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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Hassan III ... A cub from a den of lions

FROM the year 1666, the Alacans and their leadership for 44 wite rule in the Kingdom of Morocco has been characterized by stability, and the country served as a model of openness to diverse cultures and nations. It has consistently demonstrated resilience in the face of adversity, becoming a symbol of unity between the government and the people.

As a result, the French were unable to subjugate the Morocyears, and they were expelled in

King Mohammed V, along with his son, Crown Prince Hassan II, returned to the country,

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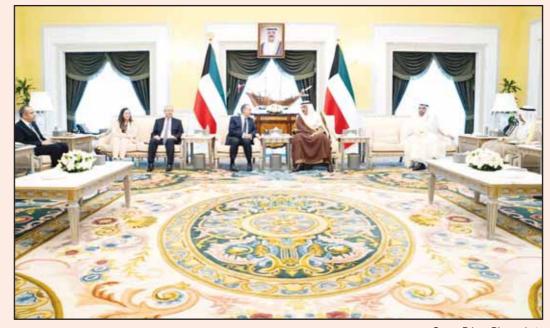




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Egyptian president sends message to Amir

Kuwait Amir receives Crown Prince, Acting Prime Minister



HH the Crown Prince receives Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr. Bader Abdulatti.

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. His Highness the Amir also re-

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

Also on Sunday, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace on Sunday Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr. Bader Abdulatti on occasion

of official visit to the country.

The Egyptian Foreign Minister relayed a message directed to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from

Continued on Page 5

OVER-60 EXPATS WITHOUT DEGREES AWAIT KUWAIT'S DECISION

PACI's comprehensive report reveals a stark educational divide among Kuwait's expatriate workforce: 1. Total University Gradu-

- ates: 143,488 · Advanced Degrees (Mas-
- ter's or PhDs): 6,561
- 2. Illiterate Workers: 82,040 3. Basic Literacy (Read and
- Write): 954,747 4. Primary Education Holders: 112,933
- 5. Intermediate Education Holders: 654,738
- 6. High School Graduates: 246,851 7. Diploma Holders: 79,902
- 8. Unspecified Educational Levels: 707,931
- 9. Total Expatriate Population: 3.36 million
- Expatriates Aged 20 and Above Lacking University Qualifications: 2.9 million

SME worker transfer cut to one year with sponsor's nod

By Najeh Bilal and Fares Al-Abdan Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: In Kuwait, a wave of anticipation surrounds a vital decision that could reshape the lives of expatriates aged 60 and over who do not hold university degrees.

The prospect of canceling mandatory health insurance fees for this group gained traction after the Court of Appeal upheld a verdict which was issued on March 2024 that nullified Administrative Decision No. 27 of 2021.

This decision, which previously governed work permit regulations, was deemed invalid by the Court of First Instance, marking a significant moment in the legal landscape.

As the nation awaits formal implementation, the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) disclosed revealing statistics saying by the end of June 2024, the number of expatriates in this specific category stood at 123,235, with 8,956 cases remaining unspecified. These figures underscore the sizeable demographic affected by the ruling.

Meanwhile, another crucial development unfolded within the small and medium enterprises (SME)

sector. The Public Authority for Manpower announced a reduction in the minimum period for transferring workers within SME projects from three years to just one, contingent on sponsor approval. However, sources clarified a key restriction – workers from SMEs cannot transfer to larger private

This policy adjustment was attributed to operational challenges faced by many SME projects, including faltering initiatives and difficulties in sustaining operations.

The reduction in transfer time aims to provide flexibility within the SME ecosystem, ensuring better workforce utilization without compromising the sector's stability.

PACI's comprehensive report shed light on the broader composition of Kuwait's expatriate workforce, revealing a striking disparity in educational qualifications:

The report put the number of University Graduates at 143,488, of whom only 6,561 hold advanced degrees (Master's or PhDs); illiterate workers, 82,040; Basic Literacy (Read and Write): 954,747; Primary Education, 112,933; Intermediate Education 654,738; High School Graduates: 246,851; Diploma Holders: 79,902 and Unspecified Educational Levels: 707,931.

Overall, 2.9 million expatriates aged 20 and above lacked university qualifications, out of a total expatriate population of 3.36 million.



Minister of Information receives Arab Times chief editor in office

Working 1 year without pay, road repair part of penalty

KFH honors the inaugural cohort of **Real Estate Evaluation Program**

Zain introduces 'The Masters'. empowering 30 individuals with disabilities to create, shape their own experiences, and become leaders

October sees record growth in local bank financing for oil and gas sector

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Local banks provided a record 638.4 million dinars in financing to the oil and gas sector (residents and nonresidents) in October, marking an increase of 349.7 million dinars from September's 285.7 million dinars.

This represents a substantial monthly growth rate of 122 percent. The year-on-year financing also surged by 513.3 million dinars from 125.1 million dinars in October 2023 over the first ten months of 2024, total financing to the sector reached 2.072 billion dinars.

The bank financing for the oil and gas sector showed fluctuations throughout the first ten months of 2024. Starting at 50.6 million dinars in January, financing grew to 278.5 million dinars in February, then continued its upward trajectory to 286.3 million dinars in March.

A significant decline occurred in April, bringing financing to 167.4 million dinars, followed by a sharp drop to just 19.4 million dinars in May. However, financing picked up again in June to 245.8 million dinars and after further fluctuations, it reached 638.4 million dinars in October.

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Band members perform during the musical show held at the Avenues.

Army Brass Band performs at Avenues

The Kuwaiti Army Brass Band organized Saturday a distinguished musical show, as part of the Gulf Weeks activities accompanying the 45th Gulf Cooperation Council Summit, which is scheduled to be

hosted by the State of Kuwait on December 1.

Visitors to the Avenues Mall enjoyed the musical show, which included playing songs about Arabian Gulf relations. (KUNA)

PACI clarifies verification levels in 'My Identity' app

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: In response to rumors about changes to Kuwaiti citizenship procedures through the 'My Identity' application, which were denied by the Ministry of Interior, the Public Authority for Civil Information has clarified the matter, reports

The Authority explained that the "My Identity" app incorporates three levels of verification, which are determined by the

Al-Seyassah daily.

method chosen during the registration process.

These levels -- medium, high, and verified -- define the extent of access to specific features within

PACI emphasized that these verification levels adhere to the highest standards of security, ensuring the protection of users' data throughout the registration and verification process.

Turkish company leads with lowest Kuwait-Saudi link bid at KD 2.47mn

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kuwait's Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) has opened financial bids for a 12-month design contract for a 111km railway linking Kuwait City to the Saudi Arabian border. This project is part of the larger Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) railway initiative, which aims to construct over 2,000km of new rail lines across the region at an estimated cost of more than \$200 billion, reports International Railway Journal.

Among the four bids received, Turkey's Proyapi Engineering and Consulting submitted the lowest offer at KWD 2.47 million (\$8.15 million). Other bidders included China Railway Company with a bid of KWD 6.77 million, Spain's Sener at KWD 8.82 million, and Systra Turkey at KWD 9.73 million.

Despite nine companies seeking to prequalify for the contract, five were excluded from consideration. The design and consultancy work is expected to be completed within a year, after which tenders for the construction phase will be issued.

Public Authority for Roads & Transportation Vice-President Haifa Al-Jarallah noted that the tender process has been expedited following discussions between Kuwait's Minister of Public Works, Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, and Saudi Arabia's Minister of Transport and Logistics Services, Mr. Saleh Al-Jasser. These meetings also explored the feasibility of a new rail line connecting Kuwait City to Riyadh.

Al-Jarallah emphasized that appointing a design consultant marks the first phase of the railway project. The second phase will involve presenting the project to potential investors and selecting an investment partner, while the third phase will focus on implementation, anticipated to take about 30 months.

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait deports 568 'violators' in 5 days

By Munif Naif Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The General Department of Residence Affairs Investigations of the Ministry of Interior announced the arrest of 396 violators of residency and labor laws and the deportation of 568 expatriates from the country during the period between November 17 and 21.

The ministry highlighted its ongoing efforts to intensify security campaigns in various parts of the country, and actively pursue and apprehend all violators of residency laws.

It affirmed that accountability extends to both the violators and their employers.

Newswatch

CAIRO: The Arab League on Sunday emphasized the need to address population issues amid the ongoing instability in the re-

Describing it a critical chal-lenge and key driver of sustain-able development, which cannot be achieved without peace and stability, League Assistant Secretary General and Head of the Social Affairs Sector Ambassador Haifa Abu Ghazaleh told the sixth session of the Executive Office of the Arab Council for Population and Development that pressing challenges facing Arab populations include migration, internal displacement, rapid demographic growth, high unemployment, reproductive health issues, and the impact of climate change. (KUNA)

AMMAN: Police in Jordan shot and killed a man after he opened fire near the Israeli Embassy early on Sunday, authorities said.

Three police officers were wounded in the shootout in the Rabiah neighborhood of the capital, Amman. Authorities did not identify the shooter or say what his motive was. (AP)

WASHINGTON: France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States welcomed the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors' adoption of a resolution on Iran, demanding that it provides explanations on presence of uranium particles at three undeclared locations.

In a joint statement issued by American Department of State, the four countries affirmed that "the resolution responds to Iran's continued failure to provide the IAEA the information and cooperation needed to clarify long outstanding issues relating to undeclared nuclear material detected at multiple locations in Iran,"

"These issues are central to the Agency's ability to provide assurance of the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme,' the statement read. (KUNA)

KAC partners with Saudi Railways to sell Haramain high speed rail tickets KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Kuwait This collaboration will provide add-Airways Corporation has entered into

an agreement with the Saudi Railways Company (SAR) to offer tickets for the Haramain High-Speed Rail to its customers, reports Al-Seyassah daily. This new service will initially be available for Hajj and Umrah campaigns, followed by offering tickets to

The agreement was signed by Abdul Mohsen Al-Faqan, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Airways and Bashar Al-Malik, CEO of SAR.

individual travelers.

Al-Faqan highlighted that the partnership aims to improve cooperation between the two companies and enhance travel services for passengers, particularly those traveling between Makkah and Madinah in Saudi Arabia.

ed value for Kuwait Airways customers by expanding their travel options, especially for visitors to the holy cities. It is expected to ease travel logistics for pilgrims and tourists by integrating both airlines and rail services. Furthermore, the agreement fa-

cilitates the commercial marketing and promotion of Kuwait Airways services. It will also enable Kuwait Airways to sell tickets for Haramain High-Speed Rail trips at the stations, as well as through its own reservation

The partnership includes an electronic link between the Haramain High-Speed Rail and Kuwait Airways booking systems, streamlining the reservation process for travelers.



Expected weather for next 24 hrs: By Day: Mild and and partly cloudy to cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times southeasterly wind, with speeds of 15-50 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times and a chance for fog forming at night. By Night: Mild to rather cold

Weather and partly cloudy to cloudy with light variable wind to light to moderate freshening at times southeasterly wind, with speeds of 10-40 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times and a chance for fog forming over some areas.

tation	Max Exp	Min Red
uwait City	27	19
uwait Airport	27	17
bdaly	27	14
ubyan	25	14
ahra	28	17
ailaka Island	26	20
almiyah	26	20
hmadi	26	16



The Minister of Information Abdul Rahman Al-Mutairi meets Editor-in-Chief of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah.

Minister of Information receives Arab Times chief editor in office

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Minister of Information Abdul Rahman Al-Mutairi received in his office the Editor-in-Chief of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah.

The two discussed current media affairs, and also delved into local events. They affirmed the vital role played by the media in supporting national matters and enhancing societal awareness.

Amir thanked for sponsoring event

Kuwait honors 20 winners of Quran memorization contest

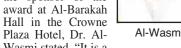
By Mohammad Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Representing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad, the Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi honored 20 winners

of the 13th edition of the Kuwait International Award for the Memorization of the Quran, its Recitation

Modes, and Science. In a speech delivered on behalf of the sponsor of the award at Al-Barakah Hall in the Crowne



Wasmi stated, "It is a pleasure to speak to you on this blessed day as we conclude the 13th edition of the Kuwait International Award for the Memorization of the Quran, its Recitation Modes, and Science.

"This award, thanks to Almighty Allah and the continuous support of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, has become a symbol of Kuwait's dedication to serving the Book of Allah and reinforcing its position as a global beacon for the sciences

"This award is not merely a passing competition but a civilizational message that reflects Kuwait's commitment to upholding Islamic values and enhancing the spirit of brotherhood among the Muslim community. It achieves this through the competition of memorizing the Book of Allah, understanding it, and applying its teachings

"Today, we witness the fruits of sincere efforts that have brought together a group of Quran scholars from different countries, in a faith-driven demonstration that embodies the unity of Muslims around the Holy Book of Allah.

"I express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the esteemed scholars who honored us with their valuable participation in this session by presenting scientific workshops and specialized lectures that enriched this forum and gave an important educational and cultural dimension to this event.

"Their contributions serve as a living example of academic dedication that aims to deepen the understanding of the meanings of the Quran and to connect

people to its rulings and values.
"I also extend my greetings to the arbitration committees, who bear the responsibility of evaluation based on the highest standards of integrity and impartiality. They performed their duties with accuracy and objectivity, which played a significant role in highlighting the exceptional Quranic talents we witnessed during this session."

Al-Wasmi affirmed that the ministry views this award as an extension of Kuwait's ongoing efforts to serve Islam and Muslims, adding, "We are committed to ensuring that it continues to be a message of goodness and peace, emanating from this diessed land to the entire world.

He said, "This award, with its successes, has proven to be not only a Quranic event but also a platform for building bridges of brotherhood and cooperation between the nations of the Muslim world and beyond.

We are committed to developing this award year after year by taking advantage of modern technology and strengthening cooperation with various supporting parties to achieve greater distinction and wider reach.'

It is worth mentioning that the award's closing ceremony saw the honoring of twenty winners across its four categories. Also, the organizing teams, the arbitration committees, and the winners of the Best Electronic Application Serving the Quran were also honored.



Traditional items at the Kuwait embassy pavilion.

Kuwaiti embassy takes part in charity bazaar to help 'needy'

BRUSSELS, Nov 24, (KUNA): The Embassy of Kuwait in Belgium participated in a charity bazaar in Brussels on Saturday, alongside other Arab and Asian embassies, to support marginalized children and women and promote humanitarian

The embassy's pavilion showcased Kuwaiti culture through traditional clothing, handicrafts, and popular foods, with support from the Ministry of Foreign Af-

Ambassador Nawaf Al-Enezi expressed pride in the embassy's involvement, highlighting the event as an opportunity to assist those in need and emphasizing the importance of teamwork and international solidarity in addressing humanitarian challenges.

The event also featured entertainment and competitions for visitors, fostering a vibrant community atmosphere.

GCC unity priority: Sheikh Mubarak

'Gulf Weeks' activities mirror genuine identity

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): The deputy chair of the Kuwait Olympic Committee Sheikh Mubarak Faisal Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah said on Saturday that the Gulf Weeks' activities coinciding with the 45th GCC summit mirror the genuine Gulf identity.

Sheikh Mubarak in a press release, issued by the Olympic Committee marking launch of the Gulf Weeks' events, affirmed that the joint GCC march is substantially backed upon in-structions by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and the sagacious gov-

The GCC leaders' guidelines in this respect aim to bolster inter-GCC merger and unity, said Sheikh Mubarak who also thanked Minister of Information, Minister of Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi for the invitation to partake in the festivities' inauguration.

He also lauded the efforts by the GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi and organizers of the Gulf activities.



Sheikh Mubarak Faisal

EMS response teams all set for GCC Summit, Gulf Cup

Doctors, technicians, nurses attend workshop



Photo by Mohammad Morsi Director of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department Dr. Ahmad Al-Shatti with other guests at the symposium.



Farwaniya Governorate photo The governors and officials at the Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center

Governors visit GCC pavilion to monitor Summit's preparation

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governor Sheikh Sabah Bader Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, and Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah visited the GCC pavilion at the Cultural Abdullah Al-Salem Center on Sunday to view Kuwait's preparations for the 45th Gulf Summit, which is scheduled for December 1, 2024.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the governors were accompanied by the head of the pavilion team Walid Al-Hamoud, Maryam Al-Kandari from the Amiri Diwan, and a number of team members.

The tour included a review of the contents of the pavilion, which was recently opened by the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The pavilion is dedicated to the Gulf Summit hosted by Kuwait on December 1, 2024, and highlights the progress and achievements of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The presentation covered several key topics, including cooperation between GCC countries, inspiring statements by leaders, joint security efforts, and initiatives aimed at enhancing economic integration among the member states.

Sheikh Athbi Nasser expressed his happiness with the visit, and praised the arrangements for

He affirmed that the pavilion highlights and enhances the achievements of the GCC countries in all fields, with the aim of familiarizing citizens and residents of Kuwait with the accomplishments of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The governor also highlighted the importance of promoting Gulf patriotism and loyalty.

Violating mobile groceries face law

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Acting Director General of Kuwait Municipality Eng. Manal Al-Asfour says the municipality is collaborating with other government agencies to enhance field supervision of violating mobile groceries, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a press statement, Al-Asfour explained that the campaign targets mobile groceries that are in violation of laws and regulations. Those that comply with the requirements and designated lo-

cations will not face any violations or penalties. The campaigns aim to organize operations and eliminate disorder, as some of these vehicles fail to adhere to designated locations or lack approval

from Kuwait Municipality. Meanwhile, Head of Central Operations at Kuwait Municipality Yousef Al-Fajji confirmed that inspection campaigns are ongoing and will continue without interruption.

He explained that the current plan focuses on unlicensed mobile groceries. În collaboration with the General Traffic Department at the Ministry of Interior, efforts are being made on a wide scale to reduce the phenomenon of these vehicles operating randomly on roads and highways. Stopping these vehicles along roads and highways leading to spring camps, chalets, farms, and stables is strictly prohibited. Any vehicle found in violation of the law will be dealt with accordingly. The majority of vehicles comply with the law and regulations, and as a result, any unlicensed vehicle will be confiscated, with the owner required to pay a fine to have it re-

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Sevassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Director of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department Dr. Ahmad Al-Shatti affirmed the department's full readiness to cover the 45th Gulf Summit, which Kuwait will host in December, as well as the 26th Gulf **Cup of Nations.**

He highlighted the ongoing coordination and collaboration with EMS teams in various hospitals to ensure their preparedness and to closely monitor all preparations for these upcoming events

Dr. Al-Shatti said this in a press statement issued on the sidelines of the "Emergency Medicine Updates ... Enhancing Care in Crises" workshop, which took place Saturday morning.

The workshop was aimed at highlighting the latest advancements in emergency medical practices, and witnessed the participation of approximately 150 technicians, doctors, and nurses specializing in emergency

Dr. Al-Shatti said the symposium was part of the series of programs and events organized by the department to support scientific initiatives for medical education and continuous professional development.

He affirmed the significance of the symposium in improving the understanding and management of medical emergencies.

Dr. Al-Shatti said it focused on the latest advancements in the field, presented effective strategies for handling various crises, and enhanced collaboration among healthcare professionals, as well as encouraging the exchange of knowledge and expertise.

He explained that eight lectures were delivered during the symposium, covering important and emerging topics in the field of medical emergencies, with contributions from numerous doctors, researchers, and emergency medical technicians.

Several key topics were discussed during the symposium, including "Using Artificial Intelligence in Emergency Response". "Exploring Types of Emergencies", "Disaster Preparedness and Risk Assessment", "Health Care Resilience in Disasters: The Case of Gaza", "Emergency Management for the Elderly", "Emergency Challenges in the Wild", and "Mental Health and Psychological First Aid". These topics are important for analyzing common crises such as natural disasters, industrial accidents, and public health emergencies.

Dr. Al-Shatti stressed the importance of distinguishing between these types of emergencies to ensure an effective and appropriate response.

All services for disabled are now fully electronic

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: To ease the burden on students and owners of educational institutions, the Deputy Director General of the Educational and Rehabilitation Services Sector at the Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA) Afnan Al-Hussaini says the services and procedures for educating individuals with disabilities are now fully electronic, reports Al-Anba

In a press statement to Al-Anba, she revealed the launch of a new electronic application for the educational and rehabilitation sector, adding that PADA has finished developing new programs to ensure all educational sector procedures related to individuals with disabilities are conducted electronically.

Al-Hussaini highlighted that the automated tracking of all student files registered in schools, rehabilitation centers, institutions, and nurseries under PADA's umbrella is now possible, which eliminates the need for in-person reviews.

She stressed that PADA will begin distributing special "user" access to the educational institutions under its jurisdiction, which will allow them to view student files directly and update data immediately.

Al-Hussaini affirmed that this step is in line with PADA's goal of achieving complete digital transformation, which aims to reduce the burden on both students and educational institution owners.



A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

ICC ruling: a glimmer of hope for Gaza's oppressed people

"IN A landmark ruling, the International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Galant, holding them accountable for alleged war crimes against the people of Gaza," columnist Yasser Al-Saedi wrote for Al-Jarida daily.

These warrants render them subject

to immediate arrest upon entering any of the countries recognizing ICC jurisdiction.

"This decision comes as a powerful statement against the atrocities com-Israel's military



Gaza, which have left thousands of innocent civilians -- men, women and children -- dead. "The systematic blockade, denial of ba-

sic necessities and large-scale destruction inflicted upon Gaza have been described by many as acts of genocide, eclipsing even historical claims of suffering. "Despite this , the decision has been

met with outrage and denial from Israeli leadership, whose rhetoric portrays an image of innocence and victim hood. "Such reactions highlight the stark

contrast between the documented realities on the ground and the narratives promoted by those defending the occupation's actions.

"For decades, activists and nations have called upon the international community to act against an entity accused of feeding on brutality and systemic racism.

"The death toll in Gaza, now exceeding 44,000 innocent lives, underscores the urgency for justice and accountability. The ICC's decision offers a glimmer of hope amidst the darkness, a sign that the global conscience may finally be awakening.

"Notably, in the wake of these arrest warrants, 11 ambassadors in Kuwait publicly voiced their support for the ICC's move, reflecting a shared sense of responsibility.

"Their statements align with growing calls to build global momentum against a regime accused of relentless aggression and disregard for human rights.

"This moment signifies more than legal accountability; it is a step toward galvanizing public opinion worldwide.

"The ICC's action reignites hope for justice among those who have suffered unimaginable atrocities and reminds the world that silence or complicity in the face of such crimes is inexcusable.

Thank you to the International Criminal Court for instilling hope and pushing humanity closer to the principles of justice and accountability, ensuring history does not forget the victims of these crimes

Also:

"In some cases, due to circumstances greater or smaller than you, you are forced, willingly or unwillingly, to produce a statue that does not resemble your true inner self one hundred percent," columnist and former Deputy Director-General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Iqbal Al-Ahmad wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"The circumstances of your upbringing, education and environment often shape you into a version of yourself that feels foreign -- a statue with imposed specifications, few of which align with your true essence

"You may hold onto ideas, beliefs and interests not because they define you, but as tools to connect with others, to avoid conflict, or to sidestep blame and rejection . Yet, this compromise comes at a cost: an internal conflict that disrupts your peace and keeps you awake at night.

"The fear of disagreement or rejection forces you to mask your true thoughts, making it harder to voice your

"This statue -- the false self -- becomes a burden, its discordant voice grating against your inner truth. You long to break free, to silence it, so your authentic voice can emerge.

"Life's journey is filled with challenges and collisions, sometimes with people close to you or with ideas you've held dear. These confrontations may shake your convictions, leaving you questioning not just your beliefs but the essence of who you are.

"As life unfolds, the inevitability of change becomes clear. Relationships, ideas, beliefs and interests shift, often requiring you to let go of what no longer serves your true self.

"The key lies in persevering -- learning from life's lessons while staying true to your core values. Strive to find a balance where you honor your authenticity without losing the people and principles that resonate with your deepest convictions. Let your journey shape you into a true reflection of yourself, as much as life allows.

"Sheikh Ibn Uthaymeen, may God have mercy on him, defined trust in God as 'sincere reliance on God Almighty in bringing benefits and warding off harm, while taking the causes that God has commanded.' This definition underscores a balance between faith and action, rejecting the idea that reliance on God alone, without effort, is sufficient,' Dr. Turki Al-Azmi wrote for Al-Jarida daily.

