthony Kiedis go wild at the finish in the fifth round, Charles Oliveira beat Michael Chandler via unanimous decision. The fight was a rematch of their May 2021 fight when Charles Oliveira topped Chandler to win the lightweight title. Oliveira staked his claim to another title fight with the win.

The fifth round was about as good as it gets inside the octagon highlighted by Chandler dropping Oliveira twice on his back. The 38-year-old Chandler stepped inside the cage for the first time in two years, in large part because he waited for a fight that never materialized with Conor McGregor.

"We've been wondering where you've been, Conor," Chandler belted in the cage. "Come back and beat me if you can."

McGregor has been sued by a woman who accused him of sexually assaulting her in a Dublin hotel in 2018.

Chandler shook Trump's hand after the fight on a card more charged with politics than punches.

Trump is tight with White, a relationship that dates to UFC's formative years before its rise into a billion-dollar promotion.



Stipe Miocic, right, punches Jon Jones in a UFC 309 mixed martial arts heavyweight title bout, early on Sunday, Nov. 17, 2024, in New York. (AP)

Germany thrashes Bosnia to earn biggest UEFA Nations League win

BERLIN, Nov 17, (Xinhua): Double strikes from Tim Kleindienst and Florian Wirtz paved the way for Germany's 7-0 thrashing of Bosnia and Herzegovina to top Group A3 on Saturday.

The Germans got off to a perfect start in their final home game of the year when Joshua Kimmich's cross allowed Jamal Musiala to head the opener into the right-hand corner.

The hosts dominated possession

and pinned the defensively-minded Bosnians deep in their own half.

Germany's onslaught was rewarded 20 minutes later when Kleindienst tipped in Robert Andrich's long-range shot to double the lead.

The visitors couldn't keep Julian Nagelsmann's side at bay, but the hosts failed to make the most of their chances, with Kai Havertz and Musiala both going close.

However, the Germans made it

three before the break when Havertz finished off a one-two with Wirtz in the 37th minute.

The hosts picked up where they left off after the restart, Wirtz curling a free kick into the roof of the net on 50 minutes before adding his second from close range seven minutes later.

Nagelsmann wasted no time in bringing on Leroy Sane and Serge Gnabry, and both made an immediate impact. Gnabry shot just wide in

the 65th minute before Sane made it 6-0 with a fine first touch moments later.

But Germany wasn't done yet and made it seven in the 79th minute when Kleindienst latched on to Antonio Rudiger's long cross.

The thumping victory left Germany at the top of Group 3, League A, ahead of the Netherlands (8 points), Hungary (5 points) and Bosnia-Herzegovina.



Finland's Eduard Hallberg speeds down the course during an alpine ski, men's World Cup slalom, in Levi, Finland, on Nov. 17, 2024. (AP)

Sports

Oly ski champ Noel wins season's first WC slalom

Hirscher fails to qualify

LEVI, Finland, Nov 17, (AP): Olympic champion Clement Noel dominated the first men's World Cup slalom of the season on Sunday for his first victory in 22 months.

The Frenchman protected his opening-run lead to beat Henrik Kristoffersen of Norway by 0.80 seconds. Swiss allrounder Loic Meillard placed third, 0.95 behind.

Lucas Pinheiro Braathen came fourth, missing by one tenth what would have been the first ever World Cup podium result in Alpine skiing for Brazil.

Record eight-time overall champion Marcel Hirscher, a three-time winner in Levi, failed to qualify for the second run in his first slalom since coming out of retirement after five years.

Noel overcame what looked like a costly mistake in his opening run when he had to brake in the steep middle section of the Levi Black course, but he put in a nearly error-free second run.

"It was a tough fight. Really, really happy about my second run," Noel said. "It was quite some good skiing, I think. I knew that Henrik set the bar high. In the pitch he skied really, really well. So, I just tried to push really hard because I knew it was tight."

It was Noel's 11th career World Cup win and first since triumphing at a night race in Austria in January 2023 - his only other victory since winning Olympic gold in Beijing.

Kristoffersen posted the fastest time in a frenetic final run that saw him rise from 11th position. The two-time slalom world champion was aiming for his first World Cup win since January 2023, and called his runner-up finish "100 per cent a step in the right direction."

Meillard, who missed the season-opening giant slalom three weeks ago after tweaking his back during warmups, was the runner-up to Swiss teammate Marco Odermatt in the overall standings last season.

Odermatt does not compete in slaloms.

