



Scan the QR code to access the Arab Times WhatsApp Channel



Amir, Crown Prince receive Saudi Minister of State at Bayan Palace



Left: HH the Amir receives Saudi Minister of State. Right: HH the Crown Prince receives Saudi Minister of State.

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Saudi Arabia Minister of State and member of the Cabinet Prince Turki bin Mohammad Al-Saud at Bayan Palace Tuesday morning.

Prince Turki Al-Saud conveyed to His Highness the Amir the greetings of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, and Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud, as well as their wishes to His Highness the Amir for long-lasting health and wellness and for the people of Kuwait further progress and prosperity.

In response, His Highness the Amir conveyed his greetings to King Salman and Prince Mohammad, wishing them long-lasting health and wellness, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its people further progress and prosperity.

Saudi Arabian Finance Minister Mohammad Al-Jadaan and Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya attended the reception.

On the same day, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received the Saudi Arabian Minister of State and member of the cabinet Prince Turki

Continued on Page 5

Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah
Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

End of Iran's slogan of exporting revolution

THE recent events in the region – particularly in Syria, the sudden collapse of the Baath regime, and the defeat of Hezbollah, which was the crown jewel of the Iranian axis in Lebanon, should teach Tehran a lesson.

By following a sectarian path, Tehran will not be able to achieve its long-standing goal of “exporting the revolution”, which was enshrined in its constitution.

The Persian regime must realize now that the balance of power in the region has shifted, and it can no longer contend with the surviving factions of defeated militias.

In the Gaza Strip, where attempts have been made for years to reshape the religious and social beliefs of its people through its obedient pawns like Hamas and Islamic Jihad in accordance with that nonsensical slogan, Tehran's influence is no longer as strong. There is now little space to govern the forces Tehran has relied on for decades.

Continued on Page 5
Email: ahmed@aljarallah.com
Follow me on:
facebook X
ahmedaljarallah@gmail.com

Zero family visit visa violations in Kuwait

610 expat violators deported in 5-day sweep



HH the Prime Minister chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Major General Ali Al-Adwani, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Residency and Nationality Affairs, announced that no violations of family visit permits have been recorded over the past nine months, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Speaking on the “60 Minutes” program set to air on Al-Akhabar Channel Wednesday, Al-Adwani attributed this success to the clear directives from Kuwait's leadership aimed at facilitating entry and exit while ensuring accountability.

He highlighted the reintroduction of family visits on March 8, emphasizing the balance between openness and adherence to rules.

Al-Adwani pointed out that while Kuwait allows free entry for citizens of many countries, the same generosity should be reciprocated abroad.

Additionally, Al-Adwani underscored privileges extended to Kuwaiti citizens, such as the ability to grant their children 10-year residencies, renewable for an additional decade, without incurring fees.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior revealed robust enforcement efforts against violators of residency and labor laws.

Continued on Page 5

Syria caretaker PM named Kuwait denounces Israeli presence at Syrian border

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10, (Agencies): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has voiced Kuwait's strong condemnation and denunciation of Israeli forces' occupation of the buffer zone on the Syrian border.

In a statement, the Ministry said the move is a flagrant violation of international laws and the UN Security Council resolutions that stress the necessity of respecting Syria's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

In addition, the Ministry underlined the need for the international community to assume its responsibilities to put an end to the series of Israeli occupation forces' attacks on the region's countries, and to hold the perpetrators accountable, in preservation of regional and international security and peace, the statement concluded.

Continued on Page 5

GCC marks 10-year anniversary of Human Rights Declaration

Kuwait stands firm on human rights pledge

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10, (KUNA): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed Kuwait's dedication to human rights on the UN Human Rights Day, through efforts based on national legislation and relevant international agreements and conventions.

As a member of Human Rights Council for the year 2024-2026, the ministry stressed its commitment to fulfilling all

pledges made during its membership, including advancing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and ensuring individuals' well-being and dignity.

The State of Kuwait marked on Tuesday the Human Rights Day, which is held under the theme “Our Rights, Our Future, Right Now.”

According to the UN, the celebration commemorates one of the world's

most groundbreaking global pledges, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

The declaration, per the UN, was proclaimed by the General Assembly in Paris on December 10, 1948 and set out, for the first time, fundamental human rights to be universally protected.

Continued on Page 5

Heirs not liable for debts if insurance coverage in place

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

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: The Court of Cassation confirmed in a ruling issued by the Commercial Circuit that financial institutions, including banks, cannot hold heirs responsible for paying off the debts of a deceased person as long as all loan contracts signed with the individual before their death included life insurance.

In its ruling, the court stated that the insurance companies with which the banks had signed loan insurance agreements are responsible for repaying the loans in the event of the person's death or inability to work.

The case in question involved a civil commercial lawsuit filed by the first contested bank against the appellant and other parties, demanding a joint obligation to pay KD 6,878,559, along with the agreed compensation for the delay, set at 10 percent annually from the date the account was closed until full payment was made.

In a statement, the bank stated that

under a banking facilities contract, the heirs of the appellants and respondents had obtained a loan of KD 7,000 with an interest rate of 10 percent per annum, to be repaid in monthly installments. The borrower continued to make payments until his death.

Upon his death, all outstanding installments, amounting to KD 7,000, along with the interest due until the date of account closure, became due. The loan had been insured with an insurance company to cover its value in the event of disability or death. As such, the insurance company was obligated to pay the remaining loan balance and the due interest, but the insurance company refused to pay.

The heirs of the borrower were required to pay the loan jointly with the insurance company, within the limits of what they received from the deceased's estate. As a result, the bank filed the lawsuit.

The court ruled that the lawsuit had lapsed due to the statute of limitations regarding the second respondent and rejected the case with respect to the remaining parties.

Day by Day

I HOPE senior officials from the Kuwait Municipality and possibly the Ministry of Public Works will take a tour of the roads in Wafra and Abdali to witness firsthand the issues of garbage, stray dogs and cats, as well as the unpleasant odors and deteriorating interior roads and streets.

The residents are willing to contribute to the costs of cleaning and maintenance. We could examine how the Paris Municipality, the New York Municipality, and the municipalities in the United Arab Emirates manage similar challenges to maintain their public areas.

I wonder who will be responsible for making the decision and issuing the necessary directives to initiate these efforts.

... Yet, tomorrow is a new day.

Zahed Matar

IMF calls for diversification

Kuwait GDP to contract in 2024, rebound expected in 2025: IMF

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has concluded the Article IV consultation with Kuwait.

A press release issued by IMF outlined

the main points highlighted during the consultation:

The economy is in recession due to

Continued on Page 5

News watch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will patronize and attend the award distribution ceremony of Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science (KFAS) for 2022-2023 at Bayan Palace's theater on Wednesday, (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrar Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Tuesday Iraqi Ambassador to the country, Al-Manhal Al-Safi, as they discussed reinforcing bilateral ties across all fields, as well as issues of common interest. (KUNA)

Municipality logs surge in revenue

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: The Kuwait Municipality has confirmed that its program for developing electronic systems and services is progressing as planned by the Information Systems Center, in line with the Council of Ministers' directives on electronic services.

The Municipality highlighted its collaboration with the Information Systems Center, the Kuwait Investment Authority and the World Bank to advance electronic systems.

Continued on Page 5



8 Zain shares its vision for shaping the future of Kuwait's digital economy

8 AIOqab appointed as VP of Financial Brokerage at Gulf Capital Investment Company 'InvestGB'



9 Riyadh Development Company and Agility Logistics Parks sign strategic partnership agreement to develop SAR 227m logistics facility in Riyadh

Prayer Timings

Fajr 05:07 Asr 14:31
 Sunrise ... 06:31 Maghrib... 16:50
 Zuhr 11:41 Isha 18:12

Local

Expected Weather for Next 24 hrs

By Day: Mild and partly cloudy with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speed of 08-32 km/h

By Night: Rather cold and partly cloudy with light variable

Weather

wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speed of 06-26 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	26	15
Kuwait Airport	25	15
Abdaly	27	13

Buayan	24	12
Jahra	27	14
Fallaka Island	25	16
Salmiya	22	16
Ahmadi	22	11
Jal Aliyah	26	12
Nuwaisib	30	15

Ambassador reflects on shared values of peace and progress

Peru celebrates 200th Independence anniversary in Kuwait

By Paulo Francisco X. Fernandes

Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: The Embassy of Peru in Kuwait, celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Peru, at the Six Palms Ballroom, Marina Hotel.

The guest of honor was Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations, His Excellency Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah. The event was also attended by the Dean of Diplomatic Corps, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to the State of Kuwait HE Dr. Zubaydullo Zubaydzoda, diplomats accredited to the State of Kuwait, dignitaries, invited guests and the media.

In his address to the dignitaries, HE the Ambassador of Peru to Kuwait HE Carlos Enrique Tomas Jimenez Gil-Fortoul, said, "Since that historic moment, Peru has opened its arms and hearts to the world, creating a diverse and welcoming society.

"It is challenging to trace the origins of our identity. Was it the highlands of the Andes, the vast expanses of the Amazon rainforest, or the arid, windswept coast of the Pacific.

"The answer is a blend of all these regions and their rich histories -- a mosaic of cultures and traditions united as one.

He went on to say, "Our land is home to people from diverse origins, all of whom we welcomed and integrated into our society. Our nation serves as a sanctuary for anyone arriving in peace -- a place where we can all discover ourselves as one united nation; a nation that believes in the right of choice, offering opportunities to harness potential, face challenges, and embrace diversity. Our land represents a space where we can freely encounter and engage with others."

He added, "Freedom is more than a system of government; it is a promise. A promise that every voice matters, every choice has significance, and every citizen has the power to shape their destiny. Freedom is not merely about elections or laws; it is the driving force for social progress. It allows for dialogue, diversity, debate, and shared growth.

"Within freedom, there is no such thing as a small idea. Only through freedom can we achieve equality, civil rights, and all the facets of our shared humanity. Freedom is the foundation for human progress and in our diversity lies our strength."

"Our diversity," he said, "allows different cultures, ideas, and perspectives to coexist and flourish. While we may not always agree, it is through free and open dialogue that we can find common ground and solutions that benefit all."

He said, "Today, the people of Peru reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the values of freedom, peace and equality. We renew our pledge to ensure that Peru continues to stand for peace, freedom, and hope for another 200 years and beyond."

For nearly fifty years, he added, the people of Peru have maintained a steadfast friendship with the State of Kuwait. We have supported each other through times of need and we pledge to continue this bond of friendship and cooperation. Just as we have stood side by side in the past, Peru



Photos by Mohammad Morsi

Top & above: Diplomats, dignitaries, and guests gather at the Six Palms Ballroom, Marina Hotel in Kuwait to celebrate Peru's 200 years of Independence.

will continue to offer its support and collaboration whenever necessary.

As we look forward, we do so with hope and determina-

tion. Our commitment to freedom, peace, and mutual support is as strong as ever. We remain optimistic that by building upon our shared values, we can create a better future

together.

He concluded by saying, "We ask Allah for guidance and assistance as we continue this shared journey."

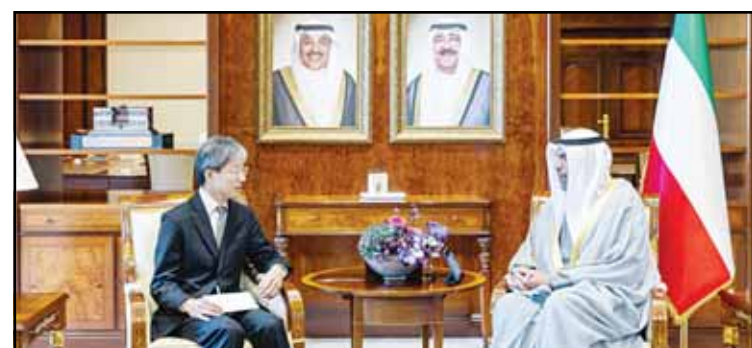
Kuwait strengthens maritime security ties with NATO allies

Open dialogue tackles piracy, trafficking and cooperation at NIRC talks

By Youssef Al-Tattan

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10, (KUNA): Kuwait is eager to enhance cooperation with regional and international organizations to overcome security challenges, mainly maritime, said Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organization Minister Plenipotentiary Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah on Sunday.

Al-Jarallah spoke to KUNA on the occasion of Kuwait's hosting of the talks of NATO and the NATO-ICI Regional Centre



Kuwait FM receives credentials of Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait Mukai Kenichiro.



Kuwait FM receives credentials from Lesotho Ambassador to Kuwait Manthabiseng Phohleli.



KUNA photos
 Kuwait FM receives credentials of Burundi Ambassador to Kuwait, Isidore Ntirampeba.

FM receives new envoys' credentials

Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya received on Monday credentials of Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait, Mukai Kenichiro, Lesotho Ambassador to Kuwait, Manthabiseng Phohleli at the Foreign Ministry.

Minister Al-Yahya also received

credentials of Burundi Ambassador to Qatar and referred to Kuwait, Isidore Ntirampeba.

The Kuwaiti top diplomat wished the ambassadors all success in their duties, and for the bilateral relations between each country to prosper. (KUNA)

(NIRC) on boosting regional maritime security, with the participation of leaders of the Ministry of Interior and Defense, and military attaches of diplomatic missions in Kuwait.

Today's event is discussing maritime security, which is a key topic for Kuwait in safeguarding waterways, he said. Talks also covered some topics and common challenges of maritime issues like piracy and how to deal with them in international waters, he noted.

This center shows Kuwait's political will in collaboration with NATO, and the country's keenness on partaking in the center's activities, noted.

Kuwait is a linking partner among GCC states partaking in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative to involve non-NATO countries in strategic talks that was signed by Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE and Bahrain in 2004, he elaborated.

Meanwhile, NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre Commodore Stathis Kyriakidis said Kuwait is one of the strategic countries of NATO in the region.

NATO needs to cooperate with allies to face common regional and international challenges, he told KUNA in a similar statement.

He hoped for boosting cooperation and mutual training as part of the center's plan in Kuwait, referring that the center will receive on Monday; tomorrow, some personnel of Kuwait's Interior and Defense Ministries to speak on this regard.

For his part, Director General of Kuwait's Coast Guard General Directorate, Rear Admiral Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Sabah said the talks focused on different operations of maritime security between the two sides.

Today's open dialogue dealt with the role of the Coast Guard in combating varied types of trafficking and piracy in international waters, he told KUNA.

Kuwait Embassy in Thailand issues safety travel advisory

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: The Embassy of the State of Kuwait in the Kingdom of Thailand has issued a precautionary advisory for Kuwaiti citizens visiting the country, urging them to comply with local regulations regarding motorcycle rentals, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The embassy emphasized the importance of possessing an international driving license when renting motorcycles and highlighted the necessity of wearing a helmet to ensure safety and avoid legal repercussions.

Moreover, the citizens are advised to rent motorcycles exclusively from offices licensed by the Thai Ministry of Tourism to ensure proper compliance and avoid potential disputes.

For assistance in case of emergencies or further guidance, the embassy recommended calling the Thai emergency hotline at 1155.

This advisory underscores the embassy's commitment to the safety and well-being of Kuwaiti citizens traveling abroad, encouraging them to adhere to local laws and regulations.

Other Voices

Waqf ... what do you know about Waqf?

By Ahmed alsarraf

Kuwait has long valued the contributions of philanthropists for charitable causes, alongside its dedication to managing the affairs of orphans and safeguarding their wealth.

Initially, these responsibilities fell under the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs when ministries were established in the 1960s.

However, in 1993, the endowment (waqf) was separated from the ministry to become an independent body, which was often dominated by individuals associated with the Muslim Brotherhood.

Unfortunately, both the ministry and the endowment authority have frequently been marred by allegations of mismanagement and misconduct, largely due to the perception that these funds were inadequately supervised.

The primary role of the endowment and orphan care is to invest these funds wisely and professionally.

Historically, their management was entrusted to clerics or individuals of high reputation. However, most lacked the expertise necessary for effective investment management.

Over the years, I have repeatedly advocated for the appointment of qualified investment professionals to oversee these assets, regardless of their religious or political affiliations.

Such proposals, however, have often been dismissed, as control of these lucrative positions has been seen as too valuable to relinquish. This control was frequently retained by members of religious groups aligned with specific political agendas, often leading to unsatisfactory outcomes.

One striking example was the scandal involving an official with ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, who, as a trustee of the endowment, initiated a costly project to cover defects in a large endowment-owned building with expensive "Alka Bond" panels.

The true cost of the project was inflated to include a personal commission exceeding one million dinars. When the fraud was un-

covered, the individual fled abroad, evading prosecution.

Despite the damage, no criminal case was filed against him, though his reputation suffered, and his political ambitions were derailed.

This same building is now slated for demolition due to its flawed design and poor execution, serving as a stark reminder of the consequences of mismanagement.

Recently, the government has reportedly been considering transferring the assets of the General Authority for Minors and the General Secretariat of Endowments to the General Investment Authority.

This move would place the management of these funds in the hands of professional portfolio managers -- a demand I and others have championed for over two decades.

Yet, certain groups have opposed this idea, citing the need for these funds to be managed in compliance with Islamic law under the supervision of Sharia committees, a condition they claim is not met by the Investment Authority or private portfolio managers.

For decades, such objections have stifled reform, despite numerous violations and mismanagement scandals. Now, when a sensible proposal to entrust these assets to professionals emerges, opposition is swift and vocal.

The sanctity of orphan and minor funds is equivalent to that of public funds; neither is more sacred than the other.

Arguments relying on the necessity of Sharia oversight often fail to hold up under scrutiny, especially given that such oversight has not prevented transgressions in government institutions or Islamic joint-stock companies. The examples of mismanagement are countless.

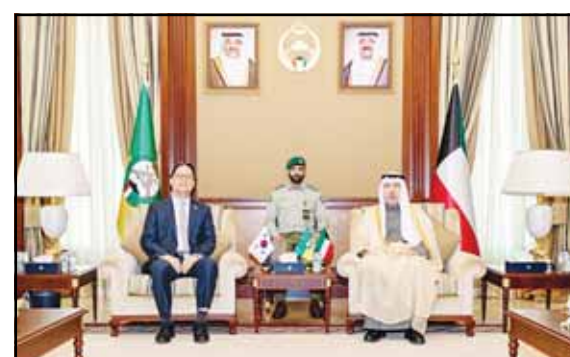
Ultimately, experience shows that the integrity and competence of those entrusted with public funds, regardless of their origin, are the true safeguards, not the mere presence of committees or regulations.

While it is important to retain legal and Sharia advisors for matters related to endowments and minors, there is no logical reason why these assets cannot also be managed by professional experts with the necessary qualifications and ethical commitment to maximize their potential.

□ □ □

e-mail: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

KNG chief hails Kuwaiti-Korean relations



KUNA photo

The Chief of the National Guard during his reception of the Korean Ambassador to the country and his deputy in his office at the General Presidency of the National Guard.

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10, (KUNA): Chief of Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Mubarak Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah praised the bilateral relation between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Korea.

This came in a press statement by KNG, during Sheikh Mubarak's reception of the South Korean Ambassador to Kuwait Chong-suk Park accompanied by the Ambassador's Advisor and Deputy Chief Mission Lee Byoung Gwan in his office, where they congratulated him on attaining his position as chief of the National Guard.

The statement added that in return, KNG Chief expressed his appreciation to the Korean Ambassador and his deputy for their congratulations.



The fall of tyrants: A history of revolts against injustice

"THROUGHOUT history, the cries of the oppressed have echoed in the palaces of the mighty, often bringing down regimes built on wealth, corruption and tyranny. From grand estates adorned with luxury to humble peasants demanding justice, the fall of unjust leaders has been a recurring chapter in humanity's story," columnist **Ahmed Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Three centuries ago, French peasants, ravaged by hunger, stormed their king's palace.

They were stunned by the sight of crystal chandeliers and silk-covered walls -- an opulence far removed from their reality.

Centuries later, in 1917, the Russians looted the palaces of their rulers during the revolution, taking rare artifacts as the symbols of their suffering crumbled.

"In Africa, Jean-Bédél Bokassa, the self-proclaimed emperor of the Central African Republic, adorned himself with a diamond-studded crown worth \$5 million.

"But by 1979, his reign ended, a casualty of his own excesses. Similarly, in the Philippines, Ferdinand Marcos and his wife Imelda fled amidst a popular uprising in 1986.

"Protestors uncovered their lavish lifestyle, including Imelda's collection of 1,060 pairs of shoes, later turned into a symbol of misplaced priorities.

"The fall of Nicolae Ceausescu in Romania was another stark reminder of the limits of authoritarian rule. After decades of hoarding wealth and building a thousand-room palace by demolishing entire neighborhoods, his people revolted in 1989. Captured by peasants and swiftly tried, Ceausescu and his wife faced justice for their crimes against the state.

"From Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia to the corrupt regimes of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, the pattern continued: tyrants hoarding wealth at the expense of their people.

"The downfall of Saddam Hussein in Iraq unveiled suitcases stuffed with cash, Cuban cigars and 50 luxurious palaces, even as his citizens lived in hardship.

"In Libya, Muammar Gaddafi's fall in 2011 exposed his golden pistols and lavish lifestyle, a stark contrast to his people's poverty. His death marked the end of a dictatorship that had alienated his nation.

"The story repeated in Zimbabwe with Robert Mugabe, whose rule reduced a resource-rich nation to one plagued by hyperinflation and poverty.

"By 2019, Sudan's Omar al-Bashir faced a similar fate, overthrown after decades of oppressive rule marked by the Darfur massacre and economic mismanagement.

"Finally, on December 8, the people of Syria toppled Bashar al-Assad's regime after years of suffering under his rule.

"The Syrians celebrated in the streets, overwhelmed by the discovery of the excesses within Assad's palace: luxury cars, designer clothing and unimaginable wealth hoarded while they endured unimaginable hardships.

"History continues to remind us: tyranny is unsustainable and the people's demand for justice remains a force that no fortress of wealth or power can withstand."

Also:

"Under the esteemed patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Saud bin Nayef bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Governor of the Eastern Province, the fourth edition of the Endowment Practices Forum 2024 was held. I had the honor of participating as a speaker in one of its sessions, responding to a gracious invitation from the Eastern Province Chamber of Commerce in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," columnist **Adnan Abdullah Al Othman** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"During the forum, I briefly outlined its key objectives and underlying themes. The forum highlighted the pivotal role of family endowments in ensuring the sustainability and security of family businesses while serving as a bridge to the future.

"As a vibrant platform, it explored best practices and innovative initiatives in endowment work, focusing on proposals to improve efficiency, foster growth in investments and shed light on local and international experiences in this field.

