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### Finance minister presents new Financial Intelligence leadership to Amir

### **Amir receives First Deputy PM, Investigations Director General and deputies**





KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Monday at Bayan Palace First Deputy Prime Minister, Defense Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah and Director General of the General Department of Investigations Major General Dr. Faisal Al-Mukrad. Dr. Al-Mukrad introduced to His High-

ness the Amir his newly-appointed deputies Saad Al-Mutairi, Reem Al-Mousa, Bassam Al-Mashouh, where they took oath.

Several senior officials attended the meeting.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also received Monday Minister of Finance and State Minister for Economic Affairs and Investment Noura Al-Fassam.

Minister Al-Fassam introduced to His Highness the Amir the newly-appointed Chief of Financial Intelligence Unit, Dr. Hamad Al-Mekrad and his deputy Yousef Al-Omar.

Amiri Diwan photos Left: His Highness the Amir receives First Deputy PM, Director General of the General Department of Investigations and his newly-appointed deputies. Right: His Highness the Amir receives Minister of Finance, Financial Intelligence Unit chief and deputy.



### Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

### Time-saving strategies pave way for progress

THE fruits of development are beginning to be seen in Kuwait, and we can feel some of them now. However, we must admit that there is still a lot of work and effort ahead. The past era left many challenges due to political and electoral favoritism, as well as sale of projects through corrupt deals.

To be honest, since liberation, Kuwait has not seen any real strides toward sustainable development that would secure a good future for the upcoming generations. Instead, there has been a hesitant approach, merely signaling, "We are still here." Many projects ended up costing far more than their actual value, while others were intentionally delayed so that some parties could benefit from inflated profits through the so-called "variation orders". As a result, the country is lagging behind in keeping pace with the rapid development seen throughout the region.

It is understood that the real value of any project lies in the speed of its completion. The ultimate goal is not the construction itself, but the well-being of society and the prompt delivery of services to citizens. Delays only worsen the losses. Therefore, countries aiming for sustainable development invest more in development projects to save time. Many countries have relied on the private sector for development, entrusting it with major sectors such as health, education, tourism, and services. Through the build-operate-transfer (BOT) system, these countries have managed to save on public budgets, and

# **Kuwait slashes private health** insurance for 11 gov't bodies

Coverage expands to families, driving unsustainable cost growth

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: In an effort to curb government expenditures, the Kuwaiti Council of Ministers has instructed 11 government entities to refrain from renewing or issuing new health insurance contracts for their employees, adhering to the relevant legal provisions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The directive targets the following government bodies – the Audit Bureau, General

### Kuwait makes bold strides to become tourism powerhouse

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait is taking agile strides on the path toward substantial development of the tourism sector, as part of the broad developnew approach to boost the sector, along with the commercial sphere. The Permanent Committee for Celebrat-

ing Eids and National Occasions plan to

**Continued on Page 5** 

Secretariat of the National Assembly, the Central Bank of Kuwait, the Competition

Protection Agency, the Capital Markets Authority, the Communications and Infor-

mation Technology Regulatory Authority, the Public Institution for Social Security,

the Kuwait Ports Authority, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, the

Kuwait News Agency and the Insurance Regulatory Unit.

#### **Continued on Page 5**



ment strategy

Relevant authorities, already developing the tourist facilities, plan new projects of promising investments, in addition to updating the sector's infrastructure and working out policies to back up the businesses of travel, entertainment and culture.

Kuwait has recently established partnerships with local and foreign tourist and entertainment companies, some fruits of which materialized with the launch of the Winter Wonderland entertainment complex, opening Al-Sabahiya park and developing "shatea Alblajat" (the beach area) in Salmiya district.

Authorities are preparing to diversify activities during the coming national occasions to draw tourists from the Gulf region. For example, "Ya Hala" shopping festival that kicked off on January 21 (due until March 31) had been planned as part of the

revocation.

by such scams.

Lawyers warn against falling for fake asylum

money paid to these scammers.

Lawyer Salah Al-Alaj highlighted

the Ministry of Interior's announce-

ment of mechanisms to ensure a dig-

nified life for affected women, treating

them as Kuwaiti citizens despite the

fraudulent claims, stating, "Restoring citizenship is a right solely vested in

His Highness the Amir.

He cautioned against falling for

Al-Alaj also warned about adver-

Dr. Faisal Al-Otaibi advised women

tisements offering asylum in the UK,

urging women to avoid being deceived

to follow the official complaint pro-

cedures outlined by the Ministry of

Interior, emphasizing that such deci-

increase tourist expenditures during the festival by 15-25 percent compared to the corresponding period in 2024, when it reached KD 170.1 million.

The festival is also aimed to serve other objective at this level; trimming spending on travel and external tourism that had soared to KD 4.39 billion in 2023.

In tandem with the approach for tourism development, Kuwait has also drawn up schemes to improve the business environment and the service economy competitiveness in the Gulf.

Kuwait posted a 41.9 percent growth of the international tourism (foreign tourists) in 2019 with a value estimated at USD 1.7 billion while the number of the tourists from the GCC countries reached 20,000.

**Continued on Page 5** 



Vibrant purple and white petunias line the Gulf Road, transforming the landscape into a colorful canvas of nature's beauty.



**NBK concludes** successful participation in KFAS innovation challenge

Zain Group's **MSCI** rating for ESG upgraded to 'BBB'



**KFH** pledges KD 15 min for cardiac diseases and research center at **Mubarak Al-Kabeer** Hospital

#### Fake ads lure women with revoked citizenship KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: A recent for sums as high as 10,000 dinars. Lewave of fraud that has emerged is remgal experts have issued warnings about iniscent of the notorious 'real estate these fraudulent schemes, emphasizing that victims often struggle to recover

fraud' cases that caused an estimated 890 million dinars in losses, as reported by the Audit Bureau.

This time, the Al-Seyassah daily, says the victims are women whose citizenship were revoked under Article 8 of the former Nationality Law.

Fraudulent advertisements have surfaced on social media, offering false promises of restoring revoked citizenship or facilitating asylum applications to Western countries in exchange for money

Following the Cabinet's decision to revoke the citizenship of naturalized Kuwaiti wives, scammers began targeting these women through social media ads.

The promoters claim they can restore citizenship or file asylum applications

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: Chairman of the Cen-

tral Agency for Remedying Status of Illegal Residents Saleh Al-Fadhala re-

ceived on Monday Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya.

A Central Agency press release said that Al-Fadhala and Al-Yahya stressed

the importance of cooperating with

all ministries and state institutions.

KUWAIT CITY: Chairperson of Ku-

wait Red Crescent Society Ambassa-

dor Khaled Al-Maghames on Mon-

(KUNA)

day praised the humanitarian efforts made by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in helping

people in need. This came in a statement for KUNA after Al-Maghames meeting with ICRC-GCC head Mamadou Sow.

During the meeting, both sides discussed ties, cooperation and means to enhance those relations in the field of humanitarian aid.

Al-Maghames noted that a presentation to highlight Kuwaiti efforts in aiding the people in Gaza, Syria, Lebanon and Sudan, was shown. (KUNA) 

CAIRO: Chairman of Arab Human Rights Committee (AHRC), Ambassador Talal Al-Mutairi emphasized the importance of bolstering Arab human sions are handled carefully to avoid injustice.

He warned against trusting fictitious individuals or companies, stating, "The law does not protect the fool." Al-Otaibi called on authorities to monitor and block these misleading advertisements from circulating online.

Attorney Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan explained that while there is no judicial route to appeal citizenship revocations due to their classification as sovereign decisions, affected individuals can file grievances with the Minister of Interior or submit a memorandum to His Highness the Amir.

He emphasized the importance of providing strong evidence to demonstrate that a revocation decision was arbitrary or based on incorrect information.

#### **Continued on Page 5**

rights efforts and enhancing coordination among countries, national human rights institutions, and civil society organizations.