Manuel Feller, the defending World Cup slalom champion, failed to score World



The winner France's Clement Noel celebrates on podium after an alpine ski, men's World Cup slalom, in Levi, Finland, on Nov. 17, 2024. (AP)

Cup points. The Austrian finished 1.18 seconds off the lead in the opening run before straddling a gate in the second.

Feller was fifth or better in each slalom race last season.

Pinheiro Braathen, returning this season and starting for Brazil after leaving the Norwegian federation a year ago, started 33rd but worked his way up to fourth, matching his achievement in the season-opening GS.

"It's such a relief that I get these results in slalom and GS, I'm so grateful," Pinheiro Braathen said. "It was really a tough race today, with this tricky ice, it was a brutal return to slalom."

Netherlands advances

Gyokeres leads Sweden to victory over Slovakia

STOCKHOLM, Sweden, Nov 17, (AP): Viktor Gyokeres led Sweden to a 2-1 win over Slovakia while the Netherlands qualified for the Nations League quarterfinals with a 4-0 win over Hungary on Saturday.

Germany also set a single-game scoring record for the relatively new competition - this is its fourth edition - by routing Bosnia and Herzegovina 7-0.

Gyokeres took his nation's opening goal in the third minute. After Slovakia's David Hancko leveled in the 19th, the Sporting Lisbon striker set up Aleksander Isak to put Sweden back in front for good in the 31st.

Gyokeres is the joint leading scorer of the Nations League with five along with Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo and Slovenia's Benjamin Sesko. Gyokeres recently staged Erling Haaland by scoring a hat trick as Sporting beat Manchester City 4-1 in the Champions League.

Sweden is trying to earn promotion from League C to League B. Estonia finished at Azerbaijan 0-0 in the same group.

The Netherlands joined Germany as the two teams from League A. Group 3 to advance to the quarterfinals in March.

The Dutch easily won their game in Amsterdam, which was briefly suspended in the first half for the medical evacuation of Hungary assistant coach Adam Szalai. The Hungarian Football Federation said the former player was in "stable" condition after being taken by ambulance to a local hospital.



Georgia's Budu Zivzivadze, right, fights for the ball with Ukraine's Mykola Matviyenko during the UEFA Nations League, group B1 soccer match between Georgia and Ukraine at the Adjarabet Arena in Batumi, Georgia, on Nov. 16, 2024. (AP)



نوفمبر
November
2024

KUNA photo

A photo of the Kuwaiti jet ski teams after winning the Abu Dhabi Championship.

Kuwait jet ski champions stand out in UAE tourney

ABU DHABI, Nov 17, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti jet ski champions made eye-catching results in the UAE 2024 jet ski tournament standing out among 60 competitors from various countries.

Ahmad Al-Khedari came first in the spark (RNJBR) category, his peers from Kuwait Fawaz Al-Mkaimi and Fahad Al-Yaacoub came second and third, respectively, in the same competition.

Ibrahim Ramadan, an official at Kuwait Sea Sport Club, told KUNA he was elated with the good results made by the Kuwaiti team in the UAE tournament, first round of which was held in January 2024 in Dubai, followed by the second round in Abu Dhabi and lastly the third in Sharjah.

The tournament that concluded in Abu Dhabi today was marked with robust competition among the 60 athletes.

Hornets stun Bucks 115-114

Tatum's OT buzzer-beater leads Celtics over Raptors

BOSTON, Nov 17, (AP): Jayson Tatum hit a 3-pointer at the buzzer in overtime and the Boston Celtics rallied to beat the Toronto Raptors 126-123 on Saturday night.

Tatum finished with 24 points and 11 rebounds. Jaylen Brown added 27 points. Al Horford and Derrick White scored 18 points apiece.

Toronto has lost seven straight and failed to register its first road win of the season despite getting a career-high 35 points from Jakob Poeltl, who finished 16 of 19 from the field with 12 rebounds. RJ Barrett added 25 points and 10 rebounds.

With the game tied at 112 in regulation, Barrett connected on a runner in the lane and was fouled by Brown with 59 seconds remaining. But Barrett missed his ensuing free throw.

Boston's Neemias Queta, who started in place of Jrue Holiday (left knee tendinopathy), scored a driving layup on Boston's next possession.

Hornets 115, Bucks 114

In Charlotte, N.C., LaMelo Ball scored 19 of his 26 points in the second half, and Charlotte overcame Giannis Antetokounmpo's first triple-double of the season to beat Milwaukee.

Antetokounmpo had a chance to win the game at the buzzer, but his foul line jumper rimmed out.