"This year's event stood out with six insightful dialogue sessions featuring 18 significant working papers. These sessions addressed topics such as the governance of family endowments, their sustainability potential and their role in stabilizing family enterprises.

"The forum showcased substantial advancements in endowment mechanisms, investment principles and the facilitation of financing by financial institutions, underscored by the Kingdom's robust support for the sector's development.

"Among the noteworthy contributions were case studies from leading institutions, including -- The Suleiman Al Rajhi Endowment, The Ali Al Duwayyan Endowments, Bahrain's Al Kooheji Charitable Foundation, The Abdullah bin Ibrahim Al Subaie Endowment and The Al Othaim Charitable Foundation.

"I had the privilege of presenting a working paper titled 'Wills That Never Die', where I detailed the success story of the Al Othman Endowment. This family endowment is a unique model blending hereditary and charitable attributes, jointly managed by the government (represented by the Public Authority for Minors Affairs) and the private sector (heirs and guardians).

"My presentation highlighted the endowment's contributions to the community through projects like Dar Al Othman, The Promenade Cultural Center, Beit Al Othman and The Promenade Complex.

"I emphasized strategies that ensure the sustainability of family endowments, including robust governance, meticulous financial auditing by accredited firms and periodic evaluations to measure implementation efficiency.

"This year's forum proved to be more than just a series of discussions -- it was an integral part of a continuous development journey that enriches the charitable sector through the exchange of ideas and experiences.

"In closing, I extend my deepest gratitude to the forum's patron, His Royal Highness Prince Saud bin Nayef bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, to the Eastern Province Chamber of Commerce's Endowments Committee, the General Authority for Endowments and the event's organizers.

"Their commitment to advancing endowment culture and mechanisms is invaluable. I also thank the sponsors and my fellow speakers for their insightful contributions to this landmark forum."



"In a recent discourse, parallels were drawn between historical Western brutality and potential future policies affecting the Middle East, invoking the works of Noam Chomsky," columnist **Dr Najm Abdul Karim** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"The statement attributed to the incoming US president regarding escalating actions if Hamas does not release prisoners by January 20 stirs echoes of historical brutality referenced in Chomsky's critiques.

"In his book Year 501: The Conquest Continues, Chomsky illuminates the destructive legacies of Western imperialism over five centuries.

"From the genocide of Native Americans during the Columbian era to the exploitation of African slaves and the atomic devastation of Japan, Chomsky outlines patterns of domination, destruction and dehumanization that marked Western expansion.

"This historical lens invites questions about current geopolitical threats and their implications for the Middle East. For instance, the idea of turning the region into 'hell' resonates with systemic approaches to domination, control and division -- echoing the strategies described in Chomsky's critique and potentially aligning with controversial projects like the 'Golden Billion' or Bernard Lewis's divisive theories.

"The broader historical and political context raises significant concerns -- How will regional and international stakeholders respond to such sweeping threats; Are these threats indicative of deeper strategies aimed at reshaping the Middle East's political landscape; and How might these policies affect ongoing conflicts and efforts toward peace?"

"The lessons of history, as detailed by Chomsky, remind us that unchecked power and dehumanizing policies often lead to devastation rather than resolution. The need for clarity, accountability and global discourse becomes paramount in the face of such provocative declarations."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



First Deputy Prime Minister with Deputy Commander of US Central Command, US Ambassador and Director General of Kuwait's Coast Guard.

Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Sabah awarded Legion of Merit

US honors Kuwaiti Coast Guard chief

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah attended at the headquarters of the Defense Ministry on Monday, an award ceremony for Director General of Kuwait's Coast Guard, Commodore Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Sabah.

The Director General received the US Legion of Merit award, given by the President of the United States.

In a statement by the Ministry of Interior, Deputy Commander of US Central Command, Admiral Brad Cooper awarded the medal with the attendance of Kuwait Army Deputy Chief-of-Staff Air Marshal Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, US Ambassador to Kuwait Karen Sasahara, and a number of military and embassy officials.

First Deputy Prime Minister said in a speech that this reflects the strong military relations between Kuwait and the United States.

He added that the medal expresses US leadership's appreciation for the Director General's efforts in strengthening military cooperation between the two countries, wishing him success in



KUNA photos During the award ceremony for Director General of Kuwait's Coast Guard, Commodore Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Sabah.

performing his duties.

For her part, Sasahara expressed pride over attending the ceremony, praising Kuwait's military keenness to enhance cooperation, and the mutual respect between US and Kuwait's militaries.

The award comes in recognition of the Kuwaiti military official's service as Commander of the Combined Task Force (CTF) 152; the largest international maritime partnership in the world and as a representative of Kuwait's Ministry of Interior from February 2019 to October 2023.

In addition to his contribution to the flow of information and exchange of technologies related to maritime field awareness, supporting 30 exercises, and for facilitating 55,000 operating hours for unmanned surface vessels and artificial intelligence.

Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Sabah directly contributed to achieving the goal of the US Naval Forces Central Command of establishing the world's first partner nation fleet of 100 unmanned surface vessels, achieving maritime security and stability between the US and coalition partners around the Arabian Gulf.

Municipal Council greenlights coastal revitalization plan despite opposition

Jahra Corniche project moves forward

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: After extensive discussions and objections, the Municipal Council has approved the implementation of the Jahra Corniche project, a significant initiative aimed at revitalizing Kuwait's coastal areas.

The decision, taken during a meeting chaired by Abdullah Al-Mahri, includes the removal of chalets obstructing the project area, located between the Doha West Station (to the east) and the Jahra Nature Reserve (to the west). The implementation is expected to begin following approvals from concerned authorities.

Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Abdullah Al-Mishari, reaffirmed the state's right to reclaim lands when necessary for public interest projects.

He highlighted the importance of balancing development with community input, especially for projects affecting residents.

The project will cover 5.6 square kilometers along the coastal strip and the investor will have up to 7 years to complete. The project will be operated, managed and maintained by the investor for 35 years.

The procedures are set to begin within 14 days of ratification and publication in the Official Gazette.

During a meeting with Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi and local residents, Minister Al-Mishari emphasized the importance of including the community's input in upcoming projects related to the governorate.



Photo taken during Municipal Council meeting chaired by Abdullah Al-Mahri.

He revealed that new initiatives aligned with the needs and aspirations of Jahra residents would soon be unveiled under high-level directives.

The Jahra Corniche project promises to breathe new life into the region's coastal areas, enhancing its recreational and environmental value while addressing public interest.

PAI raises hiring pool to 165 new positions

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Shamlan Al-Juhaidli, Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Industry, has announced an increase in the number of accepted applicants for the Authority's recent employment announcement.

This decision came in response to directives from the Minister of Commerce and Industry, who also serves as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Authority.

Al-Juhaidli explained that the increase was made possible by utilizing the job grades of retirees, raising the total number of available positions to 165.

The recruitment process involved comprehensive testing of applicants, which was supervised by the Institute of Banking Studies.

Additionally, Al-Juhaidli expressed gratitude for the role of the Public Authority for Manpower in reviewing and auditing these tests, emphasizing their contribution to ensuring fairness and accuracy throughout the recruitment process.



MUGHAL MAHAL
"We Cater, You Party!"



Wedding | Anniversary | Birthday | Events
Corporate Party & much more



1800 188
5501 1985

@mughalmahalkuwait

www.mughalmahal.com

Over 46,000 traffic violations recorded in 8 days

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: The General Traffic Department and the General Rescue Police Department reported a total of 46,562 traffic violations and 1,648 traffic accidents over an eight-day period from Nov 30 to Dec 6, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to data from the Traffic Affairs and Operations Sector, traffic personnel took several precautionary actions during this period:

■ 45 violators were referred to precautionary detention

■ 12 juveniles were sent to the Public Prosecution

■ 135 vehicles and 48 motorcycles were impounded for violating Article 207

■ 33 vehicles linked to civil and theft cases

were seized

■ 36 wanted individuals were referred, while 7 were found without evidence, and another was discovered in an abnormal condition.

■ A person in possession of suspected narcotics was referred to the General Department for Drug Control

Furthermore, emergency police operations from December 1 to December 7 resulted in significant law enforcement efforts, including:

■ 30 individuals referred to the Anti-Narcotics Department

■ Two individuals entering the country illegally were sent to the relevant authorities

■ 1,395 security and traffic operations were

carried out across various governorates

■ 74 wanted persons and 57 absconders were arrested

■ 5 individuals with outstanding criminal sentences were detained

■ 56 individuals were arrested without sufficient evidence

■ 75 residency law violators were identified and arrested

■ 241 individuals received roadside assistance

■ 51 wanted vehicles were referred to authorities

■ Police resolved 8 reported quarrels

Moreover, 142 collision accidents were referred to the relevant police stations for further investigation.



Part of the exhibition accompanying the conference for specialized modern systems.



Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs



A discussion session with the participation of a group of Kuwaitis with disabilities.



The opening of the First International Conference and Forum on Assistive Technologies for Special Needs (ATSN).



UN Resident Coordinator in Kuwait Ghada Al-Tahir

KUNA photos
President of the Kuwait College of Science and Technology Dr. Khaled Al-Begain

Kuwait leads initiatives for disability inclusion: Al-Huwailah

'People with disabilities key partners in country's development'

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah affirmed on Monday that Kuwait has always led in creating laws and initiatives that serve all citizens, particularly people with disabilities, aiming to empower them as key partners in the coun-

try's development.

Her remarks were made during the opening of the First International Conference and Forum on Assistive Technologies for Special Needs (ATSN).

The event is organized by the Kuwait College of Science and Technology (KCST), under the slogan "Artificial Intelligence in the Service of Equality and Inclusion," in partnership with the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Kuwait, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and with

support from the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS).

Dr. Al-Huwailah explained that, under the guidance of the political leadership, the government is working to provide all necessary facilities for people with disabilities to fully integrate into society and actively contribute to achieving Kuwait's developmental vision.

She emphasized that rapid technological advancements, mainly in AI, are creating new opportunities to support people with disabilities, enabling them to perform previously impossible tasks and highlighting the conference's

role in encouraging innovation and developing systems to maximize these advancements.

Meanwhile, UN Resident Coordinator in Kuwait Ghada Al-Tahir also spoke at the opening, acknowledging the conference's significant theme and recognizing the critical role that people with disabilities play in driving change towards a more inclusive and sustainable world.

She referred to the 2022 World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund's (UNICEF) global report on assistive technology,

which noted that 2.5 billion people worldwide need at least one assistive product, with the number expected to rise to 3.5 billion by 2050, stressing that assistive technology should be a global priority, not a secondary concern for specific groups.

On his part, President of the Kuwait College of Science and Technology Dr. Khaled Al-Begain stated that the college has always been committed to developing a research base that fosters innovation and creativity among its faculty and students to contribute to achieving Kuwait's 2035 vision.



albander
hotel & resort

أعياد
البرص
Celebrate
Sahjain

DECEMBER

Room Promotion

One Night Stay in a Queen Cabana
for 2 persons with inclusive of breakfast
was BHD 76.230

Now **BHD 49.550** Net

One Night Stay in a 2 Bedroom Chalet
for 4 persons inclusive of breakfast
was BHD 170.247 Net

Now **BHD 110.661** Net







Promo period from December 1st to December 31st,
excluding December 16th and 17th, 2024

Terms & conditions apply*

Tel: +973 17701201 - Ext. 351 | Email: reservation@albander.com | www.albander.com | @albanderhotelandresort

KUNA photo
Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs during her visit to the Kuwait and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities workshop.

Greater inclusion sought

Kuwait commits to boosting disability rights under SDGs

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10, (KUNA): Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Ambassador Sheikha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah affirmed Kuwait's commitment to enhancing disability rights in line with Kuwait Vision 2035 and the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Sheikha Jawaher made the remarks during the opening of the two-day workshop titled "Kuwait and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" organized by the Foreign Ministry's Human Rights Department in cooperation with Saud Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute.

The event, held under the patronage of Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and other officials.

She highlighted Kuwait's achievements in promoting disability rights by including sign language interpreter job title in the Civil Service Commission as well as launching law to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities, safeguarding their rights and fostering social inclusion.

She emphasized that these efforts are bolstered by the political leadership, evidenced by the Cabinet's approval of a proposal to establish "His Highness the Amir's Award for Creativity for Persons with Disabilities."

Citing World Health Organization (WHO) 2023 statistics, Sheikha Jawaher

noted that one in six people globally live with some form of disability, in Kuwait the number stands at 68,786 with disabilities ranging from physical, visual to mental.

Kuwait recognized the role of technological advancements in empowering persons with disabilities, taking note of the UNESCO/Amir Jaber Al-Ahmad Prize for Digital Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.

She also called for a coordinated campaign in 2025, coinciding with the Global Disability Summit, to promote greater inclusion in education, employment, and leisure, ensuring a dignified and empowered life for persons with disabilities.

On his part, WHO Representative Dr. Assad Hafeez, speaking on behalf of the UN Resident Coordinator, stressed the importance of including people with disabilities in health planning and decision-making to achieve objective global health goals.

He commended Kuwait's collaboration with the UN to provide high-quality tools, training, and job opportunities tailored to individual talents.

UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) member, Rehab Boursli, urged intensified efforts by government, international organizations, and civil society to implement more solutions for people with disabilities that foster self-reliance and social integration, amid technological advancement.

Kuwait Municipality floats tender for flagpole supply, maintenance

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Kuwait Municipality has floated Tender No. 13/2024/2025, inviting bids for the supply, installation and maintenance of flagpoles, complete with all necessary accessories, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The tender adheres to the general and special terms outlined in the official tender documents, which can be obtained from the Tenders and Contracts Department located on the Fourth Floor of the Main Municipality Building (Middle Building) for a non-refundable fee of 75 Kuwaiti dinars.

Interested companies must send representatives to attend the public session for bid envelope opening.

The municipality clarified that it will not assume responsibility for absent representatives.

The deadline for submitting bids is 12:00 noon on December 30, 2024.

Submissions should be placed in the designated box at the Tenders and Contracts Department, Minister's Building, Seventh Floor.

The following are the key details -- Bids remain valid for 90 days from the date of envelope opening; An initial guarantee of at least 2% of the total bid value is required, provided as a certified bank check or bank guarantee letter in favor of Kuwait Municipality, valid for the bid duration.

End of

Continued from Page 1

Tehran can no longer claim that it can force its vision on the Iraqis or control its party in Lebanon, which has been weakened and reduced to a shadow of its former self.

The Iranian leadership has overlooked the fact that the Shiite sect played a pivotal role in driving the British out of Iraq in 1920 and contributing to the development of the country. This suggests that Iraqis, regardless of the strength of sectarian militias, will soon resist Persian interference in their internal affairs, especially given the recent events in the region. The Iranian Revolutionary Guards will not be able to suppress millions of Iraqis.

Iran sought to incite sectarian strife, and assisted groups like ISIS and Al-Qaeda to open sectarian fronts, which led to conflict during the years following the US invasion of Iraq, the dismantling of state institutions, and the resulting chaos.

However, Iraqis eventually realized that they were not protected by foreign powers and began to see Iran's excessive influence as a myth. Tehran once boasted about its financial support for Yemenis, Syrians, Iraqis, and Lebanese, but it soon became clear that it was exploiting their resources, using the groups it created as paper tigers to intimidate the people.

About 44 years have passed since the slogan of "exporting the revolution" was first implemented, with Syria being the first to succumb to this influence during the reign of Bashar al-Assad's father.

His son later opened the country wide for Iranian intervention, transforming Damascus into a hub for those with their own agendas. This shift altered the ideological reality that Syrians had long rejected, leading to a powerful uprising against this new reality.

With around 150,000 detainees languishing in prisons without trial, many of which are secret, and with every city having its own prisons and torture chambers, the revelations of horrific atrocities in the secret facilities and the bodies found in hospital refrigerators suggest that the "exporting of the revolution" was, in fact, a genocide against the Syrian people.

More than 12 million people have been displaced abroad, and there are reports indicating that around one million have died as victims of the regime in the last 54 years.

This is why we were not surprised to see Syrians, both inside and outside the country, filled with joy at the prospect of escaping the nightmare that burdened them for five decades.

What matters now is that the Arabs who supported this criminal regime come to their senses and recognize that they were used as tools to carry out one of the greatest crimes in history against their people.

Without a doubt, Yemen must now eliminate the Houthi threat that has been undermining its citizens' national and Arab identity, and transforming their religious beliefs for years.

Today, the nation is trapped in ignorance and stagnation, and it is clinging to the leaves of qat that numb both the body and the mind, all while overlooking its rich history as a center of knowledge and wisdom.

Municipality logs

Continued from Page 1

This development has significantly reduced the time required for processing advertising licenses.

Dr. Fayez Al-Otaibi, Director of the Information Systems Center, announced a remarkable increase in revenue generated from electronic advertising licenses.

Comparing the periods before and after the system's upgrade, annual

revenues from the previous system between Aug 13, 2023 and Aug 14, 2024, amounted to approximately 807,000 Kuwaiti dinars.

In contrast, the upgraded system achieved 5.361 million dinars in just four months, from Aug 13 to Dec 8, 2024.

This improvement demonstrates the effectiveness of the Municipality's efforts to modernize and streamline its services, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to digital transformation.

Zero family

Continued from Page 1

Between December 1 and 5, the General Department of Residence Affairs Investigations conducted 20 inspection campaigns, resulting in the arrest of 317 residency and labor law violators and deportation of 610 persons for committing similar offenses.

The ministry affirmed its commitment to intensifying security operations across Kuwait to arrest the violators and outlaws, while emphasizing at the same time that accountability applies equally to both workers and their employers.

These measures reflect the government's ongoing efforts to uphold residency laws and ensure national security.

Amir, Crown

Continued from Page 1

bin Mohammad Al-Saud at Bayan Palace.

Prince Turki Al-Saud conveyed to His Highness the Crown Prince the greetings of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, and Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud, as well as their wishes to His Highness the Crown Prince for long-lasting health and wellness and for the people of Kuwait further progress and prosperity.

In response, His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed his greetings to King Salman and Prince Mohammad, wishing them long-lasting health and wellness, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its people further progress and prosperity.

The meeting included notable attendees such as Saudi Finance Minister Mohammad Al-Jadaan, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, Kuwaiti Finance Minister and State Minister for Economic Affairs and Investment Nora Al-Fassam, along with other senior officials.

Kuwait stands

Continued from Page 1

In this regard, the State of Kuwait affirmed its commitment to human rights, which was a fundamental block in its constitution founded in 1962 and was in line with international human rights laws and regulations.

Kuwait had ratified numerous global human rights accords that ensured political, civil, social, economic, cultural, judicial, racial, and gender rights for all human beings.

In particular, Kuwait had focused efforts to achieve the 2015-adopted UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including several goals geared towards overall human rights. Kuwait's role in the human rights domain had earned it on October 10, 2023 a membership seat at the Human Rights Council in 2024-26 after garnering 183 votes.

Meanwhile, Assistant Foreign Affairs Minister for Human Rights Ambassador Sheikhah Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duajj Al-Sabah affirmed Tuesday the commitment of Gulf Cooperation Council states on promoting human rights through national legislations, the principles of the

Kuwait forum highlights national identity as key to nation's destiny

Experts call for safeguarding nat'l values against divides

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10, (KUNA): Participants in a Kuwaiti citizenship forum on Tuesday stressed the significance of national identity as a "cause of nation's existence and destiny".

The two-day forum was co-organized by Kuwait University (KU), Center for the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies, Women's Institute for Development and Peace and the Cabinet's National Unity Promotion Team.

"Citizenship means rights and duties alike since responsibility, belonging and dedication are all traits for us to be effective citizens," said Chairwoman of Women's Institute for Development and Peace Kawthar Al-Jawan while addressing the event.

Calling for teaching people how to be good citizens, she said that the forum mainly aimed at looking into

Islamic religion and Gulf's traditions and values.

Ambassador Al-Sabah statement to KUNA came following an event celebrating 10th anniversary of GCC's Human Rights Declaration in the Qatari capital, Doha.

The Kuwaiti senior diplomat hailed the pioneering role of GCC states in supporting women empowerment, youth, persons with disabilities, as well as reinforcing the basic rights of individuals in healthcare, education and development.

She said that these efforts all came as continuation of the declaration ratified in Doha back in 2014, taking note of Qatar's efforts in hosting the event.

On sidelines of the event, Sheikhah Jawaher met with Qatari State Minister for International Cooperation at the Foreign Ministry, Maryam Al-Mismad.

Kuwait denounces

Continued from Page 1

In latest development, the new Syrian administration has named Mohammad Al-Bashir as the country's caretaker prime minister for a transitional period lasting until March of next year, local media reported on Tuesday.

The appointment comes after extensive talks between Syrian rebel groups, who seized the capital Damascus on Sunday, to discuss the "transfer of power," it added.

Syrian rebels stormed Damascus after taking over a number of key Syrian cities, declaring the capital "liberated" in a statement carried on state television, subsequently ousting President Bashar al-Assad, who was granted asylum in Russia on humanitarian grounds, Moscow said.

Meanwhile, Israel carried out a wave of heavy airstrikes across Syria as its troops advanced deeper into the country, a Syrian opposition war monitor said Tuesday. Israel denied its forces were advancing toward Damascus after they pushed into a buffer zone inside Syria following the overthrow of President Bashar Assad.

Associated Press reporters in the



KUNA photo

Part of the audience at the National Identity Forum and Promoting the Principles of Citizenship.

ways and means of addressing challenges facing national identity.

She underlined that it is essential to immunize national identity against any political orientations and disagreements, highlighting tradi-

tional values and customs, fighting extremism and buttressing freedom.

Al-Jawan, further, called for disseminating tolerance and accepting other people's divergent views, denouncing violence and promoting

genuine citizenship.

Head of the Cabinet's National Unity Promotion Team Dr. Abdullah Al-Sharikah said that the forum came amid exceptional and critical local, regional and international circumstances and major challenges facing national identity.

He said the Kuwaiti people are renowned for co-existence, togetherness, cohesion and mutual respect regardless of their divergent belongings and orientations.

Al-Sharikah emphasized that citizens' dedication and abidance by laws are core criteria to assess their loyalty and belonging to the nation.

Acting Manager of the Center for the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies Dr. Yaqoub Al-Kandari said national identity is closely related to the promotion of national principles.

He stressed the significance of the forum that brought together a galaxy of scholars and thinkers to discuss the issue of national identity from a scientific, academic and legal perspective.

which would enhance resilience, and promote private investment.