"Laziness, which abandons diligence and responsibility, is condemned in Islam. Stories in the Qur'an reinforce the principle of taking action alongside

"For example, Mariam, the daughter of Imran, was commanded to shake the trunk of the palm tree to receive fresh dates and Prophet Abraham, peace be upon him, declared his trust in God when thrown into the fire, saying, 'Allah is sufficient for me and He is the best Disposer of affairs.' These stories emphasize the rule: 'The reward is of the same kind as the deed.

"This concept extends beyond individual behavior to the management of societal institutions. As God commanded consultation in decision-making --'And consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon God' -- taking precautions and acting justly are critical in leadership and re-

"The application of law without bias is a cornerstone of justice, as exemplified in the story of the Makhzumi woman who stole. When the Quraysh sought to intercede, the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, firmly rejected favoritism, saying: 'The reason why those who came before you were destroyed was that if a noble person among them stole, they would leave him alone, but if a weak person among them stole, they would carry out the punishment. By God, if Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad, stole, I would cut off her hand!'

"For genuine reform, trust in God must be paired with decisive action. Corruption must be eradicated and leadership should be entrusted to individuals of integrity, experience and vision. Criticism and advice, even if public, are essential to highlight the concerns of conscientious citizens striving for reform.

"Laziness, complacency and neglect destroy nations. However, reliance on God, combined with active efforts and accountability, fosters patriotism, stability and trust in governance.

"The rule of law must apply equally to all, ensuring accountability for the corrupt and negligent. Clear visions, efficient project execution and government programs aligned with public aspirations are vital to rebuilding trust and improving societal institutions.

"As the principle reminds us, 'Stop them, they are responsible...' We look forward to a future where leadership prioritizes justice, efficiency and transparency, leading to a flourishing society built on trust and effort.'

"In recent years, 12 players representing the entire national football team of a Gulf country, were granted passports by that country, despite all of them being expatriates. This effectively meant they were naturalized," columnist Talal Al-Saeed wrote for Al-Sevassah daily.

"However, when the national team failed to meet the expectations of sports fans, and returned to their homeland, their passports were immediately revoked without exception before they even left the airport.

"There was a strong decision behind this move, one that was respected by all. No activist or social media influencer dared to question why their passports were withdrawn, nor did anyone criticize the decision. Similarly, no one questioned the original decision to grant them citizenship, as it was viewed as a sovereign matter. They were naturalized for a specific purpose, which they ultimately failed to fulfill, and the matter ended there.

"This was the leadership's decision, and it stands as such. There is no room for objection or even approval. Sovermeans eignty sovereignty, and

the authority to

make such deci-

sions rests with

this in light of

some social me-

dia users calling

for the naturali-

"We mention

those in charge!



Al-Saeed

zation of a player who scored a goal or helped secure a draw. This behavior resembles that of the Abbasid Caliph Haroun al-Rashid, who, upon liking a poem or a poet, would say, "Give him a thousand dirhams!" Today, these individuals are

saying, "Give him citizenship!" "The problem arises when someone without the authority to make such decisions demands the granting of citizenship, regardless of whether the individual truly deserves it. While this is another issue in itself, our criticism lies in the unjustified generosity of some, as they seek to be generous at the state's

expense, not their own.
"Whoever wishes to offer honor or rewards should do so from their own pocket, and give to those who truly deserve it, or even to those who don't, if they so choose. It is their right. Those who manage their own money are not unjust. But when it comes to granting state citizenship, we must pause and reflect. Who has the right to bestow citizenship on anyone? Before we assume this right for ourselves and rush to distribute such grants, let us consider the actions of those who were naturalized before.

"As soon as citizenship entered their hands, some of them changed, neglected their duties, and eventually faded into the background, only to retire or claim injury in the same way as someone who prays for something but abandons their prayers and fast once their request is

"If anyone wants to be generous, let them give from their own resources, and let us refrain from interfering in matters

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



Photo by Rizk Tawfiq

Warrant Officer Abdullah Al-Farsi's colleagues express condolences on the officer's demise at the burial site.

Amir condoles with martyr Al-Farsi's kin

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable of condolences to the family of firefighter Warrant Officer Abdullah Al-Farsi, who passed away while on duty.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir expressed sincere condolences to the martyr's family and prayed to Almighty Allah to bestow the deceased with mercy.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent on Sunday a cable of condolences to the family of firefighter Warrant Officer Abdullah Al-Farsi. In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince expressed sincere condolences to the victims' family and prayed to Almighty Allah to bestow the deceased with mercy.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah then sent a cable of condolences to the family of firefighter Warrant Officer Abdullah Al-Farsi.

Plan to send prisoners home for rest of term

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The General Administration of Correctional Institutions has announced plans to transfer 32 Sri Lankan prisoners currently serving sentences in Kuwait's Central Prison. These individuals, convicted of various crimes, will be sent to Sri Lanka to complete the remainder of their sentences under the prisoner exchange agreement between Kuwait and Sri Lanka, reports Al-Jarida daily
According to informed security sources speak-

ing to Al Jarida, the operation will be carried out in coordination with the Kuwaiti Air Force. The prisoners will be transported on a military aircraft, escorted by a security team, and handed over to Sri Lankan authorities upon arrival.

This decision is part of ongoing efforts to reduce overcrowding in the Central Prison and ensure the smooth administration of justice.

Judges get endorsement: Seventy advisors and judges have been working in courts of various levels since their arrival in Kuwait, after the decree appointing them was issued, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to the government gazette 'Kuwait Alyawm, which is published today, an Amiri Decree No. 199 of 2024 was issued with judicial appointments for 70 advisors and judges, 31 public prosecutors in the Court of Cassation and two public prosecutors in the Public Prosecution, with their appointments taking effect from the date of their arrival in the State of Kuwait.

The decree stipulates the appointment of 25 advisors to the Court of Cassation, 25 advisors to the Court of Appeal and 20 judges to the **Court of First Instance.**

Working 1 year without pay, road repair part of penalty

199 dead in traffic accidents; KD 50 for baby in front seat

By Munaif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Director of the Coordination and Follow-up Department and Head of the Unified Gulf Traffic Week Activities for the year 2025 Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Subhan confirmed that the penalties stipulated in the new traffic law include working eight hours a day for a period of up to one year without pay -- repairing the damaged parts of the streets, sidewalks or signs, and a penalty determined by the judge after referring the violation to the court, which is a discretionary authority



for the court. In an interview with Radio 360, Al-Subhan clarified that the new traffic law stipulates impounding a violator's vehicle for a maximum of two months and that the owner of the vehicle may request home impoundment after paying the specified fees. If the vehicle is impounded, a device is installed to prevent its movement; such that if the owner attempts to remove the device, he will be held

legally responsible, he added.

On traffic accidents that happen on public roads without causing damage to the vehicle or injuries or fatalities, the involved parties can take pictures of the vehicles and the scene, and go to the police station rather than causing traffic disruption, which could result in a traffic violation.

Al-Subhan said the new law stipulates a fine of KD75 for making disturbing noises in the event of reconciliation. If the violation is repeated, it will be referred to the court and the fine ranges from KD150 to KD300, along with imprisonment for up to three months. The fine for violating the red light is KD150.

If the violation is referred to the court, the fine ranges from KD600 and KD1,000; in addition to the jail sentence. If a child below 10 years old sits on the front seat, the fine is KD50, he

He also pointed out that the new law stipulates impounding the vehicle after a final judicial ruling is issued, such that it becomes the property of the Ministry of Interior, which can then seize the vehicle.

Meanwhile, Al-Subhan revealed that the number of deaths caused by traffic accidents in the first nine months of the current year reached 199.He said the second cause of death in Kuwait is traffic accidents, according to statistics from the Ministry of Health, indicating that 92 percent of traffic accidents are due to inattention while driving



KFF and EQUATE officials at the event.

KFF and EQUATE conduct 'Safe Home' drive in GUST

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) held its ongoing "Safe Home" campaign at the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) in West Mishref on Sunday morning, in collaboration with EQUATE Petrochemical Company.

According to a press release issued by KFF's Public Relations and Media Department, the "Safe Home" campaign aims to raise awareness about the dangers and causes of fires and accidents in homes and residential areas, and ways

to prevent them. The campaign includes an awareness exhibition highlighting areas inside homes where accidents and fires are most likely to occur, with the goal of reducing these incidents. It also provides information on prevention strategies and addresses public inquiries. In addition, the campaign features awareness lectures for both faculty and students.

Court rules on privacy in social media groups; defendants out

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: In a landmark case that reaffirmed the principle of 'publicity' as a cornerstone of crimes related to national unity and the Press and Publications Law, the Court of Cassation ruled on the legal boundaries of private conversations within social media groups.

At the center of the case were four defendants accused of inciting hatred, mocking a religious sect and offending the dignity of others through statements made in a private Instagram group. The Public Prosecution alleged that the

first defendant incited hatred and contempt for a segment of society and spread sectarian strife by publishing statements on Ins-These statements mocked religious be-

liefs, challenged sacred teachings and insulted revered figures.

The other three defendants were complicit by participating in and endorsing these actions within the group.

The prosecution argued that the defendants' actions constituted crimes under laws governing information technology and na-

The defense highlighted the private nature of the group at the heart of the contro-

The group, created on Instagram, was limited to a specific set of members.

Only those members could access or view the conversations. No outsider had the ability to join or observe the group, ensuring a sense of confidentiality among participants.

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This privacy, the defense argued, negated the 'publicity' element required to classify the statements as a crime under the law. The court meticulously dissected the

case, emphasizing the legal principle that a crime of this nature requires two key ele-Public Distribution -- The written or pub-

lished content must reach people indiscriminately, beyond a specific group.

Intent to Broadcast -- The accused must intend for the content to be widely dissemi-

The court further elaborated that the law does not mandate a specific number of re-

cipients to establish 'publicity.' However, the content must be accessible to the public or distributed in a way that it inevitably reaches a wider audience

In this case, the group's private nature ensured that the content was shared only among a limited circle of individuals, negating its public dissemination. The accused lacked any intention to

broadcast the statements beyond the group. In light of these findings, the court upheld the acquittal of the four defendants. It determined that the conversations, confined to a private group, did not meet the legal threshold for 'publicity,' a fundamental component of the alleged crimes.

The court clarified that while the law seeks to uphold national unity and prevent hate speech, it also recognizes the right to privacy in private communications. The decision highlighted that statements

within a closed, private group are permissible among its members unless shared with the broader public.

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Dr. Al-Jassar emphasizes importance of culture in national identity

Int'l Book Fair commemorates Kuwait Capital of Arab Culture 2025

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): As part of the 47th session of Kuwait International Book Fair, a cultural discussion was held on Saturday, with a number of men of letters, artists and intellectuals taking part.

The discussion, held at Cultural Cafe in Hall No. 6 in Mishref, focused on events celebrating Kuwait selection as Capital of Arab Culture

Secretary-General of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature (NCCAL) Dr. Mohammad Al-Jassar said that Kuwait's recognition as the Capital of Arab Culture and Media in 2025 is vital for enhancing its role as a cultural hub.

He emphasized the importance of culture in national identity and

its role in fostering global interactions. The year-long celebration will showcase Kuwaiti literature, art, and intellect through various exhibitions, performances, and cultural exchange programs.

Director-General of ALECSO Dr. Mohammad Ould Amar praised the initiative, highlighting ÂLECSO's unwavering commitment to promoting cultural collaboration across the

He noted that while a city is chosen as the capital of culture each year, Jerusalem remains the permanent capital. He affirmed ALEC-SO's dedication to developing vibrant cultural spaces that support social integration and enrich local communities.

MoE reports 94 pct completion of school administration dev project

Detailed report on project submitted to minister

innova-

address

meet

NOVEMBER

Room Promotion

evolv-

By Abdulrahman Al-Shimmari Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Ministry of Education's Development Department has reported a 94 percent completion rate for the ongoing project to enhance the organizational structure of school administrations.

Launched in 2016, the initiative aims to strengthen the administration of schools in Kuwait and align with the broader objectives of educational sustainability and the achievement of Kuwait Vision 2035.

A detailed report on the project was submitted to Minister of Education, Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, outlining the key objectives and steps taken to modernize school management systems.

The main objectives of the project include streamlining the school operations and raising efficiency to align with contemporary educational trends; enhancing and clearly defining the roles and responsibilities within school administrations to strengthen leadership and goal

achievement and introductive solutions to organizational issues and the ing needs of the education

Al-Tabtabaei

This is in addition to providing continuous training programs to develop leadership and administrative skills among school

Several key steps have been implemented as part of the project's development defining the core tasks for various leadership positions, including school principals and assistant principals. The cards aim to ensure clarity and smooth workflow within the school system.

Meanwhile, the restructuring process has involved creating clear mechanisms for distributing responsibilities based on the new organizational structure and detailed plans have developed for secure transportation of exam papers and answers in coordination with relevant authorities

Moreover, digital monitoring systems have been introduced to track and analyze the performance of school administrations.

The project's specialization cards are central to defining the roles of key administrative positions. For example, the cards for school principals and assistant principals clearly outline their responsibilities, including implementing MoE policies and developing plans for school work; supervising school operations and coordinating relationships with relevant parties.

This is in addition to monitoring student activities and collaborating with stakeholders; ensuring that educational goals and administrative standards are met.

The development project also emphasizes educational sustainability, striving to enhance the effectiveness of school leadership and improve the skills of school administrators.

The goal is to link administrative policies with educational strategies to support the broader objectives of Kuwait Vision 2035, which aims to elevate educational standards in the

The project defines specific roles for various administrative positions within the schools who are responsible for implementing educational policies, supervising the work of school staff, ensuring student welfare and coordinating activities to achieve educational goals.

A significant focus of the project is to provide ongoing professional development for school staff.

The training programs aim to improve administrative and educational competencies, helping staff stay updated with modern practices.

Moreover, regular evaluations and reporting on the progress of school operations help maintain high standards across the board.

In conclusion, the Organizational Structure Development Project represents a major step forward for Kuwait's educational system.

It is designed to improve administrative efficiency, support school leadership and ultimately contribute to achieving the goals of Kuwait Vision 2035 by creating a more sustainable and effective education sector.



A photo from the discussion.

'Warba' continues to empower Kuwaiti youth with knowledge & skills in Rowad 5.0 program

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Held in its fifth year in collaboration with DIFC Innovation Hub, Warba Bank's flagship Rowad 5.0 program continues to empower Kuwaiti youth by providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to drive innovation and achieve success in their professional lives, solidifying the Bank's commitment to fos-

tering the next generation of leaders and innovators. Speaking on the

program's success, Anwar Bader Al-Ghaith, Deputy CEO of Support Services and Treasury at Warba Bank, said: "The Rowad 5.0 Program has cemented its place as a milestone

Al-Ghaith

initiative in Kuwait, consistently graduating talented students who stand out as global innovators. These students are now equipped with essential skills and knowledge, enabling them to address today's challenges and contribute to Kuwait's economy by creating innovative products and solutions that bridge gaps in

Al-Ghaith added: "Warba Bank is committed to youth development. We firmly believe that they are the foundation of progress and the future of our nation. Through Rowad we provide a comprehensive educational platform in collaboration with esteemed partners like DIFC Innovation Hub. The program is designed to address global market trends. with a special focus on artificial intelligence and advanced technologies. Al-Ghaith emphasized that the Rowad 5.0

Program focuses on enhancing creativity and nurturing the innovative potential of young talents through educational programs and workshops that invest in the human capital paving the way for a generation capable of driving transformation and excellence in Ku-

The program, launched on October 13, 2024, spans six weeks, during which participants work with experts from Warba Bank and DIFC Innovation Hub to develop smart solutions tailored to market needs.

Rowad 5.0: Fostering Innovation in Edu-

Targeting Kuwaiti students enrolled in UK universities, the Rowad Program offers a dynamic learning environment that blends practical experience with academic knowledge. Participants engage in activities designed to contribute to the development of banking solutions in a cooperative environment that provides theoretical and real expe-

Completing Phase 1 and Advancing Towards Greater Success

With the first four weeks of phase one coming to an end, Rowad 5.0 is transitioning into its advanced stages, where participants will concentrate on developing solutions tailored to the banking needs. Warba Bank remains committed to fostering their growth and equipping them with the skills required to meet future challenges effectively.

Participants in Rowad 5.0

This year, 18 Kuwaiti students are participating in the pogram in the United Kingdom. The students include: Firas Al-Sallal, Abdulwahab Al-Rashed, Zamel Al-Zamel, Yousef Al-Essa, Bader Al-Enezi, Ahmed Juma, Yousef Al-Aqeel, Abdullah Al-Munaikh, Abdulmohsen Al-Zanki, Khalil Al-Najem, Maryam Ahmad, Abdul Aziz Al-Zanki, Suleiman Al-Mukhaizeem, Fahad Al-Abdulrazzaq, Abdullah Al-Wazzan, Bader Al-Saeed, Khaled Al-Mazidi, and Mohammed Al-Daihani.

Sharing his experience, participant Bader Al-Enezi, a cybersecurity student at the University of Manchester, said: "The Rowad Program has opened doors for me to explore the interconnectedness of technology and innovation, especially in the field of artificial intelligence. Collaborating with team members from diverse disciplines has been an enriching experience that will undoubtedly benefit my career. I encourage students to seize this opportunity to enhance their teamwork skills, explore advanced technologies, and embrace innovation.'

Fellow participant Mohammed Al-Daihani, a business administration student at the University of Manchester, highlighted: "Rowad goes beyond acquiring knowledge; it fosters ethical and responsible innovation. The program has enhanced my communication skills and prepared me for professional growth. For anyone looking to elevate their career prospects and gain hands-on experience, Rowad offers unparalleled opportunities with robust support from Warba Bank and DIFC Innovation Hub."

Warba Bank has recently been recognized with prestigious recognitions, including The Most Sustainable Bank and Best Islamic Digital Services Provider in Kuwait 2024 by International Business Magazine. The Bank was also honored by "Network International" for its leadership in digital innovation and by Mastercard for achieving the highest growth in activating digital credit cards in Kuwait.

Through programs like Rowad, Warba Bank continues to exemplify its dedication to supporting innovation, education, and the next generation of leaders, reaffirming its role as a pioneer in Islamic digital banking.



Kuwait's vision and sustainability

Dr. Jaber Eid Al-Wandah

International Consultant, Sustainable Development Deputy General Manager - Al-Najat Charity

The issue of sustainability in Kuwait's New Vision 2035 has a clear

and fundamental presence. What is the relationbetween ship this vision and sustainability? How do we take it into account and showcase it through reports? And what about Kuwait's disclosures regarding sustainable de-

velopment?



Dr. Al-Wandah

Kuwait's vision has emphasized achieving sustainability, focusing on governance, and highlighted the role of charitable institutions in raising the status of Kuwait. It also stressed the need for all institutions to commit to this vision and work within its framework. ensuring that their goals align with the state's developmental goals and strive to achieve them.

If the goals of the 'New Kuwait 2035' vision are citizen participation, respect for the law, effective governance and transparency, a prosperous and diverse economy, a strong state, and distinguished international standing, then charitable institutions - for which we are writing these articles to explain how they can adopt sustainability - are required to engage the relevant stakeholders, foremost among them being the citizens. The core work of these institutions is based on involv-

ing citizens, serving them, and earning

their trust. These institutions must also

fully comply with the law, uphold its banner, and adhere to governance. They

need to understand the impact of their charitable and humanitarian work on the economy, both domestically and internationally, given the increasing number of beneficiaries from their services and projects. Furthermore, they must recognize that their work and efforts are key reasons for elevating Kuwait's status and name on both regional and global levels.

When charitable institutions adopt and implement these principles, they contribute to the seven pillars of the New Kuwait Vision and its development plan, particularly the first pillar: a distinguished international standing by improving Kuwait's regional and global presence in charitable work. Additionally, the sixth pillar is a sustainable and diverse economy by developing a prosperous and diversified economy to reduce the state's heavy reliance on oil export revenues. The seventh pillar, a sustainable living environment, ensures the provision of housing through environmentally sound resources and plans. It is essential that charitable institutions consider these pillars, as they must work towards elevating Kuwait's status, ensuring that their projects and operations contribute to a sustainable economy, and operate with the goal of creating a sustainable and environmentally conscious living environment.

If these institutions adhere to these principles, it will then be easier for the relevant state bodies to reflect this in their disclosures and voluntary reports on the progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and reaffirm the commitment of state institutions to working in line with these global objectives. So, has the state issued disclosures on this matter? The answer is yes: Kuwait issued two reports, the first voluntary report on sustainable development in 2019, and the second was published this year

To be continued



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Projects meant to aid orphans

Kuwait opens charitable educational, residential complexes in Jordan

Kuwait's Ambassador to Jordan Al-Marri inaugurated Saturday Kuwaiti-funded charitable educational and residential complexes in the Jordanian capital Amman.

The educational complex comprises of two three-story buildings - a kindergarten and a preliminary school, built on an area of 5,000 square meters in Amman, the Kuwaiti diplomat told KUNA following the inauguration ceremony.

Ambassador Al-Marri added that the residential complex has three four-story buildings, which would be used to pay for the needs of orphans nationwide

These charitable projects are meant to aid orphans: the most vulnerable segment in the society, Ambassador Al-Marri said, noting they were funded by Kuwaiti philanthropists.



KUNA photo

Kuwaiti Ambassador to Jordan Hamad Al-Marri inaugurates the Educational Complex in Jordan.

Hassan III ...

Continued from Page 1

fueled by the strength of popular steadfastness led by the king, which resisted colonial rule.

Moroccans often recall numerous stories of the bond between the people and the king during that difficult period, and draw inspiration from them in their interactions with the Makhzen. The Makhzen is viewed as both a stronghold of openness to all segments of society and a compass that guides the nation toward progress and renaissance, while also ensuring the state's governance from the field.

I recall that whenever I would say, "May you live long," to the late King Hassan II, he would reply, "Don't say may you live long, but say may Allah bless your life."

This response is a clear indication that the blessing of Allah in the lives of leaders is reflected in the work they do for their people and their nation. That is why the guards and the people shout in unison "May Allah bless the life of our master" when greeting their king.

This royal lineage, descending from Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), believes that the success and progress of the people are at the core of its fundamental mission. And how much more profound is it when the king possesses a deep culture, is open to diverse societies, and has a vision for development?

I am talking here about the late King Hassan II, a leader who overcame countless challenges and skillfully managed relations.

This historic leader passed the mantle of rule to his son, King Mohammed VI, who was well-prepared by his father's guidance. King Mohammed VI successfully continued along the firm path laid by King Hassan II, and dealt with the region's crises with wisdom

and courage. That is why Morocco today reaps the fruits of the seeds planted by its late kings, as confirmed by the annual speeches on the Throne Day. King Mohammed VI has turned this occasion into one for accountability and

This cultured king, who is wellversed in diverse cultures, has a great ability to handle matters from a modern perspective.

Morocco's strategic location necessitates flexibility in its policies and a dynamic approach for dealing with internal issues.

During the recent visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Morocco, Crown Prince Hassan III's reception highlighted a new model of leadership in Morocco. The young prince's performance during discussions with the president of the world's most populous country showcased his exceptional capabilities.

Crown Prince Hassan III possesses a strong presence and a deep cultural understanding, embodying many of the qualities of his late grandfather, King Ĥassan II.

This, if it indicates anything, reflects the continuous training of Morocco's leaders from an early age within the royal palace for preparing them to handle matters with wisdom, no matter the circumstances

It highlights the remarkable capabilities of the Moroccan kings and the deeply rooted royal traditions that continued for 358 years. This also reflects Morocco's potential for growth and progress, as it is Africa's gol way and a vital link between the Arab world and Europe.

Kuwait Amir

Continued from Page 1

President Abdulfattah El-Sisi on bolstering relations between the two nations across all sectors, as well as regional and international developments.

Attending the meeting were Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, Chief of Crown Prince office retired Lieutenant General Jamal Al-Theyab, Crown Prince's Diwan Mazen Al-Essa, Assistant Foreign Minister Ambassador Ahmad Al-Baker and Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Osama

Turkish company

Continued from Page 1

This railway initiative is a significant aspect of Kuwait's 2035 national development plan, which aims to position the country as a global commercial and economic hub. The completion of Kuwait's segment of the GCC railway is projected for late

October sees

Continued from Page 1

Regarding the accumulated financing balance, local banks' oil and gas financing increased by 9 million dinars in October, reaching 2.385 billion dinars compared to 2.376 billion dinars in September. On an annual basis, financing declined by 73 million dinars. or 2.9 percent, from 2.458 billion dinars in October 2023.