During the 27th session of the Arab Charter Committee on Human Rights, held at the headquarters of the Arab League to discuss the UAE's second periodic report, Al-Mutairi highlighted the need for collective efforts to address regional challenges and promote the principles of justice, equality, and human dignity.

Al-Mutairi stated that the meeting reflects the members' commitment to advancing and protecting human rights in the Arab world, and that it serves as a platform to monitor the commitments of state parties under the Arab Charter on Human Rights. (KUNA)

### Around 70 people killed

### Kuwait slams attack on Saudi hospital in Sudan's El-Fasher

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27, (Agencies): The Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the drone attack that targeted earlier on Sunday the Saudi Hospital in El-Fasher City in Sudan's Darfur region, which left scores of casualties and injuries among civilians.

### **IAEA** delegation on official Kuwait visit

#### By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: A delegation from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is visiting Kuwait today for an official visit that will last until Thursday. The purpose of the visit is to assess and review the integrated nuclear security support plan for Kuwait.

The Executive Commissioner for International Cooperation at the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and National Liaison Officer with the IAEA Dr. Nader Al-Awadhi explained that the visit includes a series of technical meetings and a specialized workshop organized in collaboration with the Radiation Protection Department at the Ministry of Health over a period of four days.

#### **Continued on Page 5**

A ministry statement said the attack is a clear violation of international humanitarian law, stressing the necessity to protect civilians, healthcare institutions and vital centers.

**Continued on Page 5** 

### Day by Day

THE speech delivered by Minister of Information Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi during the press conference with Kuwaiti journalists, marking Kuwait's celebration as the Arab Capital of Culture and Information, demonstrates a clear understanding of his responsibilities. Even more encouraging is the sense of stability in the ministerial position under his leadership.

Minister Al-Mutairi faces numerous tasks, some of which have been disclosed, while others remain undisclosed or have surfaced through leaks.

Despite this, it is evident that he is well-prepared and transparent in his approach, with no intentions of withholding information.

While we eagerly anticipate positive developments under his leadership, I would like to address the Minister directly: 'Stay ahead of the times, for if you don't, the times may surpass you.'

... Yet, tomorrow is another day.

Prayer Timings Fajr ...... 05:18 ..... 15:01 Asr.. Sunrise .. 06:40 Maghrib .. 17:22 Zohr ..... 12:01 Isha ...... 18:41



Expected weather for next 24 hrs: By Day: Mild with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-35 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

By Night: Cold to very cold and partly cloudy with light to mod-

Weather				
erate northw		nd, with		
speeds of 08-	32 km/n.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec		
Kuwait City	20	13		
Kuwait Airport	22	14		
Abdaly	23	13		

W	/ind, with	Bubyan	21
h.		Jahra	22
'n	Min Rec	Failaka Island	22
<b>(p</b> )	13	Salmiyah	20
22	13	Ahmadi	23
23	14	Jal Aliyah	22
.5	13	Nuwaisib	21



Crown Prince Diwan photo His Highness the Crown Prince receives the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Al-Sabah.

### **Crown Prince meets 1st Dty PM, officials**

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Monday at Bayan Palace First Deputy Prime Minister, Defense Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah and Director General of the General Department of Investigations Major General Dr. Faisal Al-Mukrad. Dr. Al-Mukrad introduced to

His Highness the Crown Prince his newly appointed deputies Saad Al-Mutairi, Reem Al-Mousa, Bassam Al-Mashwah.

His Highness the Crown Prince's Office Director Lieutenant General (Ret.) Jamal Al-Theyab and Undersecretary of His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan for Foreign Affairs Mazen Al-Issa attended the meeting.



PM Diwan photo

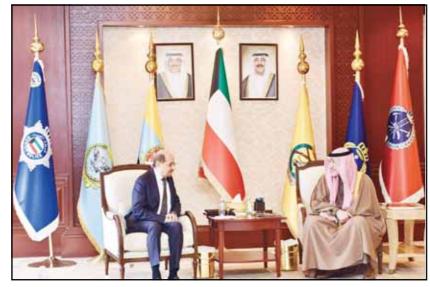
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah and the Director General of the General Department of Investigations, Major General Dr. Faisal Khalid Al-Mukrad, where they presented to His Highness the Public Prosecutor Saad Al-Mutairi, the Public Prosecutor Reem Al-Mousa and the Public Prosecutor Bassam Al-Mashwah.

### Kuwait PM receives First Deputy PM, PID director general

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Monday at Bayan Palace First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, along with Director

General of the Public Investigations Department (PID), Major General Dr. Faisal Al-Mukrad. They presented to His Highness the Prime Minister, the department's newly appointed deputy directors Saad Al-Mutairi, Reem Al-Mousa, and Bassam Al-Mashwah. The Prime Minister ex-

pressed his wishes for their success in their new roles, reaffirming the government's full commitment to the rule of law and ensuring justice. The meeting was also attended by Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel, Head of His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan



First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah upon receiving the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs of the sisterly Republic of Yemen, Dr. Shaya Zindani.

### Yemen FM praises Kuwait's unwavering support always

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27, (KUNA): Yem- Yemeni people appreciate Kuwait's humaneni Foreign Minister Dr. Shaya Zindani on itarian, charitable and developmental aid to Monday commended Kuwait's unwavering support to Yemen, citing relentless positions in this regard by the Kuwaiti political leadership, represented by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. He made the statement to KUNA and Kuwait TV while giving a lecture at Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Kuwait Diplomatic Institute on the latest Yemeni situation and the efforts of the international coalition and the State of Kuwait to re-stabilize Yemen and put a peaceful end to its crisis.

their country

# **MEW signs MoU to set up** new power, water station

### Bid to raise capacity of electricity production

**By Mohammad Ghanem** Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with an energy company for the establishment of a power and water generation station and its infrastructure accessories.

Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Mahmoud Bushehri explained in a press statement that the MoU is based on the directives of the political leadership and in implementation of the government's vision and plan to involve the private

sector in the execution of development projects, especially in the field of power generation according to the independent supplier system.

Bushehri stated that the company, along with its strategic partner -- as a developer, operator and investor in the project -- submitted an offer to establish a power generation station with a total capacity of 3,000 megawatts using gas turbines (power station) with all the infrastructure accessories, which include the main conversion station to deliver electricity to the transmission networks with their feeders, water pipelines, fuel lines and any other requirements that the ministry deems

necessary to ensure the success of the project.

Electricity Dr. Adel Al-Zamil said the company will conduct technical and financial studies for the project; taking into account the codes, specifications and international standards approved and followed by the ministry regarding the design, construction and operation of power generation stations, including the infrastructure requirements.

He added that "in the event the ministry accepts the technical and financial studies, all the concerned parties will coordinate to obtain approval from the authorities. Then, the ministry will conclude an agreement to purchase the energy produced from the power generation station after its construction according to its needs with the approval of the regulatory authorities in Kuwait and in accordance with the applicable legislation, laws

The Yemeni foreign minister, who is in Kuwait on an official visit, said that the

He pointed out that Kuwait always stands side by side with the Yemeni people in joy and sorrow, speaking highly of fraternal relations between both countries and their brotherly peoples.

Zindani added that his visit to Kuwait mainly aimed at promoting bilateral relations between Kuwait and Yemen and creating new horizons of cooperation in various domains

In another development, Kuwait First Deputy Premier, Defense Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah discussed issues of mutual interest with Yemeni Foreign Minister Dr. Shaya Zindani



Photo by Samer Shagair

Ambassador of Myanmar to Kuwait U Chan Aye and Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ambassador Sameh Jawhar cutting the cake.

### Myanmar marks Independence Day

#### **By Fares Al-Abdan** Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The Embassy of Myanmar on Monday celebrated the 77th Independence Day of the country in the presence of Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ambassador Sameh Jawhar, a group of ambassadors and heads of diplomatic missions.

Ambassador of Myanmar to Kuwait U Chan Aye said "Myanmar and Kuwait established diplomatic relations in 1998 and we opened our embassy here in Kuwait in 2009. The two countries share almost similar views on international issues of mutual interest."