Executive Board Assessment Executive Directors agreed with the staff appraisal, acknowledging the ongoing recession but highlighting the recovery in the non-oil sector, moderating inflation, and strong financial buffers that offer protection against shocks. However, they noted that risks to the outlook are tilted to the downside and emphasized the need for continued diversification efforts due to the economy's heavy reliance on oil. Directors supported the authorities' focus on transitioning to a more dynamic and diversified economy and stressed the importance of a comprehensive, well-sequenced package of fiscal and structural reforms.

They emphasized the need for medium-term fiscal consolidation to improve sustainability and ensure intergenerational equity. They recommended a balanced approach focusing on current expenditure rationalization, non-oil revenue mobilization, and increased infrastructure investment.

The directors called for extending the CIT to all large domestic companies and adopting GCC-wide VAT and excise taxes. They also stressed the importance of controlling the wage bill, phasing out energy and water subsidies, and protecting vulnerable groups.

The directors encouraged implementing a Medium-Term Fiscal Framework to strengthen budget planning and execution and urged quick enactment of the Financing and Liquidity Law to support fiscal financing.

They agreed that the exchange rate peg remains a strong nominal anchor, and the current restrictive monetary policy stance is appropriate. They recommended enhancing monetary transmission by developing the inter-bank and domestic sovereign debt markets.

The directors acknowledged the stability of the financial sector but advised replacing the unlimited deposit guarantee with a limited insurance framework to reduce moral hazard. They also suggested phasing out bank lending rate caps to support efficient risk pricing.

capital heard heavy airstrikes overnight and into Tuesday on the city and its suburbs. Photographs circulating online showed destroyed missile launchers, helicopters and warplanes.

There was no immediate comment from the insurgent groups - led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, or HTS - that have taken control of much of the country. Their lightning advance brought an end to the Assad family's half-century rule after nearly 14 years of civil war. There are concerns over what comes next.

Life in the capital is slowly returning to normal after the overthrow of Assad, who fled the country over the weekend and has been granted political asylum in Russia.

Private banks reopened on instructions from the Central Bank, said Sadi Ahmad, who runs a branch in the upscale Abu Rummaneh neighborhood. He said all his employees returned to work.

Shops also reopened in the city's ancient Hamidiyah market, where armed men and civilians could be seen buying things like perfume and ice cream. A clothing shop owner, who asked not to be named for fear of retribution, said he hoped vendors would no longer have to pay bribes to security officials.

At Bakdash, a famous ice cream shop, a poster outside read: "Welcome to the rebels of free Syria. Long live free Syria."

Kuwait GDP

Continued from Page 1

OPEC+ production cuts, but the non-oil sector is recovering, and inflation is moderating.


Real GDP contracted by 3.6 percent in 2023, driven by a 4.3 percent decline in the oil sector and a one percent contraction in the non-oil sector. In the second quarter of 2024, real GDP contracted by 1.5 percent year-on-year, with a 6.8 percent decline in the oil sector, partially offset by a 4.2 percent rebound in the non-oil sector.

Headline CPI inflation decreased to 3.6 percent in 2023 and further moderated to 2.6 percent in Septem-

Ministry of Commerce and Industry

وزارة التجارة والصناعة

RECALL INFORMATION



HONDA CR-V (RW5 & RW6)
Model 2018 & 2019 & 2020

RECALL REASON	Defective fuel pump impeller that could lead to engine stalling while driving and prevent the engine from restarting.
REMEDY	Visit Honda AlGhanim service center aftersales department to take necessary action.
CONTACT	Please visit Honda AlGhanim from 22 November 2024 or book an appointment by contacting the customer service center 1822777.

This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42,43,44,45,46,47and48)of no.(27/2015) issuing the executive by laws no.(39/2014)on Consumer Protection

Evaluations on track

MEW finalizes evening shift plans for January

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: According to informed sources from the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, final preparations are underway for the selection of organizational units and the number of employees who will be assigned to the evening shift. This information will be submitted to the Civil Service Commission (CSC), which is preparing to implement the evening shift from January 5.

The sources explained that the selection of departments in the various sectors of the ministry for evening shifts will be based on the quality of services they can provide during these hours.

Employees will be nominated for the evening shift based on their ability to serve the public effectively.

The ministry is expected to submit the names of the selected units and the number of employees to CSC by mid-December.

The sources highlighted the ministry's commitment to adhering to the number of employees nominated for the evening shift, in line with CSC's circular on the matter.

They said a larger proportion of male employees have expressed interest in the evening shift, compared to female employees who generally prefer the morning shift.

In a related development, the sources explained that the ministry is preparing to start the procedures for evaluating employee performance for the current year. It is expected that the ministry will start reaching out to its various sectors in early January to initiate the evaluation process for employees working within those sectors.


The Administrative Affairs Sector will begin contacting the departments after the deadline for employee transfers on December 25. This will ensure the timely completion of the evaluation process, which is necessary for the disbursement of the excellent work bonus.

With over 36,000 employees at the Ministry of Electricity and Water, this task requires careful attention and efficiency to ensure the bonus is distributed to eligible employees by May or June at the latest.

Ministry of Commerce and Industry

وزارة التجارة والصناعة

RECALL INFORMATION



HONDA CIVIC (FC1, FC2, FC5)
Model 2017 & 2018 & 2019 & 2020

RECALL REASON	Defective fuel pump impeller that could lead to engine stalling while driving and prevent the engine from restarting.
REMEDY	Visit Honda AlGhanim service center aftersales department to take necessary action.
CONTACT	Please visit Honda AlGhanim from 22 November 2024 or book an appointment by contacting the customer service center 1822777.

This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42,43,44,45,46,47and48)of no.(27/2015) issuing the executive by laws no.(39/2014)on Consumer Protection

INTERNATIONAL



A person evacuates a residence at Pepperdine University as the Franklin Fire approaches in Malibu, Calif., on Dec 10. (AP)

Malibu wildfire prompts evacuations

Firefighters battled a wildfire early Tuesday in Malibu, near Pepperdine University, prompting evacuations amid dangerous fire conditions because of Southern California's notorious Santa Ana winds.

It was not immediately known how the blaze, named the Franklin Fire, started but Los Angeles County Fire Department officials estimated that at least 2.6 square miles (6.7 square kilometers) had burned and structures were threatened.

The evacuation order encompassed about 6,000 people and more than 2,000 structures, KABC-

TV reported, attributing that information to fire officials.

Pepperdine canceled classes and finals for the day and there was a shelter-in-place order. Flames could be seen from the campus, according to a university statement. Fire engines were on campus and helicopters were dropping water collected from lakes in the school's Alumni Park onto the fire.

North to northeast winds were forecast to increase to 30 to 40 miles per hour (48 to 64 kph) with gusts up to 65 mph (105 kph) expected, The National Weather Service Los Angeles office posted on X. (AP)

'Mangione had some ill will toward corporate America'

Suspect in UnitedHealthcare CEO killing charged with murder

ALTOONA, Pa., Dec 10, (AP) — After UnitedHealthcare's CEO was gunned down on a New York sidewalk, police searched for the masked gunman with dogs, drones and scuba divers. Officers used the city's muscular surveillance system. Investigators analyzed DNA samples, fingerprints and internet addresses. Police went door-to-door looking for witnesses.

When an arrest came five days later, those sprawling investigative efforts shared credit with an alert civilian's instincts. A Pennsylvania McDonald's customer noticed another patron who resembled the man in the oblique security-camera photos that New York police had publicized.

Luigi Nicholas Mangione, a 26-year-old Ivy League graduate from a prominent Maryland real estate family, was arrested Monday in the killing of Brian Thompson, who headed one of the United States' largest medical insurance companies.

He remained jailed in Pennsylvania, where he was initially charged with possession of an unlicensed firearm, forgery and providing false identification to police. By late evening, prosecutors in Manhattan had added a charge of murder, according to an online court docket. He's expected to be extradited to New York eventually.

It's unclear whether Mangione has an attorney who can comment on the

allegations. Asked at Monday's arraignment whether he needed a public defender, Mangione asked whether he could "answer that at a future date."

Mangione was arrested in Altoona, Pennsylvania, after the McDonald's customer recognized him and notified an employee, authorities said. Police in Altoona, about 233 miles (375 kilometers) west of New York City, were soon summoned.

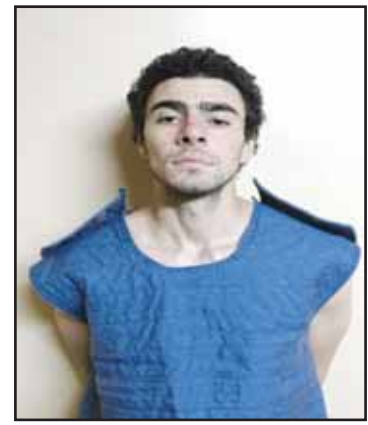
They arrived to find Mangione sitting at a table in the back of the restaurant, wearing a blue medical mask and looking at a laptop, according to a Pennsylvania police criminal complaint.

He initially gave them a fake ID, but when an officer asked Mangione whether he'd been to New York recently, he "became quiet and started to shake," the complaint says.

When he pulled his mask down at officers' request, "we knew that was our guy," rookie Officer Tyler Frye said at a news conference in Hollidaysburg.

New York Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said at a Manhattan news conference that Mangione was carrying a gun like the one used to kill Thompson and the same fake ID the shooter had used to check into a New York hostel, along with a passport and other fraudulent IDs.

NYPD Chief of Detectives Joseph Kenny said Mangione also had a



This booking photo released on Dec 9, by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections shows Luigi Mangione, a suspect in the fatal shooting of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson. (AP)

three-page, handwritten document that shows "some ill will toward corporate America."

A law enforcement official who wasn't authorized to discuss the investigation publicly and spoke with The Associated Press on condition of anonymity said the document included a line in which Mangione claimed to have acted alone.

"To the Feds, I'll keep this short, because I do respect what you do for

our country. To save you a lengthy investigation, I state plainly that I wasn't working with anyone," the document said, according to the official.

It also had a line that said, "I do apologize for any strife or traumas but it had to be done. Frankly, these parasites simply had it coming."

Pennsylvania prosecutor Peter Weeks said in court that Mangione was found with a passport and \$10,000 in cash - \$2,000 of it in foreign currency. Mangione disputed the amount.

Thompson, 50, was killed last Wednesday as he walked alone to a midtown Manhattan hotel for an investor conference. Police quickly came to see the shooting as a targeted attack by a gunman who appeared to wait for Thompson, came up behind him and fired a 9 mm pistol.

Investigators have said "delay," "deny" and "depose" were written on ammunition found near Thompson's body. The words mimic a phrase used to criticize the insurance industry.

From surveillance video, New York investigators gathered that the shooter fled by bike into Central Park, emerged, then took a taxi to a northern Manhattan bus terminal.

Once in Pennsylvania, he went from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, "trying to stay low-profile" by avoiding cameras, Pennsylvania State Police Lt. Col. George Bivens said.

'Political action committee would play significant role in primaries'

Musk warns US Republicans against standing in President Trump's way - or his

DES MOINES, Iowa, Dec 10, (AP) — A week after President-elect Donald Trump's victory, Elon Musk said his political action committee would "play a significant role in primaries."

The following week, the billionaire responded to a report that he might fund challengers to GOP House members who don't support Trump's nominees. "How else? There is no other way," Musk wrote on X, which he rebranded after purchasing Twitter and moving to boost conservative voices, including his own.

And during his recent visit to Capitol Hill, Musk and entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy delivered a warning to Republicans who don't go along with their plans to slash spending as part of Trump's proposed Department of Government Efficiency.

"Elon and Vivek talked about having a naughty list and a nice list for members of Congress and senators and how we vote and how we're spending the American people's money," said Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga.

Trump's second term comes with the specter of the world's richest man serving as his political enforcer. Within Trump's team, there is a feeling

that Musk not only supports Trump's agenda and Cabinet appointments, but is intent on seeing them through to the point of pressuring Republicans who may be less devout.

One Trump adviser, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss internal political dynamics, noted Musk had come to enjoy his role on the campaign and that he clearly had the resources to stay involved.

The adviser and others noted that Musk's role is still taking shape. And Musk, once a supporter of President Barack Obama before moving to the right in recent years, is famously mercurial.

"I think he was really important for this election. Purchasing Twitter, truly making it a free speech platform, I think, was integral to this election, to the win that Donald Trump had," said departing Republican National Committee co-chair Lara Trump, the president-elect's daughter-in-law. "But I don't know that ultimately he wants to be in politics. I think he considers himself to be someone on the outside."

During the presidential campaign, Musk contributed roughly \$200 million to America PAC, a super PAC



US President-elect Donald Trump walks with Elon Musk before the launch of the sixth test flight of the SpaceX Starship rocket on Nov 19, 2024 in Boca Chica, Texas. (AP)

aimed at reaching Trump voters online and in person in the seven most competitive states, which Trump swept. He also invested \$20 million in a group called RBG PAC, which ran ads arguing Trump would not sign a national abortion ban even as the former presi-

dent nominated three of the justices who overturned a federally guaranteed right to the procedure.

Musk's donation to RBG PAC - a name that invokes the initials of former Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a champion of abor-

tion rights - wasn't revealed until post-election campaign filings were made public Thursday.

Musk has said he hopes to keep America PAC funded and operating. Beyond that, he has used his X megaphone to suggest he is at least open to challenging less exuberant Trump supporters in Congress.

Another key Trump campaign ally has been more aggressive online. Conservative activist Charlie Kirk, whose group Turning Point Action also worked to turn out voters for Trump, named Republican senators he wants to target.

"This is not a joke, everybody. The funding is already being put together. Donors are calling like crazy. Primaries are going to be launched," Kirk said on his podcast, singling out Sens. Joni Ernst of Iowa, Jim Risch of Idaho, Mike Rounds of South Dakota and Thom Tillis of North Carolina as potential targets. All four Republican senators' seats are up in 2026.

For now, Musk has been enjoying the glow of his latest conquest, joining Trump for high-level meetings and galas at the soon-to-be president's Mar-a-Lago resort home in Palm Beach,

Florida. The incoming administration is seeded with Musk allies, including venture capitalist and former PayPal executive David Sacks serving as the "White House A.I. & Crypto Czar" and Jared Isaacman, a tech billionaire who bought a series of spaceflights from Musk's SpaceX, named to lead NASA.

Musk could help reinforce Trump's agenda immediately, some GOP strategists said, by using America PAC to pressure key Republicans. Likewise, Musk could begin targeting moderate Democrats in pivotal states and districts this spring, urging them to break with their party on key issues, Republican strategist Chris Pack said.

"Instead of using his influence to twist GOP arms when you have majorities in both houses, he could start going after Democrats who vote against Trump's agenda in states where the election was a referendum for Trump," said Pack, former communications director for the National Republican Senatorial Committee. "Otherwise, if you pressure Republicans with a primary, you can end up with a Republican who can't win, and then a Democrat in that seat."

UK and Germany sign agreement against people-smuggling gangs

LONDON, Dec 10, (AP) — The UK and Germany pledged Tuesday to share intelligence and expertise against the people-smuggling gangs that send migrants across the English Channel in small boats, the latest effort by European countries to stop the dangerous journeys.

Home Secretary Yvette Cooper and her German counterpart, Interior Minister Nancy Faeser, signed a "joint action plan" at a meeting in London. The UK said that under the deal, Germany will make it a specific offense to facilitate the smuggling of migrants to the U.K. Many of the rubber dinghies used to ferry migrants across the Channel

are stored in Germany.

"The criminal gangs who organize dangerous small boats across the channel that undermine our border security, that put lives at risk, are also the same gangs that are operating in Germany, that are operating right across Europe and beyond," Cooper said. "Law enforcement needs to operate across borders as well."

Faeser said that the cooperation would include "maintaining a high investigative pressure, exchanging information between our security authorities as best as possible, and persistently investigating financial flows to identify the criminals operating behind the scenes."

The two countries said they would also work to remove migrant-smuggling content from social media platforms, where many of the smuggling gangs tout their services.

The two ministers signed the agreement before a meeting in London of the "Calais Group" of the U.K., Germany, Belgium, France and the Netherlands, along with the European Union's police and border agencies, Europol and Frontex.

The United Kingdom's center-left government is trying to rebuild its law enforcement and intelligence ties with the U.K.'s neighbors after the country's exit from the EU in 2020. Brexit complicated international cooperation by taking the UK out of Europol and the bloc's intelligence-sharing mechanism.

Despite French and UK efforts to stop it, the cross-Channel route remains a major smuggling corridor for people fleeing conflict or poverty. Many migrants favor the U.K. for reasons of language, family ties or perceived easier access to asylum and work.

More than 31,000 migrants have made the perilous crossing of one of the world's busiest shipping lanes so far this year, more than in all of 2023, though fewer than in 2022. More than 70 people have perished in the attempts this year, according to UK officials, making 2024 the deadliest since the number of channel crossings began surging in 2018.

Meanwhile, British police have charged six people with belonging to a banned Kurdish militant group, the PKK.



Britain's Home Secretary Yvette Cooper, 2nd left, chairs a meeting of European ministers and agencies at Carlton Gardens in London on Dec 10. (AP)

Death toll in Italy blast rises to four

ROME, Dec 10, (AP) — Rescuers found two more bodies on Tuesday at the site of the massive explosion that hit a fuel depot a day earlier in the central Italian region of Tuscany, bringing the death toll to four, local officials said.

The blast collapsed a building with offices where one person is believed to be still missing.

Fourteen people have been injured and hospitalized, Tuscany's governor Eugenio Giani said, adding that two were in "critical conditions."

The explosion struck an ENI fuel depot north of Florence, sending a dark plume of smoke into the air. Witnesses kilometers (miles) away reported a large bang and tremors.



Emergency services work on a site of a fuel depot's explosion in Calenzano, near Florence, Italy on Dec 9. (AP)



Rescue workers walk in front of a car and a building destroyed by a Russian strike in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine on Dec 6. (AP)

Everyone bracing for Trump

US President Biden rushes aid to Ukraine

WASHINGTON, Dec 10, (AP) — The grinding war between Ukraine and its Russian invaders has escalated ahead of Donald Trump's inauguration, with President Joe Biden rushing out billions of dollars more in military aid before US support for Kyiv's defenses is thrown into question under the new administration.

Russia, Ukraine and their global allies are scrambling to put their side in the best possible position for any changes that Trump may bring to American policy in the nearly 3-year-old war. The president-elect insisted in recent days that Russia and Ukraine immediately reach a ceasefire and said Ukraine should likely prepare to receive less US military aid.

On the war's front lines, Ukraine's forces are mindful of Trump's fast-approaching presidency and the risk of losing their biggest backer.

If that happens, "those people who are with me, my unit, we are not going to retreat," a Ukrainian strike-drone company commander, fighting in Russia's Kursk region with the 47th Brigade, told The Associated Press by phone.

"As long as we have ammunition, as long as we have weapons, as long as we have some means to defeat the enemy, we will fight," said the commander, who goes by his military call sign, Hummer. He spoke on condition he not be identified by name, citing

Ukrainian military rules and security concerns.

"But, when all means run out, you must understand, we will be destroyed very quickly," he said.

The Biden administration is pushing every available dollar out the door to shore up Ukraine's defenses before leaving office in six weeks, announcing more than \$2 billion in additional support since Trump won the presidential election last month.

The U.S. has sent a total of \$62 billion in military aid since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. And more help is on the way.

The administration is on track to disperse the US portion of a \$50 billion loan to Ukraine, backed by frozen Russian assets, before Biden leaves the White House, US officials said. They said the US and Ukraine are in "advanced stages" of discussing terms of the loan and close to executing the \$20 billion of the larger loan that the US is backing.

Biden also has eased limits on Ukraine using American longer-range missiles against military targets deeper inside Russia, following months of refusing those appeals over fears of provoking Russia into nuclear war or attacks on the West. He's also newly allowed Ukraine to employ antipersonnel mines, which are banned by many countries.

Biden and his senior advisers, how-

ever, are skeptical that allowing freer use of the longer-range missiles will change the broader trajectory of the war, according to two senior administration officials who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

But the administration has at least a measure of confidence that its scramble, combined with continued strong European support, means it will leave office having given Ukraine the tools it needs to sustain its fight against Russia for some time, the officials said.

Enough to hold on, but not enough to defeat Russian President Vladimir Putin's forces, according to Ukraine and some of its allies.

Even now, "the Biden administration has been very careful not to run up against the possibility of a defeated Putin or a defeated Russia" for fear of the tumult that could bring, said retired Gen. Philip Breedlove, a former supreme allied commander of NATO. He is critical of Biden's cautious pace of military support for Ukraine.

Events far from the front lines this past weekend demonstrated the war's impact on Russia's military.

In Syria, rebels seized the country's capital and toppled Russia-allied President Bashar Assad. Russian forces in Syria had propped up Assad for years, but they moved out of the way of the rebels' assault, unwilling to take losses to defend their ally.

Authorities probe whether acts amount to rebellion

S.Korea prosecutors seek to arrest ex-defense minister over martial law imposition

SEOUL, South Korea, Dec 10, (AP): South Korean prosecutors are seeking to formally arrest the former defense minister alleged to have colluded with President Yoon Suk Yeol in imposing martial law last week, as authorities investigate whether their acts amount to rebellion.

Martial law, the first in more than 40 years, lasted only about six hours but has triggered a domestic firestorm and large street protests. Yoon and his associates face criminal investigations and impeachment attempts. The Justice Ministry has banned Yoon and eight others from leaving the country as authorities see them as key suspects in the martial law case. It's the first time that a sitting president in South Korea has received a travel ban.

The Seoul Central District Court said Tuesday it was reviewing a request from prosecutors for a warrant to arrest former Defense Minister Kim Yong Hyun, who has been accused of recommending martial law to Yoon and sending troops to the National Assembly to block lawmakers from voting on it. Enough lawmakers even-

tually managed to enter a parliament chamber and unanimously rejected Yoon's decree, forcing the Cabinet to lift it before daybreak on Dec 4.

Kim said in a statement Tuesday that he "deeply apologizes for causing significant anxiety and inconvenience." He said all responsibility for the imposition of martial law rests solely with him and pleaded for leniency for soldiers deployed to enforce it, saying they were only following his order.

Kim has been detained since Sunday. If an arrest warrant is issued, he would be the first person arrested in the case. Prosecutors would have up to 20 days to investigate Kim and determine whether to indict him. A conviction on the charge of rebellion would carry up to the death penalty.

Prosecutors reportedly accuse Kim of playing a key role in a rebellion and committing abuse of power by staging a riot to disrupt the constitution in collaboration with Yoon and other military and police officers. Prosecutors' offices in Seoul couldn't immediately confirm the reports.