The rise in oil project financing marks a recovery from the low levels witnessed in 2021 due to postponed projects resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, falling demand and reduced oil prices. July 2021 saw the lowest level of financing in history, amounting to just 100,000 dinars.

Additionally, the US Energy Information Administration reported a rise in crude and gasoline inventories, while distillate inventories fell during the week ending November 15.

The crude inventories increased by 545,000 barrels to 430.3 million barrels, surpassing analysts' expectations of a 138,000-barrel increase.

However, crude inventories at the Cushing, Oklahoma, delivery center fell by 140,000 barrels. During the

CSC nominates 9,371 citizens for govt jobs

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Civil Service Commission has announced that, following the CSC meeting No. (2024/13) held on Nov 7, a total of 9,371 male and female citizens, who had registered in the central employment system, on November 13 were nominated for government institutions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Bureau has instructed all government agencies covered by the central employment system that they are not allowed to reject a candidate for employment unless they fail to meet the technical standards set by the respective institution, if applicable.

'Water Supply Drain' project

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Kuwait Water Supply Charity (Suqya Charity) announced the successful completion of its "Water Supply Drain" project, with the cooperation of the General Awqaf Secretariat. Over 850,000 water bottles were distributed across more than 15 locations, including hospitals, health centers, and government agencies, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a press release, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Suqya Charity Dr. Al-Othman stated that this project is one of the charity's most important initiatives aimed at benefiting the largest possible number of people in Kuwait.

MoE discusses coordination with ministries over secondary exams

Meeting tackles 'security' to transport exam papers

By Abdulrahman Al-Shimmari Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Confirming the report published by Al-Seyassah on November 10, regarding coordination between the Ministry of Education and the ministries of Interior and Information to prepare for the General Secondary **Examinations, Acting Un**dersecretary of the Ministry of Education, Mansour Al-Daihani, held a meeting with officials from the ministries of Interior, Awgaf and Information to focus on preparations for the first

same week, refinery consumption of

crude oil decreased by 281,000 barrels

per day and refinery operating rates

Continued from Page 1

These intertwined developments

highlight Kuwait's effort to strike a

balance between economic necessities,

labor market optimization and social

insurance fees offers financial relief

to older expatriates, while the revised

SME workforce rules seek to address

the operational challenges of small

in implementing these changes while maintaining fairness and efficiency

across sectors.

ing labor market.

For policymakers, the challenge lies

As discussions continue, many ex-

patriates and businesses alike await

clear directives, hoping for reforms

that prioritize inclusivity, economic

growth and stability in a rapidly evolv-

The potential cancellation of health

dropped by 1.2 percent.

SME worker

semester exams of the academic year 2024/2025.

The meeting participants reviewed a comprehensive coordination plan between the Ministry of Education and the aforementioned ministries, which included addressing negative phenomena and adhering to the exam violations list.

The plan also covered field measures that the Ministry of Interior will take to enforce laws against entities and individuals managing suspicious websites and social media accounts that undermine the integrity of education. Legal measures were also discussed to ensure the smooth running of the exams and to protect the educational pro-

Additionally, the meeting addressed the practical steps that the Ministry of Education, in coordination with the Ministry of Interior, will take to ensure the security of transporting exam papers from secret printing presses and the safe transfer of answer sheets to and from exam committees.

Security measures to enhance protection at committee headquarters and to manage traffic and vehicle movement around schools were also covered, ensuring that exams are conducted smoothly and secure-

The meeting was attended by Maryam Al-Anzi, the First Deputy for Literary and Religious Education Examinations; Mansour Al-Dhafiri, the First Deputy for Scientific Examinations; Mahmoud Abdul-Ridha, the Administrative Supervisor of Literary Control; Faraj Nafaa, the Administrative Supervisor Scientific Control; and Arwa Al-Ayyar, the Director of the Public Relations and Educational Media Department.

Talks to focus on healthcare disparities

Kuwait stresses healthcare rights key element of national dev plans

JEDDAH, Nov 24, (KUNA): Kuwait has highlighted healthcare rights as the crux of national development plans, while the matter is given urgent priority on both regional and international levels, said a senior diplomat on Sunday.

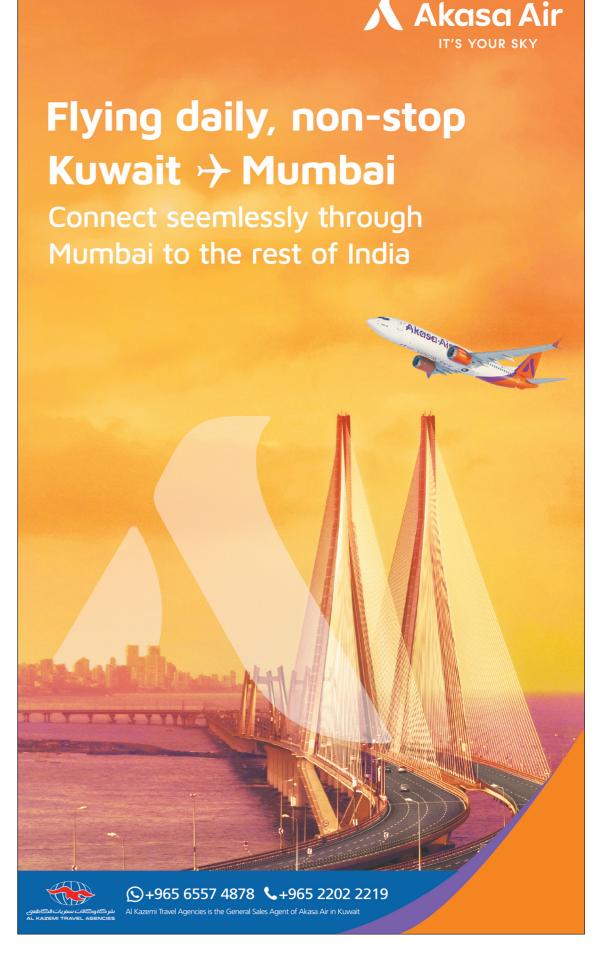
The copious amounts of healthcare aid Kuwait has provided numerous countries with is a testament to how integral the issue is to its 2035 development vision, Kuwait Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Sheikha Jawaher Al-Sabah told KUNA on the sidelines of talks involving the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's (OIC) independent human rights committee.

Kuwait has "contributed im-

mensely" towards the matter on events of global magnitude, the diplomat underlined, citing the designation of September 7 as a day devoted to awareness about the Duchenne muscular dystrophy disease as a "Kuwaiti brainchild."

On the purpose of the gathering, Sheikha Jawaher said it aims to further reinforce Kuwait's position as an active member of the OIC, while simultaneously strengthening the notion that access to healthcare is an inalienable right for all, she added.

The four-day talks will look into healthcare disparities around the region and beyond, in addition to bolstering cooperation on the matter within the Jeddah-based bloc.





This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48) of no. 27/2015

issuing the executive by laws of law no. 39/2014 on Consumer Protection



US President Joe Biden speaks to striking United Auto Workers on the picket line outside the Willow Run Redistribution Center, UAW Local 174 on Sept 26, 2023, in Van Buren Township, Mich. (AP)

A shift seen in Trump's labor pick

Republican Party increasingly winning union voters

WASHINGTON, Nov 24, (AP): Working-class voters helped Republicans make steady election gains this year and expanded a coalition that increasingly includes rank-and-file union members, a political shift spotlighting one of President-elect Donald Trump's latest Cabinet picks: a GOP congresswoman, who has drawn labor support, to be his labor secretary.

Oregon Rep. Lori Chavez-DeRemer narrowly lost her bid for a second term this month, despite strong backing from union members, a key part of the Democratic base but gravitating in the Trump era toward a Republican Party traditionally allied with business interests.

"Lori's strong support from both the Business and Labor communities will ensure that the Labor Department can unite Americans of all backgrounds behind our Agenda for unprecedented National Success - Making America Richer, Wealthier, Stronger and more Prosperous than ever before!" Trump said in a statement announcing his choice Friday night.

For decades, labor unions have sided with Democrats and been greeted largely with hostility by Republicans. But with Trump's populist appeal, his working-class base saw a decent share of union rank-and-file voting for Republicans this year, even as major unions, including the AFL-CIO and the United Auto Workers, endorsed Democrat Kamala Harris in the White House race.

Trump sat down with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters union leadership and members this year, and when he emerged from that meeting, he boasted that a significant chunk of union voters were backing him. Of a possible Teamsters endorsement, he said, "Stranger things have happened."

possible Teamsters endorsement, he said, "Stranger things have happened."

The Teamsters ultimately declined to endorse either Trump, the former president, or Harris, the vice president, though leader Sean O'Brien had a prominent speaking slot

at the Republican National Convention.

Kara Deniz, a Teamsters spokesperson, told the Associated Press that O'Brien met with more than a dozen House Republicans this past week to lobby on behalf of Chavez-DeRemer. "Chavez-DeRemer would be an excellent choice for labor secretary and has his backing." Deniz said

for labor secretary and has his backing," Deniz said.

The work of the Labor Department affects workers' wages, health and safety, ability to unionize, and employers' rights to fire employers, among other responsibilities.

On Election Day, Trump deepened his support among voters without a college degree after running just slightly ahead of Democrat Joe Biden with noncollege voters in 2020. Trump made modest gains, earning a clear majority of this group, while only about 4 in 10 supported Harris, according to AP VoteCast, a sweeping survey of more than 120.000 voters nationwide.

Roughly 18% of voters in this year's election were from union households, with Harris winning a majority of the group. But Trump's performance among union members kept him competitive and helped him win key states such as Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin.

US president-elect's moves accelerate criticisms from Dems

After Trump's Project 2025 denials, he's tapping its authors, influencers for key roles

WASHINGTON, Nov 24, (AP): As a former and potentially future president, Donald Trump hailed what would become Project 2025 as a road map for "exactly what our movement will do" with another crack at the White House.

As the blueprint for a hard-right turn in America became a liability during the 2024 campaign, Trump pulled an about-face. He denied knowing anything about the "ridiculous and abysmal" plans written in part by his first-term aides and allies.

Now, after being elected the 47th president on Nov. 5, Trump is stocking his second administration with key players in the detailed effort he temporarily shunned. Most notably, Trump has tapped Russell Vought for an encore as director of the Office of Management and Budget; Tom Homan, his former immigration chief, as "border czar;" and immigration hardliner Stephen Miller as deputy chief of policy.

Those moves have accelerated criticisms from Democrats who warn that Trump's election hands government reins to movement conservatives who spent years envisioning how to concentrate power in the West Wing and

impose a starkly rightward shift across the U.S. government and society.

Trump and his aides maintain that he won a mandate to overhaul Washington. But they maintain the specifics are his alone.

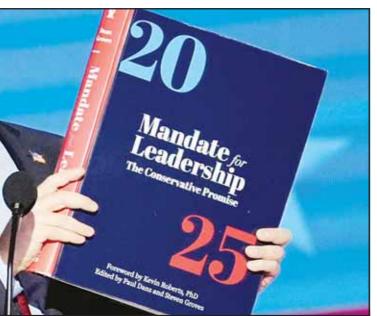
"President Trump never had anything to do with Project 2025," said Trump spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt in a statement. "All of President Trumps' Cabinet nominees and appointments are whole-heartedly committed to President Trump's agenda, not the agenda of outside groups."

Here is a look at what some of Trump's choices portend for his second presidency.

The Office of Management and Budget director, a role Vought held under Trump previously and requires Senate confirmation, prepares a president's proposed budget and is generally responsible for implementing the administration's agenda across agen-

The job is influential but Vought made clear as author of a Project 2025 chapter on presidential authority that he wants the post to wield more direct

"The Director must view his job as the best, most comprehensive ap-



A copy of Project 2025 is held during the Democratic National Convention on Aug 21, in Chicago. (AP)

proximation of the President's mind," Vought wrote. The OMB, he wrote, "is a President's air-traffic control system" and should be "involved in all aspects of the White House policy process," becoming "powerful enough to override implementing agencies' bureaucracies."

Trump did not go into such details when naming Vought but implicitly endorsed aggressive action. Vought, the president-elect said, "knows exactly how to dismantle the Deep State" - Trump's catch-all for federal bureaucracy - and would help "restore fiscal sanity."

In June, speaking on former Trump aide Steve Bannon's "War Room" podcast, Vought relished the potential tension: "We're not going to save our country without a little confrontation."

The strategy of further concentrating federal authority in the presidency permeates Project 2025's and Trump's campaign proposals. Vought's vision is especially striking when paired with Trump's proposals to dramatically expand the president's control over federal workers and government purse strings - ideas intertwined with the president-elect tapping mega-billionaire Elon Musk and venture capitalist Vivek Ramaswamy to lead a "Department of Government Efficiency."

Trump in his first term sought to remake the federal civil service by reclassifying tens of thousands of federal civil service workers - who have job protection through changes in administration - as political appointees, making them easier to fire and replace with loyalists. Currently, only about 4,000 of the federal government's roughly 2 million workers are political appointees. President Joe Biden rescinded Trump's changes. Trump can now reinstate them.

Meanwhile, Musk's and Ramaswamy's sweeping "efficiency" mandates from Trump could turn on an old, defunct constitutional theory that the president - not Congress - is the real gatekeeper of federal spending. In his "Agenda 47," Trump endorsed so-called "impoundment," which holds that when lawmakers pass appropriations bills, they simply set a spending ceiling, but not a floor. The president, the theory holds, can simply decide not to spend money on anything he deems unnecessary.

unnecessary.

Vought did not venture into impoundment in his Project 2025 chapter. But, he wrote, "The President should use every possible tool to propose and impose fiscal discipline on the federal government. Anything short of that would constitute abject failure."

Trump's choice immediately sparked backlash.

Parliamentary elections on Dec 1

Romanians cast ballots in presidential race

BUCHAREST, Romania, Nov 24, (AP): Romanians are casting ballots on Sunday in the first round of a presidential election that could pit a far-right nationalist against the incumbent leftist prime minister in the runoff.

Thirteen candidates are vying for the presidency in the European Union and NATO member country, and the vote is expected to go to a second round on Dec 8. Polls opened at 7:00 a.m. local time (0500GMT) and will close at 9.00 p.m. (1900GMT). Romanians abroad

have been able to vote since Friday.

By noon (1000GMT), nearly 3 million people - about 16% of eligible voters - had cast ballots, according to the Central Election Bureau.

The final vote could see George Simion, the leader of the far-right Alliance for the Unity of Romanians, or AUR, face off against incumbent Prime Minister Marcel Ciolacu, backed by Romania's largest party, the

Social Democratic Party or PSD.

The presidential role carries a five-



Romanian Prime Minister Marcel Ciolacu, the Social Democratic Party or PSD candidate in the country's presidential elections, casts his vote in Bucharest, Romania, on Nov 24. (AP)

year term and has significant decisionmaking powers in areas such as national security, foreign policy, and judicial

Romania will also hold parliamentary elections on Dec 1 that will determine the country's next government and prime minister.

Simion, 38, is a vocal supporter of US President-elect Donald Trump and has long been a controversial figure. He campaigned for reunification with Moldova, which this year renewed a five-year ban on him entering the country over security concerns, and he is banned for the same reason from entering neighboring Ukraine.

"I would like that in the next five to ten years, for Romanians to be really proud to be Romanians, to promote Romanian culture, Romanian products," he told reporters on Wednesday in the capital, Bucharest. "As a Romanian president, I will promote Romanian interests. In most cases, Romanian interests coincide with partner interests."

Ecaterina Nawadia, a 20-year-old architecture student, said she voted for the first time in a national election on Sunday and hopes young people turn out in high numbers.

"Since the (1989) revolution, we didn't have a really good president," she said. "I hope most of the people my age went to vote ... because the leading candidate is not the best option."



Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski, (front), speaks during a presidential election announcement in Warsaw, Poland, on Nov 23. (AP)

Polish prime minister's party picks Warsaw mayor as its candidate for president

Former US senator Harris dies at 94

CORRALES, N.M., Nov 24, (AP): Fred Harris, a former US senator from Oklahoma, presidential hopeful and populist who championed Democratic Party reforms in the turbulent 1960s, died Saturday. He was 94.

Harris' wife, Margaret Elliston, confirmed his death to The Associated



passed peacefully early this morning of natural causes. He was 94. He was a wonderful and beloved man. His memory is a blessing," Elliston said in a text message.

Harris served

"Fred

eight years in the Senate, first winning in 1964 to fill a vacancy, and made unsuccessful bid for the presidency in 1976.

It fell to Harris, as chairman of the Democratic National Committee in 1969 and 1970, to help heal the party's wounds from the tumultuous national convention in 1968 when protesters and police clashed in Chicago.



US President Donald Trump speaks during a meeting with the Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte in the Oval Office of the White House on July 18, 2019, in Washington. (AP)

NATO head, Trump meet in Florida

US President-elect Donald Trump and the head of NATO have met for talks on global security, the military alliance said Saturday.

In a brief statement, NATO said Trump and its secretary general, Mark

Rutte, met on Friday in Palm Beach, Florida.

"They discussed the range of global security issues facing the Alli-

ance," the statement said without giving details.

It appeared to be Rutte's first meeting with Trump since his Nov. 5 election. Rutte had previously congratulated Trump and said "his leadership will again be key to keeping our Alliance strong" and that he looked forward to working with him. (AP)

Europe

Croatia grenade blast kills 1: One person was killed and four others injured in a hand grenade explosion in an apartment building in the southern Croatian city of Knin on Saturday night, local po-

lice said in a statement on Sunday.

A 25-year-old young man lost his life in the explosion, while two of his friends, aged 23 and 25, and two girls, one of whom is 21 and the other a minor, suffered serious injuries and were hospitalized, the statement said.

The police investigation found that the injured 25-year-old man brought an M75 hand grenade and handed it over to another 25-year-old during a party in the apartment building. (Xinhua)

Judge granted asylum: Belarus has granted asylum to a former Polish

judge who faced espionage charges at home following his defection in May to the Kremlin-allied country.

A decree published Friday by Alexander Lukashenko, Belarus' autocratic president, described Tomasz Szmydt as being "prosecuted for political reasons" in Poland. The coun-

try is an EU and NATO member that has lent vocal support to Ukraine in its war against Russian aggression.

Szmydt's defection to Belarus in May trained the focus on Poland as a key target for Russian intelligence activity and ignited a bitter political row over the circumstances of his rapid ascent through the ranks of the

Polish justice system. (AP)

WARSAW, Poland, Nov 24, (AP): Warsaw Mayor Rafał Trzaskowski has been selected by Prime Minister Donald Tusk's centrist Civic Coalition as its candidate in next year's presidential election, beating out Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski.

Tusk announced the decision at a party gathering on Saturday, a day after more than 22,000 party members voted in a primary to select who should run to replace the incumbent, Andrzej Duda.

Tusk said Traskovski wan party

Tusk said Trzaskowski won nearly 75% of the votes, and Sikorski slightly over 25%.

Political observers in Poland say Tusk's pro-European Union party has already put itself in a strong position ahead of the presidential election by showing that it had two strong candidates, generating a buzz around them and allowing party members to choose in a democratic process.

"We are responsible people, we are responsible for the fate of our homeland today," Tusk told supporters at the party event. He said it was only the start of what is expected to be a difficult campaign.

The primary process distinguishes Tusk's party from its main rival, the national conservative Law and Justice party, known by its acronym PiS, whose candidate will be handpicked by leader Jarosław Kaczynski. The candidate is expected to be announced at a party convention in Krakow on Sunday.

"In PiS, one vote matters, while we value every vote, and that's how we differ," Trzaskowski told party members in his acceptance speech. "I'm convinced that we're coming out of this primary stronger, we're all stronger, and I have a very strong mandate and a lot of energy,

determination and courage to beat PiS."
Sikorski congratulated Trzaskowski and promised his support.

Trzaskowski has long been considered the obvious candidate for Tusk's party but was recently challenged by Sikorski, who argued that his experience in security and defense issues made him the better choice at a time of war in neighboring Ukraine and political change in the United States.

But party members overwhelmingly stuck with Trzaskowski - and were in a good mood as they gathered over coffee and cookies after cheering the outcome.

One, Małgorzata Kobus, told The Associated Press that she voted for Trzaskowski because he has been an excellent mayor, preserving green spaces and historical monuments in the capital. She also appreciates that he is highly educated and fluent in several foreign languages.

Another, Hanna Szulczewska, thinks Trzaskowski is well suited to the difficult times in a region near Ukraine. She was persuaded by polls that show Trzaskowski would have a better chance of beating out candidates from other parties.

"I am really convinced that he will make a fantastic president," she said. "And strategically we really need a strong candidate."

Trzaskowski, 52, has been mayor since 2018 and has overseen a rapidly changing city of nearly 2 million people that has absorbed large numbers of Ukrainian refugees. He ran for presi-

dent in 2020, barely losing to Duda.

A first round of the presidential election is due to be held in May, and a possible runoff two weeks later if no candidate gets an outright majority in the first round.

Russia supplied air defense missiles to North Korea in return for its troops, says S.Korea



South Korean mechanized unit personnel parade with their armored vehicles during the media day for the 76th anniversary of Armed Forces Day at Seoul air base in Seongnam, South Korea on Sept 25. (AP)

SEOUL, South Korea, Nov 24, (AP): Russia has supplied air defense missile systems to North Korea in exchange for sending its troops to support Russia's war efforts against Ukraine, a top South Korean official said Friday.

The US, South Korea and Ukraine say North Korea sent more than 10,000 troops to Russia in October, some of whom have recently begun engaging in combat on the front lines. North Korea's troop deployment threatens to escalate the war, and what Russia could give to the North in return has been a source of rampant international speculation.

The most alarming development for South Korea and the U.S. would be Russia transferring sophisticated weapons technology that can enhance North Korea's nuclearcapable missiles targeting its rivals. Many experts say, though, that it is unlikely Russia would do this in the initial stage of the North's troop deployment.

Shin Wonsik, national security adviser for South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, told an SBS TV program Friday that South Korea has found Russia provided missiles and other equipment to help it reinforce its air defense network for Pyongyang, the capital. Shin didn't say what specific missiles Russia gave to North Korea.

Lee Illwoo, an expert with the Korea Defense Network in South Korea, said that Russia has likely sent S-400 long-range surface-to-air missiles, launchers and ground-based radar systems. He said that North Korea is capable of building shorter-range surface-to-air missiles on its own.

The S-400 missile, with a range of 400 kilometers (250 miles), is considered one of Russia's most

advanced anti-aircraft weapons. But Lee questioned how significantly it can boost Pyongyang's air defense, saying Russian air defense systems have failed to effectively deal with Ukrainian drone assaults.

Many observers say North Korea has likely felt the urgent need to boost its air defense capabilities after it last month accused South Korea of flying drones to scatter propaganda leaflets over Pyongyang. North Korea threatened to take military action if leaflets were again dropped. South Korea's military has refused to confirm whether or not it was behind the alleged drone flights.

Kim Dae Young, a military expert at the Korea Research Institute for National Strategy, said it's possible that the air defense systems North Korea acquired from Russia could include counter-drone equipment.

Myanmar desperate army ramps up attacks including beheadings, torture: UN expert



Thishandoutphotoprovidedbythe Karen Human Rights Groupshows debris of aschool building destroyed by an army airstrike in Bilin township in Mon state, Myanmar on March 23. (AP)

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 24, (AP): Myanmar's desperate military junta is ramping up attacks on villages that have fallen to opposition groups, carrying out beheadings and torture, with women, children and the elderly among the victims, the UN independent human rights investigator for Myanmar said in a

new report.

Thomas Andrews, a former US congressman from Maine, said in the report to the UN General Assembly circulated Friday that the junta has responded to military defeats and the loss of territory by using sophisticated weapons against civilians and seeking to destroy towns that it cannot control.

Calling Myanmar "an invisible crisis" because the world's attention is focused elsewhere, he said, "Escalating atrocities against the people of Myanmar are being enabled by

governments that allow, or actively support, the transfer of weapons, weapons materials, and jet fuel to junta forces."