He pointed out that the five principles of peaceful coexistence; such as respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference, equality, mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence, which were put forward by the joint initiative of China and India in 1954, remain one of the cornerstones of Myanmar's foreign policy.

He added "during my tenure as the country's representative in Kuwait, I will continue to communicate constructively with my counterparts from the Kuwaiti side to enhance our existing good relations in order to reach greater horizons for mutual benefit."

He expressed his sincere gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Government of Kuwait and the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their support and assistance for the diplomatic mission to carry out diplomatic duties smoothly in Kuwait.

On the occasion, he stated "our Independence Day falls on Jan 4 -- three weeks ago. We gained our independence from Britain in 1948. Since then, successive governments in Myanmar have pursued an 'independent and non-aligned foreign policy' and maintained friendly relations with all countries near and

He pointed out that the MoU entails cooperation between the two parties to raise the electricity production capacity of Kuwait as per the decisions of the Council of Ministers in this regard.

Meanwhile, Undersecretary of the Ministry of

and regulations.3

It is worth noting that this MoU is the first of its kind in terms of the establishment of a power generation station according to the independent supplier system.

**Mubarak Port work on** 

track – Chinese envoy

**By Fares Al-Abdan** 

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait

Zhang Jianwei praised the cooperation and interest of the Ku-

waiti government, leadership, and people in enhancing rela-

Embassy's celebration of the 77th anniversary of Independ-

In a statement to reporters on the sidelines of the Myanmar

### **Other Voices**

### When home remedies fail!

#### **By Ahmad alsarraf**

For over five years, I've been dealing with an intermittent cough that comes and goes. It fades for a while, only to return -- sometimes lightly, other times more severely.

I consulted numerous doctors

and specialists across four countries, tried medications 1 never imagined I'd use, underwent MRI and CT scans and even made changes to my diet and sleep patterns. Yet. nothing seemed to help.



Finally, I caught a severe bout of influenza, along with an intense cough I hadn't experienced in years. My immune system had always been strong, so this caught me off guard.

Despite my attempts to manage it with the usual home remedies -ginger, cinnamon, turmeric, honey, chicken soup, aspirin, warmth, rest and a touch of love -- the symptoms persisted for two weeks.

I knew it was time to consult someone more knowledgeable than I and that's when I was diagnosed with a condition called 'silent reflux,' also known as laryngopharyngeal reflux (LPR).

LPR occurs when stomach acid

flows back into the esophagus and irritates the throat, vocal cords, or nasal passages, without the usual heartburn symptoms.

Instead, the symptoms manifest as a chronic cough, hoarseness, a change in voice, phlegm and a sensation of something stuck in the throat. There's also a frequent urge to clear the throat or moisturize the mouth.

The cause of silent reflux lies in a mechanical malfunction of the lower or upper esophageal sphincters, which fail to close properly, allowing stomach acid to rise. This reflux can occur silently or alongside more obvious symptoms like heartburn.

Several factors contribute to silent reflux, the most significant being excess weight and a diet rich in spicy, fatty, fried, or acidic foods.

Other triggers include lying down immediately after eating or using a mattress or pillow that's too low -it's crucial for the pillow's height to be at least 15 cm.

Silent and overt reflux can be managed either through medication or by avoiding specific triggers.

These include obesity, foods that stimulate reflux (such as caffeine, alcohol, spicy foods, citrus, chocolate and fatty or fried foods) and large meals.

It's also helpful to eat smaller meals more frequently and avoid lying down for at least an hour after eating. 

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

### ence Day, Ambassador Jianwei said, "We thank the Kuwaiti government, leadership, and people for their cooperation with our country. We

hope to strengthen consultation and coordination with the Kuwaiti side and relevant authorities to push for implementing the first phase of projects, especially those related to the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, renewable energy, and others. The Chinese side is fully prepared to implement these projects.

Regarding the completion timeline for the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project, he stated, "All projects require different stages for implementation. As

Jianwei

tions with China.

for Mubarak Port, this involves consultation with the Kuwaiti side on the duration of the project, but work is proceeding smoothly.

Ambassador Jianwei highlighted the strong desire of both sides to strengthen relations, affirming that exchanges of visits between the two countries are ongoing.

When asked about potential visits by Chinese officials to Kuwait, he stated, "We will certainly enhance exchanges between us this year."

Ambassador Jianwei emphasized that work on ongoing projects is progressing smoothly.

Meanwhile, he said the embassy will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the historic visit of the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad to Beijing on February 12, as it was a visit that played a major role in strengthening ties, adding, "This occasion will serve as a reminder of the historic visits of Kuwaiti princes to China".

Ambassador Jianwei affirmed that official exchanges between the two countries are a tradition.

Regarding the delivery of final designs, he confirmed that work is proceeding smoothly.

### 'Prepare mosques for worshipers influx during Ramadan'

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Minister of Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi recently chaired a coordination meeting with the directors of mosque departments in the six governorates to discuss the preparations for the upcoming holy month of Ramadan, reports Al-Anba daily. They discussed ways to ensure

that all the necessary arrangements are in place to accommodate the increased number of worshipers throughout the holy month.

Al-Wasmi listened attentively to feedback from the directors and assured them that any obstacle will be addressed promptly. He stressed the importance of weekly meetings to

track the status of preparations and guarantee timely completion.

He also urged the directors to set up the Ramadan centers, which the Mosque Sector organized in previous years; and resolve issues delaying the preparations, if any. His goal is to provide a conducive religious environment for worshipers; affirming that the ministry reviewed the required reception mechanisms, equipment and arrangements for a smooth Ramadan experience.

Through these efforts, Al-Wasmi reiterated that he aims to ensure a spiritually enriching atmosphere for all worshipers throughout the holy month.

alsarraf

### LOCAL



### Ambassador Nabila ... and her invaluable Africa, Europe role

"AMBASSADOR Nabila Al-Mulla's diplomatic career reflects a diverse and distinguished record, shaped by her various responsibilities and experiences in different environments,' columnist, former permanent envoy of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations (UN), the former Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) secretary general Abdullah Bishara wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"Despite the challenges of such a varied path, she navigated it alone with remarkable dedication, fully aware of the demands of success, the importance of meticulous

follow-up and her mission to champion Kuwaiti women's achievements, no matter how diverse the files or the responsibilities. "I personally



witnessed the beginning of her Bishara journey for two

reasons. First, I had recommended her for a position in the Kuwaiti diplomatic corps during the late 1970s.

"At that time, I emphasized the need to strengthen the permanent Kuwaiti delegation to the United Nations in New York, particularly as Kuwait was about to join the Security Council for the 1978-1979 term. I believed she was among the diplomats best suited to serve in this critical capacity.

"Her appointment was duly approved by the late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, who praised the selection. Ambassador Nabila herself recounts this moment in her writings, noting her meeting with His Excellency the Minister and his approval of the transfer.

"Secondly, Ambassador Nabila did not write memoirs in the traditional sense. Instead, she shared insightful observations and reflections from her personal record, offering readers an intimate glimpse into her career and the lessons she gleaned from it.

"This was a purposeful effort to convey a broader message to her audience, both in Kuwait and abroad, illustrating the values and experiences that have shaped her career and personal growth.

"One notable part of her experience was her work at the United Nations, specifically in the Fourth Committee, responsible for decolonization and issues of independence. It was there, among the passionate voices of African diplomats condemning colonialism, that Âmbassador Nabila found her voice.

"The committee was a meeting place for many African ambassadors, as it focused on key issues like the liberation struggles in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Namibia and South Africa.

"Ambassador Nabila played a crucial

lomats has been a testament to her commitment to advancing the role of Kuwaiti women in the diplomatic world.

"I commend Ambassador Nabila for her exemplary role during my own time as Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. Her cultural awareness, diplomacy and effective use of her United Nations experience were invaluable.'