Protesters with images of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and former South Korea Defense Minister Kim Yong Hyun, center, march to the presidential office after a candlelight vigil against President Yoon in Seoul, South Korea, on Dec 5. The signs read 'Arrest the rebellion criminals.' (AP)

The opposition-controlled parliament passed a bill Tuesday to appoint an independent special counsel to in-

Party had advocated for a special counsel investigation, arguing that public prosecutors cannot be trusted to conduct a thorough investigation of Yoon, a former prosecutor-general.

During a parliamentary hearing Tuesday, Kwak Jong-keun, commander of the Army Special Warfare Command whose troops were sent to parliament, testified that he received direct instructions from Kim Yong Hyun to obstruct lawmakers from entering the National Assembly's main chamber. Kwak said the purpose of Kim's instructions was to prevent the 300-member parliament from gathering the 150 votes necessary to overturn Yoon's martial law order.

Kwak said Yoon later called him directly and asked for the troops to "quickly destroy the door and drag out the lawmakers who are inside." Kwak said he discussed Yoon's order with the commander at the scene and that they concluded there was nothing that could be done, ruling out the possibility of threatening the lawmakers by shooting blanks or cutting off electric-

ity. At the same hearing, senior officer Kim Dae-woo of the military's counterintelligence agency said his commander, Yeo In-hyung, asked him if an army bunker in Seoul had space to detain politicians and other figures after martial law was imposed. Yeo is considered a close associate of Kim Yong Hyun. Last week, Hong Jang-won, a deputy director of the country's spy agency, said Yoon ordered him to help Yeo's command to detain some of his political rivals but he ignored the president's order.

Kwak and Yeo are among those who face opposition-raised rebellion charges along with Yoon and Kim, and the Defense Ministry suspended them last week.

Opposition parties and many experts say the martial law decree was unconstitutional. They say a president is by law allowed to declare martial law only during "wartime, war-like situations or other comparable national emergency states" and South Korea wasn't in such a situation.

Osprey aircraft safety causes concern

US defense chief in Japan to support alliance

TOKYO, Dec 10, (AP): US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin met with officials in Japan on Tuesday to reaffirm the importance of their alliance and Washington's commitment to regional security as threats rise from China and North Korea.

Austin's visit also came amid growing concerns over the safety of Osprey military aircraft, which have been grounded in the United States following a near crash at Cannon Air Force Base in New Mexico last month. The incident, caused by weakened metal

components, was similar to a fatal crash off southwestern Japan last year.

The US measure prompted Japan to also ground its Ospreys. After confirming details with the US military, Japan's Ground Self-Defense Force has suspended operations of its 17 Ospreys, except for possible disaster relief and other missions, beginning Tuesday to prioritize safety. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi told reporters.

During their meeting, Austin and Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru

Ishiba noted the collapse of the Syrian government and praised the strength of the Japan-US alliance at a time of rapid global political change.

"The world can change drastically in a week," Ishiba told Austin. "No one could predict the collapse of the Assad regime in that way."

The US defense chief, whose term ends in January when President-elect Donald Trump takes office, told Ishiba that he appreciated the steady alliance with Japan during "very dynamic times" and that he was proud of the modernization of alliance command and control, strengthening of force posture and deterrence capabilities over the past several years.

Austin was also scheduled to hold talks with Japanese counterpart Gen Nakatani.

Nakatani told reporters that cooperation between Japan and the US, as well as with South Korea and other partners, is important as tensions escalate in the region.

The trilateral partnership between Japan, the US and South Korea has significantly strengthened under President Joe Biden's administration, but faces new uncertainty amid ongoing political unrest in South Korea, which already led to the cancellation of Austin's planned trip to that country.

On Monday, Austin greeted crew members of the USS George Washington, a nuclear-powered flagship aircraft carrier docked at the U.S. Navy base in Yokosuka, near Tokyo.



US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, (left), shakes hands with Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba at the start of their bilateral meeting at the prime minister's official residence in Tokyo, Japan on Dec 10. (AP)



In this handout photo provided by the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, an explosive eruption occurred at the summit vent of Kanlaon volcano, as seen from Mansalanao, Negros Occidental province, Philippines on Dec 9. (AP)

Mass evacuation of Philippine villages underway after volcanic eruption

MANILA, Dec 10, (AP): About 87,000 people were being evacuated in a central Philippine region Tuesday a day after a volcano briefly erupted with a towering ash plume and superhot streams of gas and debris hurtling down its western slopes.

The latest eruption of Mount Kanlaon on central Negros island did not cause any immediate casualties, but the alert level was raised one level, indicating further and more explosive eruptions may occur.

Volcanic ash fell on a wide area, including Antique province, more than

200 kilometers (124 miles) across seawards west of the volcano, obscuring visibility and posing health risks, Philippine chief volcanologist Teresito Bacolcol and other officials said by telephone.

At least six domestic flights and a flight bound for Singapore were canceled and two local flights were diverted in the region Monday and Tuesday due to Kanlaon's eruption, according to the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines.

The mass evacuations were being carried out urgently in towns and vil-

lages nearest the western and southern slopes of Kanlaon which were blanketed by its ash, including in La Castellana town in Negros Occidental where nearly 47,000 people have to be evacuated out of a 6-kilometer (3.7-mile) danger zone, the Office of Civil Defense said.

More than 6,000 have moved to evacuation centers aside from those who have temporarily transferred to the homes of relatives in La Castellana by Tuesday morning, the town's mayor, Rhumyla Mangilimutan, told The Associated Press by telephone.

Ethnic minority armed group claims capture of strategic Myanmar town

BANGKOK, Dec 10, (AP): One of the most powerful ethnic minority armed groups battling Myanmar's army has claimed the capture of the last army outpost in the strategic western town of Maungdaw, gaining full control of the 271-kilometer (168-mile)-long border with Bangladesh.

The capture by the Arakan Army makes the group's control of the northern part of Rakhine state complete, and marks another advance in its bid for self-rule there.

Rakhine has become a focal point for Myanmar's nationwide civil war, in which pro-democracy guerrillas and ethnic minority armed forces seeking autonomy battle the country's military rulers, who took power in 2021 after the army ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Khaing Thukha, a spokesperson for the Arakan Army, told The Associated Press by text message from an undisclosed location late Monday that his group had seized the last remaining military outpost in Maungdaw on Sunday.

Outpost commander Brig. Gen. Thurein Tun, was captured while attempting to flee the battle, Khaing



Myanmar border guards stand to provide security near the fence at a man's land between Myanmar and Bangladesh, near Taungpyolyatya village, Maungdaw, northern Rakhine State, Myanmar, on June 29, 2018. (AP)

Thukha said.

The situation in Maungdaw could not be independently confirmed, with access to the internet and mobile phone services in the area mostly cut off.

Myanmar's military government did not immediately comment.



People shout slogans condemning reported attacks on Hindu and other minorities in Bangladesh during a protest near the Bangladesh diplomatic mission in New Delhi, India on Dec 10. (AP)

Hundreds protest in India's capital

NEW DELHI, Dec 10, (AP): Hundreds of protesters rallied near the Bangladesh diplomatic mission in the Indian capital on Tuesday, pressing for an end to reported attacks on Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh after former premier Sheikh Hasina fled into exile in India in August.

The protesters demanded an intervention by the United Nations, carrying banners and placards that criticized the world body for not doing more to address the problems in Bangladesh. They also rejected claims by interim government officials in Bangladesh that the targeting of minorities was an internal matter.

"It's a very serious attack, a very sustained attack on the lives of the (Hindu) minority," said Veena Sikri, a former Indian ambassador to Bangladesh. Attacks on the livelihoods, homes and businesses of minorities in Bangladesh must stop, she said.

Argentina's President Milei marks one year in office

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, Dec 10, (AP): When libertarian President Javier Milei assumed office one year ago, Argentine supermarkets were marking price increases on an almost daily basis. Middle-class families tried to spend their rapidly depreciating pesos as quickly as they got them, and economists warned the country was teetering on the brink of hyperinflation.

It was popular outrage over this upside-down economy that fueled the rise of Milei, a self-declared "anarcho-capitalist" and former TV pundit who rode to power on vows to "blow up" the central bank, take an axe to the bloated government and kill sky-high inflation.

It was an almost impossible job, and Milei's lack of government experience, unkempt hairdo, sexual boasts and missionary-like zeal for his dead dog, the Rolling Stones and the free market didn't inspire much confidence in a country with a history of failed economic reforms.

"It wasn't a given that he could govern Argentina when he took

office," said Marcelo J. Garcia, Americas director at geopolitical risk firm Horizon Engage. "He was Mr. Nobody."

On taking power, Milei implemented a series of austerity measures, including slashing energy and transportation subsidies, laying off tens of thousands of government workers, freezing public infrastructure projects and imposing wage and pension freezes below inflation.

It has been brutal. Unemployment has climbed, economic activity has declined and poverty has surged.

But now signs have emerged that Argentina's bizarre and long mismanaged economy is starting to look a little more normal.

Monthly inflation has plummeted, bonds have rallied and the closely watched gap between the black market dollar and the official rate has shrunk as much as 44%. Argentina's country-risk index, an influential measure of the risk of default, is at its lowest point in five years.

"He reaches the anniversary at the best moment of his administration," Garcia said.

Inflation, Argentina's perpetual scourge and Milei's top priority upon coming to office, slowed from a monthly rate of 25.5% in December 2023 to just 2.7% in October - its lowest level in three years.



Milei

Lula recovering in ICU after surgery

SAO PAULO, Dec 10, (Agencies): Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is recovering in an intensive-care unit after undergoing surgery for an intracranial hemorrhage, the Sirio-Libanês hospital said in a statement in the early hours of Tuesday.

The procedure was performed after the 79-year-old leftist leader felt headaches doctors believed resulted from a fall at home in October.

The hospital said Lula, who travelled from the capital Brasilia to be treated 1,000 kilometers south (620 miles) in Sao Paulo, is "well, under monitoring in an ICU bed" after the bleeding was drained.

Brazil's presidency has yet to issue any comment. Lula canceled a trip to Russia for a BRICS summit after the accident, his office said at the time. It left him with a cut visible on the back of his head, slightly above his neck.

Hospital Sirio Libanês in Sao Paulo said in a statement that the leftist leader was instructed not to take long distance trips, but can keep his other activities.



Lula

Mahama pledges reset in bad economy

Ghana's former leader declared election winner

ACCRA, Ghana, Dec 10, (AP): Ghana's former leader John Dramani Mahama was declared the winner of the presidential election on Monday and pledged a "a life of limitless opportunity" for citizens after voters vented their anger over the country's worst cost-of-living crisis in a generation.

Previously president of the West African nation between 2012 and 2017, the 65-year-old Mahama received 56.5% of votes cast, or 6.3 million votes, the electoral commission said. His main opponent from the current governing party, Vice President Mahamudu Bawumia, conceded defeat on Sunday and got 41%, or 4.6 million votes.

Electoral commissioner Jean Mensa said vote-counting continued in nine constituencies but would not change the final result. Turnout was just over 60%.

Mahama had promised to "reset" the country on various fronts. His campaign prioritized the economy and largely ap-



Supporters of opposition candidate and former President John Dramani Mahama celebrate his victory after his opponent Ghana's vice president and ruling party candidate, Mahamudu Bawumia conceded in Accra, Ghana on Dec 8. (AP)

pealed to young Ghanaians who saw the vote as a way out of the economic crisis.

In his victory speech on Monday, Mahama said Ghana must be able to meet the basic needs of its people including affordable housing, health care, food, clean water, safe work and fair wages.

"We want a Ghana that considers the well-being of all her citizens and affords them each the ability to live a life of dignity, a life of limitless opportunity," he said. "This country, this land, is not for one person or for one family or for one tribe or ethnic group."

He said the last eight years under outgoing President Nana Akufo-Addo have "left a scar on our national psyche, which may take some time to erase."

Mahama's win is viewed as following the trend of elections around the world, favoring opposition parties against incumbents. Mahama's National Democratic Congress also won the majority in parliament.

		Change	Closing pts			Change	Closing pts
JAPAN	- Nikkei	+0.53	39,367.58	UAE	- DFMGI	-1.11	4,794.11
PHILIPPINES	- PSEI	+0.66	6,724.82	EGYPT	- EGX	-1.25	30,617.83
SAUDI	- TASI	+0.80	12,193.64	PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	-0.87	109,103.56

Business

During insightful panel hosted by KDIPA and The Business Year

Zain shares its vision for shaping the future of Kuwait's digital economy



Al-Gharabally at the panel discussion.



A photo taken during the panel discussion.



Minister Omar Al-Omar with Nawaf Al-Gharabally and Zain's executive team.

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Nawaf Al-Gharabally, CEO of Zain Kuwait, participated in an insightful panel discussion held by the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) and the global media group The Business Year. The event was joined by H.E. Omar Al-Omar, Minister of State for Communications Affairs, alongside a distinguished group of executives and senior leaders from various public and private sector institutions.

The Thought Leadership Circle, titled Accelerating Technology & AI Implementation, focused on four key pillars: aligning public-private efforts for AI-driven transformation; AI's impact on workforce, education, and skills development; data analytics, cybersecurity, and digital payments; and challenges and opportunities in AI implementation.

During the session, Nawaf Al-Gharabally said: "We value initiatives that bring together visions and ideas from leading institutions and companies in the country, particularly in the technology and banking sectors. Such efforts create synergies between the public and private sectors and strengthen collaborative initiatives, helping us collectively achieve Kuwait's development goals and shape the future of the country's digital economy."

He continued: "At Zain, we consider ourselves a human-centric organization, and our purpose is to build lasting connections that enrich lives. As a leader in tech innovation, we see ourselves at the heart of Kuwait's digital transformation. Through our partnerships with leading technology players and the expertise of our national talents, we empower government entities and private sector companies to harness technology, enhance their operations, and realize their visions, especially

Nawaf Al-Gharabally:

- "At Zain, we remain steadfast in our commitment to being a strategic partner to the public sector in driving digital transformation."
- Session featured participation of Minister of Communications and senior leaders from various sectors.

in the era of data and artificial intelligence."

Al-Gharabally added: "Technology companies handle vast amounts of data, which is the fuel of artificial intelligence. Data unlocks immense opportunities and unprecedented potential for institutions across vital sectors to accelerate their digital transformation and overcome challenges efficiently."

He explained further: "Recently, we have taken significant steps to accelerate AI adoption, including investing in technical training for our workforce, enhancing collaboration with our partners, and integrating solutions into our digital infrastructure to improve operational efficiency. These efforts contribute to sustainability goals and enhance customer experiences."

Al-Gharabally emphasized: "We work closely with our technology partners to harness the power of data and AI, enabling companies and government entities to

make informed decisions and better serve both individual and corporate customers. AI is a tool that helps us achieve this mission."

He also highlighted Zain's successful partnerships with various institutions, leveraging data to support their goals. He noted that the challenge lies in viewing each customer as a unique sector with distinct needs and designing tailored services to deliver the best experience for them. This can be achieved through data-driven insights, supported by regulatory frameworks that facilitate this approach.

Concluding his remarks, Al-Gharabally said: "We are optimistic about the Kuwaiti government's vision to accelerate digital transformation. Over the past years, we have witnessed many successful initiatives in this area, and there are future plans that will be implemented to achieve this vision. This is a step in the right direction toward a digital economy, and we at Zain remain steadfast in our commitment to being a strategic partner to the public sector in driving digital transformation."

Zain continues its long-standing partnership with The Business Year, headquartered in London, to host such insightful gatherings. The company believes in the critical role of these platforms in fostering dialogue, exchanging ideas, and enabling innovation across various market sectors.

Zain also commends the pivotal efforts of KDIPA in improving Kuwait's business environment, diversifying the economy, enhancing competitiveness, and positioning Kuwait as a global financial and investment hub. Zain reaffirms its commitment to supporting these efforts toward achieving a New Kuwait as a proud representative of the Kuwaiti private sector.

Al-Rifai extols role of tech projects in supporting Kuwait's Vision 2035

Fund actively involved in Nexus '24 Technology & Innovation Exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Hiba Al-Rifai, Director-General of the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development, recently shared insights into the technological sector's contribution to the Fund's initiatives, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Rifai revealed that technological projects account for 11 percent of the total funded projects by the National Fund, emphasizing that this percentage is a strong indicator of progress and aligns well with regional trends.

Speaking to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Al-Rifai described this achievement as "excellent," reflecting the Fund's strategic role in fostering technological advancements within Kuwait.

She highlighted the Fund's active involvement in the Nexus 2024 Technology and Innovation Exhibition, which wrapped up its activities recently. The exhibition showcased five projects funded by the National Fund, alongside various workshops aimed at supporting innovation and skill-building among participants.

Al-Rifai underscored the National Fund's commitment to implementing the directives of the 45th Gulf Summit, hosted by Kuwait earlier this December.

These directives, she said, emphasize technological



Al-Rifai poses for a photo with other participants in the event.

KUNA photo

progress and promoting local products while aligning with the national vision of New Kuwait 2035.

She explained that the New Kuwait 2035 vision seeks to transform Kuwait into a regional financial and commercial hub driven by a sustainable, diversified economy, powered by national talent and innovation. She noted that technology plays a pivotal role in achieving this vision.

Al-Rifai stressed that technology is far more than just a tool -- she sees it as "the cornerstone for achieving development and turning ideas into sustainable scientific solutions." She pointed out that technological adoption empowers entrepreneurs to tackle challenges, explore new growth opportunities and innovate.

The National Fund remains deeply committed to participating in initiatives that act as platforms for innovation.

Al-Rifai emphasized that the Fund aims to empower entrepreneurs by fostering opportunities for collaboration across different sectors. She added that investing in the next generation and supporting innovators would allow them to compete on a global scale and achieve their full potential.

Al-Rifai reiterated the importance of unifying efforts across public and private sectors to nurture innovation and technological development. This vision not only strengthens the local economy but positions Kuwait as a forward-thinking hub for innovation in the years to come.

Virtual meeting to formalize decision

OPEC set to re-elect Al-Ghais for a second term

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: In a move signaling the continuity and stability within the global oil organization, OPEC member states are preparing to re-elect Kuwaiti Haitham Al-Ghais as Secretary-General for a second three-year term, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Sources close to the matter told Reuters that the decision is expected to be formalized during a virtual meeting scheduled for Dec 10.

The session will focus exclusively on administrative matters, steering clear of discussions on oil production strategies.

Al-Ghais, who assumed the role in January 2022, succeeded

the late Nigerian oil diplomat Mohammed Barkindo.

Since taking office, he has played a pivotal role in steering OPEC's strategies aimed at maintaining equilibrium in the volatile oil market. His leadership has been marked

by efforts to adapt to fluctuating global demand and geopolitical pressures, ensuring the group's stability in challenging times.

Meanwhile, the OPEC+ alliance, which includes OPEC



Al-Ghais

members and allied non-member states, decided last Thursday to delay planned production increases until April 2024.

This marks the third postponement of the move, with the coalition aiming for a phased cancellation of 2.2 million barrels per day in production cuts.

The gradual rollback is scheduled to begin in April and extend until September 2026, underscoring the alliance's cautious approach to market adjustments.

As Al-Ghais is set to continue his leadership, his role will remain critical in navigating the evolving dynamics of the global oil market and fostering unity among OPEC member states.

KUFPEC targets new exploration blocks in Natuna Sea

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC) is preparing to expand its exploration efforts by submitting bids for additional exploration concessions off the coast of Indonesia, specifically in the Natuna Sea, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

KUFPEC currently oversees two offshore projects in the Natuna Sea region: an oil, gas and condensate exploration block in Anambas and an exploration license in Ivindo.

Sara Al Baker, KUFPEC's country manager in Indonesia, told Reuters that the company is particularly focused on exploring potential blocks in the Natuna Sea area, in line with ongoing devel-

opment plans for the Anambas block.

Al Baker expressed optimism about the Natuna Sea's potential, estimating that the area could hold up to 230 trillion cubic feet of gas.

She further indicated that KUFPEC intends to participate in forthcoming offshore oil and gas licensing opportunities, positioning the company strategically as the Indonesian government works to revitalize the local oil and gas industry.

The Indonesian government is actively pursuing reforms to reduce bureaucratic hurdles in oil and gas exploration.

These efforts aim to foster foreign investment and strengthen the country's energy security as it seeks to boost its oil and gas pro-

duction capabilities.

Although Indonesia was a member of OPEC from 1962 until 2009, it suspended its membership later that year due to declining crude oil production and rising demand for oil within the nation -- the fourth most populous country in the world, after India, China and the United States.

These factors underscore the urgency for exploration projects like KUFPEC's to address Indonesia's shifting energy demands.

KUFPEC's strategic plans signal a forward-thinking approach to exploration as it continues to solidify its role in meeting regional and global energy needs through technological advancement and partnerships.

Decision reaffirms commitment to empowering national talents

AIOqab appointed as VP of Financial Brokerage at Gulf Capital Investment Company 'InvestGB'

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Gulf Capital Investment Company, "InvestGB," the investment arm of Gulf Bank, has announced the appointment of Nouf AIOqab as Vice President-Financial Brokerage. This strategic move reaffirms the company's commitment to empowering national talents and enhancing the role of women in the financial and investment sector in Kuwait.

AIOqab has extensive experience in the investment sector, spanning 19 years. She previously held several positions at Global Investment House and Kuwait Finance and Investment Company (KFIC), which contributed to building her extensive expertise and enhancing her track record of success in this field. AIOqab holds a Bachelor's degree in Accounting and Business Administration from Kuwait University. She has also earned numerous prestigious certifications specializing in finance and the rules and regulations of the Kuwait Capital Markets Authority.

On this occasion, AIOqab stated, "I am delighted to be part of 'InvestGB', and I look forward to contributing to achieving its strategic goals and delivering exceptional services to our clients, while contributing to the company's continuous growth and success."

Sara AIMuzaini, Senior Vice President - Human Resources at InvestGB, stated, "We are delighted to welcome Nouf AIOqab to 'InvestGB'. Nouf will lead efforts to strengthen InvestGB's brokerage services, ensuring clients receive first-class tailored solutions. Her extensive experience will be a valuable addition to our operations, further enhancing the efficiency and success of our investment initiatives."



Nouf AIOqab



Sara AIMuzaini

AIMuzaini added, "Nouf AIOqab's appointment aligns perfectly with our strategic vision to empower local talents for long-term success. Her extensive expertise will play a pivotal role in strengthening our competitive position and leadership in Kuwait's investment sector." Emphasizing the company's commitment to diversity and inclu-



InvestGB logo

sion, AIMuzaini concluded, "Diversity is a cornerstone of our company, women make up 46% of our workforce, and we maintain a 71% Kuwaiti representation."