Andrews didn't name the governments. But he praised Singapore for cracking down on weapons transfers that has led to a 90% reduction by Singapore-registered companies, and said sanctions imposed by the United States on junta-controlled, state-owned banks have disrupted military supply chains.

The UN special rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar lamented, however, that their actions remain an exception.

He called on all countries to address Myanmar's "devastating human rights and humanitarian crisis" by stopping the flow of weapons to the junta, stepping up humanitarian aid to millions in need, and supporting efforts to hold perpetrators

accountable for human rights viola-

Myanmar is racked by violence that began when the army ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021 and brutally suppressed nonviolent protests. That triggered armed resistance and combat across the country, with the military increasingly using airstrikes to counter the opposition and secure terri-

The army is on the defensive against ethnic militias in much of Myanmar as well as hundreds of armed guerrilla groups collectively called the People's Defense Forces, formed to fight to restore democ-

The military has said in the past that it only attacks legitimate targets of war and has accused the resistance forces of being terrorists.

Japan holds Sado mines memorial despite S.Korean boycott amid lingering tensions



Guests offer a moment of silence during a memorial ceremony for the Sado Island Gold Mine in Sado, Niigata prefecture, Japan on Nov 24. (AP)

SADO, Japan, Nov 24, (AP): Japanese officials on Sunday paid tribute to workers at the country's Sado Island Gold Mines but offered no apology over Japan's brutal wartime use of Korean forced laborers, highlighting lingering tensions between the neighbors over the issue.

South Korea a day earlier announced that it was boycotting the memorial, saying it had been impossible to settle unspecified disagreements between both governments in time for the event. The Korean absence is a major setback in the rapidly improving ties between the two countries, which since last year have set aside their historical disputes to prioritize U.S.-led security cooperation.

The Sado mines were listed in July as a UNESCO World Heritage site af-

ter Japan moved past years of disputes with South Korea and reluctantly acknowledged the mines' dark history, promising to hold an annual memorial service for all victims, including hundreds of Koreans who were mobilized to work in the mines.

The first ceremony of what Japan has promised will be an annual event held at a facility near the mines took place with more than 20 seats for South Korean attendees empty.

"As a local resident, I must say (their absence) is very disappointing after all the preparations we made," said Sado Mayor Ryugo Watanabe. "I wish we could have held the memorial with South Korean attendees."

Families of Korean victims of mine accidents were expected to separately hold their own ceremony near the mine

on Monday

At Sunday's ceremony four Japanese representatives, including central and local government officials and the head of the organizing group, thanked all mine workers for their sacrifice and mourned for those who died. None offered any apology to Korean forced laborers for

the harsh treatment at the mines.

Akiko Ikuina, a parliamentary vice minister, representing Japan's government, praised the craftsmanship of the laborers and their contribution to the Sado mines.

She noted that "many people from the Korean Peninsula were at the mines under Japan's wartime labor policies" and that they engaged in difficult work under dangerous and severe conditions away from home and their loved ones, and some died in accidents or from illnesses.

Demonstrators march against the government of President Gustavo Petro, in Bogotá, Colombia on Nov 23. (AP Colombians take to streets to reject proposed reforms, rebuke Petro

Thousands of Colombians took to the streets on Saturday to oppose the policies of President Gustavo Petro, who accused demonstrators of trying to destabilize the

day to oppose the policies of President Gustavo Petro, who accused demonstrators of trying to destabilize the government.

Protesters in cities including Bogotá, Medellín and

Cali decried a series of proposed health, labor and pensions reforms and accused Petro's administration of corruption.

The crowd, which included retired military officials

The crowd, which included retired military officials and opposition lawmakers, waved Colombian flags, with some demonstrators holding signs that read, "No to Petro reforms," and "No to labor reforms."

"I never expected to have to take to the streets to protest, to give my voice of rejection to this corruption," said Luis Carlos Hernández as he marched through the streets of Bogotá, referring to Petro's supporters as

"guerrilla bandits."
Petro, a former leftist guerrilla who has denied the accusations, said that only some 20,000 people participated in Saturday's demonstrations as he accused them of trying to overthrow the government and mock

"In Colombia, we will stop the coup d'état," he wrote on X. (AP) $\,$

China seeks inroads

Taiwan president to visit allies in South Pacific

TAIPEI, Taiwan, Nov 24, (AP): Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te will visit the self-governing islamic's allies in the South Pacific, where rival China has been seeking diplomatic invocado.

has been seeking diplomatic inroads.

The Foreign Ministry announced that Lai would travel from Nov 30 to Dec 6 to the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu and Palau.

The trip comes against the background of Chinese loans, grants and security cooperation treaties with Pacific island nations that have aroused major concern in the US, New Zealand, Australia and others over Beijing's moves to assert military, political and economic control over the

region.

Taiwan's government has yet to confirm whether Lai will make a stop in Hawaii, although such visits are routine and unconfirmed Taiwanese media reports say he will stay for more than one day.

Under pressure from China, which claims Taiwan as its own territory and threatens to annex it by force if needed, Taiwan has just 12 formal diplomatic allies. However, it retains strong contacts with dozens of other nations, including the US, its main source of

diplomatic and military support.

China has sought to whittle away traditional alliances in the South Pa-



Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te, center, arrives to speak at a gathering of the largest delegation of foreign lawmakers to visit Taiwan in Taipei, Taiwan on July 30. (AP)

cific, signing a security agreement with the Solomon Islands shortly after it broke ties with Taiwan and winning over Nauru just weeks after Lai's election in January. Since then, China has been pouring money into infrastructure projects in its South Pacific allies, as it has around the world, in exchange for political support.

China objects strongly to such US stopovers by Taiwan's leaders, as well as visits to the island by leading American politicians, terming them as violations of US commitments not to afford diplomatic status to Taiwan after Washington switched formal recognition from Taipei to Beijing in 1979



Paramilitary soldiers stand guard with riot gears at a road barricaded with shipping containers ahead of a planned rally by supporters of imprisoned former Prime Minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, in Islamabad, Pakistan on Nov 24. (AP)

Pakistan partially stops mobile, internet services

Pakistan Sunday suspended mobile and internet services "in areas with security concerns" as supporters of imprisoned former premier Imran Khan geared up for a protest in the capital.

The government and Interior Ministry posted the announcement on social media platform X, which is banned in Pakistan. They did not specify the areas, nor did they say how long the suspension would be in place.

"Internet and mobile services will continue to operate as usual in the rest of the country," the posts said. A spokesperson for the Interior Ministry was not immediately available for comment.

Meanwhile, telecom company Nayatel sent out emails offering customers "a reliable landline service"

as a workaround in the areas suffering suspended cellphone service.

Khan has been in prison for more than a year and has over 150 criminal cases against him. But he remains popular and his political party, Pakistan Tehreek-

e-Insaf or PTI, says the cases are politically motivated. His supporters rely heavily on social media to demand his release and use messaging platforms like WhatsApp to share information, including details of

Pakistan has already sealed off the capital Islamabad with shipping containers and shut down major roads and highways connecting the city with PTI strongholds in the provinces of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (AP)

US unemployment claims at 213,000 versus 220,000 forecasted

Global business activity mixed as inflation accelerates

By National Bank of Kuwait

United States & Canada

Canada Inflation

nflation in Canada accelerated in Oc-Ltober, with the latest CPI figure showing a 0.4% gain on the month, compared to a 0.4% slowdown in September. On an annual basis, inflation increased 2.0% compared to the previous 1.6% increase, while core CPI rose to 2.2%, up from 2.1%. Gasoline prices decreased by 4.0%, compared to the previous 10.7% decrease, while prices for food purchased from stores rose 2.7%, marking the third month of price growth for groceries outpacing headline inflation. The report comes before the BoC meeting scheduled in December, where the bank is expected to cut interest rates by

The USD/CAD currency pair closed the week at 1.3980.

US Unemployment Claims

The number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits dropped to a seven-month low, indicating a potential rebound in job growth for November after last month's slowdown caused by hurricanes and strikes. Initial claims for state unemployment benefits fell by 6,000 to a seasonally adjusted 213,000 for the week ending November 16, the lowest level since April. This figure came in below the 220,000 claims that was forecasted by economists.

US PMI

The US economy gained momentum in November, driven by strong growth in the services sector. The PMI Services index rose to a 32-month high of 57.0 from 55.0, while the Composite PMI climbed to 55.3, the highest in 31 months, up from 54.1. Although PMI Manufacturing remained in contraction at 48.8, it showed slight improvement from 48.5, indicating some stabilization. Chris Williamson of S&P Global Market Intelligence highlighted growing business optimism, with confidence reaching a two-and-a-half-year high. This was attributed to expectations of lower interest rates and a more pro-business approach from the incoming administration, leading to increased output and stronger order inflows. The survey suggests accelerating economic growth in Q4 alongside easing inflationary pressures, with only a modest rise in prices across goods and services. Following the release of the PMI data, odds of a rate cut in December decreased slightly, with markets pricing in a 54% chance of a 25 bps rate cut versus holding rates

The US Dollar Index closed the week

Europe

Eurozone PMI

Eurozone business activity contracted in November, hitting a 10-month low, as indicated by the HCOB Flash Eurozone Composite PMI Output Index, which dropped to 48.1 from 50.0 in October. Both the services and manufacturing sectors declined, with services contracting for the first time in 10 months. The downturn was driven by weak demand, falling new orders, and low business confidence. The manufacturing sector continued its prolonged slump, with its PMI Output Index falling to 45.1, a two-month low. Manufacturing output has now declined for 20 consecutive months, with new orders decreasing at the fastest rate in 2024 and export demand dropping at its sharpest pace since late 2023. Manufacturing employment saw its steepest decline since August 2020. Meanwhile, the services sector, after two months of marginal growth, also contracted, with the Services PMI falling to 49.2, its lowest since January. Reduced new orders and weaker business confidence, now at a two-year low, contributed to the decline. France experienced its fastest drop in services activity this year, while Germany also showed signs of strain. However, services employment rose, partially offset-ting broader job losses. Price pressures

■ Annual CPI in Canada increased 2.0% versus 1.6% previously. ■ Unemployment claims at 213,000 versus 220,000 forecasted. ■ US composite PMI at more than two-year high of 55.3 driven by

strong expansion in the services sector.

Eurozone composite PMI back to contraction territory at 48.1 with

both manufacturing and services declining. • Inflation in the UK increased 2.3% in October versus 1.7% in September.

■ UK retail sales fell 0.7%, more than the 0.3% expected decline.
■ China maintained the 1-year loan prime rate (LPR) at 3.1% and

the 5-year LPR at 3.6%

increased in November. Input and output prices in services rose sharply due to higher wages, while manufacturing prices continued to fall. These contrasting trends pose challenges for businesses, especially amid weakening demand. The sharp inflation increase in the services sector could raise concerns for the European Central Bank, highlighting risks of stagflation. EUR declined significantly following the release of the figures, falling below 1.0400 at one

The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.0417.

United Kingdom

In October 2024, the UK's annual inflation rate rose to 2.3%, up from 1.7% in September, reaching its highest point in six months and surpassing both the Bank of England's target and market expectations of 2.2%. The primary driver was a rise in costs for housing and household services, which increased to 5.5% from 3.8%, largely due to the adjustment of the Ofgem energy price cap. Electricity and gas prices, although still negative, saw smaller declines compared to September. Other sectors with increased prices included restaurants and hotels (up to 4.3% from 4.1%) and housing and utilities (rebounding to 2.9% from -1.7%). Service prices rose slightly to 5%. In contrast, food inflation remained stable at 1.9%, and recreation and culture prices saw a decrease in their

growth rate (3% from 3.8%). Monthly, the CPI went up by 0.6%, and core inflation edged higher to 3.3% from 3.2%.

UK Retail Sales British retail sales saw a sharper-thanexpected decline in October, highlighting weakening economic momentum ahead of Prime Minister Keir Starmer's first budget. Sales volumes fell by 0.7% from September, versus economists' forecast of a 0.3% drop, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Retailers reported reduced spending as shoppers awaited the new government's tax and spending announcements on October 30. Additionally, the absence of school half-term holidays during October's data reporting period may have further dampened sales. Clothing sales were particularly affected, falling by 3.1% after a modest 0.3% rise in Sep-

tember. Despite the gloomy retail sales

data, markets are still expecting the Bank of England to hold rates steady at the upcoming December meeting.

UK PMI

The UK private sector shifted from growth to stagnation in November as output contracted for the first time in over a year, with tax increases in the new government's budget impacting hiring and investment. The preliminary S&P Global Flash Composite PMI fell to 49.9, down from 51.8 in October, marking its first drop below the 50.0 nochange threshold in 13 months. Staffing levels declined for the second consecutive month, with manufacturers cutting jobs at the fastest rate since February. The Manufacturing PMI dropped to 48.6 from 49.9, indicating an accelerated contraction in the sector, while the Services PMI slipped to 50.0 from 52.0, signaling stagnation in service sector activity. Growing pessimism about the economic outlook further weighed on business confidence. The Sterling declined following the release of the data, falling below 1.2500 at one point.

The GBP/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.2531. **Asia Pacific**

Chinese Interest Rates

China's central bank decided to

keep key benchmark lending rates unchanged, maintaining the 1-year loan prime rate (LPR) at 3.1% and the 5-year LPR at 3.6%, as it evaluates the impact of recent stimulus efforts. The 1-year LPR influences corporate and most household loans, while the 5-year LPR serves as a benchmark for mortgages. This decision follows last month's 25-basis-point reduction to both rates and comes amid weak economic momentum reflected in October's economic data. Industrial production and fixed asset investment grew slower than expected, and real estate investment showed a deeper annual decline. Retail sales, however, exceeded expectations with a 4.8% yearon-year rise, suggesting some sectors are benefiting from recent stimulus measures. Additionally, the Ministry of Finance previously announced a 10 trillion yuan (\$1.4 trillion) fiscal package to address local government debt and hinted at further economic support in the near future. The central bank, led by Governor Pan Gongsheng, reiterated its commitment to supportive monetary policy and signaled the potential

The USD/CNY currency pair closed the week at 7.2455

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar

for further rate cuts.

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30750

	Previous Week Levels			This Week's Expected Range		3-Month	
Currencies	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.0533	1.0333	1.0609	1.0417	1.0250	1.0500	1.0463
GBP	1.2610	1.2484	1.2714	1.2531	1.2400	1.2600	1.2528
JPY	154.41	153.28	155.88	154.74	154.00	155.50	152.93
CHF	0.8875	0.8799	0.8957	0.8937	0.8850	0.9100	0.8844

Kuwait continues to follow a gradual path to lower rates

GCC banks achieve record \$2.12 trillion in loans amid economic growth in Q3-2024

Bv KAMCO Invest

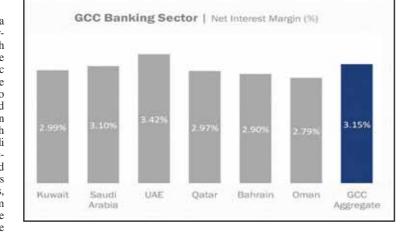
isted banks in the GCC witnessed a Listed banks in the GCC manager broad-based growth in lending during Q3-2024 with healthy q-o-q growth seen across countries in the region. The growth reflected resilient economic growth in the region that came despite relatively lower oil prices. The IMF also highlighted the trend and forecasted GCC nominal GDP growth of 3.5% in 2024 mainly driven by healthy growth in the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, particularly in the non-oil sector. In addition, the project market and the pipeline of prospective projects remain strong for the GCC countries, reflecting commitment to long term growth visions as the countries strive to steer the economy away from the reliance on crude oil. Aggregate gross loans for GCC-listed banks increased by 3.1% to reach a new record high of USD 2.12 Trillion at the end of Q3-2024 as compared to USD 2.06 Trillion at the end of the previous quarter. The y-o-y growth reached double-digits at 10.1%, once again led by healthy growth in each market. Data from central banks (excluding UAE) also showed growth in credit facilities outstanding for GCC banks, barring Bahrain that recorded a marginal decline. Data from SAMA showed the strongest growth in Saudi Arabia with outstanding credit facilities seeing the biggest q-o-q growth in nine quarters at 3.7% during Q3-2024 followed by Qatar and Bahrain with growth of 1.9% and 1.2%, respectively. Meanwhile, aggregate quarterly net income growth for banks in the region reached a three quarter low level of 0.4% to reach USD 14.9 Bn during Q3-2024. The marginal growth came after three out of the six country aggregates showed growth that was almost fully offset by decline reported by the remaining three countries. Moreover, the minimal growth came despite a healthy growth in total bank revenue that grew by 4.1% with net interest income growth of 2.8% and non-interest income growth of 6.9%. Factors that weighed on the bottom-line performance was a q-o-q increase in operating expenses as well as higher loan impairments booked during the quarter that almost fully offset topline growth during Q3-2024. Aggregate impairments reached three-quarter high level of USD 2.5 Bn during Q3-2024 led by higher impairment booked by banks in UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Bahrain partially offset by declines reported by banks in Qatar and Kuwait.

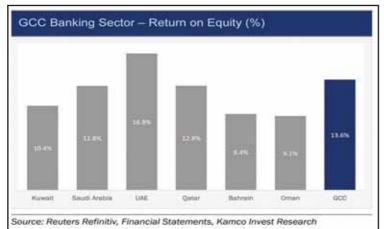
Highlights - GCC Banking Sector This report analyzes the financials reported by 56 listed banks in the GCC for the quarter ended Q3-2024. Data for individual banks have been aggregated to the country level. Some of the key observations from the most recent finan-

includes the following: Expect to see a relatively flatter rate curve going forward

cial quarter for the GCC Banking Sector

Global interest rate expectations underwent a significant change over the last few weeks after economic data releases pointed to stubborn economic trends that were also reflected in higher-than-expected inflation numbers. The resilient economic





growth came despite elevated interest rate levels, especially in the US. The discussion around the economy also changed drastically after the change of guard in the US and the subsequent change in key policies, especially related to US trade relations. Economist now expects a second round of trade war between the US and its key importing countries, especially China, with the incoming president expected to impose a higher tariff on imports. This would ultimately result in higher inflation in the coming years and this drove treasury yields higher.

The latest inflation report for the US showed a yearly CPI increase of 2.6% during October-2024 vs. 2.4% in September-2024. The number for core CPI remained steady at 3.3% annual growth during October-2024. However, unlike previous instances where energy prices led to the growth in inflation, the increase last month came mainly on the back of housing-related costs. The US Fed now expects that the decline in inflation may not be linear and could see volatile bumps on the way to reach the target rate of 2.0%. Other economic data for the US showed healthy consumer spending with higher retail sales and a resilient labor market.

In the Euro area, inflation surprised on the upside coming in at 2.0% in October-2024 from 1.7% in September-2024. The increase in the headline inflation came on the back of higher food and energy prices. One of the key factors affecting growth in Europe is the resurgence of Russia/Ukraine war. That said, the broader outlook for the region shows moderating price pressure led by easing wage pres-

sure and moderating services inflation. Moreover, the 75 bps cuts announced so far by the ECB further adds cushion to the growth story in the region and with softer economic data, including the PMI especially from larger EU economies, the expectation for a fourth cut in December-2024 remains intact with a probability for over 100% as per Bloomberg consensus estimates. On the other hand, the ECB expressed concerns about the expected trade tariffs from the US and its impact on economic growth.

Meanwhile, the most recent inflation release came from the UK which saw CPI accelerating more than the forecast to reach an annual growth of 2.3% from 1.7% in September-2024. This was the biggest increase in inflation since October-2022 and was mainly led by higher services inflation that remained stubbornly high at 5% coupled with higher energy bills. The higher-than expected inflation has ruled out any further cut to interest rates this year from the Bank of England after the two cuts already implemented until earlier this month.

In terms of expectations, data from the US is expected to disappoint with higher estimates for core PCE for October-2024 indicating that the disinflation process may not be a smooth ride in the US. Moreover, any further data that points to stubborn inflation would rule out a rate cut in December-2024. The probability of a 25-bps rate cut next month was down to 59% based on current estimates from Bloomberg.

In terms of interest rates in the region, most GCC central banks followed the rate cuts announced by the US Fed with

a 50 bps cut during September-2024 followed by a 25 bps cut during November-2024. However, Kuwait continued to follow a gradual path to lower rates, and it can do so because the KWD is not fully pegged to the USD as in the case of the rest of the GCC currencies. The Central Bank of Kuwait implemented only a single rate cut of 25 bps in September-2024.

Loan growth underscores the steady economic trends in the GCC

Data from GCC central banks once again highlighted the resilience of regional economies with continued growth in outstanding credit facilities. Credit facilities in the region continued to show growth during Q3-2024 led by growth in almost all countries in the region. Saudi Arabia witnessed a doubledigit y-o-y growth in outstanding credit facilities at 12.2% while banks in Qatar showed a y-o-y growth of 7.4%. The lending growth in the region reflected a strong project pipeline with aggregate contract awards of USD 54.2 Bn in the GCC during Q3-2024. Similarly, manufacturing activity data from Bloomberg (Markit Whole Economy Surveys) showed PMI figures stayed strong during the quarter above the growth mark of 50 for Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE at the end of Q3-2024. The manufacturing activity in Saudi Arabia remained robust with PMI at 56.3 points during September-2024, the highest in three months. This was also reflected in the quarterly GDP growth for the Kingdom that reached 2.8% yo-y in Q32024, backed by 4.2% growth in non-oil sectors, 3.1% growth in government activities and 0.3% growth in the oil sector. The q-oq growth stood at 0.8% based on preliminary data from

the General Authority for Statistics. UAE also boasted a strong PMI figure of 53.8 points in September-2024 while Dubai showed a similar growth with a PMI of 54.1 points. On the other hand, manufacturing activity remained subdued in Qatar during Q3-2024 after seeing recovery in Q2-2024. The PMI during the three months of Q3-2024 averaged at around 52 points. The Industrial Production Index for August-2024 released by the National Planning Council in Qatar showed a marginal monthly growth of 0.4% following a much stronger growth of 6% in July-2024.

At the country level, data from Saudi central bank once again showed the fastest pace of credit growth in the GCC during Q32024. According to SAMA, outstanding credit facility in Saudi Arabia increased by 3.7% q-o-q during Q3-2024 to reach SAR 2.85 Trillion, backed by a broad-based growth in almost all sectors in the economy. From among the prominent sectors, outstanding credit facilities for the Real Estate sector increased by 7.7% during the quarter while for the Electricity Water Gas & Health Services sector the q-o-q growth came in at 7.5%. Personal Facilities, Building & Construction and Manufacturing showed growth of around 2.6% to 2.8% during the quarter. Gross credit for the UAE banking sector increased by 0.1% during July-2024 to reach AED 2.1 Trillion.

To be continued

NBK unveils enhanced services and upgrades for NBK Mobile Banking App

Transfers now faster and easier

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) remains steadfast in its dedication to enhancing the quality of services offered through the NBK Mobile Banking App, ensuring customers experience seamless transactions coupled with robust security. In line with this commitment, NBK has rolled out a range of new services and refined existing features within the app, delivering a banking experience is both exceptionall

and reassuringly secure. The recent updates introduced a variety of new services and enhancements to NBK Mobile Banking App, including:

Interest in Advance with NBK Flexible Term Deposit

The latest update to NBK Mobile Banking allows customers to open an NBK Flexible Term Deposit and receive interest in advance, in addition to other interest payment options, which are monthly, quarterly or annually. Customers can now open an NBK Flexible Term Deposit with a minimum amount of KD 1,000 through the NBK Mobile Banking App, while interest is calculated based on the depos-

it term and interest payment options.

Enabling Visibility as a Benefi-

ciary & Quicker Transfers NBK Mobile Banking App users can now conduct their transfers in faster and easier manner via the application by enabling their visibility to other NBK Mobile Banking users to be added as a beneficiary using mobile. In addition, with the new update users now have easier access to transactions related to send and receiving money requests straight from main dashboard, such as Quick Pay, Bill Splitting, Load My Account, Quick Send, transfers, etc. Moreover, with the new update, customer can now enjoy the flexibility of such requesting money via WAMD

without registration. Monthly Statements

With the new NBK Mobile Banking update, customers can now have the option to view their monthly statement from Account Details page, with the ability to customize or set specific dates and easily share it using their desired method without having the need to visit any of NBK Branches.