#### Also:

"Youth are the hope of the future, the lifeblood of nations, the backbone of their strength and their steadfast support. They are the pillars upon which nations are built and civilizations rise, columnist Wasmiya Al-Musallam,' wrote for Al-Anba daily.

"Hardworking and dedicated youth bear the responsibility of uplifting their homelands and communities. Through their commitment, they actively engage in various fields of voluntary and humanitarian work, often sacrificing their time and resources to achieve noble and meaningful goals.

"Youth, with their enthusiasm and dedication, stand as the driving force behind transformative change.

'Voluntary humanitarian work carries a unique light in the heart, a radiance on the face and blessings in livelihood. It fosters love in the hearts of others, leaving a lasting impact on the course of history and paving the way for a brighter future.

"Youth, as the heartbeat of their nations, draw from the wisdom and experience of elders, thinkers, writers and scholars. These individuals, refined by their knowledge and enriched by life's lessons, serve as beacons of guidance, offering their insights to propel society forward.

"The youth, fueled by ambition and determination, are poised to succeed thinkers and intellectuals in the future. They are the harbingers of progress, possessing the creativity and drive to shape their nations' destinies. Their efforts safeguard and elevate their countries, ensuring continuous growth and development.

"A nation thrives through its youth, whose aspirations and boundless energy contribute to societal advancement. With their vigor, resilience and determination, they lay the groundwork for building prosperous communities. They are pivotal to key areas such as the economy, culture, science and volunteer work, always with an eye on the future.

"To harness the potential of youth, it is essential to invest in their abilities and nurture their talents. Establishing youth-focused cities, creating opportunities for constructive activities and engaging them in roles that benefit the economy and society are vital steps.

"Moreover, fostering scientific centers, comprehensive sports clubs and purposeful cultural initiatives ensures their skills are honed to meet the chal-



First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah upon receiving the Secretary-General of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers Dr. Muhammad bin Ali Koman.

#### **Boost eyed in security ties**

Kuwait First Deputy Prime Minister, Defense Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah discussed ways to enhance mutual security cooperation with Secretary General of Arab Interior Ministers Council (AIMC) Dr. Muhammad Koman.

An Interior Ministry statement said Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef commended the Council's role in developing Arab security sector, and following up on Council decisions. During the meeting, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef received an invitation to attend the Council's next meeting. (KUNA)

### Court orders PADA to pay citizen her dues

#### **By Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The Court of Appeals has ruled that the Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA) must pay finan-cial dues and allowances to a Kuwaiti woman who has experienced moderate to severe physical disabilities since birth.

The lawsuit, filed by lawyer Ali Al-Ali, said the plaintiff is registered with the Authority as a person with a permanent moderate and a severe physical disability.

She had applied to the Authority to prove her disability, and a certificate was issued in accordance with Law No. 8 of 2010 concerning the rights of persons with disabilities.

After requesting that her dues be paid retroactively from birth, the Authority failed to respond within 60 days, prompting her to file a lawsuit.

The Court of First Instance had previously ruled in favor of the plaintiff, ordering the Authority to pay her monthly dues from the day the application was submitted.

#### 

**'No pics in uniform':** Major General Pilot Sabah Al-Jaber, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, has issued a cir-cular prohibiting military personnel from publishing their photos at events or appearing in media and on social media platforms wearing military uniform, unless authorized by the relevant authorities, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The circular also bans the publication or dissemination of any military-related correspondence, tasks, or operations conducted by military units. Furthermore, it prohibits the photography or circulation of images involving military facilities, vehicles, weapons and equipment.

## **Risk of losing bank balance in** response to 'fraud' messages

### Pay traffic violations via Mol and Sahel sites only

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The spreading messages regarding traffic fines are fraudulent, as manifested in the absurdity of the amounts stated therein, reports Al-Anba daily quoting a source from the security sector.

According to the source, these messages are fraudulent in the truest sense of the word. He pointed out that by just reading the details upon clicking the link accompanying the message confirms its falsity.

He wondered "since when the settlement order for any traffic violation has been set at KD4.500. What about the fine for beating the red light? It is also set at KD4.500 as per the link, while the actual amount of the settlement order for this violation is KD50. The link through which the payment is supposedly made is full of fallacies and errors, as well as the content of the message and the name that appears in the message."

The source affirmed that the payment of traffic violation fines is only through the official channels the Ministry of Interior and Sahel applications. He reiterated that the ministry does not send text messages using international phone numbers, underscoring the need to verify the identity of the sender. "Even if one is not familiar with the application, the violation usually appears when carrying out any transaction or while traveling," he added.

The source warned that responding to such fraudulent messages exposes the person to the risk of losing his bank balance; hence, the need for caution.

#### 

Bids for Al-Haraj on hold: Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP), in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, has extended the deadline for purchasing and submitting bids for consulting services related to the feasibility study and tender documents for the vehicle auction market (Al-Haraj) project to March 3, 2025, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This extension follows requests from companies and alliances for additional time to pre-pare their technical and financial bids. The new deadline replaces the previous one of February 2.2025.

The project is the first of its kind in Kuwait and is located in an area between Al-Abraq, Al-Naeem and Al-Liyah, covering 500,000 square meters.

It will include an integrated technical services city for vehicle auctions, providing services for the buying and selling of used vehicles.

The project will feature parking lots, auction tracks and a support services building. The extension aims to ensure all interested companies have ample time to submit their proposals.

### Kuwait to host disaster risk reduction forum on Feb 9

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) held a press conference Sunday morning to announce the launch of the 6th Arab Regional Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, which will be hosted by Kuwait from February 9-12 under the title "Building Resilient Arab

dier General Muhammad Bader Al-Gharib, and Chair of the Scientific Committee and Declaration Drafting Colonel Dr. Mishari Jaber Al-Fars.

Brigadier General Al-Qahtani highlighted the main axes and strategic objectives of the upcoming forum, which include strengthen. ing the integration of risk reduction, climate change, and sustainable development, and ensuring the exchange of successful practices and experiences among Arab countries.

adding that there are expectations for a large turnout from Arab countries.

Brigadier General Al-Qahtani explained that the conference is organized in collaboration with the United Nations Regional Office for Arab States for Disaster Risk Reduction and the League of Arab States. It aims to serve as a major platform that reflects the commitment of Arab countries to enhance cooperation in confronting the growing challenges associated with natural and humanmade risks.

ference will be held under the patronage of the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef.

He highlighted the Public Relations Department's role in ensuring the success of the event, indicating that invitations will be sent to all media outlets to cover the conference's discussions and activities.

role in forging strong and pragmatic relationships with African delegations, supporting Kuwait's position on these issues, particularly as the country held a seat on the Security Council.

"Her efforts led to lasting friendships with key African leaders, including Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Sam Nujoma of Namibia and prominent anti-apartheid representatives from South Africa.

"Beyond her work with Africa, Ambassador Nabila was also involved in crucial discussions surrounding Arab issues in the Security Council. She participated in high-level consultations with the American delegation, focusing on key issues like Palestine and Lebanon.

"These sessions, often held at the Kuwaiti ambassador's residence, played a vital role in preemptively resolving contentious matters before formal discussions in the Council. Ambassador Nabila's participation in these meetings, especially in advocating for Palestinian rights, left a significant mark on the diplomatic landscape.

"One of the defining chapters of her career came later when she served as Kuwait's ambassador to Southern Africa. Her tenure in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia was marked by her building solid diplomatic relations with regional leaders, most notably Nelson Mandela.

"Her work in Africa not only served Kuwait's interests but also helped to cement her reputation as a skilled and respected diplomat, especially in her role as Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

"Another key period in Ambassador Nabila's career was her time in Vienna, where she demonstrated exceptional leadership as Chair of the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors. Her work was instrumental during a period of intense focus on Iran's nuclear program and she managed to maintain a neutral, objective stance while navigating the complexities of Western opposition. "Ambassador Nabila's last diplo-

matic posting was in Brussels, the heart of Europe, where she continued her work with unparalleled dedication. As Kuwait's ambassador to Belgium, the capital of the European Union and NATO, she played a pivotal role in ensuring Kuwait's diplomatic presence remained strong in Europe. Her active participation in various diplomatic activities highlighted her unwavering commitment to promoting Kuwait's interests on the global stage.