Deal contributes to economic growth in the Kingdom and enhancing the capital's position as a global logistics hub

Riyadh Development Company and Agility Logistics Parks sign strategic partnership agreement to develop SAR 227m logistics facility in Riyadh

RIYADH, Dec 10: Riyadh Development Company (ARDCO), a publicly listed Saudi real estate development and development management company, and Agility Logistics Parks (ALP), announced the signing of a strategic partnership to build a state-of-the-art warehousing facility at a prime location east of Riyadh.

The SAR 227m project involves construction of 58,000 SQM of Grade A warehousing on a 97,904 SQM parcel of land in the Rimal district of Riyadh. The integrated logistics center will be built by Agility, on land owned by ARDCO.

Construction is to begin in 2025, and the complex is expected to open in the first half of 2026.

On this occasion, Jehad AlKadi, CEO of ARDCO, said: "This partnership is part of our commitment to the 'Invest to Grow' strategy, which aims to invest in promising growth sectors, providing a sustainable source of income for the company while creating added value in priority sectors and maximizing overall shareholder returns. The 'Logistics Facilities' project, in collaboration with Agility Logistics Parks, marks the company's first



Riyadh Development Company and Agility Logistics Parks sign strategic partnership agreement to develop SAR 227 million logistics facility in Riyadh.

investment in high-quality logistics sector facilities. This contributes to strengthening Riyadh's position as a vibrant capital and a regional hub for logistics services."

Michel Saab, CEO of Agility Logistics Parks, also said: "We are proud to collaborate with ARDCO on this new project, which reflects our confidence



Officials pose for a group photo after signing the strategic partnership agreement.

in Saudi Arabia's potential as one of the most exciting markets for logistics investment in the world today. Agility has been investing in building strategic

logistics infrastructure in the Kingdom for over two decades, and we've witnessed first-hand how Riyadh is continuing to strengthen its position as a

vital regional and global logistics hub. This project will further expand logistics capacity and resilience in the nation's dynamic capital."

In line with its robust human capital development strategy

Burgan Bank launches 'second round' of its Investment and Wealth Management Academy

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Burgan Bank launched the second round of the Investment and Wealth Management Academy – a program dedicated to fostering an environment of continued learning which is held in collaboration with global professional education and training leader Fitch Learning.

The three-week intensive program is designed to help staff from across key departments acquire the latest tools and knowledge, enabling them to remain competitive and deliver an outstanding service to Burgan's Private Banking and Wealth Management clients.

This comes as part of Burgan Bank's dedicated human capital development strategy and commitment to advancing Kuwait's professional talents.

"Our yearlong learning and development efforts are designed with care to fulfill our promise of creating an environment where employees are constantly growing professionally and personally, which ultimately enables us to continue providing our retail customers and corporate clients with the best banking experience possible," said Ms. Fatma Ahmad - Senior Manager – Learning and Development at Burgan Bank. "To



Officials pose for a group photo

guarantee that employees on all fronts receive equal opportunities for growth and development, we are proud to partner with the best educational institutions in Kuwait and worldwide to tailor specialized training programs that address our staff's varying learning needs."

Sixteen promising employees from Private Banking, Retail Banking, Risk Management, and Operations were selected to attend the Academy's three-week program, which focuses on advanced investment and wealth management strategies and is designed in accordance with the international market's standards. The program aims to help the participants acquire the knowledge and develop the skills required to obtain the Chartered Institute for Securities and Investment – London (CISI)



Fatma Ahmad

certification and prepare for the International Introduction to Securities and Investment (IISI) exam. As a certified Great Place to

Work®, Burgan Bank continues to offer its employees numerous channels for personal and professional growth, tailored to suit individuals' learning styles and interests. Besides its leading training and learning programs, such as Ro'ya and Entelaqah, Burgan Bank also provides less formal spaces for self-paced development, including the Burgan Talk podcast and Lean-In Circle for Women Empowerment. Owing to its dedication to expanding its learning and development scope, Burgan Bank received several accolades including the prestigious Brandon Hall Group Human Capital Management (HCM) Gold Award of Excellence in the "Learning and Development" category for the "Best Use of Social Collaborative Learning".

Trump Organization leases brand to 2 new projects in Saudi Arabia

DUBAI, Dec 10, (AP): The Trump Organization said it has leased its brand to two new real estate projects in Saudi Arabia just weeks before President-elect Donald Trump returns to the White House.

It will partner with Dar Global, a London-based luxury real estate developer that will lease the Trump brand but fully own and develop the projects in the Saudi capital, Riyadh. The two have partnered on other projects in the region, including the development of a golf resort in neighboring Oman.

"Following the remarkable success of Trump International Oman, as well as our most recent ventures in Dubai and Jeddah, we are thrilled to announce two additional projects in Riyadh," Eric Trump, the president-elect's son who oversees the company's real estate interests, said in a statement.

Trump's company struck many real



President Donald Trump shakes hands with Saudi Deputy Crown Prince and Defense Minister Mohammed bin Salman during a bilateral meeting, in Riyadh, Saturday, May 20, 2017. (AP)

estate licensing deals overseas before he entered the White House in 2017, including for hotels and residential towers in Canada, Dubai, Mexico, India and Turkey.

Kuwait envoy extols Saudi Jazan development projects

RIYADH, Dec 10, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah commended the development process in the Saudi region of Jazan in all fields.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement after meeting with Jazan Governor Prince Mohammad bin Nasser, Sheikh Sabah Nasser Al-Sabah expressed admiration for development projects and modern infrastructure in Jazan.

He stressed that progress witnessed in Jazan shows Saudi leadership's keenness on achieving the Kingdom 2023 vision.

During the meeting attended by Deputy Governor of Jazan Prince Mo-

hammad bin Abdulaziz, the Kuwaiti ambassador conveyed greetings and appreciation of the Kuwaiti political leadership to its Saudi counterpart and Jazan governor, commending deep-rooted sisterly ties between the two countries, the statement noted.

The Kuwaiti ambassador thanked Prince Mohammad bin Nasser for the warm reception and hospitality, adding the governor lauded the role of Kuwait's leadership in boosting mutual collaboration between the two sides.

The meeting witnessed discussions on cooperation between the two sides, and topics of mutual concern, the statement concluded.

KPC: Kuwait oil price up 5 cents to USD 72.37 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10, (KUNA): The price of Kuwait oil went up by five cents to USD 72.37 per barrel on Monday as opposed to USD 72.32 pb last Friday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC)

on Tuesday.

At the global level, the Brent crude increased by USD 1.02 to USD 72.14 pb, the same occurred to the West Texas Intermediate, which rose USD 1.17 to USD 68.37 pb.

Bank participates in NEXUS 2024 - Kuwait

Al-Ajeel: KFH's digital services and products transform banking and customer experience

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: KFH Deputy General Manager Digital Transformation, Tareq Al-Ajeel said that global investments in digitization reached \$3 trillion, while digitized transactions totaled approximately \$20 trillion in 2020.

He noted that KFH is pursuing a strategy to expand its role and market share in the global growth of digital transactions and e-products and services, which are now essential components of modern business operations worldwide.

During KFH's participation in the NEXUS - Kuwait 2024, a pre-

mier technology and innovation event in Kuwait, Al-Ajeel emphasized that the digital economy is now the main driver of the global economy. He highlighted that banks and companies are focused on upgrading their technological infrastructure and prioritizing digitization for new product and service launches.

He explained that KFH is steadfast in its strategy of supporting digitization and innovation to facilitate comprehensive digital transformation and attain a globally advanced position, in accordance with the state's plans and Kuwait Vision 2035.

Al-Ajeel that Investing in digitization is a forward-thinking choice. By launching advanced digital products and services, businesses can increase profit margins and operational efficiency, reduce costs, and expand their market share. Additionally, digitization enhances efficiency, productivity, and customer loyalty by elevating the banking experience.

Moreover, Al-Ajeel explained that many of financial solutions and digital services introduced recently by KFH represent a significant transformation in enhancing the customer experience and fulfilling their aspirations. KFH pioneered the offering of a wide range of these services in the banking sector, powered by its robust technological infrastructure.

He indicated that the advanced digital services encompass all aspects of business, extending to branches and beyond, self-service devices, smart branches, online, e-applications, and a variety of digital channels.

It is worth noting that KFH pavilion at Nexus showcases the largest technology center with developed digital devices and innovative customer experience. The team shared valuable insights about these solutions, and attendees commended KFH for its exceptional digital initiatives and its role in promoting digital transformation.



Tareq Al-Ajeel

The first of its kind in Kuwait

NBK offers customers a unique digital experience

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: In line with its dedication to meeting customers' needs and providing exceptional services and rewards that live up to their expectations, National Bank of Kuwait's (NBK) is launching a one-of-its kind digital experience to get NBK Visa Infinite Credit Card and link it with Al Jawhara or Al Jawhara Savers Account for an exclusive range of benefits.

NBK announced that customers can open an Al Jawhara or Al Jawhara Savers Account and get the NBK Al Jawhara Miles Credit Card through the NBK Mobile Banking App free for life when depositing and blocking KD 3,000 or more in Al Jawhara or Al Jawhara Savers Account.

The bank mentioned that cardholders also get Welcome Miles 3x the card's credit limit up to 150,000 NBK Miles Points.

The NBK Al Jawhara Miles Credit Cardholders also get 3x chances in Al Jawhara draws, thus increasing their chances to win in the weekly and monthly as well as grand prize draws held three times a year.

NBK continues to offer customers new levels of convenience and excellence. Now, with just a few taps, they can instantly issue any of the credit cards through the NBK Mobile Banking App, and enjoy an integrated digital experience empowered by cutting-edge technology. These cards are easily and securely issued against their account balances or term deposits, providing flexibility and efficiency that meets the evolving needs of the modern world.



Jawhara product bundling

Commenting on this, Mr. Hisham Al-Nusif, GM - Consumer Banking Group, at National Bank of Kuwait said, "NBK always seeks to enrich customer banking experience by providing top-notch products and offers that meet the expectations of different segments and offer them an exceptional banking experience."

Al-Nusif mentioned that all customers can now open Al Jawhara or Al Jawhara Savers Account to get the NBK Al Jawhara Miles Credit Card instantly through the NBK Mobile Banking App, thus benefiting from NBK Miles Program which gives cardholders 3 miles for every KD 1 spent locally and 5 miles for every KD 1 spent abroad.

Other benefits also include unlimited complimentary airport lounge visits with one guest, Purchase Protection, Extended Warranty and getting the chance to enter various draws, adding that NBK Credit Cards offer the best payment method.

It is worth mentioning that Al Jawhara draws offer the biggest prizes in Kuwait, with KD 20,000 prize weekly, KD 125,000 monthly, and grand prizes worth KD 1,000,000 each, three times

Al-Nusif:

- We seek to enrich customer banking experience by providing top-notch products and offers that meet their expectations
- Opening an Al Jawhara or Al Jawhara Saver Account together the NBK Visa Infinite Credit Card instantly through NBK Mobile Banking App
- This unique digital experience links NBK Miles Program's exclusive benefits with Kuwait's biggest draws program 'Al Jawhara', in addition to launching the NBK Al Jawhara Miles Credit Card
- Customers can enjoy an integrated digital experience where they can issue any of the credit cards instantly through NBK Mobile Banking App

a year. NBK also provides Al Jawhara Savers Account holders a bonus interest rate up to 1.5% for the first year, in addition to the chance to enter the monthly and grand draws if savings reach KD5,000 and above. The bank also offers customers who have been banking with it for more than 2 years double chances in case they were not eligible to earn the existing double chances.

'Tariff wars ... sci-tech wars go against laws of economics'

Xi says China will continue to be biggest engine of world economic growth

BEIJING, Dec 10, (Xinhua): Chinese President Xi Jinping said on Tuesday China has full confidence to achieve this year's economic growth target and will continue to play its role as the biggest engine of world economic growth.

Xi made the remarks during a meeting in Beijing with heads of major international economic organizations, who are here to attend the "1+10" dialogue.

The foreign dignitaries included President of the New Development Bank Dilma Rousseff, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund Kristalina Georgieva, President of the World Bank Group Ajay Banga, and Director-General of the World Trade Organization Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

Xi briefed the guests on the third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, especially the important measures recently adopted by China. He said that after more than 40 years of sustained and rapid development, the Chinese economy has ushered in a phase of high-quality development, contributing around 30 percent to the world economic growth.



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with heads of major international economic organizations, who came here for the '1+10' Dialogue, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, Dec 10, 2024. (Xinhua)

China will further opening-up to the outside world, proactively align with high-standard international economic and trade rules, and build a market-oriented, law-based and internationalized business environment to provide more opportunities for and share more development div-

idends with other countries, he said.

China is willing to maintain dialogue, expand cooperation and manage differences with the U.S. government, and push bilateral relations forward in the direction of steady, healthy and sustainable development, Xi said, expressing the hope

that the U.S. side will work with China in the same direction.

"Tariff wars, trade wars and sci-tech wars go against the trend of history and the laws of economics, and there will be no winners," he said.

Noting the progress in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) over the past

decade, Xi welcomed international economic organizations to continue actively participating in the BRI co-operation and promote the modernization of all countries that features peaceful development, mutually beneficial cooperation and common prosperity.

The foreign guests hailed China's remarkable achievements, particularly in reducing poverty and fostering new quality productive forces, saying China's people-centered development philosophy has been proven to be both successful and practical and offers inspiration for the world.

China has continued to comprehensively deepen reform, expand opening-up and achieve high-quality development, providing tremendous opportunities to the world, especially countries in the Global South, they said.

They noted that the BRI, the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative have fully demonstrated China's role as a responsible major country and provided an important platform for countries in the Global South to achieve their own development.

Amid global economic challenges and the rise of unilateralism and protectionism, countries around the world are looking to China with hope and belief that it will remain a key engine of global economic growth, they said.



Democratic state Sen. George Muñoz, of Gallup, N.M., speaks in Santa Fe, N.M., on Jan. 5, 2024. (AP)

'Not a poor state anymore'

Oil wealth outshines personal tax collections in New Mexico

SANTA FE, N.M., Dec 10, (AP): Efforts by New Mexico to save and invest portions of a financial windfall from local oil production are paying off as state government income on investments surpasses personal income tax collections for the first time, according to a new forecast Monday.

General fund income from the state's two, multibillion-dollar permanent funds and interest on treasury accounts is expected to climb to \$2.1 billion for the fiscal year between July 2024 and June 2025, surpassing \$2 billion in revenue from personal income taxes.

The investment earnings are designed to ensure that critical programs - ranging from childcare subsidies to tuition-free college and trade school education - endure if oil income falters amid a possible transition to new sources of energy.

At the same time, legislators this year revised personal income tax brackets to lower taxes in the nation's No. 2 state for oil production behind Texas.

"We're not a poor state anymore," said Democratic state Sen. George Muñoz of Gallup. "We've got things that we can win on - free education, childcare ... low taxes for working families, for children. And that's all because we've done a lot of the work to set this up for the future."

The comments came at a legislative panel Monday where economists from four government agen-

cies announced an income estimate for the coming year. The figures are the baseline for budget negotiations when the Democratic-led Legislature convenes in January.

State government income, which is closely linked to oil production in New Mexico, continues to grow, though at a slower pace, as legislators discuss new investments in social programs aimed at curbing crime and homelessness.

Economists estimate the state will bring in a record-setting \$13.6 billion in general fund income for the fiscal year that runs from July 2025 to June 2026, a 2.6% increase over the current period.

This year's income bump leaves room for an additional \$892 million in state spending in the coming fiscal year, a 7% increase, according to the Legislature's accountability and budgeting office. State income is forecast to exceed current bedrock annual spending obligations by \$3.4 billion.

New Mexico legislators are pushing to open new savings accounts.

One proposal would set aside as much as \$1 billion in a trust to underwrite spending on mental health and addiction treatment in response to public frustration with crime and homelessness. Legislators also are likely to revisit a stalled proposal to create a trust for Native American education that could expand Indigenous language instruction.

Asian stocks mostly higher as China benchmarks lifted by fresh stimulus

BANGKOK, Dec 10, (AP): Shares in Asia were mostly higher on Tuesday as Chinese shares were buoyed by an apparent shift in Beijing toward easier credit and other forms of stimulus for the sluggish economy.

Shares in market superstar Nvidia fell 0.6% in after-hours trading extending a 2.6% loss after China said it's investigating the company over suspected violations of Chinese anti-monopoly laws.

The Shanghai Composite index surged 1.6% to 3,456.12 while Hong Kong's Hang Seng was up 1%, at 20,618.18. At a meeting announced late Monday, top Chinese leaders agreed on a "moderately loose" monetary policy for the world's second-largest economy. That's the first move in 10 years away from a more cautious, "prudent" stance. A major planning meeting expected Wednesday could also bring more stimulus for the Chinese economy.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 gained 0.5% to 39,335.74 while the Kospi in South Korea jumped 2.3%, recovering some of its recent losses as the country's recent political turmoil simmered on.

On Tuesday, South Korean prosecutors were seeking to formally arrest the former defense minister alleged to have colluded with President Yoon Suk Yeol in imposing martial law last week, as both men are being investigated on rebellion and other charges.

Taiwan's Taiex shed 0.8% as the government said China's military appeared to be preparing for widely an-

tipated drills in response to a recent visit by its president. Lai Ching-te's visits to Hawaii and Guam. Taiwan's defense ministry said Monday that it has detected Chinese naval and coast guard ships entering the Taiwan Strait and the western Pacific and that China had restricted airspace along its south-east coast through Wednesday.

The moves ratchet up tensions after U.S. President-elect Donald Trump said he would not commit to defending Taiwan if China were to invade during his presidency.

Elsewhere in the region, Australia's S&P/ASX 200 slipped 0.4% to 8,389.30. Markets in Thailand were closed for a holiday.

On Monday, the S&P 500 fell 0.6% to 6,052.85, coming off its 57th all-time high of the year so far. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dipped 0.5% to 44,401.93, and the Nasdaq composite pulled back 0.6% to 19,736.69.

Nvidia's decline was by far the heaviest weight on the S&P 500. It has skyrocketed to become one of Wall Street's most valuable companies because its chips are driving much of the world's move into artificial-intelligence technology. That gives its stock's movements more sway on the S&P 500 than nearly every other.

U.S.-listed stocks of several Chinese companies climbed, including a 12.4% jump for electric-vehicle company Nio and a 7.4% rise for Alibaba Group. Stocks in Shanghai.

Canadian tariffs spell higher costs for Americans, warns PM Trudeau

Businesses likely to shift burden to consumers

TORONTO, Dec 10, (AP): Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said that Americans "are beginning to wake up to the real reality that tariffs on everything from Canada would make life a lot more expensive" and said he will retaliate if Donald Trump goes ahead with them.

Trudeau later responded by calling Canada a state and Trudeau the governor.

Speaking at an event put on by the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, Trudeau also said dealing with Trump will be "a little more challenging" than the last time because Trump's team is coming in with a much clearer set of ideas of what they want to do right away than after his first election win in 2016.

The U.S. president-elect has threatened to impose a 25% tax on all products entering the U.S. from Canada and Mexico unless they stem the flow of migrants and drugs.

"Trump got elected on a commitment to make life better and more affordable for Americans, and I think people south of the border are beginning to wake up to the real reality that tariffs on everything from Canada would make life a lot more expensive," Trudeau said.

On the weekend, Trump appeared in an interview with NBC's "Meet the Press," where the president-elect said he can't guarantee that his promised tariffs on key U.S. foreign trade partners won't raise prices for American consumers.

"Let's not kid ourselves in any way, shape or form, 25% tariffs on everything going to the United States would be devastating for the Canadian economy," Trudeau said.

"It would also, however, mean real hardship for Americans as well. Americans import 65% of their crude oil from Canada, significant amounts of electricity. Just about all the natural gas exported from Canada goes to the United States. They rely on us for



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, left, attends a fireside chat with the Halifax Chamber of Commerce with Patrick Sullivan in Halifax Monday Dec. 9, 2024. (AP)

steel and aluminum. They rely on us for a range of agriculture imports. All of those things would get more expensive."

Trudeau seemed to respond to Trudeau's comments with a post on social media late Monday, in which he noted Trudeau's recent dinner at Mar-a-Lago where some said Trump joked about Canada becoming the 51st state.

"It was a pleasure to have dinner the other night with Governor Justin Trudeau of the Great State of Canada. I look forward to seeing the Governor again soon so that we may continue our in depth talks on Tariffs and Trade, the results of which will be truly spectacular for all! DJT," Trump posted on Truth Social.

If Trump makes good on his threat to slap 25% tariffs on everything imported from Mexico and Canada, the price increases that could follow will

collide with his campaign promise to give American families a break from inflation.

Economists say companies would have little choice but to pass along the added costs, dramatically raising prices for food, clothing, automobiles, alcohol and other goods.

The Produce Distributors Association, a Washington trade group, has said tariffs will raise prices for fresh fruit and vegetables and hurt U.S. farmers when the countries retaliate.

"We will of course, as we did eight years ago, respond to unfair tariffs," Trudeau said.

Trudeau said his government is still mulling over "the right ways" to respond, referencing when Canada put billions of new duties in 2018 against the U.S. in a tit-for-tat response to new taxes on Canadian steel and aluminum.

Many of the U.S. products were

chosen for their political rather than economic impact. For example, Canada imports just \$3 million worth of yogurt from the U.S. annually and most of it comes from one plant in Wisconsin, the home state of then-Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan. That product was hit with a 10% duty.

"It was the fact that we put tariffs on bourbon and Harley-Davidsons and playing cards and Heinz ketchup and cherries and a number of other things that were very carefully targeted because they were politically impactful to the president's party and colleagues," Trudeau said.

Trudeau said when Trump says things he means them but they also know Trump is trying to insert uncertainty and "a bit of chaos" into democracies.

"One of the most important things for us to do is not freak out, not to panic," Trudeau said.

Social media and flexible work can save careers, new research shows

By Andrew Edelblum, University of Dayton; Ashish Kalra, University of Dayton; Na Young Lee, University of Dayton; Riley Dugan, University of Dayton, and Sangsuk Yoon, University of Dayton

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

In today's high-pressure business world, demands like meeting sales targets and managing customer relationships are challenging enough. But for some workers, the real battle is surviving the toll of an abusive manager.

Toxic behavior from supervisors - including public ridicule, unfair blame and angry outbursts - can push talented employees to the brink, increasing the likelihood of disengagement and turnover. Just consider the quiet quitting phenomenon of recent years.

As business researchers interested in workplace dynamics, we set out to look into these troubling trends. Our goal was to explore strategies for mitigating the harmful impact of so-called "jerk boss" behaviors, such as insulting employees as "soft" for

declining to work weekends.