Hide Amount

NBK added a layer of security. Users now have the flexibility to hide/ unhide the amount displayed of their products, such as accounts, credit cards, prepaid, loans, and all types of deposits whenever they want. This gives them more privacy when opening the application in public places. Customize Customer and Display

Device Names

With the NBK Mobile Banking App, customers can now personalize and edit the display of their names. They have the flexibility to retain their current name, shorten it, or modify it to their preferred style, ensuring the display aligns with their individual preferences and desires.

Customers are able to display the names of their devices in the app through the device management op-

No Minimum Balance for New **Account Opening**

In additional to the seamless banking solutions provided by



Mohammad Al Dakhil

■ Al Dakhil: We are introducing innovative services through the ongoing enhancements of NBK Mobile Banking App
■ NBK always strives to reach the highest level of

customer satisfaction



MOB Banking Stay Tuned E-shot.

NBK, customers can now also have the option to open a new account with zero minimum through NBK Mobile Banking App balance and enjoy a world-class digital banking experience without having the need to visit the branch.

New App Set Up Experience Post First Time Log in & Registration

To elevate our digital customer experience, NBK Mobile Banking app introduces a new experience for setting up and customizing the app once the customer is successfully registered and logging in for the first time. That includes the ability to choose their desired card to be added instantly to apple wallet, enabling FaceID, Geo Alerts, and Push Notifications. As well as the ability to choose their desired profile picture before accessing the

Commenting on the new enhancements, Mr. Mohammad Al Dakhil, Head of Digital Banking Business at National Bank of Kuwait, said, "We are dedicated to unveiling a broad array of innovative services through the continuous enhancement of the NBK Mobile Banking App. As a central pillar in our banking operations, the app is poised to manage a significant proportion of transactions across our

'A new era in the real estate market'

KFH honors the inaugural cohort of Real Estate Evaluation Program

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) honored the inaugural cohort of graduates of its Real Estate Evaluation Program, the first of its kind in Kuwait. Launched earlier in collaboration with the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST), the program aims to serve all professionals and individuals interested in the real estate sector in Kuwait.

The honoring ceremony took place at the KFH Auto in the presence of KFH's Executive Management, represented by KFH Acting Group CEO, Abdulwahab Iesa AlRushood, KFH Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar, and KFH Group Chief Operations Officer, Abdullah Abu Alĥous, and Head of GUST Executive Education, Dr. Abdullah

KFH Acting Group CEO- Abdulwahab Iesa Al Rushood

During the ceremony, KFH Acting Group CEO, Abdulwahab Iesa Al Rushoodthanked program graduates and those involved in implementing the KFH Real Estate Evaluation program. He emphasized that this program aligns with KFH's leadership in social responsibility. It also reaffirms KFH's long experience in the real estate sector, aiming to improve customer satisfaction through a comprehensive program developed by real

He added that KFH ushered in a new era in the real estate market by launching a program designed to enhance the skills and professionalism of real estate appraisers. This initiative is expected to positively influence transactions and trades within the real estate market.

Al Rushood indicated that KFH is committed to enhancing real estate evaluation methodologies to bolster overall economic activity. This initiative seeks to safeguard the rights and

■ AlRushood: The program emphasizes KFH's long experience in the real estate sector ■ AlOmar: Encouraging human capital to keep pace with development through the latest technical and professional methods ■ Abu Alhous: The program graduates will contribute positively to the real estate market ■ Dr. Al-Falah: A fruitful collaboration with KFH to elevate the Kuwaiti real estate Evaluation market

assets of relevant institutions, companies, and banks by mitigating risks associated with real estate financing, avoiding conflicts of interest, and fostering stability and growth for all as-

KFH Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer - Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar

Meanwhile, KFH Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar extended his congratulations to the inaugural cohort of graduates who successfully completed the three levels of KFH Real Estate Evaluation program. He praised the efforts of those involved in the program and their significant contribution to enhancing the real estate market. He also indicated that the program is ongoing and will witness the graduation of new cohorts.

He noted that the recognition of outstanding employees and talents is part of KFH's commitment to developing and encouraging its human resources to keep pace with advancements through the latest technical and professional methods. AlOmar stressed



Abdulwahab lesa Al Rushood, Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar, Abdulla Abu Alhous, and Dr. Abdullah AlFalah with the honorees.

KFH's commitment to supporting and training employees through advanced programs and courses aimed at delivering the best customer experience in the real estate sector, thereby benefiting participants and ensuring market

AlOmar revealed that the program is now available to firms and individuals interested in the real estate market, indicating KFH is collaborating with relevant local and international entities to establish a certified and accredited professional qualification for program

KFH Group Chief Operations Officer - Abdulla Abu Alhous

KFH Group Chief Operations Officer, Abdulla Abu Alhous, expressed his confidence in the significance of the academic and professional knowledge acquired by employees through the program. He highlighted the positive contributions that graduates of the program will bring to the real estate sector in Kuwait. The program was developed by a team of specialists and researchers in the real estate field. This initiative aims to empower appraisers to accurately assess the value of real estate assets, make

sound investment resolutions, and preserve real estate wealth.

Abu Alhous emphasized that the KFH Real Estate Evaluation Program will enhance the position of KFH in the real estate market and contribute to the governance of operations while improving performance, in accordance with established standards recognized by regulatory and supervisory bodies.

He stressed the significance of such programs considering the increasing demand for real estate evaluation services from government institutions, Banks, companies, and individuals

Head of GUST Executive Education Center – Dr. Abdullah AlFalah

Meanwhile, Head of GUST Executive Education, Dr. Abdullah AlFalah. commended the successful collaboration between KFH and GUST through KFH Real Estate Evaluation Program, which is set to enhance the real estate Evaluation market in Kuwait.

AlFalah praised the strategic relationship between GUST and KFH through ongoing and advanced programs that address all areas and sectors benefiting employees, students and the community.

Al-Shall report highlights Kuwait's fiscal performance, profits of listed companies

Report covers several key areas

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: As September 2024 drew to a close, Al-Shall's weekly economic report offered a deep dive into Kuwait's fiscal health and the performance of its corporate sector, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The report covered several key areas, including the state's financial management, oil revenues and the profits of listed companies, all of which painted a complex picture of the coun-

try's economic situation. The Ministry of Finance shared a snapshot of the state's revenues for the fiscal year 2024/2025. By the end of September, the total revenues collected had reached approximately 10.117 billion dinars, about 53.5 percent of the total estimated revenues for the entire fiscal year, which were projected to be around 18.919 billion dinars.

The bulk of these revenues came from oil. Actual oil revenues amounted to 8.881 billion dinars by September 30, accounting for 54.7 percent of the expected oil revenues for the year, which were forecasted at 16.234 billion dinars.

Oil, as expected, made up the lion's share of Kuwait's revenue, contributing a substantial 87.8 percent to the total revenues. With the average price of oil standing at \$83.3 per barrel for the first half of the fiscal year, it was clear that the oil sector remained the cornerstone of Kuwait's financial stability.

But the report didn't just focus on oil. Non-oil revenues stood at 1.236 billion dinars, coming in at a monthly rate of 206.1 million dinars.

However, the budget had anticipated a monthly rate of 223.7 million dinars for the entire fiscal year, implying a potential shortfall of about 211.7 million dinars if the current pace continued.

On the spending side, the report highlighted expenditure appropriations of 24.555 billion dinars for the fiscal year, which represented a 1.773 billion dinar decrease from the previous fiscal year.

By the end of September, the government had spent 8.521 billion dinars, with an additional 1.446 billion dinars committed, bringing total expenditures to approximately 9.967 billion dinars. The report noted that the monthly average of expenditures was 1.661 billion dinars.

While the government did record a budget surplus of 150.4 million dinars at the end of September, the

report urged caution. There was concern that spending would increase as the year progressed and the ongoing decline in oil prices, coupled with the uncertain future of OPEC+ production policies, posed risks to the fiscal outlook.

Turning to the corporate side, Al-Shall also monitored the performance of Kuwait's listed companies for the first nine months of the year.

By the end of September, 138 companies (about 96.5 percent of the total listed) had reported net profits totaling approximately 2.126 billion dinars. This marked a 3.8 percent increase compared to the same period in 2023, when profits stood at 2.047 billion

Looking at quarterly performance, profits for the third quarter amounted to 696.9 million dinars, a 1.7 percent increase compared to the 685.1 million dinars recorded in the second quarter.

However, compared to the 744.1 million dinars reported in the first quarter, the third quarter saw a 6.4 percent decline in profits.

with the opening of new Sabhan branch KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: In line

Burgan Bank expands corporate banking

with its nationwide network expansion efforts, Burgan Bank announced the opening of its newest corporate branch in Sabhan, strategically positioned to cater to the expanding business community in the area. This new branch underscores the Bank's commitment to delivering personalized banking services tailored for corporate clients while facilitating efficient daily operations.

The Sabhan branch complements Burgan Bank's existing network of corporate branches, including those at the Bank's Head Office and Al-Shaheed Tower, further enhancing the Bank's ability to serve businesses throughout Kuwait. With services designed for routine banking needs such as account management, record modifications, and withdrawals, the new branch is equipped to meet the diverse requirements of companies in Sabhan and the surrounding industrial areas

Commenting on the branch opening, Mr. Mohammad Najeeb AlZanki, General Manager Corporate Banking at Burgan Bank, stated: "The inauguration of the Sabhan branch marks a significant milestone in our strategy to enhance corporate banking services across Kuwait. We aim to provide businesses in the Sabhan area with convenient access to banking solutions that support their growth and operational needs. Our commitment to delivering excellence remains at the forefront as we expand our net-

work and service offerings." Burgan Bank is committed to delivering distinctive and customized financial solutions that address the unique demands of businesses, including those related to upcoming government contracts. This approach not only supports economic growth but also aligns with the Bank's vision to foster economic development and strengthen Kuwait's business landscape. By positioning itself as a reliable partner, Burgan Bank assists companies in overcoming challenges and driving success in the market.



Mr. Mohammad Najeeb AlZanki, General Manager – Corporate Banking at Burgan Bank.

Additionally, Burgan Bank offers innovative payroll solutions to meet diverse business requirements, helping streamline financial operations, particularly salary management. With its continuously expanding corporate banking products and services, the Bank is focused on enhancing financial accessibility and optimizing the banking experience for businesses.

The Sabhan branch will also be supported by Burgan Bank's Relationship Managers, based at the Bank's headquarters, who offer customized banking solutions for more complex corporate requirements, such as financing and facility management.

As Burgan Bank continues to grow its corporate banking presence, the Sabhan branch is part of a broader strategy to provide innovative banking solutions and exceptional customer service, enhancing the experience for businesses across Kuwait.

For more information on the Bank's branches, products and services, please call the Burgan call center at 1804080, or visit the Bank's website www.burgan.com.

unto دراية

KIB and Co-Op Societies officials pose for a group photo.

Bid to promote banking and financial literacy

KIB strengthens its strategic partnership with the Union of Cooperative Societies

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the ongoing strengthening of its strategic partnership with the Union of Cooperative Societies in Kuwait. This collaboration aims to promote banking and financial literacy while making banking services and products easily accessible to customers as they shop at cooperative societies across Kuwait. This initiative supports the "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) campaign, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) in collaboration with local

In this regard, Musab Al-Shalan, Deputy General Manager -Retail Banking Department at KIB, met with the President of the Union of Cooperative Societies Musab Al-Mulla at the Union's headquarters. Representatives from the cooperative societies participating in the Bank's strategic agreement were also in attendance, including Mubarak Al-Kabeer Cooperative Society, Mishref Cooperative Society, Al-Shaab Cooperative Society, Farwaniya Cooperative Society,



KIB and Co-Op Societies officials hold a meeting.

Abdullah Al-Salem and Al-Mansouriya Cooperative Society, Qurtuba Cooperative Society, Kaifan Cooperative Society, and Al-Shuhada Cooperative

Al-Shaalan highlighted that KIB aims to expand its partnerships with civil society organizations, including cooperative societies, aligning with the Bank's vision and strategy to maintain a strong presence near its customers while they shop. He pointed out the significant role cooperative societies have played since their establishment in meeting the needs of

citizens and consumers across various regions, positively contributing to the country's economic and social development. "This success has even inspired other countries to learn from the Kuwaiti experience in this field," Al-Shaalan stated.

Al-Shaalan added that this initiative reflects KIB's commitment to social responsibility, as the Bank consistently strives to craft its initiatives and activities with care, aiming to make a positive and sustainable impact on Kuwaiti society. He emphasized that supporting and developing civil soci-

ety organizations is a key objective for the Bank in this regard, commending the outstanding performance of cooperative societies, which have become a successful model of productivity and

On his part, Al-Mulla expressed his gratitude for KIB's distinguished role in supporting the cooperative sector, which serves a large segment of citizens. He praised the field training and part-time employment project for recent graduates, designed by the Bank for local youth in collaboration with the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies and the participating cooperative societies. He expressed hope for continued successful cooperation in such social development initiatives.

It is worth mentioning that KIB places great importance on promoting banking awareness within the community and consistently seeks to launch initiatives aimed at enhancing financial literacy. The Bank also actively participates in activities and events supporting the "Let's Be Aware" financial awareness campaign, in line with its main slogan, "Bank for Life."

KPC announces multiple tenders for consulting and maintenance services

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has floated several new tenders, signaling a focus on strategic development and operational efficiency.

The first tender is for consulting services to review and enhance the corporation's financial investment strategy and policy. The preliminary meeting for this tender is scheduled for Dec 9, with bids due by December 24.

In addition, KPC has initiated a tender for consulting services to study consumption rates of the corporation's assets and those of its affiliated companies, with the same preliminary meeting and bid submission dates as the financial investment strategy ten-

The corporation also announced a special exercise to engage consultants for auditing the governance of work ethics at KPC. The preliminary meeting for this tender is set for December 23, with bids due by January 7, 2025.

KPC also informed stakeholders of the postponement of the preliminary meeting for a tender on the supply, installation and maintenance of communications equipment and support devices for the main building and the Petroleum Training Center. The new meeting date is November 24, instead

of the originally scheduled Nov 21. In a related development, KPC confirmed that, at the request of Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC), it has awarded a maintenance services tender for KUFPEC's main building in the Shuwaikh Administrative Area, valued at 447,000 dinars.

Furthermore, KPC has launched an indivisible global tender for the supply of marine lubricants, with bids due by December 24 and a local tender for labor services related to maintenance and operations at the liquefied gas branch in the Shuaiba Industrial Area. The deadline for bids for this labor tender is January 7, 2025.

Zain introduces 'The Masters', empowering 30 individuals with disabilities to create, shape their own experiences, and become leaders

Follows company's recent creation of the first Corporate Employee Resource Group in the region, and a three-day Masters 'Learn and Lead' training program, both specifically for individuals with disabilities

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Zain Group, a leading provider of innovative technologies and digital lifestyle communications operating in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, has launched 'The Masters' initiative, empowering 30 individuals with disabilities to create and shape their own experiences and giving them a stage to become leaders through a focus on four core impact areas: 1. Cocreating Zain's Disability Inclusion strategy; 2. Embedding accessibility into all products and services; 3. The Learn and Lead program; and 4. Fostering voice and visibility.

This never-before-seen opportunity for people with disabilities soon follows Zain's establishment in September, 2024, of the first Corporate Employee Resource Group (ERG) in the region, specifically for individuals with disabilities. Partnering with PurpleSpace - the networking and professional hub for disabled employees - this partnership signifies a commitment by Zain to create an ERG experience that goes beyond traditional practices,



Zain 'The Masters' group photo.

supported by the company's top management.

Bader Al-Kharafi, Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO commented, "As a leading regional purpose driven entity, the introduction of The Masters is another one-of-its-kind initiative from Zain that underscores that disability is not merely a term, but an opportunity for people with disabilities to advocate,

Bader Al-Kharafi:

■ "The Masters is another one-of-its-kind initiative from Zain that underscores that disability is not merely a term, but an opportunity for people with disabilities to advocate. lead and act."

lead and act. Our mission is go beyond merely offering telecommunication services, as we focus on addressing deficits and

WASHINGTON, Nov 24.

(AP): US President-elect Don-

ald Trump announced Friday

that he'll nominate billionaire

hedge fund manager Scott

Bessent, an advocate for defi-

cit reduction, to serve as his

next treasury secretary, one

of several personnel decisions

that he unveiled as he closed

challenges across our footprint and provide meaningful connectivity that leads to equitable systemic change. Throughout all the communities we serve, we intend to leave no one behind in terms of their ability to be as active and engaged in society as possible."

Zain just completed a Learn and Lead program, holding a three-day training program for 15 Masters from across its eight markets of operation plus participants from Omantel. This program, conducted by The Butterfly, a UAE-based organization renowned for disability training, took place between November 12-14 and focused on Advocacy, Disability Awareness Self-Empowerment, Leadership, Public Speaking, and Presentation Skills.

Following the training, the 15 Masters are set to return to their respective operations and deliver the same training to employees in the lead up to, and post the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, which falls on December 3, 2024.

This first-of-its-kind program places disability at the forefront of Zain's organizational and inclusion outlook, empowering individuals with disabilities to lead sessions, have their voices heard, and see their contributions recognized.

The Masters program envisages that employees who are blind, deaf, or with physical disabilities will be given the opportunity to train others at Zain and Omantel, on Advocacy, Disability Awareness Self-Empowerment, Leadership, Public Speaking, and Presentation Skills, giving them a stage and opportunity to lead and shape their own experiences.

Overall, the expected attendance for The Masters' 'Learn and Lead' sessions is expected to reach approximately 1,000. Through this initiative, all the future Zain and Omantel Masters have the opportunity to advocate for themselves and others, sharing their experiences and becoming leaders wherever





ABK flyers

Highest interest payout

Heroes Kids Account

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is excited to announce the launch of its new ABK Heroes. This new package is designed to resonate with today's younger generation, providing a fresh identity that motivates and empowers children while emphasizing the importance of saving.



Johair Marafi

newborns and children until the age of 16, this account reflects ABK's vision to support this conscious generation understand importance

that the sustainability of and manages their

finances respon-

Catered

sibly. The ABK Heroes account comes with a host of attractive benefits and features tailored for young savers, including monthly draws for the chance to win the latest Apple Vision Pro, the highest interest payout in Kuwait of 2%, and an eco-friendly debit card that teaches the importance of sustainability while managing finances. Additionally, account holders will enjoy exclusive discounts at various merchants throughout Kuwait, such as Dabdoob,

Trampo, Kiddi, and much more. Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, stated, "With the launch of ABK Heroes, we aim to instill the culture of savings in customers at an early age. We believe that by making banking fun and rewarding, we can inspire the next generation to em-

maintaining health lifestyle.

offers parents the opportunity to plan for their children's financial future early on and reflects the Bank's continuous commitment to providing worthwhile solutions that strengthen its leading position

in the Kuwaiti banking sector. efit from the current promotional campaigns and offers throughout the year.

Traditional sectors in China get smarter with 5G+ industrial net

BEIJING, Nov 24, (Xinhua): At one of the busiest container terminals along the midstream of the Yangtze River, the atmosphere is surprisingly calm, with only a few people around. Automatic cranes efficiently lift and transfer cargo, while driverless trucks glide in and get loaded.

"Now, 50 percent of our terminal's loading and transportation is automated, which has created a huge leap in efficiency," said Chen Xiaomian, production and operations manager of Wuhan CSP Terminal Co., Ltd. The company operates the namesake terminal in Wuhan, capital of central China's Hubei Province.

"We only need 12 workers to remotely handle a workload that typically requires 39 workers at a traditional terminal," Chen said. Supported by 5G+ industrial internet, terminal workers can operate cranes using just a control handle while monitoring progress on a screen.

According to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT), 5G+ industrial internet is a new infrastructure that integrates application model or industrial ecosystems into industrial sectors. It leverages 5G and other advanced telecommunications technologies.

By connecting people, machines and systems along industrial and value chains, 5G+ industrial internet boosts the digital, networked and intelligent development of industrial sectors, helping companies reduce costs and increase efficiency.

As part of its tech-driven growth strategy, China has committed to developing 5G+ industrial internet in recent years, aiming to accelerate the smart upgrades of its traditional indus-

brace smart financial habits." ABK decided to name the account

'ABK Heroes' as part of its efforts to encourage children to take responsibility at an early age when it comes to managing their finances. ABK will also be hosting a number of activities for the heroes that will help them become more responsible such as financial literacy workshops, helping people in need by visiting them and providing support as well as learning the importance of

Marafi continued, "This account also

Marafi concluded with an invitation to follow the Bank's social media accounts to remain up to date with the latest marketing initiatives and to ben-

out the workweek. Trump also said he would nominate Russell Vought to lead the Office of Management and Budget, the same position he held during Trump's first presidency. Vought was closely involved with Project 2025, a conservative blueprint for Trump's second term that the GOP 14, 2024. (AP) nominee tried to distance himself from during the campaign. The announcements showed how Trump was trying to balance competing perspectives as he pursues an aggressive and sometimes contradictory economic agenda that includes cutting taxes, reducing government spending, putting

prices for American consumers. Although Bessent is closely aligned with Wall Street and could earn bipartisan support, Vought is known as a Republican hardliner on budget and cultural issues.

tariffs on foreign imports and lowering

Trump said Bessent would "help me usher in a new Golden Age for the United States," while Vought "knows exactly how to dismantle the Deep State and end Weaponized Govern-

After announcing his choices for key financial posts, Trump kept up the pace of what has been a breakneck transition process.

Trump picked Rep. Lori Chavez-DeRemer of Oregon, a rare Republican who is considered a stalwart union ally, as his labor secretary. He also said he would nominate Scott Turner, a former football player who worked in Trump's first administration, to serve as his housing secretary.

More choices were named for health and national security positions. In less than three weeks since the election, Trump has announced decisions for almost his entire Cabinet.

Bessent, 62, is the founder of hedge fund Key Square Capital Management, after having worked on-and-off for Soros Fund Management since 1991. If confirmed by the Senate, he would be the nation's first openly gay treasury secretary. He told Bloomberg in August that

attacking the U.S. national debt should be a priority, which includes slashing government programs and other

"This election cycle is the last chance for the U.S. to grow our way out of this mountain of debt without becoming a sort of European-style socialist democracy," he said then.
As of Nov. 8, the national debt



Trump appoints hedge fund

tycoon as treasury secretary

Vought nominated as budget chief, Chavez-DeRemer for labor

Investor Scott Bessent speaks on the economy in Asheville, N.C., Aug.



Acting OMB Director Russel Vought speaks during a press briefing at the White House, March 11, 2019, in Washington. (AP)



Rep. Lori Chavez-DeRemer, R-Ore., accompanied by Majority Whip Rep. Tom Emmer, R-Minn., left, and House Majority Leader Rep. Steve Scalise, R-La., right, speaks at a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Jan. 25, 2023. (AP)

stands at \$35.94 trillion, with both the Trump and Biden administrations having added to it. Trump's policies added \$8.4 trillion to the national debt, while the Biden administration increased the national debt by \$4.3 trillion, accord-

ing to the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, a fiscal watchdog.

Even as he pushes to lower the national debt by stopping spending, Bessent has backed extending provisions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017,

which Trump signed into law in his first year in office. Estimates from different economic analyses of the costs of the various tax cuts range between nearly \$6 trillion and \$10 trillion over 10 years. Nearly all of the law's provisions are set to expire at the end of 2025.

Before becoming a Trump donor and adviser, Bessent donated to various Democratic causes in the early 2000s, notably Al Gore's presidential run. He also worked for George Soros, a major supporter of Democrats. Bessent had an influential role in Soros' London operations, including his famous 1992 bet against the pound, which generated huge profits on "Black Wednesday," when the pound was de-linked from European currencies.

Bessent previously told Bloomberg that he views tariffs as a "one time price adjustment" and "not inflationary," and he said tariffs imposed during a second Trump administration would be directed primarily at China. And he wrote in a Fox News op-ed this week that tariffs are "a useful tool for achieving the president's foreign policy objectives," such as encouraging allies to spend more on defense or deterring military aggression.