"Upon returning to Kuwait, Ambassador Nabila continued to contribute to the nation's diplomatic legacy, particularly by sharing her wealth of experience with students at the American University in Kuwait. Her involvement in educating future generations of dip-

lenges of the future. "Youth possess a unique adaptability, a capacity for innovation and a readiness to take responsibility. They should be empowered to lead in political, economic, cultural and social arenas, guiding the nation's trajectory."

"The whole world waited for the inauguration day, when the old-new president enters the White House and assumes the leadership of the United States of America for the next four years," Saleh Bin Abdullah Al-Muslim wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"The world, with all its spectrums, societies and various trends, waited for the entry of this man who came from

a political background that extended for eight years -- four of which were outside the White House, where there were challenges, toughstrength, ness, disputes, conflicts, issues and

endings for some Saleh Al-Muslim conspirators,

both male and female, as if they had no issue other than Trump.

"For the first time, the language of parties in the United States and the conflict between Democrats and Republicans disappeared, as it rather became between Trump as a person and as an independent candidate, and as a fierce and strong competitor, and the Democratic Party.

"During the elections, the majority doubted his victory. They thought he would not pass the first stage and that the number of cases against him would destroy him, exhaust him and make him the talk of the world and his defeat certain. However, these policies are not suitable for the Trump era', and for the toughness of the man who has engaged in acting, wrestling and presenting pro-grams and has fought battles in real estate and contracting and has been defeated several times, but he neither surrendered nor collapsed. He rather emerged stronger and tougher.

"Trump is a self-made man, whether we agree with him or not. He succeeded in reaching the White House and in choosing his work team, which was completely devoid of anyone who was with him in his previous years. This is evidence of the difference in the upcoming thought, the upcoming direction and the upcoming work, and evidence that the new Trump is not Trump????

- Compiled by PFX Fernandes/ **Mahmoud Attiveh** 

Societies: From Understanding to Action"

According to a press release issued by KFF, the conference featured Chair of the forum's Supreme Committee Brigadier General Muhammad Ali Al-Qahtani, Chair of the Media, Protocol, and Information Technology Committee Briga-

He revealed that invitations have been sent to the relevant ministers,

An Asian caught selling vegetables at a makeshift market.

### Many held selling goods at makeshift Jleeb shops

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The Farwaniya Security Directorate, in collaboration with the Kuwait Municipality, conducted a series of security campaigns targeting illegal and makeshift markets in the suburb of Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, reports Al-Anba daily.

These operations led to the arrest of eight persons who are charged with violating the residence and labor laws.

This in addition to using government property to set up an illegal activity - sale of food products unfit for human consumption and stolen goods. The authorities also seized a quantity of state-subsidized food items intended for citizens.

An official source said these security operations will continue in coordination with municipal staff to maintain law and order and eliminate violations such as makeshift markets.

#### 

Docu forger nabbed: The General Department of Residency Investigations has taken into custody an unidentified expatriate for forging official documents in exchange for sums of money, reports Al-Anba daily.

A statement issued by the Ministry of Interior confirmed that the investigations revealed the suspect was forging reports and medical prescriptions in the name of a medical center using doctors' stamps without their knowledge or consent.

Following complaints a security team was formed to arrest the suspect and he was caught red-handed while handing over a forged document. The suspect was then referred to the relevant authorities for legal action.

The Ministry affirmed its firm stance against anyone attempting to disrupt the country's security or violate laws, emphasizing the importance of abiding by regulations for the benefit of the nation and society.

Meanwhile, Brigadier General Al-Gharib stressed that the con-

More than 800 officials, decisionmakers, experts, and representatives from international, national, and regional bodies are expected to participate in the forum.







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### LOCAL

## **Council upholds Al-Mishari's** objections on major projects

Labs, parking lots, land rules gain nod

#### **By Enaas Awad**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: During its first meeting after the holiday, the Municipal Council approved all objections raised by the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Abdul Latif Al-Mishari, against decisions made during prior meetings.

Notable among these objections were the National Council's request concerning the Jableh Cultural Project and the requirements and specifications for agricultural and livestock development areas linked to the building works regulation.

Additionally, Minister Al-Mishari objected to the failure to approve the letter from the Director General of the Kuwait Municipality regarding the Injaz Market

project. The Capital Governorate Committee of the Municipal Council, chaired by Dr. Hassan Kamal, approved two of nine items on its agenda.

The approved items include the technical opinion on establishing modern wa-



Al-Mishari

Dr. Hassan Kamal to design and construct longitudinal parking lots for the Dasma Cooperative Society branch in Block No. 5.

by

The committee forwarded two other items for further review by the executive body -- a letter from the Public Authority for Sports regarding the design contract for the Kuwait Club football stadium pro-

And also a letter from the Public Facilities Management Company requesting to manage, operate and

ject.

maintain surface parking lots near the former Kuwait Credit Bank, adjacent to the municipality's multistorey parking lots.

The Municipal Council endorsed a proposal by member Munira Al-Amir to issue a regulation to organize the procedures for privatization, following approval by the technical committee.

The proposal aims to consolidate all decisions and actions related to land allocation for projects into one regulation, enhancing transparency and ensuring effective oversight.

The approved regulation consists of four chapters. The first chapter addresses the pre-allocation stage, detailing the necessary documents and studies to be submitted, as well as the allocation request process leading to the Municipal Council's decision.

The second chapter outlines the laws and procedures following the allocation decision, covering the actions taken by state agencies.

Students explore cultural landmarks, regional projects

### **KFAED's 'Be Outstanding' program wraps up** educational tour across Togo, Benin, Bosnia

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Secondary school students participating in the 'Be Outstanding' program, organized by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, have concluded their educational and cultural visits to the Republics of Togo, Benin and Bosnia and Herzegovina, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The program ran from January 17 to 25 and featured a variety of activities showcasing development projects and cultural heritage.

Saleh Al-Taqi, the supervisor of the Togo and Benin delegation, noted that students were engaged in cultural and recreational tours, including visits to 'House of Brazil' or 'House of Memory in Ouida, Benin, a museum documenting the history of the slave trade.

This is in addition to exploring the 'Gate of No Return', a poignant memorial representing the final departure point for enslaved individuals

The delegation also toured Cotonou, including the Amazon of Dahomey Statue and the Venice of Africa village of Janvi.

The students also visited infrastructure projects supported by the Kuwait Fund, such as The Ouidah-Alada road improvement project and the Bahou-Toury link, enhancing regional connectivity. The Cotonou East Coast Protec-

tion Project is aimed at mitigating coastal erosion and its environmen-

tal and economic impacts. During their visit, the delega-



Students visit to the Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Benin, Marie Akou.



One of the recreational visits for the students.

Fund's contributions to development projects and for selecting Benin as a destination for the program.

### West Funaitees water station tender cleared

#### **By Mohammed Ghanem** Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: In confirmation of the article published on January 9, the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy has received approval from the State Audit Bureau to proceed with the tender for the construction, completion, and maintenance of a new water filling station in West Funaitees at a total cost of KD 1.495 million.

According to informed sources, the ministry, after receiving the bureau's approval, will contract with the winning contractor and begin work in accordance with the agreed contractual requirements.

The new station is planned to serve as an alternative to the existing freshwater filling station in Mishref. The project has been part of the ministry's long-term plans to provide fresh water to surrounding areas and solve the ongoing issues in Mishref.

The relocation of the station will help alleviate the challenges faced by this high-density residential area, including traffic congestion and accidents caused by tanker trucks passing through.

The move is expected to improve road safety and reduce the damage to infrastructure, as the current station's operations have contributed to road wear and the risk of water spillage from tankers, further affecting the quality of roads and asphalt.