Drawing from a survey of 237 business-to-business salespeople across multiple industries, our newly published work found two low-cost, high-impact remedies. The first is to encourage productive workplace social media use. The second is to offer flexible work arrangements.

In some workplaces, managers view workplace-based apps and larger platforms - like Instagram, LinkedIn and Microsoft Teams - as valuable tools for networking, promotion and coordination. In others, they criticize these spaces for encouraging cyberloafing.

However, an underappreciated quality of social media is its role as a support system for workers facing toxic leadership. Journalist L.V. Anderson once aptly described Slack as "a safe space for mild grousing about management, power dynamics and subtle inequities in the workplace."

Our research strongly supports this sentiment, highlighting how

online platforms enable employees to connect, vent and bypass the formalities of traditional email.

Another key result was that flexible work can go a long way. Personalized work schedules and telecommuting options offer a buffer against the stress caused by abusive supervisors, we found.

It's easy to understand how this works: Workers feel valued when offered a tailored schedule that meets their needs. This sense of being appreciated helps offset the emotional toll of working under a jerk boss.

So it's no surprise that more and more workplaces are adopting flexible work setups. An estimated 58% of the American workforce - or 92 million workers - are currently in roles that offer a remote or hybrid setup, according to polling from McKinsey. The same survey found that 87% of people accept offers to work remotely when given the option.

These findings are a call to action

for businesses, particularly as disgruntled employees reportedly cost U.S. firms a whopping US\$1.9 trillion annually.

Our work suggests that encouraging the use of workplace social media - along with offering flexible work arrangements - can create a more resilient workforce that's better equipped to handle the challenges of even the harshest of managers. Using both techniques in tandem seems to provide the strongest protection.

To be fair, these interventions don't directly tackle abusive bosses' behavior. Addressing that may require more complex solutions, such as targeted training and improved recruitment practices.

But our research suggests that, as part of a larger suite of management reforms, social media and flexible work arrangements can go a long way toward creating more supportive, functional work environments. (AP)

What's On



Photos from the event.

A showcase of talent, energy and imagination

British School of Kuwait hosts annual British Academies Carnival

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: On the vibrant evening of Dec 7, The British School of Kuwait (BSK) came alive with excitement and creativity as it held its highly anticipated annual event, the British Academies Carnival.

The event was graced by prominent figures, including Madam Vera, the esteemed Founder of BSK, His Excellency Eduardo Patricio, the Mexican Ambassador along with his wife, and Kefah Al-Mutawa, BSK's Director of Media Affairs. Their opening speeches highlighted the carnival's importance in fostering arts, sports, and cultural enrichment, setting an inspiring tone for the festivities.

Spanning six hours, from noon to 6 PM, the carnival was a showcase of talent, energy, and imagination. Attendees were treated to a variety of



A group photo from the event

captivating performances, including theatrical performance, piano recitals, ballet showcases, and an array of sports activities such as roller-skating,

gymnastics, and karate. These activities spotlighted student talent and encouraged skill development. The evening's highlights included a dazzling LED light dance, a magical bubble show, and a jaw-dropping dinosaur-themed performance sponsored by National Geographic Ultimate Explorer, adding a unique layer of excitement and wonder.

BSK's Marketing Director, Manaf Yousef, emphasized the carnival's pivotal role in uniting the school community and enhancing student well-being. "The British Academies Carnival is a cornerstone event for us, celebrating achievement, creativity, and the diversity of our school community," he remarked. He noted that the carnival offered a rich entertainment program suitable for all ages, featuring live sports and arts performances and

recreational activities. The venue was thoughtfully divided into three zones: the activity area (featuring student and guest performances), the vendor area, and the food area, ensuring a seamless and enjoyable experience for all attendees.

The success of the British Academies Carnival 2024 was made possible through the generous support of its platinum sponsors, Royale Hayat Hospital and Diet Care, as well as contributions from Shoebox New York, National Geographic Ultimate Explorer, ITL World Travels, and Anderson Education. Their involvement played a critical role in elevating the event and bolstering community engagement.

Beyond the entertainment, attendees enjoyed a wide variety of food and beverages, while local businesses

and service providers showcased their offerings, adding to the vibrant atmosphere. Many parents also took the opportunity to enroll their children in British Academies' renowned training courses during the event, underscoring the programs' reputation for excellence.

In closing, Manaf Yousef expressed heartfelt gratitude to the administrative and academic teams whose dedication ensured the event's success. He also extended his thanks to the sponsors and partners, whose invaluable support strengthened bonds within the community and fostered meaningful social connections.

The British Academies Carnival 2024 was not just an event — it was a celebration of talent, creativity, and community spirit, leaving an indelible mark on all who attended.

Kala(Art) hosts painting competition

3,085 children participate in 'NIRAM24'

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Kala (Art) Kuwait conducted the "NIRAM-2024" Children's Day Painting Competition on Friday, December 6, at the Indian Community School Kuwait, Khaitan Branch, to celebrate Children's Day and mark the 135th birthday of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India. Kala(Art) Kuwait celebrated the 20th anniversary of the "NIRAM" Painting Competition with elegance and glory, an event open to all students from Indian schools in Kuwait.

The venue of Kala(Art) Kuwait's "NIRAM-2024" was filled with young artists from various corners of the Indian expatriate community in Kuwait, as well as from Arab, Philippine, and Sri Lankan nationals studying in Indian schools. The venue was alive with different colors and lines, creating a festive atmosphere. There were over 3,820 entries, with 3,085 children participating in the competition. Clay Sculpture was also part of the competition, and parents actively participated in the open canvas as well.

Sheik Abdul Rahman, Chairman of the Indian Community School Kuwait and Board of Trustee member, inaugurated the event. Kala(Art) Kuwait President Siva Kumar, General Secretary Aneesh Varghese, Program General Convener Ragesh P.D, Treasurer Ajith Kumar, Former President Jaison Joseph, Public Relations Conveners Mukesh V.P., ICSK Principal Gangader Shirshad, Go Score CEO Amal G. Haridas, Salmiya Clinic Marketing Manager Mrs. Marwa, and prominent community leaders Javed, Najeeb P.V., Krishnan Kadalundi, Aniyam Kujju, Arun Rajagopal, Jayash Abdul Kareem, and Sumesh attended the inaugural function.

Well-known artists Sasi Krishnan, Hari Chengannur, Sunil Kulanada, and Mukundan Palanimala supervised the competition. A team of more than 100 Kala(Art) volunteers, led by Executive Members Mustafa, Sunil Kumar, Ashraf, Johnney, Vincent, Jyothi Sivakumar, Ambili

Rakesh, Aneecha Shyji, Namitha Sivakumar, Sandhya, Rijo, Vishnu, Shyji, Sarah, Santhosh O.M., Prince, and Sonia, managed the program.

The results of the competition will be announced by the organizing and judging committees on December 30 through leading newspapers and websites. The prize distribution ceremony will take place on Jan 10, 2025, at the Indian Community School, Khaitan.

Kala(Art) Kuwait has announced exclusive prizes for the winners. First-place winners in each group will receive a gold coin and gold medal, second-place winners will receive a silver medal, and third-place winners will receive a bronze medal, along with a memento and certificate. In addition to the first, second, and third places, there will be merit prizes, and 10% of the participants will be awarded consolation prizes. Furthermore, there will be an Overall Championship Trophy for the schools that rank in the top three.

A Memorial Trophy will also be awarded to the school with the highest number of participants in the event, in tribute to the late C. Bhaskaran, one of the founders and advisory board members of Kala(Art) Kuwait.

The organizers express their satisfaction with the successful completion of the competition and take this opportunity to thank all the children, parents, management, and teachers of Indian schools in Kuwait, representatives of various Indian socio-cultural organizations, and all sponsors for their active participation and wholehearted support in making the event a grand success. Kala(Art) Kuwait has once again proven beyond doubt that it upholds the interests of art lovers in Kuwait and will continue its support for the promotion of Kala(Art). Students and parents are familiar with "NIRAM" and can no longer be deceived, as this is the 20th consecutive year Kala(Art) Kuwait has successfully conducted this prestigious painting competition on the occasion of Children's Day.



Photos from the event.

Exclusive for Indian boys

Registration opens for SIC mega quiz competition '24

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Welcome to the SIC Mega Quiz Competition! Get ready to test your knowledge and compete for exciting prizes in the SIC Mega Quiz Competition 2024. This competition is open to boys aged 14-23, and it's exclusively for Indian nationals residing in Kuwait. Whether you're a quiz enthusiast or just looking for a fun challenge, this is your chance to showcase your skills and win amazing rewards!

Eligibility criteria include: age: boys aged 14-23; nationality: Indian nationals residing in Kuwait. Other requirements: complete the registration form accurately and access to a stable internet connection and a device to participate in the quiz.

Event date: Registration deadline: Dec 15; online quiz sessions: Dec 20 and Dec 21; semifinals: Dec 27 and finals: Jan 3.

Make sure you register before the deadline and stay updated with the quiz materials and session details.

How to participate and win: Registration: Complete your registration before the deadline. After registration, you will receive confirmation along with quiz materials and access to the WhatsApp group for updates.

Online sessions: The first two online sessions are critical for qualification to the semi-finals. These sessions will test your general knowledge, accuracy, and speed.

Semi-final round: Participants who qualify through the online sessions will move on to the semi-finals. Here, you'll compete with the best to secure your place in the final round.

Final round: The top participants from the semi-finals will battle it out in the finals for ultimate glory. The quiz will include three rounds: Rapid-Fire,

Welcome Round, and a Buzzer Round. Scores will be based on accuracy and speed. In the event of a tie, a tie-breaker round will determine the winner.

Rules and guidelines: Registration: Ensure all details provided in the registration form are accurate and complete; registration must be completed before the deadline. Late registrations will not be accepted; false information during registration will result in immediate disqualification.

Participation: Participants must have a stable internet connection and a suitable device to join the quiz; the quiz will be time-bound, so ensure punctuality; cheating or any form of misconduct will lead to disqualification and the quiz master's decision is final and cannot be challenged.

Resources for participants: Quiz material: Upon registration, quiz materials will be shared with you via email/WhatsApp. You can also access the quiz materials through the following link:

[Access Quiz Materials](Google Drive Link)<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JkWhFywnvEakWB8d59xdWYugpjoXNq?usp=sharing>

WhatsApp Group: Join our WhatsApp group for real-time updates, announcements, and communication with fellow participants. [Join WhatsApp Group](WhatsApp Group Link) <https://chat.whatsapp.com/C4Jksm9LCv4CWJfeBFi6K>

How to win: Compete in the online sessions: The first two online sessions are crucial for qualifying to the semi-finals. Each session will focus on different aspects of knowledge and will be timed for accuracy and speed.



A collage of photos from the event.

KOC supports HSE forum with key workshops

ASSP-KC marks 25 years with HSE Forum 2024

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: The American Society of Safety Professionals - Kuwait Chapter (ASSP-KC) is Kuwait's premier voluntary and non-profit organization, providing professional guidance, training, and consultancy in the field of health, safety, and environment (HSE) to industrial and social sectors in the region.

Continuing its commitment to social responsibility, ASSP-KC, in collaboration with Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), organized the KOC & ASSP HSE Forum 2024. The event featured three workshops and five technical sessions, held at the KOC Hubara Assembly Hall in Ahmadi.

The event began with Eng. Heba Kumainasy welcoming the participants, followed by an opening address by Eng. Fadhel Al-Ali, Chairman of ASSP-KC, who emphasized the importance of such forums in enhancing the safety knowledge of contractors in

Kuwait. Eng. Bader Mubarak Al-Hadhrami, President of ASSP-KC, expressed gratitude to KOC for sponsoring the event and highlighted that these sessions are open to all, especially contractors who play a critical role in the industrial sector. Khashif Vali Syed, Secretary of ASSP-KC, also welcomed the attendees and stressed the value of participating in such knowledge-sharing events. He also provided an overview of ASSP-KC's upcoming 12th International Health, Safety, Security, and Loss Prevention Professional Development Conference & Exhibition 2025, held under the patronage of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC). Additionally, he highlighted the opportunity to present technical papers at the conference, along with details about the abstract submission deadline.

Eng. Ahmad Eissa Al-Shatti, TL HSE, WK, KOC, and Deputy Director for the ASSP GCC HSE Ex-

cellence Awards 2024, provided an overview of the awards program, mentioning that the winners will receive their awards during the ceremony scheduled on December 19, 2024.

The event featured the following technical presentations:

- Value of Global Certification by Bala Siva Srikanth Adivi, CSP, CFIOH, CCPSC, TPL Specialist, HSE KOC.
- Fall Protection by Muruganatham Boosapathi, Safety Engineer, KOC.
- Process Safety Culture & Normalization of Deviation by Devendra Rathore, PSM Engineer, KNPC.
- Overview of Industrial Hygiene in Oil & Gas Industries by Roshan Rahiman AK, CIH, KIPIC.
- Artificial Intelligence in HSE by Keyur Pandya, HSE Trainer, Wataniya Environmental Services Company.

Danielle Deadwyler, Saoirse Ronan, and more left out

The snubs and surprises in 2025 Golden Globe nominations

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif., Dec 10, (AP): The Golden Globes nominated more than 40 individual films Monday - and yet still managed to overlook quite a bit. That may just be the brutal truth of awards season: The field narrows and suddenly great performances and wonderful films are simply left in the dust.

The Globes have always had quirks, like A-lister tunnel vision, and while there might not be anything quite as glaring as the infamous year of "The Tourist," this batch is not without its oddities: Some good, some bad, some simply perplexing.

Here are some of the biggest snubs and surprises from the nominations.

Danielle Deadwyler just can't catch an awards season break. After being overlooked for "Till" by both the Globes and the Oscars, it seemed likely she'd be recognized for her turn in Malcolm Washington's adaptation of August Wilson's "The Piano Lesson" (which somehow got no nominations at all). Oscar nominations are still over a month away, however, so perhaps this is the spark needed to remind voters.

It may be fun to needle the Golden Globes, but every once in a while they get something very, very right - and this



This image released by Sony Pictures Classics shows Saoirse Ronan in a scene from 'The Outrun.' (AP)

year, the proof is in the nominations for "All We Imagine as Light." The Indian film from a small distributor is one of those gems that, more often than not, is mainly celebrated by critics groups. And yet here it was nominated not only alongside a truly great batch of films in the in-

ternational category - which it won't be at the Oscars because India controversially selected another film to represent the country - but also in directing, for Payal Kapadia.

For an actor who has received four Golden Globe nominations in her life-

time and one win ("Lady Bird"), it was a bit of a shocker that Saoirse Ronan did not receive any this year. She had two major performances in notable films: as a recovering alcoholic in "The Outrun" and as a mother in wartime London in Steve McQueen's "Blitz" (also entirely, bafflingly empty-handed). Recognition for both would not have been undeserved.

Sebastian Stan managed to get a supporting and lead nomination for two different roles, however. His lauded portrayal of a young Donald Trump in "The Apprentice" is not awards season kryptonite, after all (Jeremy Strong was also nominated). Equally exciting is Stan's recognition for "A Different Man," and yet that also comes with a snub caveat: His breakout co-star Adam Pearson did not get the same.

Another major oversight is Mari- anne Jean-Baptiste, who delivered the performance of a lifetime in Mike Leigh's "Hard Truths" as Pansy, the very unpleasant, but very quotable English woman with a chip on her shoulder. She has been getting recognition from prominent critics groups - most recently from the Los Angeles Film Critics Association - so hopefully

all is not lost for other nominations.

Where do we even start with this one? Certainly, when only six are nominated there are going to be some major exclusions, but the absences were glaring, including RaMell Ross ("Nickel Boys"), Denis Villeneuve ("Dune: Part Two"), Jon M. Chu ("Wicked"), Mohammad Rasoulof ("The Seed of the Sacred Fig"), and Jesse Eisenberg ("A Real Pain").

One nomination for "Sing Sing," for Colman Domingo, does not seem sufficient. Though it would have fit well in the best drama category, most glaring is the exclusion of Clarence "Divine Eye" Maclin from supporting. The former inmate was a revelation in this film about incarcerated men who participate in a theater program.

The lead performance category for "musical or comedy" is, as always, all over the place. Unlike most years, there are actual musicals (Karla Sofia Gascón for "Emilia Pérez" and Cynthia Erivo for "Wicked"). While the others might have comedic elements, mostly of the dark or satirical variety, there's not really a straight comedy in the batch, which is unfortunate in a year when June Squibb delivered such

a great comedic performance in "Thelma" - also her first leading role. A real missed opportunity.

Pamela Anderson's renaissance is in full swing, with a nomination for "The Last Showgirl" that caught some off guard. She and Brazilian actor Fernanda Torres are up against the likes of heavy hitters like Angelina Jolie, Nicole Kidman, Tilda Swinton and Kate Winslet.

Meryl Streep has been nominated 34 times at the Golden Globes (including receiving the Cecil B. DeMille Award in 2017) and yet somehow her delightful turn in "Only Murders in the Building" was not one of them this year.

The Globes love movie stars, especially the charismatic kinds who put on charm offensives at guild Q&As. Ryan Reynolds may not exactly be an Oscar contender for "Deadpool & Wolverine," but he should have been a shoo-in for the Globes. Is it a sign of the reformed times of the Globes 2.0 that he didn't make the cut? Or perhaps Glen Powell took the high-wattage charm spot this year? Either way, we'll look forward to an inside joke the next time the merc with a mouth graces our movie theater screens.

Film



Blue Ivy Carter arrives at the premiere of 'Mufasa: The Lion King' on Monday, Dec. 9, 2024, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP)

Actress brings Miss Hannigan to life in NYC tour

Goldberg plays baddie onstage in 'Annie'

NEW YORK, Dec 10, (AP): Whoopi Goldberg is about to break two ironclad rules of show business - never work with animals or children.

The actor and TV host is slipping into the terrifying role of Miss Hannigan when the latest touring production of "Annie" lands in New York City for the holidays.

"I'm having the time of my life," the EGOT-winning Goldberg says between rehearsals as she readies to tell the tale of a spunky young orphan with her dog Sandy set during the Depression.

"I thought, 'Who can we cast in that iconic role that would be right artistically and right for a large venue and right for an audience?' And it just felt like she was the right person," says Carolyn Rossi Copeland, who is producing the new tour.

Goldberg will help lead the show at The Theater at Madison Square Garden from Dec. 11-Jan. 5. The tour has a deep connection to the first version of the hit show: It is being directed by Jenn Thompson, who at the age of 10 stepped into the role of Pepper in the original Broadway production.

"It's been a really beautiful journey. I have a lot of ghosts I got to exorcise and revisit and reclaim," says Thompson, who for the new show has chipped away at the layers of productions and charted a course back to the original production.

"It had changed a lot over the years. It had gone through many revisions and alterations and it wasn't even a conscious mission when I started but that's where we ended up - kind of back at the beginning."

Goldberg laughs when she says she signed on before realizing how much was going to be required of her. "I'm rusty. I'm old,"

says the "The View" co-host.

"I got in the middle of it and I thought, maybe this is more than I can handle. And then a little voice said, 'Really? You know, if you said this is more than I can handle to anyone, they would laugh you off the stage because it's not.' It's exactly what I can handle."

Hannigan is a gin-swilling orphanage head who calls her charges "brats," denies them hot mush and threatens "your days are numbered." She has two great songs - "Easy Street" and "Little Girls."

The musical contains musical gems like "Tomorrow" and "It's the Hard Knock Life." Martin Chamin's lyrics, which earned him and songwriter Charles Strouse a Tony for best score in 1977, are playful and moving: "You're never fully dressed/without a smile" and "No one cares for you a smidge/when you're in an orphanage."

"I love the dark side of it," says Thompson. "There's a lot of joy and there's a lot of rage and they are in conversation with each other. And it's what makes it a great musical in my mind."

"Annie" has been adapted many times for the screen, including a 1982 film version, another in 1999 and one in 2014 starring Quvenzhané Wallis, and a live TV version in 2021 on NBC with Harry Connick Jr. and Taraji P. Henson.

The tour after the new year will head to Maryland, Alabama, Illinois, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, California, Washington,

Pennsylvania, Georgia, Nebraska, Colorado, Texas and Wisconsin.

The musical was born in the wake of the Vietnam War and the Nixon administration and the creators have said they were seeking to offer some hope. "I think it is a story about survival and choosing the light when you are in the dark," says Thompson.

The musical first premiered on Broadway in 1977 and was revived in 1997 and 2012. The 1977 original show won the Tony Award as best musical and ran for 2,300 performances, inspiring tours and revivals that never went out of style. It last played New York on Broadway in 2012-14.

"The original show was just endowed with so much hope and optimism and the comedy in it was honest," says Copeland. "It's really back to its roots. There's no gags and gimmicks."

Others who have played Hannigan include Carol Burnett, Kathy Bates, Dorothy Loudon, Nell Carter, Katie Finneran, Jane Lynch and Henson. Goldberg says she's stayed away from watching any versions "so I wouldn't copy other people."

Goldberg has a long history with New York theater, producing such shows as "Sister Act," "Xanadu" and "Thoroughly Modern Millie," as well as performing in "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" and "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum."

"I don't sound like Cynthia Erivo," she says. "I don't sound like Nicole Scherzinger. I don't sound like anybody. I don't sound like Audra McDonald. I just sound like me. And for 'Annie,' it's the right sound."

Jay-Z defends

'Child rape suit is an extortion ploy'

NEW YORK, Dec 10, (AP): Jay-Z says a rape allegation made against him is part of an extortion attempt.

A woman who previously sued Sean "Diddy" Combs, alleging she was raped at an awards show after-party in 2000 when she was 13, amended the lawsuit Sunday to include a new allegation that Jay-Z was also at the party and participated in the sexual assault.

The 24-time Grammy award winning rapper, producer and music mogul called the allegations "idiotic" and "heinous in nature" in a statement released by Roc Nation, one of his companies.

He also revealed that he had anonymously sued the woman's lawyer, Tony Buzbee, last month, alleging he was trying to blackmail the rapper by threatening to make the rape allegation public if he didn't agree to a legal settlement. He said Buzbee sent a letter to his lawyer appearing to seek a settlement, but that the letter had the "opposite effect" on him.

"It made me want to expose you for the fraud you are in a VERY public fashion," Jay-Z's statement read. "So no, I will not give you ONE RED PENNY!!!"

The litigation is part of a wave of sexual assault lawsuits levied against Combs as the hip-hop mogul remains in custody in New York awaiting trial on federal sex trafficking charges.