In addition, Bessent has floated ideas for how Trump could put pressure on Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, whose term expires in May 2026. Last month, Bessent suggested Trump could name a replacement chair early, and let that person function as a "shadow" chair, with the goal of essentially sidelining Powell.

But after the election, Bessent reportedly backed away from that plan. Powell, for his part, has said he wouldn't step down if Trump asked him to do so, and added that Trump, as president, wouldn't have the authority to fire him.

Trump repeatedly attacked Powell during his first term as president for raising the Fed's key rate in 2017 and 2018. During the 2024 campaign, he said that as president he should have a "say" in the central bank's interest rate decisions. Presidents traditionally avoid commenting on the Fed's policies.

Vought, 48, was the head of the Office of Management and Budget from mid-2020 to the end of Trump's first term in 2021, having previously served as the acting director and deputy director. He's paired a deep knowledge of government finances with his own Christian faith.

After Trump's initial term ended, Vought founded the Center for Renewing America, a think tank that describes its mission as renewing "a consensus of America as a nation under God."

The Center for Renewing America released its own 2023 budget proposal entitled "A Commitment to End Woke and Weaponized Government." The proposal envisioned \$11.3 trillion worth of spending reductions over 10 years and about \$2 trillion in income tax cuts in order to bring the budget into surplus by 2032.

Features



Chinese feature film awarded at Cairo Int'l Film Festival

Gaza highlighted at CIFF, Palestinian filmmakers awarded

CAIRO, Nov 24, (Xinhua): The Palestinian Gaza Strip, which is facing ongoing devastating Israeli attacks, has been highlighted in the 45th edition of the Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF), with several Palestinian films and filmmakers awarded during the closing ceremony held on Friday evening.

The documentary A State of Passion by Carol Mansour, a Lebanese-Canadian filmmaker of Palestinian origin, and Lebanese producer Muna Khalidi, which sheds light on the medical journey of a Palestinian doctor within Palestine, was awarded Best Arabic Film in the Horizons of Arab Cinema com-

A Palestinian film competition was initiated in this year's CIFF, in cooperation with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation States Broadcasting Union (OSBU).

The first OSBU award at the 45th CIFF was given to the documentary Square Kilometer Dreams directed by Palestinian filmmaker Qassam Sbeih, the second to A State of Passion, and the third to Passing Dreams directed by Palestinian filmmaker Rashid Masharawi.

"Given what is happening in

Palestine this year, and specifically in Gaza, it was important that the films we made about Gaza be screened at the CIFF," Masharawi told Xinhua during the closing ceremony, stressing the significant role of art in supporting just causes.

Meanwhile, in a special program held for the anthology film From Ground Zero, which combines 22 short films from Gaza, the films Soft Skin, No Signal, and A School Day received cash prizes.

From day one of the 45th CIFF, the festival showed solidarity with the Palestinian cause by screening Passing Dreams as its opening film.

The festival's president, Egyptian veteran movie star Hussein Fahmy, and the CIFF staff all attached to their attire a label pin of the national flag of Palestine as a sign of solidarity and support.

'The 45th CIFF was not held as scheduled last year due to the events in Gaza, so we had to cancel the festival then. We have returned to say through the festival that Gaza is in our hearts and the Palestinian people are always with us," Fahmy told Xinhua in an earlier interview during the festival.

Chinese film Brief History of a



People attend the closing ceremony of the 45th edition of the Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF) in Cairo, Egypt, Nov. 22, 2024. (Xinhua)

Family won the Network for the Promotion of the Asia Pacific Cinema Award as the best Asian feature film at the 45th Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF) concluded here on Friday evening.

"This is my first feature film ... It's a great experience. In all the competitions here, it was the only feature-length Chinese language film. So, that's very special and I'm very happy to win the award," Lin Jianjie, the director, told Xinhua after receiving the award.

"What I want to do is to bring the Chinese film on the international stage. I think this is a very great achievement for the film," he

The film tells the story of a Chinese middle-class family and their son's mysterious friend, with a focus on the bonds between family

The jury statement said the film demonstrated a subtle exploration of emotions and the use of imagery and sound design. "They told me it doesn't look like a filmmaker's first feature. It's very mature, and it has a very distinct artistic vision," Lin told Xinhua.

The Chinese feature will be screened on Saturday at one of the theaters of Cairo Opera House, where the 45th CIFF was held.

This year's CIFF saw a strong presence of Chinese films. A highlight of the event was the Chinese Cinema Week, during which seven Chinese features were screened. Among these was Decoded, directed by Chen Sicheng, who received the CIFF's Golden Pyramid honorary award.

'China has a great cinema industry for a long time, and we used to watch Chinese films while learning filmmaking," said Egyptian film director Khaled El-Hagar, a jury member of the International Critics' Week Competition.

"It is important for the Egyptian and Arab audience to watch films from different cultures such as China, India, and other Asian countries, not just European and American films," he told Xinhua, describing Brief History of a Family as "very interesting and intriguing."

During the ten-day festival, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the CIFF and the Beijing International Film Festival to boost cooperation between the two sides in relevant areas.

"Egypt and China have very strong relations for long decades, especially in the field of arts. In fact, the cinematic and artistic experiences of both countries reflect their civilizations and show a similarity in their dramatic style," Egyptian Minister of Culture Ahmed Fouad Hanno told reporters during the closing ceremony.

He added that this artistic cooperation and closeness between Egypt and China would certainly provide a boost to bilateral cultural exchange.

As for the main International Competition of the CIFF, the Romanian film The New Year That Never Came, directed by Bogdan Muresanu, won the top Golden Pyramid Award, while Russia's Postmarks and Brazil's Malu got the Silver Pyramid and the Bronze Pyramid, respectively.

Variety

TRIPOLI: An European Film Festival kicked off in the Libyan capital Tripoli on Saturday.

The six-day event, sponsored by the European Union (EU) Del-egation to Libya and the Libyan General Authority for Cinema, Theater and Arts, will screen films from Spain, Italy, Malta, France, Germany, and Libya, according to the EU Ambassador to Libya, Nicola Orlando.

"This is a unique opportunity to celebrate and promote Libya's rich cultural heritage and vibrant contemporary activity," said Or-

"We hope that this festival will become a tradition between Libya and Europe, inspiring a new generation of men and women and creating a greater mutual understanding between our coun-

tries and cultures," he added. Abdul Basset Abu Ginda, chairman of the Libyan General Authority for Cinema, Theater and Arts, said the festival is a "positive step in the path of partnership between Libya and the

European Union."
"We also hope for more cooperation in the field of technical training and harnessing arts to serve children and families, emphasizing human rights and calling for the rejection of wars and conflicts in order to achieve a world of peace," Abu Ginda said during the opening of the festival.

BERLIN: American photographer and activist Nan Goldin has used a speech at the opening of her exhibition in Germany to condemn Israel's war in Gaza.

Goldin, 71, said Friday she wanted to use her retrospective show at the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin "as a platform to amplify



position moral outrage" at what she described as "genocide in Gaza and Lebanon.

grandparents escaped po-

groms in Russia. I was brought up knowing about the Nazi Holocaust. What I see in Gaza reminds me of the pogroms that my grandparents escaped," Goldin said.

Goldin is a leading artist and activist whose life and work was documented in the award-winning 2022 film "All the Beauty and the Bloodshed. She spoke of the displacement

and destruction in Gaza, and told a cheering audience that criticism of Israel should not be conflated with antisemitism. (AP)

HALIFAX, Nova Scotia: A Canadian security forum on Saturday presented an award to Vladimir Kara-Murza, a Kremlin critic and Pulitzer Prize-winning writer who was freed from prison earlier this year in a massive prisoner exchange.

The Halifax International Security Forum presents the award annually in honor of U.S. Sen. John McCain, who died in 2018, to "individuals from any country who have demonstrated uncommon leadership in the pursuit of human justice.

The forum attracts military officials, United States senators, diplomats and scholars.

"I am humbled beyond words to be receiving this prize, but I view it first and foremost as your recognition of all my fellow Russian citizens who have the courage to stand up to Putin's regime and to call out his murderous war in Ukraine in full knowledge what the price of that will be," Kara-Murza said.

McCain was a regular at the forum and his son, Jack McCain, presented Kara-Murza with the award. (AP)

Film



This image released by Netflix shows Thomasin McKenzie in a scene from 'Joy.' (AP)

Heartwarming true story of hope and persistence

'Joy' is a loud cheer for fertility, science

LOS ANGELES, Nov 24, (AP): Toward the end of Netflix's "Joy," the muffled cry of a newborn baby prompts a man and woman in a hospital to embrace out of pure bliss. They aren't the parents, but they had as much to do with the birth as the mom and dad.

This charming and winning movie charts the decadelong true story of how the world's first IVF baby was born in England in 1978 - a 5-pound, 12-ounce girl who paved the way for millions more. It's an upbeat, very English affair, mixing sober discussion of endometriosis with chocolate biscuits.

The couple embracing that day were pioneering scientist Robert Edwards and Jean Purdy, a young nurse and embryologist. Together with surgeon Patrick Steptoe, the trio succeeded with in vitro fertilization, a method of treating infertility. Edwards would go on to win the Nobel Prize.

"Joy" has been birthed at a time when science is under threat in America - even IVF - so it's downright inspiring to see plucky, smart scientists working hard to change the world. "What we're doing, it matters," says Steptoe, played with quiet economy by Bill Nighy.

"Joy" is the personal stories of the three scientists mostly through the eyes of Purdy, a polite lab-coated warrior. "If I hear a commotion, I'm not very good at staying out of it," she says. Perfectly played by Thomasin McKenzie, Purdy is both vulnerable and strong, learning through the process to be a better human. James Norton plays Edwards with charm, self-doubt and calm spirit.

Jack Thorne's script nicely explains the massive

pressure the trio faced. IVF may have become common and uncontroversial over the last decades, but back in the late '70s it was experimental and shunned. The Anglican church called it a sin, the newspapers labeled it Frankenstein-ish and other scientists warned of freak babies. "You're aware they'll throw the book at us," Nighy's Steptoe tells the team. "We will unite them all against us.

Purdy, a single woman as the swinging '60s lead to the '70s, is exiled by her own pious mother - "You can't play God with this," the elder woman tells her daughter



This image released by Netflix shows James Norton in a scene from 'Joy.' (AP)

- and disinvited by her church. No matter. "This fight is ours. We don't have a choice," Purdy says. The film also celebrates the brave would-be mothers who volunteered their bodies to be poked and prodded at the edge of science.

Our hero researchers try to argue to the skeptical world in vain that IVF is simply a way for science to help those in need, like glasses for the shortsighted or dentures for those with teeth decay. It's remarkable to return to this debate now when science's great achievements today may be under threat, like fluoridated wa-

Director Ben Taylor keeps the story small and intimate, a series of vignettes adding up to almost like a play. It features moments of quiet and polite bravery, and small conversations over a pint of ale - a reminder of the power of performances and that changing the world doesn't need a muscle-bound bro with X-ray vision.

It's held together by a superb soundtrack with witty selections like "Yes We Can Can" by Lee Dorsey, "Nobody But Me" by The Human Beinz and "Here Comes the Sun" by George Harrison, each song encapsulating the moment in time, like pearls on a strand.

"Joy" is not all joy. There is frustration and loss and tears along the way, but it is a triumphant film about the way humans can make the world better and how a baby's cry can be a priceless gift.

"Joy," a Netflix release, is rated PG-13 for "thematic material brief strong language, some sexual references and surgery images." Running time: 115 minutes. Three and a half stars out of four.



Feifei Cheng holds her award for Best New Performer at the 61st Golden Horse Awards in Taipei Taiwan, Saturday, Nov. 23. (AP)



Yang Kuei-mei holds her award for Best Supporting Actress at the 61st Golden Horse Awards in Taipei, Taiwan, Saturday, Nov. 23. (AP)



Chung Suet-ying holds her award for Best Leading Actress at the 61st Golden Horse Awards in Taipei, Taiwan, Saturday, Nov. 23. (AP)



Director Yin You-qiao, (left), and Chiang Wei-liang hold their awards for Best New Director at the 61st Golden Horse Awards in Taipei, Taiwan, Sat-urday, Nov. 23. (AP)

Art



A woman visits an exhibition titled 'Eye to Eye' which showcases over 120 works by modern world artists as well as Iranian painters at Tehran Mu-seum of Contemporary Art, in Tehran, Nov. 21. (AP)



People take snap shots next to China's late leader Mao Zedong painting by American artist Andy Warhol as they visit an exhibition titled 'Eye to Eye' in Tehran. (AP)

Cultural shift in Tehran

Iran's hidden Western art collection goes on display

TEHRAN, Iran, Nov 24, (AP): As Iran faces increasing tensions with the West and turmoil at home, a new exhibition at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art is displaying Western artwork including pieces not seen by the public in at least a decade.

The unveiling of the exhibition "Eye to Eye" has drawn numerous women, their hair uncovered, to the underground galleries of the museum in Tehran's Laleh Park. Their presence, while unacknowledged by authorities, shows the way life has changed inside Iran just in the last few years even as the country's theocracy presses forward with enriching uranium to near-weapons grade levels and launching attacks on Israel during the ongoing Mideast wars.

"The first feeling that came to me, and I told my parents, was that I can't believe I'm seeing these works. which have always been kept far from our eyes," said Aida Zarrin, a young woman at the museum.

"If such events are held here and we can see artworks like the rest of the world, it's enough. They are really precious.'

The government of Iran's Western-backed shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, and his wife, the former Empress Farah Pahlavi, built the museum and acquired the vast collection in the late 1970s, when oil boomed and Western economies stagnated. Upon opening, it showed sensational works by Pablo Picasso, Mark Rothko, Claude Monet, Jackson Pollock and other heavyweights, enhancing Iran's cultural standing on the world stage.

Ousted

But just two years later, in 1979, Shiite clerics ousted the shah and packed away the art in the museum's vault. Some paintings cubist, surrealist, impressionist and even pop art - sat untouched for decades to avoid offending Islamic values and the appearance of catering to Western sensibili-ties. Nearly everything is believed still to be there, though an Andy Warhol print of the empress was

slashed during the revolution. Today, the collection is likely worth billions of dollars. Even with Iran now cash-strapped under Western sanctions, officials with the museum have been able to advocate for keeping the collection, though there have been occasional trades in the past for items from Persian history. Those sanctions may increase under the next

administration of U.S. Presidentelect Donald Trump.

As Iranian politics have thawed, re-frozen and thawed again, the collection resurfaces along with those changes.

Among the over 120 works being shown are ones from Picasso, Andy Warhol and Francis Bacon, along with celebrated Iranian artists. One of the Warhols, "Jacqueline Kennedy II," is a silkscreen double image of the former US first lady in mourning after the 1963 assassination of her husband, President John Kennedy. Another Warhol portrait of Rolling Stones frontman Mick Jagger also garnered attention from the cellphone photo snappers.

History

"A lot of these works are important works in the history of art, and that's why this show distinguishes itself from others," said Jamal Arabzadeh, the exhibition's curator. "A lot of people with less exposure to art have discovered the museum for the first time. ... We are seeing a part of the community that are discovering art and the museum and see the potential of this place, and this is something to be proud of."

The presence of Western art comes as Iran's government has long fought against items like Barbie dolls and depictions of cartoon characters from "The Simpsons." Such Western influences have been deemed un-Islamic in the past and have been seen as part of a "soft" cultural war against the Islamic Republic.

With a ticket costing the equivalent of 14 U.S. cents, the exhibition offers a rare government-sanctioned event not involving the country's politics or Shiite religion.

Among the visitors were many women defying the country's mandatory headscarf, or hijab, law. Crackdowns over the hijab have slowed down after Iran's presidential election in July that elected reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian, though individual cases of arrest continue to draw anger.

And for many, the cost of tickets to travel abroad given Iran's collapsing rial currency keep for-

eign museums out of reach. "This is very attractive for art enthusiasts because not everyone can go and see museums abroad. It's extremely exciting to see the works here," said a woman who only gave her last name, Dolatshahi. "I had no idea I could see works by van Gogh and Picasso here.

Obituary

Affable and smooth-talking TV host

Game show icon Chuck Woolery dies

NEW YORK, Nov 24, (AP): Chuck Woolery, the affable, smooth-talking game show host of "Wheel of Fortune," "Love Connection" and "Scrabble" who later became a right-wing podcaster, skewering liberals and accusing the government of lying about COVID-19, has died. He was 83.

Mark Young, Woolery's podcast co-host and friend, said in an email early Sunday that Woolery died at his home in Texas with his wife, Kristen, present. "Chuck was a dear friend and brother and a tremendous man of faith, life will not be the same without him, Young wrote.

Woolery, with his matinee idol looks, coiffed hair and ease with witty banter, was inducted into the American TV Game Show Hall of Fame in 2007 and earned a daytime Emmy nomina-

In 1983, Woolery began an 11-year run as host of TV's "Love Connection," for which he coined the phrase, "We'll be back in two minutes and two seconds," a two-fingered signature dubbed the "2 and 2." In 1984, he hosted TV's "Scrabble," simultaneously hosting two game shows on TV until 1990.

"Love Connection," which aired long before the dawn of dating apps, had a premise that featured either a single man or single woman who would watch audition tapes of three potential mates and then pick one for a date.

A couple of weeks after the date, the guest would sit with Woolery in front of a studio audience and tell everybody about the date. The audience would vote on the three contestants, and if the audience agreed with the guest's choice, "Love Connection" would offer to pay for a second date.

Woolery told The Philadelphia Inquirer in 2003 that his favorite set of lovebirds was a man aged 91 and a woman aged 87. "She had so much eye makeup on, she looked like a stolen Corvette. He was so old he said, 'I remember wagon trains.' The poor guy. She took him on a balloon ride.'

Highlights

Other career highlights included hosting the shows "Lingo," "Greed" and "The Chuck Woolery Show," as well as hosting the short-lived syndicated revival of "The Dating Game" from 1998 to 2000 and an ill-fated 1991 talk show. In 1992, he played himself in two episodes of TV's "Melrose Place.'

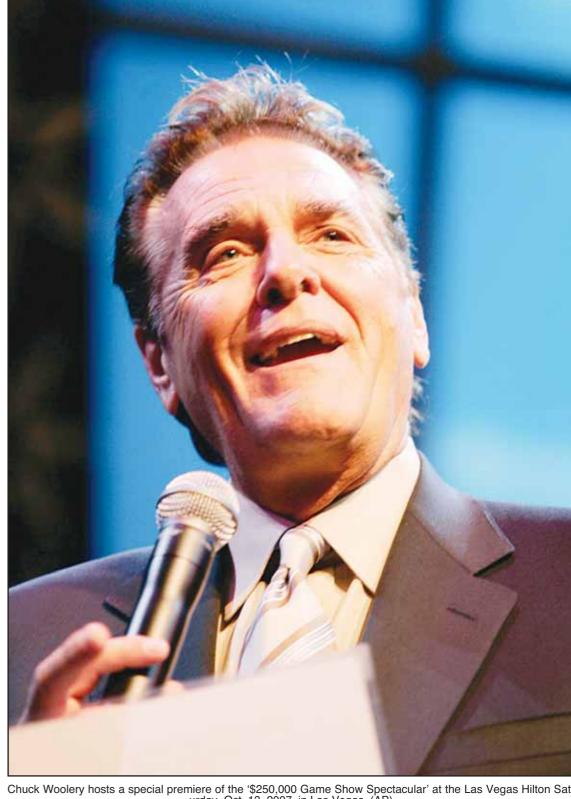
Woolery became the subject of the Game Show Network's first attempt at a reality show, "Chuck Woolery: Naturally Stoned," which premiered in 2003. It shared the title of the pop song in 1968 by Woolery and his rock group, the Avant-Garde. It lasted six episode and was panned by critics.

Woolery began his TV career at a show that has become a mainstay. Although most associated with Pat Sajak and Vanna White, "Wheel of Fortune" debuted Jan. 6, 1975, on NBC with Woolery welcoming contestants and the audience. Woolery, then 33, was trying to make it in Nashville as a singer.

"Wheel of Fortune" started life as "Shopper's Bazaar," incorporating Hangman-style puzzles and a roulette wheel. After Woolery appeared on "The Merv Griffin Show" singing "Delta Dawn," Merv Griffin asked him to host the new show with Susan Stafford.

"I had an interview that stretched to 15, 20 minutes," Woolery told The New York Times in 2003. "After the show, when Merv asked if I wanted to do a game show, I thought, 'Great, a guy with a bad jacket and an equally bad mustache who doesn't care what you have to say that's the guy I want to be.

NBC initially passed, but they retooled it as "Wheel of Fortune" and got the green light. After a few years, Woolery demanded a raise to \$500,000 a year, or what host Peter Marshall was making on "Hollywood Squares."



Chuck Woolery hosts a special premiere of the '\$250,000 Game Show Spectacular' at the Las Vegas Hilton Saturday, Oct. 13, 2007, in Las Vegas. (AP)

Griffin balked and replaced Woolery with weather reporter Pat Sajak.

"Both Chuck and Susie did a fine iob, and 'Wheel' did well enough on NBC, although it never approached the kind of ratings success that 'Jeopardy!' achieved in its heyday," Griffin said in "Merv: Making the Good Life Last," an autobiography from the 2000s cowritten by David Bender. Woolery earned an Emmy nod as host.

Born in Ashland, Kentucky, Woolery served in the US Navy before attending college. He played double bass in a folk trio, then formed the psychedelic rock duo The Avant-Garde in 1967 while working as a truck driver to support himself as a musician.

The Avant-Garde, which tourbed in a refitted Cadillac hearse, had the Top 40 hit "Naturally Stoned," with Woolery singing, "When I put my mind on you alone/I can get a good sensation/ Feel like I'm naturally stoned."

After The Avant-Garde broke up, Woolery released his debut solo single "I've Been Wrong" in 1969 and several more singles with Columbia before transitioning to country music by the 1970s. He released two solo singles, "Forgive My Heart' and "Love Me, Love Me."

Woolery wrote or co-wrote songs for himself and everyone from Pat Boone to Tammy Wynette. On Wynette's 1971 album "We Sure Can Love Each Other," Woolery wrote "The Joys of Being a Woman" with lyrics including "See our baby on the swing/ Hear her laugh, hear her scream."

After his TV career ended, Woolery went into podcasting. In an interview with The New York Times, he called himself a gun-rights activist and described himself as a conservative libertarian and constitutionalist. He said he hadn't revealed his politics in liberal Hollywood for fear of retribution.

He teamed up with Mark Young in 2014 for the podcast "Blunt Force Truth" and soon became a full supporter of Donald Trump while arguing minorities don't need civil rights and causing a firestorm by tweeting an antisemitic comment linking Soviet Communists to Judaism.

"President Obama's popularity is a fantasy only held by him and his dwindling legion of juice-box-drinking, anxiety-dog-hugging, safe-space-hiding snowflakes," he said.

Woolery also was active online, retweeting articles from Conservative Brief, insisting Democrats were trying to install a system of Marxism and spreading headlines such as "Impeach him! Devastating photo of Joe Biden

During the early stages of the pandemic, Woolery initially accused medical professionals and Democrats of lying about the virus in an effort to hurt the economy and Trump's chances for reelection to the presidency.

"The most outrageous lies are the ones about COVID-19. Everyone is lying. The CDC, media, Democrats, our doctors, not all but most, that we are told to trust. I think it's all about the election and keeping the economy from coming back, which is about the election. I'm sick of it," Woolery wrote in July 2020.

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Viola Davis became one of Hollywood's most revered actors through an array of powerful roles, from "Fences" to "The Woman King," and now her decorated career has earned her one of

the Golden Globes' highest honors Davis will receive the Cecil B. DeMille Award at the 82nd annual awards ceremony on Jan 5, the Golden Globes announced Wednesday morning. The actor has won praise for a string of compelling characters in films such as "The Help," "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" and "Doubt," while captivating TV audiences through the legal thriller drama "How to

Get Away with Murder. Golden Globes president Helen Hoehne called Davis a "luminary," and expressed admiration for the actor's dedication to her craft and impact on the



industry

"Viola's courage in portraying complex, powerful characters has broken barriers and paved new paths, making her an emblem of excellence and an ideal recipient of this pres-tigious award," Hoehne said. The DeMille Award has

been bestowed to 69 of Hollywood's greatest talents. Past recipients include Tom Hanks, Jeff Bridges, Oprah Winfrey,

Davis Morgan Freeman, Meryl Streep, Barbra Streisand and Sidney Poitier. (AP)

TOKYO: Police thought a shoe thief was on the loose at a kindergarten in southwestern Japan, until a security camera caught the furry culprit in action. A weasel with a tiny shoe in its mouth was spotted on the video footage after police installed three cameras in the school in the prefecture of Fukuoka.