### PAHW clarifies plot size misinformation

tion met with Mary Ako, Deputy

Secretary-General of the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs of Benin, who

expressed gratitude for the Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) has rubbished rumors suggesting that its Board of Directors has approved the distribution of residential plots with an area of 250 square meters instead of the standard 400 square meters, reports Al-Seyassah daily. In a statement, the PAHW urged the public to exercise

caution in sharing information and emphasized the importance of relying on official sources for accurate updates. This clarification comes in response to misinformation circulating across various platforms. The institution reaffirmed its commitment to transparency and keeping citizens



#### **Employees'** financial and job rights at risk

informed through its official channels

Education Ministry faces backlash over delayed promotion decisions

#### By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Educational sources expressed their dissatisfaction with the delay in issuing the job promotion bulletin for the 2024/2025 academic year, which is hindering the formation of work teams in educational zones.

The sources explained that this delay could have been avoided by forming tion of a specialized technical committee. This procedure was supposed to begin on January 1 and include a large number of employees from both the Ministry of Education's headquarters and educational zones, as well as teachers and administrators.

Delaying the issuance of promotion decisions could prevent those entitled from receiving their financial and job rights on time, especially with the fiscal

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intensive work committees and issuing decisions progressively based on specific priorities for ensuring that all procedures are completed before the end of March.

The implementation of promotion decisions through integrated systems was scheduled to begin on January 1 and continue until March 31, with the goal of completing the procedures before the start of the new fiscal year, thus preventing any delays that could affect the job and financial rights of those entitled

Preparing the promotion files for eligible employees, in cooperation with educational zones, requires the formayear nearing its end.

The sources stressed the need to expedite the formation of work teams in educational zones to complete the promotion procedures within the specified time frames.

They highlighted the importance of immediate coordination between the Ministry of Education and the educational zones to address the delay, minimize its negative impact on eligible employ-ees, and expedite the issuance of the job promotion bulletin, as this will ensure that the rights of all workers in the educational and administrative sectors are protected.

### **PIFSS secures CAPT approval for ILO contract**

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) has received approval from the Central Agency for Public Tenders to directly contract the International Labor Organization (ILO) for the provision of services related to the sixteenth actuarial examination of the institution's financial position and the fourth examination of the Unemployment Insurance Fund, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The total value of the contract is \$480,640 (approximately 148 thousand dinars), as per clauses (6 and 3) of Article (18) of the Public Tenders Law No. (49) of 2016.

#### **News in Brief**

#### **Transformer maintenance starts:**

The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy began maintenance work on several secondary transformer stations in all six governorates today, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The ministry announced that the maintenance work will continue until February 1, with power outages expected in certain areas according to the specified schedule.

Maintenance will begin at 8:00 am and will last for four hours, with the duration subject to change based on the nature of the work at each station.

In a related context, informed sources revealed that maintenance work on power and water distillation stations is progressing as planned, with over 80 percent of the work expected to be completed by the end of March. 

KALD launches new program: In a step that reflects the commitment of the civil and educational society to provide a comprehensive educational and developmental environment, the Kuwait Association for Learning Differences (KALD) announced the launching of the second version of the integrated educational program for students with learning differences, learning difficulties or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; as the program aims to improve the academic, psychological and social skills of these students in order to guarantee equal opportunities for them in the fields of education and life in general, reports Al-Anba daily.

The new version of the program includes three main sections, each of which was designed by experts in the field of education and Psychology in a way that suits the different needs of students.

The academic section consists of individual lessons for students with learning difficulties in reading, writing and Mathematics; while the psychosocial section is an organized and studied group of various activi-ties like sports and arts in order to support the student's psychological needs such as understanding feelings, reactions, etc., and social needs such as the individual's relationship with others and society, social values and cultural practices.

#### 

MoE begins promotion process: The educational districts have started the job promotion procedures for employees and teachers in public, special education and religious education schools, in addition to the supervisors in private Arab schools, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources said the Education Ministry has formed teams tasked to sort the names of eligible employees in the educational districts, indicating the promotion process started at the beginning of January

Sources added these teams are reviewing the employees' files to ensure the promotion conditions are met, according to the applicable systems and regulations.

### LOCAL

# Kuwaiti ambassador hailsSolar-powered facility promises sustainable future for local educationIndia's 'cultural diversity'KRCS opens basic school in eastern Yemen

NEW DELHI, Jan 27, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ambassador to India Meshal Alshemali praised on Sunday the cultural, religious and ethnic diversity and the spirit of cooperation in India.

His remarks came after participating in the Republic Day and Constitution Day celebrations.

Ambassador Alshemali told KUNA that he attended the reception and military parade on the occasion of Indian Republic Day at the invitation of President Droupadi Murmu.

The ambassador noted that the event showcased India's military advancement, cultural diversity, and technological innovation with a massive parade for all military sectors. The occasion also provided an opportunity to learn about India's rich cultural heritage, in addition to the stages of technological and artistic development in a number of sectors.

Alshemali wished the Indian leadership and people all success, and peaceful coexistence among its people. He also expressed the Kuwaiti leadership's desire to further consolidate Kuwait-India relations, which serve the interests of both countries and friendly peoples.



KUNA photo Meshal Alshemali – Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Republic of India

He pointed out that the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Kuwait last December laid a new foundation in strengthening political, trade, economic, defense and cultural relations between the two friendly countries and taking relations to a more comprehensive and strategic ones. KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27, (KUNA): The Kuwait Red Crescent Society has opened the 'Fatima Mishaan Al-Khudair Basic Education School' in the Sayhut District of Al-Mahrah Governorate, eastern Yemen, as part of its long-standing 'Kuwait by Your Side' campaign.

The school, spanning 1,080 square meters, is equipped with nine classrooms, modern facilities and a solar energy system, providing a sustainable educational environment for hundreds of female students to complete their primary education.

Awad Quwaizan, Undersecretary of Al-Mahrah Governorate, praised Kuwait's developmental and humanitarian contributions to Yemen, highlighting sustainable projects such as those in the education sector.

Samir Harash, Director General of the Education Office in the governorate, noted that the new school will help alleviate overcrowding in existing schools and offer a better learning environment for female students.

Salem Bawazir, Director of the Office of the Response for Humanitarian Works Foundation in Hadhramaut, explained that the school includes classrooms, administrative offices, a solar system and sanitation facilities.

It represents a significant addition to the education sector in Al-Mahrah with the support of the KRCS.

The school is the first of its kind in the governorate and further development projects are underway, including a new development complex in the Sayhut Directorate. افتتاح وتدشين مدرسة فاطمة مشعان الخض والمتاح وتدشين مدرسة فاطمة مشعان الخض

KUNA photo Yemeni officials participate in the opening of Fatima Al-Khudair School in Al-Mahrah Governorate with Kuwaiti funding.

Pavilion celebrates solidarity with Palestine

Kuwait's cultural heritage takes center stage at Cairo International Book Fair

CAIRO, Jan 27, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Information pavilion at Cairo International Book Fair highlights the country's contributions in promoting Arab culture.

The Ministry's participation in this edition of the Fair holds a special importance as it coincides with Kuwait named Capital of Arab Culture and Media for 2025, Exhibitions and Media Publications Supervisor at the Ministry of Information Abdullah Al-Rafdi told KUNA.

He explained that among the most notable publications are Cultural Destinations in the State of Kuwait, The State of Kuwait and Culture, Tourist Attractions and Museums in the State of Kuwait, and others.

Regarding Kuwait's support for the Palestinian cause, Al-Rafdi affirmed that it remains a matter of principle for the country, highlighting the country's steadfast support for the Palestinian people. He also noted the Ministry's efforts to underscore this commitment through a collection of publications displayed in the pavilion.

For her part, Munira Al-Mayas from the Foreign Media Sector at the Ministry, said the pavilion features a wide range of publications highlighting Kuwaiti heritage, culture, and folklore, along with children books.