The unnamed woman says she was hanging around Radio City Music Hall during the 2000 MTV Video Music Awards and managed to talk a limousine driver into bringing her to a celebrity-studded party at a private residence after the event.

She said that while she was in the limousine, she was asked to sign a nondisclosure document. Once at the party, the lawsuit said, she took a drink that made her feel "woozy and light-headed" and went into a bedroom to lie down.

She said that Combs and Jay-Z, whose legal name is Shawn Carter, then barged into the room along with another unnamed celebrity and raped her. The woman said she eventually escaped the room, fled the house and called for a ride from a nearby gas station.

Buzbee, a personal injury lawyer in Houston, said the notion that he was trying to blackmail Jay-Z is "stupid and laughable," and that his letter simply sought confidential mediation in the litigation.

"What he fails to say in his recent statement is that my firm sent his lawyer a basic demand letter on behalf of an alleged victim and that victim never demanded a penny from him," he said in an emailed statement. "Since I sent the letter on her behalf, Mr. Carter has not only sued me, but he has tried to bully and harass me and this plaintiff. His conduct has had the opposite impact. She is emboldened. I'm very proud of her resolve."

Jay-Z's attorney, Alex Spiro, filed court paperwork Monday asking a judge to require his accuser, who is only identified as Jane Doe, to reveal her identity if she wants to continue the lawsuit. Spiro said the woman hasn't provided any evidence to justify her anonymity and that her "vague assertions of potential harm fall far short of the stringent requirements" under the law.

Spiro asked for an urgent hearing on the matter.



Jay-Z



Goldberg



Murdoch

Variety

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia: The Riyadh International Philosophy Conference 2024 concluded its third and final day with a series of thought-provoking sessions exploring the theme of quality of life. The three-day event was held at the King Fahad National Library in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and brought together over 60 renowned global thinkers, including prominent figures such as Dr. Fausto Fresco, Dr. Abdelrahman Dekkoun, and Dr. Nermin Ezzeldin. The conference explored the theme "Philosophy

and Quality of Life: Existence, Truth, and Goodness" and established itself as a vital platform that reflects Saudi Arabia's leadership in advancing philosophical discourse locally and globally. Dr. Mohammed bin Hasan Alwan, Chief Executive Officer of the Literature, Publishing, and Translation Commission, expressed his happiness with the success of the conference, stating: "This conference has showcased the power of philosophy to address the most pressing challenges of our time. By bringing together leading thinkers from around the world, we have fostered meaningful dialogue and inspired new ideas for a better future." (AP)

RENO, Nev.: A probate commissioner has ruled against Rupert Murdoch's effort to change his family's trust to give one of his sons control of his media empire and ensure Fox News maintains its conservative editorial slant, according to a sealed document obtained by The New York Times. In a decision filed on Saturday, a probate commissioner in Nevada concluded that Murdoch, 93,

and his son, Lachlan Murdoch, had acted in "bad faith" in their endeavor to amend the irrevocable trust. The New York Times reported on Monday. The trust divides control of the company equally among four of Rupert Murdoch's children - Prudence, Elisabeth, Lachlan and James - after he dies. Lachlan Murdoch has been the head of Fox News and News Corp since late last year, when his father stepped down. The elder Murdoch has argued that to preserve his businesses' commercial value for all his heirs, the trust must be changed to allow Lachlan Murdoch to maintain Fox News' con-

servative bent. James and Elisabeth Murdoch are both known to have less-conservative political views than their father or brother, potentially complicating efforts to ensure that Fox News remains conservative. In his 96-page opinion, Nevada Probate Commissioner Edmund J. Gorman Jr. of the Second Judicial District Court characterized the plan to change the trust as a "carefully crafted charade" to "permanently cement Lachlan Murdoch's executive roles" inside the empire "regardless of the impacts such control would have over the companies or the beneficiaries" of the family trust. (AP)

Child online safety key

Calif mulls mental health warnings on social media

SACRAMENTO, Calif., Dec. 10. (AP) California, home to some of the largest technology companies in the world, would be the first US state to require mental health warning labels on social media sites if lawmakers pass a bill introduced Monday.

The legislation sponsored by state Attorney General Rob Bonta is necessary to bolster safety for children online, supporters say, but industry officials vow to fight the measure and others like it under the First Amendment.



Murthy

Warning labels for social media gained swift bipartisan support from dozens of attorneys general, including Bonta, after US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy called on Congress to establish the requirements earlier this year, saying social media is a contributing factor in the mental health crisis among young people.

"These companies know the harmful impact their products can have on our children, and they refuse to take meaningful steps to make them safer," Bonta said at a news conference Monday. "Time is up. It's time we stepped in and demanded change."

State officials haven't provided details on the bill, but Bonta said the warning labels could pop up once weekly.

Up to 95% of youth ages 13 to 17 say they use a social media platform, and more than a third say that they use social media "almost

constantly," according to 2022 data from the Pew Research Center. Parents' concerns prompted Australia to pass the world's first law banning social media for children under 16 in November.

"The promise of social media, although real, has turned into a situation where they're turning our children's attention into a commodity," Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, who authored the California bill, said Monday. "The attention economy is using our children and their well-being to make money for these California companies."

Lawmakers instead should focus on online safety education and mental health resources, not warning label bills that are "constitutionally unsound," said Todd O'Boyle, a vice president of the tech industry policy group Chamber of Progress.

"We strongly suspect that the courts will set them aside as compelled speech," O'Boyle told The Associated Press.

Victoria Hinks' 16-year-old daughter, Alexandra, died by suicide four months ago after being "led down dark rabbit holes" on social media that glamorized eating disorders and self-harm. Hinks said the labels would help protect children from companies that turn a blind eye to the harm caused to children's mental health when they become addicted to social media platforms.

"There's not a bone in my body that doubts social media played a role in leading her to that final, irreversible decision," Hinks said. "This could be your story."

Common Sense Media, a sponsor of the bill, said it plans to lobby for similar proposals in other states.



Conference participants in a group photo

KUNA photos

Minister highlights drop in patients sent abroad

A new chapter in Kuwait's healthcare journey

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: On a day that marked a pivotal moment in Kuwait's healthcare evolution, Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi stood before an audience at the Robotic Surgery Conference, exuding optimism and pride.

With a vision firmly anchored in progress, he announced a significant milestone -- the number of patients sent abroad for treatment had dropped dramatically. This achievement, he explained, was the result of Kuwait's growing investment in modern medical technologies and the expansion of healthcare facilities.

Dr. Al-Awadhi detailed the Ministry's strides in elevating local healthcare services. The much-anticipated new maternity hospital had begun its initial operations, signaling a new era for maternal care.

Simultaneously, construction and preparation were advancing for hospitals specializing in communicable diseases, pediatrics, women's health and the expansion of Adan Hospital and the Chest Hospital. Primary healthcare centers across the country were also undergoing significant upgrades.

But it wasn't just physical infra-



Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi during a tour of the exhibition.

structure that was transforming. The Ministry had embarked on a digital revolution, launching a project to transition all healthcare sector communications to electronic platforms.

"We began this transformation just two weeks ago," Dr. Al-Awadhi shared, "and we're now in the final stages of implementing it across hospitals and health centers." This leap to-

ward digitization promised not only to enhance efficiency but also to reduce costs, eliminating unnecessary expenditures and streamlining operations.

The highlight of the day, however, was Dr. Al-Awadhi's enthusiastic discussion of robotic surgery and artificial intelligence in Kuwait. With six state-of-the-art robotic devices currently in use -- each valued at around one mil-

lion dinars -- the country was solidifying its place in the world of advanced medical technology.

Over the past decade, he disclosed, these robots had performed 2,000 successful surgeries, proving their worth by improving treatment outcomes and minimizing complications.

"The surgical robots provide high-resolution, three-dimensional vision and unmatched precision," Dr. Al-Awadhi explained. "They empower our surgeons to undertake complex and delicate operations that were once beyond human capabilities."

Currently, 20 highly trained male and female doctors operate these robots and efforts are underway to acquire more devices.

As Dr. Al-Awadhi concluded his remarks, he emphasized the Ministry's commitment to harnessing cutting-edge technologies to meet the nation's medical needs.

Kuwait's healthcare system, long reliant on sending patients abroad, was now charting its own course.

With the opening of new hospitals, the embrace of digital transformation and the integration of advanced surgical technologies, the country was proving that a vision of excellence, paired with decisive action, could lead to remarkable change.

Omega-3 fatty acids essential for preterm birth prevention

Prenatal supplements lack omega-3s: study

By Mary Scourbutokos

Eastern Virginia Medical School

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

Most prenatal supplements lack the amount of omega-3 fatty acids that could help prevent preterm birth, meaning delivery before 37 weeks' gestation. This is a key finding of a new study, published by my team, in the American Journal of Perinatology.

Omega-3 fatty acids are essential nutrients that are found largely in fatty fish. They help prevent inflammation and, by doing so, decrease the risk of preterm birth.

Our study, however, showed that roughly 1 in 6 prenatal supplements on the market in the US that contain omega-3 fatty acids provide the amount that is needed by most pregnant women.

My colleagues and I used the US Department of Agriculture's Dietary Supplement Label Database to identify prenatal supplements that contained omega-3 fatty acids. We then compared the stated amount of omega-3s on the product labels with the recommended amounts in the new guidelines published in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology Maternal-Fetal Medicine by a team of experts representing international obstetric and child health orga-

nizations.

The guidelines recommend different doses of omega-3 fatty acids depending on whether a woman's baseline intake prior to pregnancy was adequate or inadequate.

We found that 70% of the prenatal supplements that contained omega-3s provided the amount that is recommended for women with adequate intakes. However, previous research has shown that only 5% of pregnant women and women of childbearing age consume adequate amounts of omega-3 fatty acids. Thus, for women with insufficient intakes, a prenatal supplement with a higher amount of omega-3s would be helpful.

Preterm birth is the leading cause of infant mortality worldwide. It is also the leading cause of infant illnesses that lead to costly stays in neonatal intensive care units. And then there is the heavy emotional toll that it has on parents and families.

Preterm birth also significantly increases a child's risk for long-term health consequences such as intellectual disability, chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes and psychiatric illness in adulthood. Yet there are few treatment options for preterm birth.

This is where omega-3 fatty acids come in. They lower risk of preterm birth by decreasing production of the signaling molecules that kick-start labor.

A Cochrane review of 26 randomized controlled

trials demonstrated that 1,000 milligrams of supplemental omega-3 fatty acids per day can decrease risk of preterm birth by 11%, and risk of early preterm birth - delivery before 34 weeks' gestation - by 42%.

Considering that prenatal supplements often don't contain the required amount of omega-3s, one option is to simply take an additional omega-3 supplement alongside a prenatal vitamin to supply the difference and obtain the benefit.

Nevertheless, omega-3 supplements are not always necessary. The new guidelines recommend that all women of childbearing age should consume 250 milligrams of omega-3s per day. This amount can be obtained from roughly two 3-ounce servings per week of fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel, herring, sardines and anchovies.

When women increase their intake of omega-3 fatty acids prior to pregnancy, the recommended intake levels during pregnancy are lower. This is a way to eliminate the need for supplements in the first place.

However, women of childbearing age must also consider levels of mercury in fish because of its adverse effects on fetal neurodevelopment. While most species of salmon are low in mercury, certain fish that are rich in omega-3s can be moderately high in mercury. It's important to consult local public health guidelines on mercury levels in fish to ensure safe consumption levels. (AP)



A photo of the Billava Sangha Kuwait medical camp organizers and participants.

Billava Sangha conducts free medical, consultations camp

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: As a part of their social service, Billava Sangha Kuwait (BSK), organized a medical camp in coordination with Shifa Al Jazeera Medical Centre, Fahaheel on Dec 6 which was open to all.

The camp started early in the morning at 7:00 AM and continued till 1:30 PM. About 85 people, including Indians and other nationalities availed the benefits of the free health check-up services.

The free health check-up package included tests for blood glucose, blood pressure, oxygen saturation, ECG (above 40 years or as advised by doctor) followed by free consultation with specialized doctors (general physician, dental and ophthalmology).

Privilege cards were issued to all participants, which offer discounts in various lab tests and consultations till Dec 31, 2025 at all three centers: Shifa

Al Jazeera Medical Centre, Fahaheel and Farwaniya and at Al Nahil Int'l Clinic, Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.

It was a flawless event, and the entire program was executed to near perfection. The main highlights of the camp are excellent crowd management, close follow-up with each participant and perfect time management which resulted in bare minimum waiting time for the participants. This was achieved by the active participation of BSK-welfare officer Mr. Charan Raj Suvama & Joint welfare officer Mr. Dayanand Amin, BSK committee members and the necessary cooperation from the staff of Shifa Al Jazeera medical Centre.

Shifa Al Jazeera Medical Centre - Administration Manager, Gunaseelan Pillai Narain, thanked BSK for their noble work towards community welfare and happy to be associated in future events as well.

MEDICAL CLASSIFIEDS

Take care of your health

To advertise in this page please call: (+965) 24813566 Ext.: 513 or E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com

For your ads on this page

Call: 24813805 E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com

www.arabtimesonline.com

SHIFA AL JAZEERA MEDICAL CENTRE
FARWANIYA

Dermatology - Cosmetology Dept.

Dr. Abdul Nazer
MBBS, MD (DVD)
Skin & Dermatology Specialist

Dr. Faizan Kalekhan
MBBS, MD, DNB
Dermatology, Venereology & Leprosy

Our Services
PRP | Peels | Painless laser hair removal | Treatment for scars, acne scars, wrinkles, Aging, Skin Tightening, Stretch marks | Cellulite, fat, warts, moles, corn | Mesotherapy | Crystal Peel & diamond Microdermabrasion | Carboxytherapy | Dualpeel | Whitening treatment (Localized & Whole body) Botox | Fillers | Hair loss treatment | Nail surgeries | Skin biopsies | Cryotherapy | Dermapen

Behind Maghateer Commercial Complex & Opp. Police Station - Farwaniya
www.shifaaljazeera.com.kw

Ph: 2473 4000

KEA lifts trophy in style

CETAA hosts thrilling Kids Football tournament in collaboration with FOCC



The victorious KEA celebrates at the end of the tournament.



The runner-up MACE

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: College of Engineering Trivandrum Alumni Association Kuwait chapter organized its flagship event, the Kids Football tournament, with gusto on 6th December at Classico Football grounds, Ahmadi. CETAA takes immense pride in hosting this tournament every year, which has gained popularity amongst the children of the Kuwait Engineers Forum. CETAA has partnered with Friends of CRY Club (FOCC), one of the most trusted NGOs committed to empowering children by protecting their fundamental rights. The tournament fosters camaraderie and celebrates the spirit of sportsmanship by hosting a friendly football tournament for kids.

Invitees who attended the event were CRY Representative Mr. Murali Kutticode, (FOCC) Kuwait and representatives from sponsors of the event from Nouri - Mr. Shyam Mohan, Arabian Corrosion - Mr. Krishnan Natarajan, Mark Technology - Mr. Suresh Pillai, Athma - Mr. Hasaynar Pareed.

The event was attended by a robust KEF Team comprised of KEF General Convener - Ms. Hanan Shan, KEF GC Designate - Mr. Ganga Prasad T, KEF Ex Officio - Mr. Santosh Abraham, CETAA President - Ms. Sheryl Sasi Rajan. Presidents and Chairpersons from the various Alumni: AECK - Mr. Deepak Geo Thomas, KEA - Mr. Eby Samuel, NSSCEAA - Mr. Joe Joseph Arakkal, MACEAA - Mr. Vinil K.V., TECAA - Ms. Manju Sreenath, TKMCEAA - Mr. Manoj C. G.

Seven teams from the various alumni played the league stage matches. The matches were action-packed and replete with stellar performances. Players of the league matches were as follows. TKM Vs TEC: Athul Sandeep (TEC), AECK Vs MACE: Nidhin A Jojan (MACE), CETAA Vs NSS: Johaan Smijoe (CETAA), TKM Vs AECK: Joe Joshua Lijo (TKM), TEC Vs MACE: Nidhin A Jojan (MACE), KEA Vs CETAA: Ryan Tibish (KEA), TKM Vs MACE: Nidhin A Jojan (MACE), TEC Vs AECK: Athul Sandeep (TEC), NSS Vs KEA: Nihal Kamal (KEA).

The teams that topped the standings in the initial league phase (KEA and MACE) played the finals. The high-octane performance of the two teams made it a perfect final for the spectators to watch as it ended in a draw 2-2 after normal time. The nail-biting match went into extra time. MACE drew first blood but an unnerved KEA kept their cool and scored 2 goals in quick succession to clinch the trophy. Nihal Kamal (KEA) was adjudged the Player of the Match (Final). Nidhin A Jojan (MACE), however, bagged the Player of the Tournament for his outstanding performance in all his



CETAA players with officials.



KEA player receives an award for outstanding performance.



MACE player awarded by an official.



One of the best performers of the tournament.

matches.

The following were adjudged as promising players: Navneeth Arun, Joe Joshua Lijo, Job Delin, Stephen Mario Santhosh, Faizan Javed, and David Emmanuel. Nihal Francis was adjudged the most promising player and Jordan Varghese Binny was adjudged the best goalkeeper.

The KEF Children's Club, under the leadership of Angela Sunil, President, and Sridevi Raroth, Secretary took the initiative to organize a Food Stall at the event. The stall was a tremendous success, earning praise from the community. To further enhance the event's energy, the children also arranged interactive games.

West Ham sinks Wolverhampton to heap more pressure on O'Neil

Udinese halts five-game winless run

LONDON, Dec 10, (AP): West Ham beat Wolverhampton Wanderers 2-1 in the Premier League and heaped more pressure on beleaguered coach Gary O'Neil.

Both sides came into the match under a cloud and the game was widely billed as a make-or-break match for O'Neil and West Ham counterpart Julen Lopetegui.

Wolves started the night second to last while the London side was in 14th place, and the pressure and nerves were apparent in an edgy first half that was devoid of class or composure.

Mohammed Kudus and Konstantinos Mavropanos had half chances for West Ham, while at the other end João Gomes shot over from a good position.

Things improved after the break, and West Ham took the lead in the 53rd minutes from a corner kick. Wolves left Tomas Soucek unmarked at the back post and his looping header sailed into the far corner.

Matt Doherty equalized for Wolves in the 69th. However, just three minutes later West Ham's talismanic captain Jarrod Bowen found time and space in the box to slot home with his left foot.

West Ham was without Michail Antonio, its ever-present striker who broke a leg in a car crash on Saturday, and Bowen held up Antonio's No. 9 shirt to celebrate his goal.

The West Ham players took the field in training tops with Antonio's name and number on them and the home fans gave him a warm round of applause in the ninth minute.

"The goal and victory were for Mi-



AC Monza's Georgios Kyriakopoulos, centre, scores his side's first goal during the Italian Serie A soccer match between at the U-Power Stadium in Monza, Italy. (AP)

chail," Soucek said. "I said to myself before the game that I wanted to score even more because he has been here since I came and he's my favorite. It is difficult for me to play without him but I'm happy he is fine."

"We had a video call with him before the game. He smiled at us and gave us all the best."

The result left the Hammers in 14th spot, one point behind Manchester United. It was the third defeat in a row for Wolves, who remain on nine

points, equal with third-to-last Ipswich Town.

Udinese won for the first time since October 2-1 over lowly Monza to end a five-game winless run and move into ninth spot in Serie A.

Lorenzo Lucca put Udinese ahead after six minutes but Greek defender Giorgos Kyriakopoulos equalized for the home side two minutes into the second half.

However, Slovenian Jaka Bijol gave Udinese scored the 70th-minute winner that was harsh on Monza, which dominated for long spells, especially in the first half.

The result was Udinese's first victory since Oct. 25 and lifted it one point above Empoli.

Monza's misery, meanwhile, extended to an eighth straight winless game.

Only one Serie A team has scored fewer goals.

Bronze equals record

Messi & Ronaldo miss out on men's FIFPRO World XI

HOOFDDORP, Netherlands, Dec 10, (AP): No Lionel Messi and no Cristiano Ronaldo.

The all-time soccer greats did not make the men's world team of the year organized by global players' union FIFPRO.

The 37-year-old Messi, who plays for MLS side Inter Miami, and the 39-year-old Ronaldo, who plays for Al-Nassr in the Saudi Pro League, were the only players not with European clubs voted onto a 26-man shortlist by FIFPRO last week.

This year's team of the year featured six players from record 15-time Champions League winner Real Madrid and four from Premier League heavyweight Manchester City, with Liverpool's standout center half Virgil van Dijk the other player selected.

The World XI was voted for by professional players from 70 countries.

City's Ederson is in goal, with Madrid duo Dani Carvajal and Antonio Rüdiger partnering Van Dijk in defense.

A stellar midfield saw Jude Bellingham and Toni Kroos (Madrid) picked alongside playmaker Kevin De Bruyne and Ballon d'Or winner Rodri from City.

Prolific City striker Erling Haaland is teamed up with Kylian Mbappé and his Madrid clubmate Vinicius Jr. in a star-studded attack.

It is the first time since 2006 that Messi has not been selected. Argentina's World Cup winner and record eight-time Ballon d'Or winner holds the record after being voted into the team 17 times. Ronaldo has been selected 15 times but last appeared in 2021.

FIFPRO has invited the world's professional footballers to choose their men's team since 2005 and the women's team since 2015. It is the only global football award decided exclusively by the players.

A record-breaking 7,000 women's players voted.

Chelsea defender Lucy Bronze - formerly with Barcelona - was



In this file photo, Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi runs after scoring against Orlando City during the second half of an MLS soccer match in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (AP)

returned for the first time since 2021, while 24-year-old Zambia striker Barbra Banda (Shanghai Shengli and Orlando Pride) became the first African woman to make the team of the year.

England's Mary Earps (Manchester United and Paris Saint-Germain) was chosen as goalkeeper with Olga Carmona (Real Madrid and Spain) and Alex Greenwood (Manchester City and England) also in defense.

Alexia Putellas joined countrywoman Bonmati in an all-Barcelona midfield alongside England's Keira Walsh.

The attack features Colombia's Linda Caicedo (Real Madrid) and England's Lauren James (Chelsea).

Coote fired after comments about Liverpool and Klopp

LONDON, Dec 10, (AP): Premier League match official David Coote was fired after his position was deemed "untenable" by English soccer's referees body following an investigation into his conduct.

The Professional Game Match Officials Limited suspended Coote on

Nov. 12 while it looked into a video, published by The Sun newspaper, that circulated of him making offensive comments to friends about former Liverpool manager Jürgen Klopp.

Since then, UEFA also launched an investigation into Coote following

a video, again published by The Sun, allegedly showing him using cocaine during the European Championship this year.