"It's great it turned out not to be a human being," Deputy Police Chief Hiroaki Inada told The Associated Press Sunday. Teachers and parents had feared it could be a disturbed person with a shoe fetish. (AP)

NEW YORK: Jonathan Majors' ex-girlfriend has dropped her assault and defamation lawsuit against the once-rising Hollywood star after reaching a set-

Lawyers for Majors and Grace Jabbari agreed to dismiss the case with prejudice, according to a joint filing in Manhattan federal court Thursday

Jabbari's lawyer said Friday that the suit was "favorably settled" but declined to elaborate. (AP)

Bank hosts health screenings for male employees

Gulf Bank holds 'Movember' campaign to raise awareness about men's health

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Gulf Bank has organized the "Movember" campaign to further its commitment to employee health and well-being, following the success of Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October. Celebrated globally in November, this initiative focuses on raising awareness about men's health, with an emphasis on important issues like prostate cancer and mental health.

The campaign offered male employees initial medical screenings for prostate cancer and mental health assessments, conducted in partnership with Royale Hayat Hospital and MindWell Clinic.

Gulf Bank remains dedicated to fostering a work environment that supports overall well-being, with a strong focus on health. This initiative aligns with the Bank's sustainability strategy, which aims to promote a comprehensive approach to employee welfare.

Prior to launching the "Movember" campaign, Gulf Bank organized a health and wellness initiative for female employees, which included various health, awareness, and sports activities. This initiative highlights the Bank's commitment to nurturing and empowering its workforce, recognizing both male and female employees as its most valuable

These activities are part of the wide range of initiatives Gulf Bank implements each year as part of its sustainability programs, addressing key community issues. These programs are inclusive, supporting employees of all genders

Gulf Bank recognizes its essential role in promoting public health, particularly among its employees. The "Movember" campaign provides an opportunity to involve the broader community in meaningful conversations about men's health, which is often overlooked. The Bank aims for this campaign to inspire positive behavior changes and bring greater focus to men's overall health and well-being.

Gulf Bank is dedicated to upholding sustainability principles by promoting gender equality, providing fair benefits to all employees, and implementing sustainability standards both internally and externally. This commitment reinforces the Bank's leadership position in Kuwait.

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.



Polio cases up

Yemen reports 1st chickenpox case

ADEN, Nov 24, (Agencies): The Yemeni Ministry of Public Health and Population confirmed the first infection case of chickenpox in Al-Mahrah Governorate, near the eastern borders with Oman, on Saturday.

The patient showed positive response to medication, the Ministry's pandemic surveillance and response team told Yemen news agency Saba.

Persons in contact with the patient showed no symptoms of infection, which sends a reassuring message about the public heath situation in the governorate, the team noted in a state-

Polio: Pakistan reported three polio cases on Sunday, bringing the total number of cases in the country this year to 55, according to an official statement.

The Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the National Institute of Health confirmed the detection of Wild Poliovirus Type 1 (WPV1) in three districts, including Dera Ismail Khan, Zhob and Jaffar-

Dera Ismail Khan, a district in the country's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, has reported six polio cases this year. Meanwhile, the southwestern districts of Zhob and Jaffarabad have reported three and two cases, respectively, the statement said.

The statement said that the Pakistan Polio Program has conducted multiple mass vaccination drives since January 2024, providing vaccines directly to children at their doorsteps.

Vaping: Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov signed a law banning vapes and electronic cigarettes starting from mid-2025, the presidential press service reported Saturday.

The law prohibits the import, circulation and use of electronic cigarettes, imposing a fine of 115 US dollars for smoking electronic cigarettes and about 695 dollars for legal entities. Selling electronic cigarettes will result in fines of 230 dollars for individuals and 750 dollars for legal entities.

Importing electronic cigarettes will result in correctional labor for two months to one year or a fine of up to 1,390 dollars. Meanwhile, importing electronic cigarettes in large quantities will result in a fine of up to 2,300 dollars or imprisonment for one to two

The law, titled On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts in the Sphere of Protecting Citizens' Health, will come into force on July 1, 2025.

Climate

UN approves \$300b yearly aid for vulnerable nations

Critics call it insufficient

BAKU, Azerbaijan, Nov 24, (AP): United Nations climate talks adopted a deal to inject at least \$300 billion annually in humanity's fight against climate change, aimed at helping poor nations cope with the ravages of global warming in tense negotiations in the city where industry first tapped oil.

The \$300 billion will go to de-

veloping countries who need the cash to wean themselves off the coal, oil and gas that causes the globe to overheat, adapt to future warming and pay for the damage caused by climate change's extreme weather. It's not near the full amount of \$1.3 trillion that developing countries were asking for, but it's three times a deal of \$100 billion a year from 2009 that is expiring. Some delegations said this deal is headed in the right direction, with hopes that more money flows in the future.

It was not quite the agreement by consensus that these meetings usually operate with and developing nations were livid about being

COP29 President Mukhtar Babayev gaveled the deal into acceptance before any nation had a chance to speak. When they did they blasted him for being unfair to them, the deal for not being enough and the world's rich nations for being too stingy

Objected

"It's a paltry sum," India negoiator Chandni Raina said, repeatedly saying how India objected to rousing cheers. "I'm sorry to say we cannot accept it."

She told The Associated Press

that she has lost faith in the United Nations system. A long line of nations agreed with

India and piled on, with Nigeria's Nkiruka Maduekwe, CEO of the National Council on Climate Change, calling the deal an insult and a joke.

"I'm disappointed. It's definitely below the benchmark that we have been fighting for for so long," said Juan Carlos Monterrey, of the Panama delegation. He noted that a few changes, including the inclusion of the words "at least" before the number \$300 billion and an opportunity for revision by 2030,

helped push them to the finish line. "Our heart goes out to all those nations that feel like they were walked over," he said.

through "does not speak or reflect or inspire confidence and trust that we will come out of this grave problem of climate change," India's Raina said. "We absolutely object to the unfair means followed for adoption,"

The final package pushed

Raina said. "We are extremely hurt by this action by the president and the secretariat. Speaking for nearly 50 of the

poorest nations of the world, Evans Davie Njewa of Malawi was more mild, expressing what he called reservations with the deal.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a post on X that he hoped for a "more ambitious outcome." But he said the agreement "provides a base on which to

There were somewhat satisfied parties, with European Union's Wopke Hoekstra calling it a new era of climate funding, working hard to help the most vulnerable. But activists in the plenary hall could be heard coughing over Hoekstra's speech in an attempt to disrupt it.

Eamon Ryan, Ireland's environment minister, called the agreement "a huge relief."

"It was not certain. This was tough," he said. "Because it's a time of division, of war, of (a) multilateral system having real difficulties, the fact that we could get it through in these difficult circumstances is really important.'

U.N. Climate Change's Executive Secretary Simon Stiell called the deal an "insurance policy for humanity," adding that like insurance, "it only works if the premiums are paid in full, and on time."

The deal is seen as a step toward helping countries on the receiving end create more ambitious targets to limit or cut emissions of heattrapping gases that are due early next year. It's part of the plan to keep cutting pollution with new targets every five years, which the world agreed to at the U.N. talks in Paris in 2015.



A group photo from the cooperation agreement signing between Ali Abdulwahab Al-Mutawa Commercial Company and the Kuwaiti Cancer Patients Care Society.

Roche's lymphoma drugs made accessible

AAW, KSCCP bring hope to expatriate cancer patients with affordable care

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co. (AAW) announced today a partnership with the Kuwait Society for the Care of Cancer Patients (KSCCP) to provide advanced cancer drugs from Hoffmann-La Roche, the Swiss multinational healthcare company. This initiative aims to bring hope to expatriate cancer patients in Kuwait, making lymphoma treatment more accessible. The partnership agreement was signed

at AAW's headquarters on Wednesday, November 20th, during a meeting between AAW Chairman and CEO, Mr. Faisal Ali Al Mutawa, and KSCCP Mr. Mohamed Mubarak Al Otaibi, in the presence of the Vice President Hamoud Ali Al-Mutairi, and a delegation from Roche, including the Regional Manager for the Gulf, Dr. Ahmed Tawfik, and Dr. AAW CEO and Chairman, Mr.

Faisal Ali Al Mutawa said, "We are pleased to sign this agreement with the Kuwait Society for the Care of Cancer Patients to provide the latest medications for critical cases of cancer to expatriate patients who are unable to bear the costs of treatment. This initiative is a noble humanitarian act that instills hope and alleviates the suffering of patients.

He added, "We extend our gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of this initiative, with special thanks to the KSCCP, under the patronage of Mr. Mohammed Mubarak Al-Otaibi. At AAW, we remain committed to improving patients' lives and supporting charitable organizations



From right to left: Mr. Hamoud Ali Al-Mutairi, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Society, and Mr. Faisal Ali Al-Mutawa, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Ali Abdulwahab Al-Mutawa Company.

addressing various illnesses."

KSCCP Chairman, Mr. Mohamed Mubarak Al Otaibi said,"This partnership with AAW reflects our shared commitment to providing compassionate care and hope to expatriate cancer patients in Kuwait. By making lymphoma treatments more accessible and affordable, we are easing their burden and supporting their recovery. Thanks to AAW's dedication to this cause, particularly Mr. Faisal Al Mutawa, who consistently demonstrates the

spirit of generosity and solidarity.' Roche General Manager for the Gulf Countries, Dr. Ahmed Tawfik said, "At Roche, we are committed to improving patients' lives through innovation and ensuring that advanced treatments reach everyone in need. We recognize the efforts and the vital role KSCCP plays in supporting expatriate cancer patients and providing them with the care and hope they deserve."

Since its establishment, AAW has been dedicated to supporting organizations in the field of health awareness. The company has contributed to initiatives such as the Ruqaya Abdulwahab Al-Qatami Breast Cancer Foundation, and the National Cancer Awareness Campaign (CAN), among others.

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Aussie slump to 12-3 at stumps on third day

Jaiswal's heroics lead India to verge of victory over Australia in 1st test

shasvi Jaiswal's brilliant 161 and an unbeaten 100 by Virat Kohli had India sniffing victory in the opening Border-Gavaskar test after setting Australia an unlikely target of 534 runs at the Perth Stadium on Sunday.

Australia slumped to 12-3 at stumps on the third day in the face of taking on the highest-ever run chase for victory in test cricket.

Fast bowler and captain Jasprit Bumrah (2-1) drew first blood and trapped debutante opener Nathan Mc-Sweeney (0) lbw with the fourth delivery that kept low. Then off the last ball of the day, Bumrah trapped Marnus Labuschagne (3) lbw with another delivery that hardly bounced.

In between, nightwatchman and skipper Pat Cummins lasted eight balls before he edged fast bowler Mohamed Siraj to Kohli at second slip.

Bumrah picked up where he left off in the Australian first innings when he took 5-30 to bundle out the hosts for 104. This was after India was bowled out for 150 after winning the toss as 17 wickets tumbled on the first day.

Kohli swept legspinner Labuschagne for his eighth boundary to bring up his 30th century in his 119th test on India 11-11. test as India declared on 487-6 leaving Australia 190 overs over two days to secure an unlikely win.

India last won a test in Perth at the WACA ground in 2018.



India's Yashasvi Jaiswal celebrates after completing his 150 runs on the third day of the first cricket test between Australia and India in Perth, Aus-

four wickets.

359-5 at tea as the post lunch session

produced just 84 runs for the loss of

the space of six balls. That included

Jaiswal who clubbed medium paceman

Mitchell Marsh but to his dismay had

Steve Smith at point catching to end

first ball after lunch triggered the mini

collapse and included Rishabh Pant,

stumped as offspinner Nathan Layon

Devdutt Padikkal's dismissal to the

his near 7 1/2 hour innings.

India briefly lost its way in the session when it lost 4-46 including 3-8 in

It was also Kohli's first century in 16 innings since July 2023 and came off 143 balls and also included two sixes. He shared a rollicking 76 runs for the seventh wicket with Nitesh Kumar Reddy who was unbeaten on 38.

With Perth temperature soaring to 36 degrees Celsius (96.8 degrees Fahrenheit) the pitch was showing signs of early deterioration with cracks emerging and the odd ball keeping low making batting appear increasingly difficult.

India resuming on a well-placed 275-1 after lunch and progressed to

the latter while attempting to slog. Jaiswal, who lived in poverty and in a tent with the groundsman of the Mumbai Maidan before starting his career, played one of the finest innings in the short test history of at the Perth

cleverly pushed a delivery wide of the charging left hander only for wicket-keeper Alex Carey to whip the bails.

Batsman Druv Jurel was unlucky

when he referred his lbw decision and

TV replays showed the delivery just

brushing the leg stump.
But Kohli and Washington Sundar

(29) counterattacked with an 89-run

sixth wicket stand before Lyon bowled

from an appreciative third-day crowd. His insatiable appetite for big innings was evident Sunday as he stood crest fallen when finally dismissed after playing an innings that will be

Stadium and left to a standing ovation

remembered for many years to come.
His innings lasted 297 balls and provided the backbone of the Indian effort, putting the tourists in position to push for an early lead in the five-test series. He hit six sixes and 15 fours as he took his 2024 run tally to 1,280 in 12 tests at an average of 58.18 including two double hundreds against England at home to add to this ton.

Jaiswal brought up his fourth test century in sensational style as he parried a Josh Hazlewood bouncer over the third man boundary for his third

Lowest score in this matchup in 15 yrs

New Zealand wins in Turin but struggle against passionate Italy

TURIN, Italy, Nov 24, (AP): New Zealand dominated Italy everywhere except the scoreboard in a tour-ending 29-11 win in autumn rugby.

The All Blacks wanted to sign off 2024 in style and send off departing stalwarts Sam Cane and TJ Perenara with a flourish after five weeks in Yokohama, London, Dublin, Paris and Turin.

But Italy, humiliated by the All Blacks 96-17 last year at the Rugby World Cup, gave a passionate, committed effort to restrict New Zealand to its lowest score in this matchup in 15 years.

"We talked a lot during the week about how important it would be not to give up even for a second," Italy stand-in captain Juan Ignacio Brex said. "At the World Cup, every little mental switchoff brought the All Blacks under our posts, we couldn't allow that. We wanted to show our attack and our attitude, and we did it. Now we have to work on the technical parts.'

New Zealand was held to 17-6 until the last 10 minutes when it conjured tries for backs Mark Tele'a and Beauden Barrett while Italy was down to 14 men.

But those tries were split by Italy's one and only try, to Tommaso Menoncello served up by his center partner Brex.

New Zealand carried for more than twice as many meters as Italy, beat 31 defenders, but suffered from 18 Italy, 11 penalties and two yellow cards. handling errors, only one more than

Italy saved its best for last this autumn after being smashed by Argentina and struggling past Georgia just six days ago.

The Italians, privileged to play the first non-football match in a sold-out Juventus Stadium, were on it from the outset, and Paolo Garbisi and Beauden Barrett traded penalties.

Moments after All Blacks captain Scott Barrett was sin-binned for a dangerous clearout, scrumhalf Cam Roigard snuck through the middle of Italy's ruck defense for the first try in



Italy's Monty Ioane, left, and New Zealand's Will Jordan compete for the ball during the Autumn Nations Series rugby union match between Italy and the All Blacks at the Allianz stadium, in Turin, Italy. (AP)

the 24th minute.

Wing Monty Ioane typified Italy's defense when he made a try-saving tackle on Will Jordan from behind, got up, and made another try-saver on Wallace Sititi, forcing a forward pass.

But fullback Will Jordan typified the All Blacks' class, as Italy ran out of defenders and his 38th try in 41 tests passed Jonah Lomu on their alltime try-scoring list.

After the All Blacks survived Italy's siege of their try-line after halftime - though repeated fouls saw center Anton Lienert-Brown sinbinned - Italy then repelled 16 phases by New Zealand at the expense of replacement prop Simone Ferrari, also yellow-carded for too many fouls.

Ferrari's absence helped the All Blacks, who also got a lift from their bench, notably from Perenara, who had led his last All Blacks haka. As he came on for Roigard, fellow World Cup winner Cane departed to wide applause after his 104th and last test.

Italy's defense led by No. 8 Ross Vintcent with 21 tackles and Menoncello's 14 continued to swarm while a man down, but the All Blacks ruthlessly exploited the man advantage to give the scoreline a flattering look.

Italy back to Davis Cup final



Italy's Jannik Sinner returns the ball against Australia's Alex de Minaur during the Davis Cup semifinal at the Martin Carpena Sports Hall in Malaga, southern Spain. (AP)

Sinner and Berrettini the heroes

MALAGA, Spain, Nov 24, (AP): Top-ranked Jannik Sinner and Matteo Berrettini won matches in front of a supportive crowd to lift defending champion Italy past Australia 2-0 and back into the Davis Cup final.

Sinner extended his tour-level winning streak to 24 singles sets in a row by beating No. 9 Alex de Minaur 6-3, 6-4 after Berrettini came back to defeat Thanasi Kokkinakis 6-7 (6), 6-3, 7-5.

"Hopefully this can give us confidence for to-

morrow," said Sinner, now 9-0 against de Minaur. Italy will meet first-time finalist Netherlands on Sunday for the title. The Dutch followed up their victory over Rafael Nadal and Spain in the quarterfinals by eliminating Germany in the semifinals on Friday.

Italy, which got past Australia in last year's final, is trying to become the first country to win the Davis Cup twice in a row since the Czech Republic in 2012 and 2013. Italy's women won the Billie Jean King Cup by defeating Slovakia in Malaga on Wednesday.

The much shorter trip for Italian fans than Australians meant the 9,200-seat arena sounded like a home environment Saturday for Berrettini, with repeated chants of "I-ta-lia!" or "Ole, ole, ole, ole! Matte'! Matte'!" amplified by megaphones and accompanied by drums and trumpets. Chair umpire James Keothavong repeatedly asked spectators to stop whistling as Kokkinakis was serving.
"We're in Spain," Kokkinakis said, "but it felt

like we were in Italy. Sinner received the same sort of backing, of

course, although he might not have needed as much with the way he has played all year, including taking the title at the ATP Finals last weekend. "It's an honor, it's a pleasure, to have Jannik

with us," Italian captain Filippo Volandri said. The biggest suspense Saturday on the indoor hard court at the Palacio de Deportes Jose Maria Martina Carpena in southern Spain came in Berrettini vs. Kokkinakis.

Berrettini, the runner-up at Wimbledon in 2021, needed to put aside the way he gave away the opening set, wasting three chances to finish it, and managed to do just that. He grabbed the last three games of the match, breaking to lead 6-5, then closing it out with his 14th ace after 2 hours, 44 minutes.

The big-hitting Berrettini has been ranked as high as No. 6 and is currently No. 35 after missing

chunks of time the past two seasons because of injuries or illness. He sat out two of this year's four major tournaments and lost in the second round at each of the other two.

But when healthy, he is among the world's top tennis players, capable of speedy serves and booming forehands. He was in control for much of the match against No. 77 Kokkinakis, who was the 2022 Australian Open men's doubles champion with Nick Kyrgios and helped his country get past the United States in the quarterfinals Thursday.

Berrettini earned the first break to lead 6-5 in the opening set and was a point away while serving at 40-30. Kokkinakis saved that via a 21-stroke exchange that ended with Berrettini sending a forehand long, then ended up breaking back when the Italian missed again off that wing.

Then, ahead 6-4 in the tiebreaker, Berrettini had two more opportunities to own the set. But Kokkinakis - who saved four match points against Ben Shelton in the quarterfinals - saved one with a gutsy down-the-line backhand passing winner and the other with a 131 mph (212 kph) ace, part of a four-point run to close that set.

"It wasn't easy to digest ... because I had so many chances," Berrettini said.

Stolz bags three golds

US shines in 500m at ISU Speed Skating World Cup

BEIJING, Nov 24, (Xinhua): American skaters Jordan Stolz and Erin Jackson won men's and women's 500m respectively at the ISU Speed Skating World Cup in Nagano, Japan on Sunday.

Stolz had bagged three golds in the tournament before seizing the men's 500m title in 34.41 seconds, just 0.08s ahead of the runner-up Tatsuya Shinhama of Japan, while the bronze went to Merijn Scheperkamp of the Netherlands.

The 32-year-old Jackson finished first in 37.78 seconds, beating the Netherlands' Dione Voskamp also by a narrow margin of 0.06 seconds, and fellow American skater Kimi Goetz took the bronze.

Timothy Loubineaud of France pocketed the men's mass start gold in 7 minutes and 52.12 secons, while Marijke Groenewoud of the Netherlands was crowned in the women's mass start in 8:36.64.

Italy and the Netherlands triumphed in the men's and women's team pursuit respectively. while South Korea dominated the mixed relay.

The three-day tournament concluded on Sunday as the United States became the biggest winner with five golds.

The next World Cup event will take place in Beijing from November 29 to December 1.



Gold medalist Amber Glenn (center) of the United States, silver medalist Chiba Mone (left) of Japan and bronze medalist Kim Chaeyeon of South Korea pose during the awarding ceremony for the women's singles skating at the Cup of China ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating 2024 in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality. (Xinhua)

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i. Should have the ability to work independently with minimal supervision, organize his time and workload and have the desire to help people.
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Pay KD, 200-7X10-270.

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4. For any further query regarding this position, please contact over telephone +965-2390-0914 or email: bdembku2024@gmail.com

Racing clinches Copa Sudamericana title

ASUNCION, Nov 24, (Xinhua): Argentina's Racing secured its first international trophy in 36 years on Saturday with a 3-1 victory over Brazilian side Cruzeiro in the Copa Sudamericana final.

Gaston Martirena gave Racing the lead at La Olla in Paraguayan capital Asuncion in the 15th minute, when he took a touch after Juan Fernando Quintero's pass before curling an improbable 25-yard effort into the far

The Buenos Aires outfit doubled its lead five minutes later through Adrian Martinez, who slid home at the far post following Maximiliano Salas' cross from the right wing.

halftime by heading home from close range after his initial attempt was blocked by goalkeeper Gabriel Arias. Roger Martinez put the result beyond

eran goalkeeper Cassio after Juan Nardoni's through-ball on the counterattack.

throughout the entire competition," Quin-

Kaio Jorge reduced the deficit just after

doubt as he slotted a cool finish past vet-"We faced a very tough rival today but we deserve this title for the way we played

"I can't speak highly enough of this group. Every player contributed to this and

we are champions not by chance, but because of hard work," added the Colombia international midfielder.



Players of Argentina's Racing Club celebrate with the trophy after winning the Copa Sudamericana final soccer match against Brazil's Cruzeiro in Asuncion, Paraguay. (AP)

nental triumph since 1988, when it also beat Cruzeiro in the final of the now-defunct Supercopa Libertadores.

The result marked Racing's first conti-

Raphael Veiga struck a first-half winner as Palmeiras moved to the top of Brazil's Serie A standings on Saturday with a 1-0 away win over Atletico Goianiense.

Veiga combined with teenager Estevao before finding the time and space in traffic to calmly slot his left-footed shot from 15 vards into the bottom left corner.

The result lifted Palmeiras to the top of the 20-team standings with 70 points, ahead of second-placed Botafogo on goal difference with three games remaining.

"It was a tough game against an opponent that had nothing to lose," Palmeiras manager Abel Ferreira told a post-match news

"We did what we needed to do today, but we now have to start thinking about our next match," he added, alluding to Tuesday's home clash against Botafogo.

Kuwait ready to welcome fans

Kuwait's sporting heritage in the spotlight as it hosts Khaleeji Zain 26

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kuwait is putting the finishing touches to what promises to be a spectacular and entertaining Khaleeji Zain 26, one of football's most prestigious regional tournaments that was previously known as the Arabian Gulf Cup.

Tens of thousands of fans are expected to descend on the Gulf state for the 26 th edition of the biennial tournament which runs from December 21 to January 3, with eight Gulf national teams playing 15 matches at the stateof-the-art Jaber Al-Ahmad

International Stadium and Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah Stadium (Sulaibikhat Club Stadium).