The 56th Cairo International Book Fair will run until February 5th.



Kuwaiti Ministry of Information Pavilion at Cairo International Book Fair



Abdullah Al-Rafdi, Exhibitions Supervisor at the Exhibitions and Media Publications Department at the Kuwaiti Ministry of Information.

KUNA photos Munira Al-Mayas from the Foreign Media Sector at the Ministry of Information.

## Kuwait gears up for grand Nat'l Holiday celebrations

Al-Mutairi hails collaborative efforts

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27, (KUNA): Minister of Information and Culture, Minister of State for Youth Affairs, and Chairman of the Permanent Committee for Celebrating National Holidays and Occasions, Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, reviewed the committee's latest preparations on Monday for celebrating holidays and occasions for the year 2025.

In a press statement, the minister praised the efforts of the head of the Volunteer Work Center, Sheikha Amthal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and members of the committee representing government agencies and the private sector.

The statement said that during the meeting, the visual presentation submitted by Ooredoo, owner of Fast Telecommunications Company and operator of the (51) digital platform, was reviewed. The presentation included a global celebration project that will feature a group of international stars, coinciding with the national holiday celebrations next February and continuing the platform's efforts to engage



Minister of Information at the third meeting of the Permanent Committee for the Celebration of National Holidays and Occasions.

with the public.

He explained that the organizing team of the Kuwait Shopping Festival 2025 (Ya Hala) presented a visual presentation of the achievements made since the launch of the festival, including statistics and events. The team also shared the vision for all the upcoming events, starting on February 2nd, following the flag-raising ceremony marking the start of the celebrations and national holidays. The draws and presentation of the festival's prizes will begin on February 1st, followed by accompanying events and shows.

He added that the total number of participating companies and shops has exceeded 9,000, and more than 300 draw boxes have been deployed throughout the country to accommodate the increasing number of festival beneficiaries. The festival's tourism and entertainment activities and events cater to all age groups.

### **Continued from Page 1**

### **Time-saving**

invested funds in other areas of community welfare.

In Kuwait, however, there are still sectors that consume a lot of public funds but deliver low-quality outcomes, to the point of becoming a burden on the state treasury.

A prime example of this is the medical sector. Despite the presence of modern hospital buildings, these facilities often lack the necessary expertise, making them more akin to clinics than advanced treatment centers. As a result, over the years, a large percentage of Kuwaitis have sought treatment abroad.

This issue was exploited by the rise of the so-called "overseas treatment tourism," which has only added to the strain on public finances. The funds spent on overseas treatments could have been saved or better utilized within the country.

Similarly, entertainment facilities have become another example of projects that weigh heavily on the state's budget. After the government, under pressure from certain MPs, shut down several of these entertainment venues, the cost of tourism abroad surged to unprecedented levels.

Despite recent development efforts, progress is still slow and cannot be relied upon to revive the country. Unless the mindset shifts to "Time is more precious than money", true progress cannot be achieved. If Kuwait aims to keep pace with its neighboring countries in their renaissance, it must be willing to spend money to save time, which means increased spending to minimize time. At the same time, the state must rely more on the private sector, ensuring stricter oversight and accountability.

For years, we have heard about major projects such as Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, the new Kuwait International Airport, the metro, and the national train system. Yet, with each new government, these projects remain uncompleted. Ministers have come and gone, but little has changed.

Meanwhile, several countries in the region are spearheading huge construction initiatives with the help of the private sector. These countries manage and supervise these projects through their relevant ministries, without burdening the state treasury.

If Kuwait wants to experience real progress, it must follow this direction. Simply clinging to nostalgia and echoing past glories will only deepen backwardness, which is something no one wants.

### Kuwait slashes

The measure suspends health insurance contracts that provide employees with access to private hospitals and clinics at significant discounts, sometimes reaching 90 percent.

Previously, these contracts were funded by the budgets of respective agencies, despite the availability of government-provided health insurance through the Ministry of Health.

According to sources, the Ministry of Finance initiated this move after examining budgetary allocations and noting the growing costs of employee health insurance, which sometimes extended to cover family members.

This escalation in expenses was deemed unsustainable, prompting the recommendation to discontinue such contracts.

It was clarified that the suspension does not impact expatriates employed in these entities, who must continue to secure health insurance to maintain residency status.

This decision reflects the government's broader efforts to rationalize spending and optimize the use of existing resources.

### Fake ads

Legal experts have urged government agencies to take action against these fraudulent advertisements, blocking their spread on social media platforms.

They also emphasized the need to raise public awareness about the official avenues for addressing grievances and protecting individuals from exploitation.

This troubling trend highlights the urgency of cracking down on fraudsters preying on vulnerable individuals, particularly women seeking to reclaim their rights. It underscores the need for vigilance, accountability and robust legal safeguards to prevent such exploitation.

### IAEA delegation

The primary aim of the workshop is to review the achievements of the nuclear security support plan, update it, and assess additional nuclear security needs. This will help prioritize actions to maintain and enhance an effective, sustainable nuclear security system.

The workshop will focus on the six functional areas of the international nuclear security support plan - national policy and strategy, legislative and regulatory frameworks, deterrence, detection, response, and continuous improvement.

Dr. Al-Awadhi highlighted that Kuwait is a signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and all agreements related to nuclear security, and is fully committed to implementing the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for radioactive and nuclear materials. As part of this commitment, Kuwait has been actively working to strengthen its nuclear security by taking the necessary measures to prevent illegal access to these materials.

### **Kuwait slams**

Conveying the State of Kuwait's deepest condolences for the victims and wishes of a speedy recovery for the injured, the ministry called for implementing UN Security Council resolution 2736 of June 2024, which demands that parties involved in the fighting adhere to international humanitarian law, by protecting civilians and healthcare institutions from conflict and to provide humanitarian access to any civilians impacted by the civil war.

Around 70 people were killed in an attack on the only functional hospital in the besieged city of El-Fasher in Sudan, the chief of the World Health Organization said Sunday, part of a series of attacks coming as the African nation's civil war escalated in recent days.

The attack on the Saudi Teaching Maternal Hospital, which local officials blamed on the rebel Rapid Support Forces, came as the group was experiencing apparent battlefield losses to the Sudanese military and allied forces under the command of army chief Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan. That includes Burhan appearing near a burning oil refinery north of Khartoum on Saturday that his forces said they seized from the RSF.

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Ministry denounced the attack as "a violation of international law."

International mediation attempts and pressure tactics, including a U.S. assessment that the RSF and its proxies are committing genocide, and sanctions targeting Burhan, haven't halted the fighting.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus posted the death toll in the hospital attack in El Fasher on the social platform X.

Officials and others in the capital of North Darfur province had cited a similar figure Saturday, but Tedros is the first international source to provide a casualty number. Reporting on Sudan is incredibly difficult given communication challenges, the indiscriminate violence faced by civilians and exaggerations by both the RSF and the Sudanese military.

### Kuwait makes

The third "mekashat" (leisure sites), inaugurated on November 16, drew some 150,000 visitors, including GCC countries' citizens.

In line with guidelines by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Government has placed the file of developing the heritage sites among the urgent priorities.

His Highness the Amir had also ordered establishing popular markets in Jahra and Ahmadi reminiscent to Al-Mubarakiya bazaar.

Kuwait, among the concrete steps on this path, signed the executive agreement for tourist cooperation with Bahrain for the years 2024, 2025 and 2026 for exchanging expertise and information, organizing joint activities and boosting promotion.

An agreement signed with Tunisia late last year included launch of the executive program for tourism cooperation between 2025 and 2027. Those recently inked with Tajikistan featured an identical program for the 2024-2026 period.

At the Gulf level, it is seeking to draw more tourists to the region through the Gulf Tourism Strategy (2023-30).

Signaling increasing international interest in Kuwait's unique tourist potentials, the Middle East committee of the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) elected it as the deputy chair and member of the designation documents committee for the first time since its establishment.