Coote is also being investigated by the Football Association following allegations that he discussed with a fan the possibility of giving a yellow card

to a player in a match. Coote denies any wrongdoing, according to The Sun.

The PGMOL issued a statement saying Coote's employment has been terminated with immediate effect following the conclusion of its investigation.

Dortmund's injuries pile up

Work to do for Barcelona and Atletico to assure top-8 finish

MADRID, Dec 10, (Agencies): FC Barcelona and Atletico Madrid are in different moments of form as they prepare for vital UEFA Champions League ties on Wednesday night.

Barcelona, currently third in the 36-team group, has to play Borussia Dortmund and Benfica away from home before entertaining Atalanta, meaning it still has a lot of work to do to assure the top-eight finish that would see it qualify directly for the round of 16.

Meanwhile, Atletico has an easier calendar ahead of it, but needs to keep winning to climb from its current 15th place into the top-eight.

Facing last season's finalist Borussia Dortmund, Barcelona coach Hansi Flick must be worried about his side's recent form in La Liga, which has seen it lose two and draw two of its last five games.

Part of the reason for Barca's problems is that a defense that looked solid at the start of the season is now starting to leak due to a packed fixture, with few options to rotate key players given the long-term injuries to Ronald Araujo and Andreas Christensen.

Araujo is on the verge of returning to action and will travel to Germany, although he is unlikely to play on Wednesday. Lamine Yamal, Raphinha and Robert Lewandowski will lead the Barca attack.

Atletico has what should be a much easier game when it entertains Slovan Bratislava, who travels after five defeats from five games in which it has conceded 18 goals and scored just four.

Atletico, meanwhile, is playing its best football of the season and goes into the game after a thrilling 4-3 league win at home to Sevilla.



Borussia Dortmund's Julian Ryerson, center, controls the ball in front of Borussia Mönchengladbach's Lukas Ullrich, second from right, during a Bundesliga soccer match in Mönchengladbach, Germany. (AP)

Diego Simeone's side is currently just a point outside the top-eight, with games against Bayer Leverkusen and RB Salzburg still to play, and a win on Wednesday would give it an excellent chance of finishing in the top-eight.

Antoine Griezmann was outstanding against Sevilla and with Julian Alvarez and Rodrigo De Paul also performing well at the moment, Wednesday should be a comfortable night in the Metropolitan Stadium. Borussia Dortmund will have a heavily depleted squad for its Champions League game against Barcelona after defender Niklas Süle was ruled out for "a few months" with an injury.

Ahead of Wednesday's game in Germany, Dortmund coach Nuri Sahin said Tuesday that Süle joins an injury list including fellow defender Waldemar Anton and attacking midfielder Julian Brandt, while forwards

Maximilian Beier and Karim Adeyemi are both doubtful.

Sahin didn't specify exactly how Süle was injured but indicated it was a repeat of the ankle problem which caused him to miss much of October and November. That could mean captain Emre Can, usually a midfielder, drops back into defense alongside Nico Schlotterbeck against Barcelona.

Adeyemi hasn't played in more than two months since he scored a hat trick against Celtic in the Champions League on Oct. 1 and picked up a muscle injury. Sahin said Adeyemi was on his way back to fitness but "we just have to weigh up whether it makes sense to throw him in after such a long time." Barcelona is third and last season's Champions League runner-up Dortmund fourth in the 36-team standings on 12 points apiece.

Towns has 24 points and 15 rebounds as Knicks top Raptors for 5th win in 6 games



New York Knicks center Karl-Anthony Towns drives into Toronto Raptors center Jakob Poeltl as teammate Toronto Raptors guard RJ Barrett defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Toronto. (AP)

TORONTO, Dec 10, (AP): Karl-Anthony Towns returned from a one-game absence with 24 points and 15 rebounds, Jalen Brunson had 20 points and 11 assists and the New York Knicks held on to beat the Toronto Raptors 113-108 on Monday night for their fifth win in six games.

Towns broke a tie by scoring a layup with 36 seconds left in the game, then sealed the win by making a 3-pointer on New York's next possession.

Mikal Bridges scored 23 points as the Knicks won their fifth straight meeting with the Raptors. OG Anunoby added 14 points against his former team and Josh Hart had 10.

Raptors forward Scottie Barnes left midway through the third quarter because of a sprained right ankle. Barnes was helped off the court by teammates before hopping to the locker room, unable to put weight on his right foot.

Barnes missed 11 games earlier this season because of a right orbital fracture and has worn protective glasses since returning Nov. 21. Toronto went 2-9 without the 2022 NBA Rookie of the Year.

RJ Barrett scored 30 points for Toronto, and Jakob Poeltl had 10 points

and 12 rebounds.

Towns returned after sitting out Saturday's loss to Detroit because of a sore right knee. Guard Cam Payne (left elbow) also returned for the Knicks.

Rookie guard Ja'Kobe Walter matched his career high by scoring 14

points in the first half. Walter finished with 19 points.

Barnes was injured when he landed on Towns while battling for a defensive rebound with 6:47 left in the third. Barnes scored 15 points in 23 minutes before exiting.

Towns made only one of his first four attempts from long range before making the decisive 3-pointer with six seconds remaining.

New York hosts Atlanta in the NBA Cup quarterfinals on Wednesday. Toronto's next game is Thursday at Miami.



New York Knicks makes a layup during the 2024-2025 NBA regular season game between Toronto Raptors and New York Knicks in Toronto, Canada. (Xinhua)

UNC wins first women's soccer championship since 2012

CARY, N.C., Dec 10, (AP): Olivia Thomas scored on a free kick in the 62nd minute for her fourth goal of the NCAA Tournament and North Carolina beat Wake Forest 1-0 on Monday night for the program's first national championship since 2012.

North Carolina (22-5-0) has won 22 of the 43 NCAA women's soccer titles. The Tar Heels also won the 1981 AIAW title to total 23 national championships. No other women's soccer team owns more than four.

Wake Forest (16-4-4) was playing in the championship game for the first time in program history. The Demon Deacons were seeking just the 11th national championship in school history. UNC has 51 NCAA team championships across

eight different sports.

Thomas drew three defenders and was taken down just out-

side the 18-yard box by Dempsey Brown, who received a yellow card. Thomas found a gap in the



North Carolina celebrates after defeating Wake Forest to win NCAA Women's College Cup soccer final in Cary, N.C. (AP)

wall and curled it past goalkeeper Valentina Amaral for her ninth goal of the season.

Interim head coach Damon Nahas is the second coach in NCAA women's soccer history to win a national championship in their first year as a head coach, joining UCLA's Marguerite Aozasa from 2022.

North Carolina was making its 32nd College Cup appearance, including five of the last seven. No other team has been in more than 14. UNC was in the national title game for the 28th time, and has finished as the runner-up on six occasions.

It was the first title game involving two teams from the state of North Carolina since 1992 when North Carolina beat Duke 9-1.

Third edition of Arabian Gulf Padel Cup kicks off

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: The third edition of the Arabian Gulf Padel Cup for both men and women kicks off tonight at the Regency Hotel and will run until next Sunday.

This year's tournament holds special significance as all six Gulf countries are participating: Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, Oman, Bahrain, and the host nation, Kuwait. In the women's competition, four teams will compete, representing Saudi Arabia, Oman, the UAE, and Kuwait.

The Qatari team claimed the title in the first edition, while the UAE team emerged victorious in the second. In the women's category, Oman won both the first and second editions.

Omar Al-Zanki, Chairman of the Kuwaiti Padel Club, expressed his pride in hosting the Gulf Cup, wishing success to all teams. He emphasized that the competition's atmosphere fosters Gulf solidarity and cohesion.



Omar Al-Zanki

Al-Zanki acknowledged the growing level of competition in the Gulf region and predicted a tough battle for the top positions, making it difficult to forecast the champions in both the men's and women's events.

Kuwait aims for another win

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Kuwait Club seeks another win in the basketball league as it faces Al-Nasr at 5:00 pm in the sixth round of the competition. The second match will pit Al-Tadamon against Al-Qurain at 7:30 pm. Both games are scheduled to take place at the Union Hall in Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Indoor Halls Complex.

Kuwait Club and Al-Qadsiya currently top the league standings with 6 points each. Kazma and Al-Nasr follow in third and fourth place with 5 points, trailed by Al-Sulaibikhat with 4 points. Al-Arabi and Yarmouk share 3 points each, while Al-Qurain and Al-Tadamon sit at the bottom with 2 points apiece.

The tournament format allows the top four teams from the preliminary league to progress to the semi-finals, where the first-place team will face the fourth-place team, and the second will compete against the third in a best-of-three "play-off" series. The winners will advance to the final.

In the opening game, the Kuwait Club is heavily favored to claim the two points, boasting standout local players such as Alexander Al-Ghais, Hamad Adnan, and Turki Hamoud, alongside American professionals



Kuwait Club eyes new victory in the league.

Jakar, Brianti, and Augustine. However, Al-Nasr has shown significant improvement in recent weeks and features skilled professionals like Steve and Thomas, making this clash anything but straightforward.

In the second match, Al-Qurain is poised for its first victory of the season, given the technical disparity between them and their opponent. Al-Tadamon lacks professional players in their lineup, giving Al-Qurain a notable advantage.



Sheikh Mishaal and Al-Mutairi on the sidelines of the General Assembly.

Kuwaiti American Football Committee strengthens international ties

LAUSANNE, Dec 10: The head of the Kuwaiti American Football Committee, Madi Al-Mutairi, highlighted the recent meetings held to advance the sport's development in Kuwait and beyond. These gatherings included the former Vice President of the Asian Federation and founder of the sport in Kuwait, Sheikh Mishaal Talal, who hosted key figures such as the President of the International Federation, Frenchman Pierre Troche, and the President of the Asian Federation, Malaysian Daryl Nathaniel. The meetings took place at the request of the Kuwaiti Committee on the sidelines of the International Federation's General Assembly at the Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Al-Mutairi stated that numerous positive topics were addressed, focusing on the development of the

sport at both the continental and local levels. Particular attention was given to the Kuwaiti American Football Committee's preparations for upcoming events, especially those related to the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic qualifiers. He expressed gratitude for the cooperation and responsiveness of international and regional leaders, emphasizing their shared commitment to promoting the game's growth.

He also praised the notable progress the sport has achieved globally, along with the advancements in various derivative formats. Al-Mutairi highlighted a significant milestone where the Malaysian Federation enlisted Kuwaiti international referees Omar Al-Qattan and Abdullah Al-Qattan to officiate matches in the Malaysian Open Championship, wishing them success in their role.



Arsenal's Declan Rice, center, runs during a training session of Arsenal in London, England ahead of the Champions League soccer match between Arsenal and Monaco. (AP)

Sports

Over 4,400 volunteers ready for Championship in Kuwait

Comprehensive plans in place for Khaleeji Zain 26 guests: Organizing Committee

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: The Public Relations Committee of the Supreme Organizing Committee for the "Khaleeji Zain 26" has finalized its initial preparations to welcome guests for the tournament. A comprehensive plan was developed last November to ensure a seamless and comfortable experience for all visitors, from their arrival in Kuwait to their departure.

Sheikh Nasser Fahad Al-Sabah, Chairman of the Public Relations Committee, emphasized the committee's early start to address potential challenges and maintain smooth operations. "We have formed several volunteer teams to handle various responsibilities," he said. "A public relations team will greet guests at the airport, while others will assist at hotels accommodating the delegations, referees,

and officials. Additional teams will oversee arrangements at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium and Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Stadium during the matches."

Sheikh Nasser assured that committee members would be on duty 24/7 throughout the tournament to provide exceptional service and promptly resolve any issues. "This is our responsibility, and we take great pride in fulfilling it to the highest standards," he said.

He extended gratitude to Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, Chairman of the Supreme Organizing Committee, and Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef, President of the Football Association, for their unwavering support. "Their encouragement and assistance have significantly facilitated our work and placed upon us a great responsibility, which we are



Sheikh Nasser Fahad Al-Sabah

tated our work and placed upon us a great responsibility, which we are



One of the stadiums well-prepared for the tournament.

committed to honoring," he added. Meanwhile, Abdullah Al-Ad-

wani, Chairman of the Volunteers Committee, announced that volun-

teer registration for "Khaleeji Zain 26" closed last Thursday, with over 4,400 volunteers enlisted. "Volunteers will play an essential role in the tournament, from assisting fans with stadium entry and emergencies during matches to ensuring their smooth exit," he explained.

The final group of volunteers was inducted yesterday, following strict selection criteria. Al-Adwani noted that specialized training sessions are scheduled for today for the latest recruits, with comprehensive training for all volunteers set for Friday and Saturday at Jaber International Stadium and Jaber Al-Mubarak Stadium. "These sessions will prepare volunteers for their duties and ensure they are fully equipped to contribute to the success of the tournament," he concluded.



The Kuwaiti rhythmic gymnastics team

Kuwaiti rhythmic gymnastics team heads to Tunisia for Championship

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: The Kuwaiti girls' rhythmic gymnastics team has departed for Tunisia to participate in the Mediterranean Union Championship, scheduled to take place in Tunis.

This marks a significant milestone as Kuwait, along with Saudi Arabia and Qatar, joins this edition of the championship at the invitation of the Arab Gymnastics Federation.

The delegation is led by Fahad Al-Soula, President of the Arab and Kuwaiti Gymnastics Federations, and comprises five talented athletes: Sarah Al-Bannai, Lian Behbehani, Raya Al-Qassar, Nabila Al-Kharafi, and Amina Al-Kandari. They are accompanied by Ukrainian coaches Irina Kovalchuk and Victoria Vsyuk, along with team administrator Lujain Al-Asfour.

The Mediterranean Union Championship is renowned for its high level of competition, featuring advanced gymnastics nations such as Spain, Portugal, and Greece, alongside several Arab countries. This platform provides a valuable opportunity for Kuwaiti athletes to gain experience and engage with top-level competitors, enhancing their skills and confidence.

Kuwait Club, Kazma advance to semis

Burgan fate hangs in the balance

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 10: Kuwait and Kazma have advanced to the semi-finals of the Federation Volleyball Championship following commanding victories in the eighth round. Kuwait Club defeated Burgan 3-1, while Kazma swept Al-Shabab 3-0, solidifying their positions among the top four teams.

Kuwait Club remains unbeaten in the tournament, amassing 21 points from seven consecutive wins. Burgan, despite its efforts, stayed at 14 points with five wins



Kazma and Al-Shabab players battling for the ball.

and two losses. Kazma secured second place with 18 points from six victories and one defeat,

while Al-Shabab remained at 10 points. The remaining matches in the

round will determine the other two teams joining Kuwait Club and Kazma in the semi-finals, as per the tournament's structure, which allows the top four teams from the preliminary round to progress.

Burgan showed resilience against Kuwait Club, claiming the first set 28-26. However, Kuwait Club quickly regained control, dominating the subsequent sets 25-15, 25-21, and 25-16 to secure the win and collect all three points. Burgan now awaits the outcome of the Qadsia vs. Al-Arabi match to determine its fate.

Kazma, aiming for the championship title, faced little resistance in its encounter with Al-Shabab. The "Orange" team clinched a straightforward victory, winning the sets 25-14, 26-24, and 25-19, earning their spot in the next round.

Lebanon reveals squad

Kuwait resumes training after draw against Yemen



Al-Awadhi is congratulated by Mohammed Daham after scoring.

DOHA, Dec 10: The Kuwait team resumed its training camp in Doha, Qatar, following a 1-1 draw with Yemen in a friendly match held at Al-Duhail Stadium. The match, part of Al-Azraq's preparation for the upcoming "Khaleeji Zain 26", saw Yemen take the lead in the 84th minute through Abdul Majeed Sabara before Salman Al-Awadhi secured a last-minute equalizer for Kuwait. Al-Azraq's Ali Khalaf missed a penalty in the first half.

The Khaleeji Zain 26 will take place in Kuwait from December 21 to January 3. Before returning home, Al-Kuwait is set to play two friendlies against Lebanon on December 12 and 15 in Qatar.

Argentine coach Juan Pizzi utilized the match against Yemen to assess key players returning from injury, including Youssef Nasser,

Mashari Ghannam, and Reda Hani.

Meanwhile, Lebanon's Montenegro coach, Miodrag Radulovic, announced his squad for the friendlies against Kuwait. The matches will serve as part of Lebanon's preparations for the final round of the 2027 Asian Cup qualifiers, where they will compete in Group C alongside Yemen, Bhutan, and Brunei Darussalam.

Lebanon's squad includes Mustafa Matar, Mahdi Khalil, Ali Al-Sabaa, Qasim Al-Zain, Muhammad Safwan, Khalil Khamis, Muhammad Al-Haik, Hussein Al-Zain, Hussein Sharaf Al-Din, Nassar Nassar, Muhammad Al-Husseini, Jad Samira, Ahmed Khair Al-Din, Ali Tanish, Jihad Ayoub, Muhammad Haidar, Hassan Kurani, Rabie Ataya, Ali Qassar, Zain Fran, Sami Marhej, Malik Fakhro, and Leonardo Shahin.

Boston University dominates Thomas

Uduje, Vaihola lead San Jose State past Lincoln University

SAN JOSE, Calif., Dec 10, (AP): Josh Uduje scored 21 and Robert Vaihola posted a double-double to help San Jose State beat Lincoln University (CA) 117-80 on Monday night.

Uduje made 8 of 13 shots and all five of his free throws for the Spartans (5-6). Vaihola totaled 17 points and a career-high 18 rebounds. Donovan Yap Jr. and Sadraque NgaNga added 16 points apiece.

Reserve Joshua Russ had 18 points on 6-for-12 shooting from 3-point range to lead the Oaklanders. Elijah Williams had 17 points. Claude McKesey and Laolu Kalejaiye both scored 15.

Uduje had 14 points to help the Spartans take a 57-47 lead into halftime.

Lincoln closed within six early in the second half before San Jose State used a 17-0 run to pull away.

The Spartans will host Cal Poly on Saturday.

Matai Baptiste, Michael McNair and Miles Brewster all scored 15 to guide Boston University to a 113-75 victory over Thomas (ME).

Baptiste added nine rebounds and four steals for the Terriers (5-5). McNair made 5 of 8 from 3-point range and added five rebounds. Brewster hit two 3-pointers and collected three steals.

Parker Desjardins led the Terriers with 15 points. Luke Gabloff added 14 points and Jackson Ruelke scored 12. Boston University took the lead 19



Robert Vaihola

into the game and never looked back. Brewster had 10 points to help build a 54-41 advantage at halftime.

Jayden Nunn had 18 points and Baylor made its first 10 shots in an 88-57 victory over Abilene Christian.

Nunn sank 7 of 12 shots - 4 for 4 from 3-point range - for the Bears (6-3), who improved to 4-0 at home.

Norchad Omier scored 15 on 7-for-7 shooting and grabbed six rebounds for Baylor, which shot 59%. V.J. Edgecombe added 14 points, six boards and four steals. Josh Ojjanwuna totaled 13 points and eight rebounds, while Langston Love scored 10 off the bench.

Freshman Robert Wright III made his first start for the Bears and finished

with eight points and four assists. Wright started in place of Jeremy Roach, who suffered a concussion in a 76-72 loss to No. 25 UConn last time out. Roach was averaging 12.8 points per game.

Leonardo Bettiol led the Wildcats (6-4) with 16 points. Quion Williams scored 10.

Edgecombe had nine points, Love added eight and seven Bears had at least two baskets in taking a 46-22 lead at halftime. Baylor took its first double-digit lead at 19-9 on a jumper by Ojjanwuna with 12 minutes left and pushed its advantage to 20 on a layup by Edgecombe six minutes later.

Edgecombe had a nice three-possession sequence late in the second half. He converted an acrobatic reverse layup after a defender knocked the ball out of his hands and he added a two-hand slam for an 80-50 lead. The third possession ended in Edgecombe's nice pass from under the basket to find Nunn in the corner for a 3-pointer.

Baylor will host Norfolk State on Wednesday. Cruz Davis and Kijan Robinson scored 20 points apiece to help Hofstra defeat Norfolk State 80-67.

Davis shot 6 of 10 from the field, including 5 for 6 from 3-point range, and went 3 for 5 from the line for the Pride (8-3). Robinson shot 7 of 12 (4 for 9 from 3-point range). Jean Aranguren shot 6 for 10 (2 for 4 from 3-point range) and 5 of 7 from the free-throw

line to finish with 19 points.

Jalen Myers led the Spartans (6-4) with 17 points. Christian Ings added 12 points and five assists. Brian Moore Jr. had 10 points.

Hofstra took the lead with 10:33 left in the first half and did not give it up. Aranguren led their team in scoring with 13 points in the first half to help put them up 37-31 at the break.

Joe Bamisile totaled 23 points and 11 rebounds to power VCU to a 66-47 victory over Pennsylvania.

Max Shulga finished with 14 points and seven rebounds for the Rams (8-2). Phillip Russell hit two 3-pointers and scored nine.

The Quakers (3-7) were led by Ethan Roberts with 14 points. Nick Spinoso contributed 12 points, seven rebounds, five assists and two steals.

VCU took the lead with 5:28 left in the first half and never looked back. Bamisile led his team in scoring with 13 points in the first half to help put them up 36-25 at the break.

Kenny Noland had 17 points in Columbia's 92-46 victory over Sarah Lawrence.

Noland went 7 of 9 from the field (3 for 5 from 3-point range) for the Lions (10-1). Josiah Cunningham scored 12 points and had three steals. Blair Thompson went 4 of 7 from the field and scored 10.

The Gryhons were led by Mason Meyers with 11 points.

Best of the Rest

Mutellip suffers ankle injury:

Chinese Super League (CSL) club Chengdu Rongcheng announced on Tuesday that its midfielder Mutellip Iminqari picked up an ankle injury when he played in an U-21 match.

The 20-year-old suffered ligament damage in his right ankle after being tackled by an opposition player in the game on Sunday, the Chengdu club said in a statement.

Mutellip faces a layoff of two to three weeks, the Chengdu side added.

Since the 2024 CSL campaign concluded in early November, Mutellip had been playing with

the Chengdu U-21 side for the past month. (Xinhua)

Keita heads to Hungary:

Former Champions League winner Naby Keita is joining Hungary's Ferencváros on a year-long loan after his spell with Werder Bremen in Germany ended with him being suspended by the team for months.

The Guinean midfielder joined Bremen in June 2023 after five years at Liverpool but only played five games for the German team. The loan begins next month, Bremen said Tuesday.

Keita has been suspended from the squad since April, when Bremen accused Keita of refusing to travel to a Bundesliga game if he wasn't in the starting lineup. (AP)