The tournament will throw the spotlight on Kuwait as a sporting and leisure destination, a challenge that is being grasped with both hands by a state with a rich and proud sporting

Kuwait announced itself as an accomplished sporting host nation when it welcomed the Asian Cup to its shores in 1980, and it used home advantage to become the first Arab nation to win the much sought-after continental football title. The state was captivated and enjoyed how the power of sport could unite a nation in support, encouraging Kuwait to open its doors to more prestigious sporting championships at the Arab, Asian and World level.

Supported by a growing and welltrained volunteer workforce, which is vital to the success of any large-scale event, Kuwait has since developed an impressive hosting CV that can list numerous sports.

It has become a key component of Kuwait's sports strategy implemented by the Public Authority for Sports, which was created in partnership between the relevant bodies and institutions from both the public and private sectors.

The strategy has succeeded in advancing the sports sector in Kuwait by harnessing resources and developing systems that have improved sports activity and placed Kuwait on the international sporting map as a desirable sporting destination.

It all bodes well for the Khaleeji Zain 26 which Kuwait is hosting on behalf of the Arab Gulf Cup Football Federation for the fifth time.

An admirable recent track record of host major sporting events Kuwait hosted the International Ice Hockey Federation World Championship Division IV in April 2024, featuring Mongolia, Indonesia, Malaysia and the hosts, Kuwait.

In 2023, Kuwait hosted the World



Al-Sulaibikhat Stadium one of the stadia to host the 'Gulf 26' matches

Bowling Championships featuring 400 of the planet's best male and female players. Also, in 2023, Kuwait hosted the

inaugural Middle East Asia Pentathlon Championships on behalf of the International Modern Pentathlon Federation, and the 1 st World Police Futsal

Cup for the International Police Sports

Back in September this year, Kuwait was praised for its staging of the FIP World Padel Championships Qualifiers for Asia and Africa, featuring 14 nations.

Over 150 athletes from 36 countries took part in the Freediving World Indoor Championship last year and, still in the pool, the World U20 Water Polo Championship was superbly held in Kuwait in 2019.

There have been so many more international championships from shooting to even wireless car championships that have shown Kuwait's hosting pedigree time and time again.

In combat sports, Kuwait has proudly hosted the International Women's Boxing Championship, and has staged many contests across several combat

Kuwait has hosted the Khaleeji Zain 26 on four previous occasions in 1974, 1990, 2003/04 and 2017/18, and will be hoping that it can make home advantage count like in 1974 when they clinched one of their record 10 Gulf titles on home soil.

But one thing is for certain, the seven visiting Gulf teams, officials, fans and media making their final preparations to travel to Kuwait can be assured that they will be arriving at a friendly destination that places the well-being of its visitors at the heart of its preparations for Khaleeji Zain 26.

Utah routs Knicks to halt four-game skid

Nuggets use strong 2nd half to beat Lakers



the first half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles. (AP)

SALT LAKE CITY, Nov 24, (AP): Lauri Markkanen had 34 points, Collin Sexton had four 3-pointers in the fourth quarter and the Utah Jazz ran past the New York Knicks 121-106 on Saturday to snap a fourgame skid.

Sexton finished 25 points and John Collins had 20 points and 13 rebounds forthe Jazz.

OG Anunoby scored a seasonhigh 27 points, Jalen Brunson scored 23 points and Karl-Anthony Towns had 16 points and 16 rebounds for the Knicks, who shot 39% from the field and lost for the first time in five games.

New York cut the lead to eight in the fourth quarter, but the Jazz responded with 10 consecutive points, capped by Johnny Juzang's 3-pointer to make it 104-86 with 6:16 remaining.

Nuggets 127, Lakers 102

In Los Angeles, Nikola Jokic scored 34 points and Michael Porter Jr. added 24 as Denver used a strong second half to beat Los Angeles.

Russell Westbrook had 14 points, 11 assists and seven rebounds for Denver against his for-

Austin Reaves scored 19 points and LeBron James added 18 for the

Lakers, who lost consecutive home Spurs 104, Warriors 94 In San Antonio, Victor Wem-

banyama scored 25 points, Harri-

son Barnes had 22 and San Antonio overcame a 17-point third-quarter deficit to beat Golden State.

Wembanyama added nine assists, seven rebounds and three blocks in his return from a three-game absence with a bruised right knee.

San Antonio rookie Stephon Castle added 19 points and stole the dribble from Golden State's Stephen Curry behind the 3-point line with 1:46 remaining to preserve an eight-point lead.

Magic 111, Pistons 100 In Orlando, Franz Wagner had

30 points, nine rebounds and eight assists, and Orlando beat Detroit for their eighth win in nine games. Wagner, who has scored 30 or

more points in five of his last sev-



Orlando Magic guard Anthony Black (0) collides with Detroit Pistons guard Marcus Sasser (25) who goes to the basket during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Orlando, Fla. (AP)

en games, sat out the fourth quarter while the Magic's bench stretched Orlando's lead to 22 with 7:19 re-

Grizzlies 142, Bulls 131

In Chicago, Scotty Pippen Jr. had a career-best 30 points with 10 assists to lead Memphis past Chi-

Jaylen Wells added 26 points as Memphis won its second straight.

Pippen, playing in the arena where his Hall of Fame father's retired number hangs, had 26 points in the first three quarters for Memphis, which has won three of its

Trail Blazers 104, Rockets 98

In Houston, Anfernee Simons scored 25 points and Shaedon Sharpe added 24 as Portland bounced back from a tough loss with a win over Houston.

The victory came after Portland was blown out 116-88 by the Rockets in an NBA Cup game Fri-

The Trail Blazers led by three late before Alperen Sengun cut the lead to 99-98 on a shot in the paint with 21 seconds left.

Bucks 125, Hornets 119

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 32 points and 11 rebounds and Damian Lillard added 31 points to lead Milwaukee past Charlotte for their fourth consecutive victory.

Milwaukee opened the fourth quarter with a 14-5 spurt for a 110-90 lead, but the Hornets got it to 121-119 on Brandon Miller's 3-pointer with 15 seconds left.

Best of the Rest

Noel wins WC slalom: Olympic champion Clement Noel held on to his commanding first-run lead to take a men's World Cup slalom Sunday for his second win in two weeks and 12th overall.

The Frenchman lost time in the final run but still finished 0.43 seconds ahead of Kristoffer Jakobsen, denying the Swedish skier what would have been his first World Cup win. Atle Lie McGrath of Norway,

who was second after the opening run, dropped to third, 0.44 behind.

Noel also won the seasonopening slalom in Finland a week ago for his first World Cup victory in 22 months. "It's for sure really, really important," Noel said when asked in a course-side TV interview about starting the season with back-to-back wins. (AP)

Sounders into West final: Jordan Morris scored in the 109th minute and Stefan Frei made nine saves to lead Seattle to a stunning 2-1 overtime victory over topseeded Los Angeles FC on Saturday night in a Western Conference semifinal at BMO Stadium, earning the fourth-seeded Sounders a trip to the conference final.

Seattle advances to play the winner of Sunday's semifinal matchup between the second-seeded Los Angeles Galaxy and No. 6 seed Minnesota United after ending a 10-match winless streak in all competitions (0-8-2) against LAFC.

Defender Ryan Hollingshead gave LAFC the lead five minutes into the second half when he used assists from Mateusz Bogusz and Eduard Atuesta to score after a giveaway by Seattle defender Jackson Ragen. (AP)

Red Bulls advance to final:

Dante Vanzeir notched an assist on a first-half goal by Felipe Carballo and then scored nine minutes later. and Carlos Coronel made them stand up by posting his seventh career clean sheet against New York City FC in the New York Red Bulls' 2-0 victory in an Eastern Conference semifinal at Citi Field on Saturday night.

The seventh-seeded Red Bulls will play the winner of Sunday's semifinal between No. 9 seed Atlanta United and fourth-seeded Orlando City for the conference championship and the right to play for the MLS Cup.

The Red Bulls grabbed a 1-0 lead in the 16th minute on a leftfooted shot from 25 yards out by Carballo. Carballo made five starts and eight appearances in his first season in the league without a goal contribution. It was his second goal in three postseason

Scots end Aussies hopes:

Australia's bid for its first rugby Grand Slam in 40 years is over.

The Wallabies lost 27-13 to Scotland on Sunday to end their hopes of a sweep of victories in the season-closing tour of Britain and Ireland. They'd previously beaten England and Wales, and will end the tour in Ireland next

Adding to Australia's woes was the sight of Joseph Sua'ali'i, the team's new star back, going off injured in the first half at Murrayfield after hurting his right arm tackling Scotland captain Sione Tuipulotu. Tuipulotu, born in Australia,

was one of four try-scorers for Scotland while Harry Potter - a debutant for the Wallabies and the target of pre-match puns because of his name - went over for a late consolation for the tourists.

Hamburg fires Baumgart: Former Bundesliga heavyweight Hamburger SV has fired Steffen Baumgart as coach after five games without a win across all

competitions. The second-division club said Sunday it was letting Baumgart go because of a "crisis of performances and results" after the team's 2-2 draw at home with Schalke on Saturday.

That left Hamburg eighth in the 18-team division, four points behind early leader Paderborn after 13 rounds. (AP)



Al Arabi seeks new win in the championship.

Kuwait Club aims to maintain perfect record against Yarmouk

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kuwait Club is set for an anticipated clash against Yarmouk today at 5:00 pm in the fourth round of the Federation Volleyball Championship. Following this, a high-stakes encounter between Al-Arabi and Burgan will take place at 7:00 pm. Both matches are scheduled at the Federation Hall within the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex for Indoor Halls.

The tournament features nine participating clubs, with the top four advancing to the semi-finals. The team faces the fourth, while the second takes on the third, with the winners progressing to the final match.

Kuwait Club leads the standings with 9 points from three consecutive wins and is the clear favorite against Yarmouk, currently in eighth place without any points.

The second match promises more intensity, as Burgan, ranked third with 9 points from three unbeaten matches, holds a slight edge over Al-Arabi. Al-Arabi, in fifth place with 2 points, has played two matches, narrowly winning against Al-Shabab 3-2 but falling to Kazma 1-3. The evenly matched contest is expected

Int'l judge Frank de Kock guides riders at Kuwait dressage event

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Kuwait Equestrian Federation hosted a training championship in the discipline of "Dressage" at the Kuwait Equestrian Center in Subhan, featuring the participation of numerous male and female riders.

Alaa Al-Sultan, one of the participating riders, highlighted that the event encompassed three levels of dressage and featured Frank de Kock, a Dutch judge accredited by the International Equestrian Federation (FEI). De Kock evaluated the performances and dedicated time after each test to provide riders with personalized advice and insights into scoring methods, helping them refine their techniques and improve future performances.

The event also welcomed German rider Lara Pfeiffer, who expressed her joy at visiting Kuwait for the first time. She remarked, "I am proud



Frank, Lara and with Sultan during the coronation.

that all the riders today were stars," reflecting her admiration for the participants' skills and enthusiasm.

Al-Nassr eyes Asian glory

RIYADH, Nov 24, (AP): Cristiano Ronaldo's hopes of winning a first major trophy since arriving in Saudi Arabia in 2022 were given an unlikely domestic lifeline on Saturday and, on Monday, the Portuguese star can help Al-Nassr stay on course for a first Asian title.

Ronaldo scored his seventh goal of the season against Al-Qadsia on Friday in a battle against Spanish defender Nacho but his former Real Madrid teammate was celebrating at the final

"It was a different and difficult game against Ronaldo," Nacho said. "He is my friend and I had the best part of my career playing with him but here we have a different experience and are playing for different teams. It was an

honor to play against him." Al-Nassr looked to be slipping out of the Saudi Pro League (SPL) title race. Al-Hilal, unbeaten in 46 league games, would have gone nine points clear on Saturday with a win against Al-Khaleej but despite leading 2-0, Hilal fell to a shock 3-2 defeat, a first

since May 2023. "We knew that the victories would not continue because this is football," said Hilal forward Marcos Leonardo. "We have to work and achieve victory in the next match in the AFC Champions League Elite.'

Saudi Arabian clubs have yet to lose in the western zone of the Asian competition - the 24 teams in the tournament are divided into two groups of 12 with eight from each progressing to the Round of 16 after playing eight match-

es - and occupy the top three spots. Al-Nassr is third with ten points from four games and will be almost certain of a place in the next round if it defeats Al-Gharafa of Qatar.

Al-Hilal, a four-time champion and top of the group with four wins, also travels to Qatar to face 2011 winner Al-Sadd. Unlike SPL games, Neymar is eligible to play in Asian competitions but the Brazilian is still recovering from the injury sustained against Esteghlal of Iran earlier in November.

Al-Ahli of Jeddah is second with the maximum 12 points and faces defending champion Al-Ain of the United Arab Emirates. Al-Ain is bottom of the group and lost 5-4 to Hilal and then 5-1 to Nassr, defeats which cost Hernan Crespo his job as head coach earlier in November. The Argentine has been replaced by Leonardo Jardim, the Portuguese boss who led Al-Hilal to the 2021 continental title.



Tottenham's Son Heung-min, right, shoots on goal as Manchester City's Kyle Walker defends during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester City and Tottenham at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, England. Tottenham won 4-0. (AP)

Sports

Verstappen wins 4th F1 championship

Mercedes sweep Las Vegas Grand Prix

LAS VEGAS, Nov 24, (AP): Asked how he planned to celebrate his fourth consecutive Formula 1 championship, Max Verstappen did a quick scan of the room searching for drink.

Actually, Verstappen can do anything he wants after finishing fifth on Saturday night in the Las Vegas Grand Prix to beat Lando Norris of McLaren for the title with two F1 races remaining this season.

The Red Bull driver is now a king of Las Vegas, a year after he arrived in Sin City extremely negative about the extravagant race on the famed Strip. He won and completely changed his tune last November as the Dutchman even sang "Viva Las Vegas" as he crossed the finish line.

Now he used the street circuit to become only the sixth driver in F1 history to win at least four titles. Verstappen needed only to finish ahead of Norris to win the title. He started fifth but was already up to second by the 10th lap and Norris never challenged.

He ended the race up 63 points over Norris with two events remaining this season - a position Verstappen said he never expected to be in even though he's the son of a former F1 driver. His father, Jos, was even once teammates with Michael Schumacher, one of the best in F1 history.

Despite being surrounded by greatness, Verstappen insist-

ed he never expected his own career to be so successful.

"When you're growing up racing some legendary drivers, it's very impressive that I can even be on the podium, whenever it is," he said. "Maybe win a championship? It's already hard enough to win one, and then of course, then you also need a bit of luck to be in the right team situation to maybe win more. Luckily, we did that.

The team celebrated their champion as soon as the race

"Max Verstappen you are a four-time world champion," team principal Christian Horner said on the radio. "That is a phenomenal, phenomenal achievement. You can be incredibly proud of yourself as we are."

Verstappen sounded unusually emotional on the radio. "Oh My God, what a season. Four times. Thank you, thank you guys," he said. "We gave it all."

The race was won, meanwhile, by George Russell who was followed by Lewis Hamilton in the first 1-2 sweep for the Mercedes drivers since 2022. Hamilton came from 10th on the grid - two weeks after a demoralizing race in Brazil to capture his podium finish.

The duo crossed the finish line under a checkered flag waved by actor Sylvester Stallone.

Carlos Sainz Jr. finished third for Ferrari as the constructor championship remains a tight battle between leader McLaren and Ferrari. Charles Leclerc, his teammate, was fourth. Red Bull had won the title that pays roughly \$150



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen, of the Netherlands, celebrates with teammates after winning the Formula 1 championship after the F1 Las Vegas Grand Prix auto race in Las Vegas. (AP)

million in prize money the last two seasons but has slipped to third in the standings.

That championship battle appears headed to next month's

season finale in Abu Dhabi. McLaren has a 24-point lead over Ferrari heading into this weekend's race in Qatar after Norris and Oscar Piastri finished sixth and seventh in Las Vegas.

Blue to depart for training camp in Doha

Kuwait ramps up training for Khaleeji Zain 26



Kuwaiti players led by the coach prepare for Gulf Zain 26.

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kuwait begins its preparations for the "Khaleeji Zain 26" tournament today at 8: 00 pm in the sports hall of the Bayan Youth Center, under the General Authority for Sports. Training will continue tomorrow at the subsidiary stadium of Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, followed by a concluding session back at the Bayan sports hall.

The delegation is set to depart this Thursday for a training camp in Doha, Qatar, which will run until mid-December. This camp forms part of the team's extensive preparations for the Khaleeji Zain 26 championship, scheduled to take place in Kuwait from December 21 to January 3. During the camp, the team will play three friendly matches against Yemen, Syria, and Lebanon.

Key players from Qadsia, including Khaled Ibrahim, Khaled Al-Rashidi, Eid Al-Rashidi, Rashed Al-Dosari, Adhbi Shehab, and Moaz Al-Dhafiri, will miss the initial preparation phase due to their participation in the Gulf Clubs Championship. Sîmîlarly, Kuwait SC players Faĥad Al-Hajri, Sami Al-Sanea, Abdulraĥman Kamil, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Reda Hani, Mishari Ghannam, Faisal Zayed, Mohammed Daham, Yousef Nasser, and Khaled Al-Kharqawi will be unavailable as they fulfill commitments to the AFC Champions League 2. Both groups are expected to join the national team on December 5.

The Gulf Zain 26 draw placed Kuwait in Group A alongside Qatar, the UAE, and Oman, while Group B comprises Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Yemen.

The preparation program has been developed in coordination with the Kuwait Football Federation's Board of Directors and the technical and administrative staff. Argentine coach Juan Antonio Pizzi aims to assess the readiness of all play-

We played a really bad game: Flick

HH Amir congratulates Sheikha Naima for receiving Arab Sports Pioneers Award

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable on Sunday to Sheikha Naima Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Chairperson of Kuwait Women's Sports Federation and Honorary Chairperson of the Organizing Committee for Women's Sports in the GCC.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir congratulated Sheikha Naima on receiving the UAE's "Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak Women Sports Award" in the category of Arab Sports Pioneers.

His Highness the Amir praised the distinguished honor she received in appreciation for her efforts in enhancing women's sports in Kuwait and the GCC, wishing her continued success.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable on Sunday to Sheikha Naima,

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince congratulated Sheikha Naima on receiving the UAE's "Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak Women Sports Award" in the category of Arab Sports Pioneers, wishing her continued success

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable on Sunday to Sheikha Naima

In the cable, His Highness the Prime Minister congratulated Sheikha Naima on receiving the UAE's "Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak Women Sports Award" in the category of sports pioneers.

Kazma secures fourth spot at the Asian Clubs Championship

Bv Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kazma secured fourth place in the 27th Asian Handball Clubs Championship, which concluded recently in Doha, Qatar, after a 24-34 loss to Qatar's Al Duhail in the third-place playoff.

The title was claimed by UAE's Sharjah Club, who edged out Saudi Arabia's Al Khaleej in a thrilling final, winning 27-26.

Kazma's journey in the tourna-ment was marked by missed opportunities, particularly in the semi-final match against Sharjah. Despite leading by five goals at one stage, a series of costly mistakes allowed their opponents to stage a comeback and secure a narrow 28-27 victory in the dying seconds, following a fiercely contested match that extended into

two overtimes. Kuwait Club, the second Kuwaiti



Al Duhail attacks the Kazma defense.

representative in the tournament, finished in sixth place after a 28-31 defeat to Qatar's Al Rayyan in the fifthplace decider. Meanwhile, Bahrain's Al Shabab claimed seventh place with a 36-31 victory over Iran's Mes Kerman.

Qadsiya faces Burgan in a high-stakes clash

By Hassan Mosa Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Qadsiya faces a challenging test as it takes on Burgan at 7:30 pm today in the ninth round of the preliminary stage of the Handball League. The round also features a clash between Salmiya and Al-Arabi at 6:00 pm, and an earlier matchup between Al-Qurain and Khaitan at 4:30 pm.

The league format allows the top six teams from the preliminary stage to qualify for the Premier League.

In the first game, Qadsiya, currently eighth with 8 points, aims to build on its recent wins and climb the standings to secure a spot among the top six. However, this goal will be tested against Burgan, sitting comfortably in third place with 11 points and showcasing consistent performances throughout the tournament. Qadisiyah began the season poorly, losing four of its first eight matches, but hopes for resurgence under new Tunisian coach Amen Al-Qafsi.

The second game promises intense competition as Al-Arabi and Salmiya, tied at 12 points each, battle for the top spot. Al-Arabi holds a



Al-Qadsiya seeks to continue its journey to qualify for the handball league.

slim lead on goal difference, but both teams are eager to seize victory and claim the lead in the standings.

In the third game, Al-Qurain, positioned seventh with 8 points, has a favorable chance to secure a win against Khaitan, who sits in 11th place with just 4 points. A victory would help Al-Qurain stay in contention for a spot in the Premier League.

Barca concedes two late goals in draw at Celta

BARCELONA, Spain, Nov 24, (AP): Celta Vigo gave 10-man Barcelona a shock by scoring two late goals and snatching a 2-2 draw at home in the Spanish league.

Barcelona was minutes away from a win to pad its league lead after Raphinha and Lewandowski had put Barcelona ahead.

But the game dramatically swung after Barcelona defensive midfielder Marc Casadó was sent off with a second booking in the 81st. Moments later Jules Koundé's poor control of a ball in his area allowed Alfon González to pick his pocket and give the hosts hope in the 84th minute.

Celta poured forward at Balaidos Stadium and Hugo Álvarez rifled in the 86th-minute equalizer with Barcelona unable to mark the extra man.

Barcelona coach Hansi Flick, however, said that he saw it coming since his team had never been able to establish its passing game and was making mistakes even when up 2-0.

"It was not only the 10 last minutes. it was the whole match. We played today a really bad game," Flick said. "The passing game for us was bad. We made a lot of mistakes and at the end we had no confidence with the ball."

This was Barcelona's second straight

stumble since Lamine Yamal was side-

lined with a right-ankle injury. Barce-

lona lost 1-0 at Real Sociedad without

Yamal before the international break. Barcelona is seven points ahead of third-place Real Madrid, which has played two fewer games.

Koundé accepted the blame for what he called his "gross mistake" that helped give Celta hope.

'We didn't do what we needed to all game, and at the end they made us pay," Koundé said. "It starts with me. I can't lose my focus like that. It was a gross mistake that can't happen. I accept that it was my fault.'

The late rally by Celta came after Raphinha had led Barcelona as he filled

in for Yamal on the right side of the front three. Raphinha opened the scoring in the

15th when he ran onto a long pass by Koundé that bounced over left back Óscar Mingueza, cut back to his left foot and fired home.

Lewandowski doubled the lead in the 61st after Raphinha intercepted a pass by Minqueza and set up his strike partner. The Poland striker scrambled the ball past two defenders before slotting beyond Vicente Guaita.

Lewandowski took his league-leading tally to 15 goals in 14 rounds, while



Celta's Javi Rodriguez, left, and Barcelona's Dani Olmo fight for the ball during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Celta Vigo and Barce-Iona at the Balaidos stadium in Vigo, Spain. (AP)

Barcelona. Coach Diego Simeone showed his sensitive side after the match when he choked up when speaking about this love for the team he has coached for

Raphinha has added eight league goals.

Raphinha came close to a second

goal that would have made it 3-0 when

he hit the post in the 77th, just moments

before the wild final stretch when it all

can't happen just because we had

a player sent off. But onto the next

game," said Gavi Páez, who started his

first match since returning from a seri-

Antoine Griezmann converted a late

penalty to equalize and Alexander Sor-

loth struck an 86th-minute winner to

give Atletico Madrid a 2-1 win at home

The comeback victory lifted Atletico

into second place - five points behind

"We have to learn from this. This

crumbled for the visitors.

ous leg injury last season.

over Alaves.

nearly 13 years.

Valencia played its first home game since last month's devastating floods that killed over 200 people in eastern Spain. The club honored the victims before kickoff when several fans were seen to

cry during the ceremony. Hugo Duro led the 4-2 win over Real Betis by scoring a double.

Girona routed Espanyol 4-1 in a Catalan regional derby with Bojan Miovski's first two goals since joining the club.

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