Miles Bridges returned from a three-game absence and scored 19 points, while Moussa Diabate added 12 points and 14 rebounds off the bench.

Taurean Price had 23 points for the Bucks, while Antetokounmpo finished with 22 points, 15 rebounds and 12 assists. Bobby Portis had 21 points.

The Hornets led by four before Pat Connaughton made a 3-pointer and then, following Ball's miss, drove the lane and scored to put Milwaukee up by one with 19 seconds left.

Lakers 104, Pelicans 99

In New Orleans, Anthony Davis had 31 points and 14 rebounds and Los Angeles extended their winning streak to five games with a victory over New Orleans.

LeBron James highlighted a 21-point performance with a pair of pivotal 3-pointers in the final minutes, but his career-long four-game triple-double streak came to an end.

Rookie Dalton Knecht hit five 3s to finish with a career-high 27 points in a spot start for the Lakers.

One night after posting 40 points and 12 rebounds in a victory at San

Antonio, Davis reached the 30-point plateau for the eighth time in 12 games played this season.

Brandon Ingram scored 32 points, and reserve Jaylen Nowell scored 16 points for the Pelicans, who've lost 10 of their last 12 games.

Mavericks 110, Spurs 93

In Dallas, Kyrie Irving and Daniel Gafford scored 22 points apiece as Dallas snapped a four-game losing streak with a win over San Antonio, who played without star center Victor Wembanyama.

The 7-foot-3 Wembanyama, last season's unanimous selection as NBA Rookie of the Year, was sidelined with a bruised right knee and is day to day. He got hurt during a home loss to the Los Angeles Lakers on Friday night.

Zach Collins, Wembanyama's replacement in the starting lineup, led the Spurs with a season-high 20 points. Julian Champagnie scored 13, all in the first half.

Gafford set a season high for points as Dallas got a season-best 54 from its bench.



Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum, right, is blocked under the basket by Toronto Raptors center Jakob Poeltl, left, during overtime of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024, in Boston. (AP)



The Kuwaiti women's national football team delegation during a meeting with the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Bahrain, Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Training camp fuels growth

Kuwaiti junior women's football draws in Bahrain friendly match

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 17, (KUNA): Kuwait's junior women's football team tied 2-2 with its Bahraini counterpart in the second friendly match held in the capital, Manama, on Saturday.

Hanan Al-Hardan, a member of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Junior Women's Football Association and head of the delegation, told KUNA that the team's participation in the two friendly matches against Bahrain during the training camp aims to prepare for upcoming events.

The Kuwaiti junior women's team played its first friendly match against Bahrain last Thursday, which ended in a 3-0 victory for the Bahraini side.

Al-Hardan expressed hope that the series of friendly matches and training camps in which the Blue Juniors are participating will enhance their capabilities and football skills, helping to

establish the team's presence in international competitions. She conveyed her confidence in the team's potential, emphasizing their commitment to delivering a strong competitive performance in upcoming matches and representing Kuwait honorably in international forums.

Al-Hardan extended her sincere gratitude to the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in Bahrain, led by Ambassador Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, for its significant support and encouragement of the delegation.

She also praised the warm hospitality and excellent organization provided by the Bahrain Football Association during the delegation's stay. Additionally, she commended the Kuwait Football Association and the General Authority for Sports for their continuous support in facilitating the team's participation in external matches.

Saudi Al-Ittihad crowned champion of West Asia table tennis championship

DOHA, Nov 17, (KUNA): The West Asia Table Tennis Club Championship, hosted in Doha at the Abdullah bin Suhaim Hall of the Qatar SC, concluded on Saturday with Al-Ittihad Club of Saudi Arabia, claiming the title of the men's tournament after beating Bahrain SC 3-1.

Bahrain's Saar SC and Qatar SC claimed third place, thus sharing the bronze medal.

The four-day event gathered 12 men's teams, and five females'.

The females' segment of the championship, which was concluded yesterday, saw Al-Fatat SC, of Kuwait, claiming the title with eight points.

The Orthodox Club, of Jordan, came second with seven points. Qatar SC and Al-Arabi SC shared the third place.

Attending the awards ceremony were President of the Qatari, Arab and Asian table tennis federations Khalil Al-Muhannadi, President of Qatar



Photo during the West Asia Table Tennis Club Championship title match.

SC Sheikh Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Suhaim Al Thani and Secretary-General of the Qatar Table Tennis Federation Mohammad Abdullah Saleh, as well as senior members of the regional federations of the sport.