### MoE extends 'service' for Tunisian English teachers

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The Ministry of Education has announced the extension of the service of several Tunisian English subject teachers for the academic year 2025/2026, reports Al-Anba daily. Acting Director of the Human Re-

Acting Director of the Human Resources Department Walid Al-Shammari confirmed in an official statement – a copy of which was obtained by the daily – that the undersecretary approved the abovementioned decision. service for another academic year; that is, until the end of the 2025/2026 academic year," he asserted. Al-Shammari said this extension en-

"These teachers will continue their

Al-Shahimar sale this extension entails that the teachers' service will continue until the end of the specified period, clarifying that the decision does not preclude the termination of service for legally outlined reasons. He added the concerned authorities have been instructed to implement the decision accordingly.

### Al-Bakhait: Warba Bank announces winners of Al Sunbula weekly draw

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Warba Bank, Kuwait's premier provider of corporate and investment banking services, today announced the winners of the latest Al Sunbula weekly draw as part of its continued commitment to reward loyal customers. The draw was held in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in addition to Warba Bank officials.

This week, ten Al Sunbula account holders each received a cash prize of KD 1,000. The winners are as follows: Mr. Faisal Mohammad Abdullah Al-Ruwaili, Ms. Maryam Youssef Ahmad Karam, Mr. Nawaf Salem Salman Al-Otaibi, Mr. Ahmad Salah Taha Ramadan, Mr. Imad Youssef Abdullah Al-Munaie, Mr. Abdulmohsen Badi Al-Otaibi, Mr. Majed Saud Nasser Al-Hussaini, Mr. Jassim Mohammad bin Jassim Al-Falaikawi, Ms. Yasmine Anwar Al-Jabi, and Ms. Alaa Abdul Amir Abbas Bahrouh.

Designed to support customers' savings goals, Al Sunbula account offers a unique savings opportunity, combining attractive returns on their savings with the chance to win cash prizes through regular draws year-round.

Explained the eligibility criteria, Mr. Abdulaziz Saud Al-Bakhait, Area Manager of the Retail Banking Group at Warba Bank, said, "Customers are required to deposit a minimum of KD 100 to qualify for both the weekly and grand Al Sunbula draws. For every KD 10 in their account, customers receive one entry based on the lowest monthly balance, increasing their chances of winning as their balance grows. The balance must remain in the account for a full month to be eligible to the weekly draw, and two months to be eligible to the grand draws. What differentiates



Abdulaziz Al-Bakhait

Al Sunbula is that there are no restrictions on deposits or withdrawals, and the more a customer deposits, the higher their chances of winning."

In addition to the benefits of Al Sunbula account, Warba Bank recently introduced its latest banking solution, Customer Onboarding, as part of its ambitious five-year strategy. This innovative digital service allows non-Warba customers to easily open an Al Sunbula account online via the Bank's website, without the need to visit a branch. Through this new automated system, unique within Kuwait's banking sector, new customers can complete their account setup in five minutes, at any time and from any location.

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

### INTERNATIONAL



Activists with Revcom Corps Chicago hold signs outside of Hamline Elementary School after federal agents were turned away on Jan. 24, 2025, in Chicago. (AP)

### Top Trump administration officials in Chicago for launch of immigration crackdown

CHICAGO, Jan 27, (AP): Top Trump administration officials, including "border czar" Tom Homan and the acting deputy attorney general, visited Chicago on Sunday to witness the start of ramped-up immigration enforcement in the nation's third-largest city as federal agencies touted arrests around the country.

Few details of the operation were immediately made public, including the number of arrests. But the sheer number of federal agencies involved showed President Donald Trump's willingness to use federal law enforcement beyond the Department of Homeland Security to carry out his long-promised mass deportations.

Acting Deputy Attorney General Emil Bove said he observed immigration agents from the DHS along with agents from the FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. He didn't offer details on the operation, which came days after DHS expanded immigration authority to agencies in the Department of Justice, including the DEA and ATF. "We will support everyone at the

federal, state, and local levels who joins this critical mission to take back our communities," Bove said in a statement. "We will use all available tools to address obstruction and other unlawful impediments to our efforts to protect the homeland. Most importantly, we will not rest until the work is done.

"Dr. Phil" McGraw, a daytime television psychologist, interviewed Homan and livestreamed the Chicago operation on his multiplatform TV network MERIT TV, and several other reporters were also invited to Sunday's operation. The Associated Press plans to observe operations this week.

The DEA's Chicago office posted pictures on X showing Bove and Homan with agents from ATF and Customs and Border Protection.

Since Trump took office, similar immigration enforcement operations have been publicized around the country, which U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement says are ongoing. Social media posts from other DEA and Homeland Security offices noted additional weekend operations in at least Arizona, California, Colorado,

Georgia, Nebraska and Texas. The DEA posted pictures Sunday on social media of an operation at a location in the Denver area, where roughly 50 people were taken into custody.

6

Jonathan Pullen, special agent in charge for the DEA Rocky Mountain field division, said the Colorado operation targeted drug trafficking by Tren de Aragua, a Venezuelan gang. He said about 100 agents and officers, including from the DEA, ICE, ATF and Homeland Security Investigations, carried out a federal search warrant for drug trafficking around 5 a.m. Sunday at a location where Tren de Aragua members were having a party.

ICE detained nearly 50 people and transported them on a bus to one of its processing centers in nearby Aurora, Pullen said. As of Sunday afternoon, about 40 people remained in ICE custody, he said.

"They ran all of the information while they were on scene and they determined, ICE determined, that they were here illegally or they had some other violation in the immigration system, and they detained and arrested them," Pullen said.

### Outcome can be pivotal in deciding cases

### Pennsylvania and Wisconsin back in spotlight with high-stakes court elections

HARRISBURG, Pa., Jan 27, (AP): Republicans put Pennsylvania and Wisconsin back in the win column in the 2024 presidential race, and they're hoping that momentum carries over to contests this year that will determine whether their state Supreme Courts retain left-leaning majorities or flip to conservative control.

The outcome can be pivotal in deciding cases related to abortion, election disputes, voting laws and redistricting for Congress and their state legislatures.

Money is pouring in and expected to eclipse the \$70 million-plus combined spent on the states' Supreme Court races two years ago.

The Wisconsin race has caught the attention of Elon Musk, the SpaceX and Tesla CEO who is a close ally of President Donald Trump, and has surfaced tensions related to Trump's pardons of his supporters who stormed the US Capitol on Jan 6, 2021.

"For both sides, these races seem much, much higher profile than they used to be," said J.J. Abbott, who runs Commonwealth Communications, a progressive advocacy group in Pennsylvania.

State Supreme Court races have become some of the most expensive and bitterly fought over the past few years, given how central those courts are in deciding divisive issues.

Republicans are optimistic after Trump won both states in November. The courts there have played major roles since both states have divided governments, with Democratic governors and legislatures that are either fully or partially under Republican control.

În the past couple years alone, liberal majorities on both states' high courts handed victories to Democrats in cases involving the boundaries of Wisconsin's legislative districts and Pennsylvania's congressional districts.

Victories for Democrats or their allies in voting rights cases also included overturning Wisconsin's ban on absentee ballot drop boxes and ensuring Pennsylvanians can vote by provisional ballot if their mail ballot is rejected.

Musk cited the Wisconsin drop box ruling, which came last July, in a message posted this past week on his social platform X: "Very important to vote Republican for the Wisconsin Supreme Court to prevent voting fraud!"

A recount, nonpartisan audit and report by a conservative law firm all affirmed that there was no widespread fraud in Wisconsin in 2020, when absentee ballot boxes were in use, and that Democrat Joe Biden won the state's presidential contest.

The Democratic-supported candidate in Wisconsin's officially nonpar-



The Wisconsin Supreme Court listens to arguments from Wisconsin Assistant Attorney General Anthony D. Russomanno, representing Gov Tony Evers, during a redistricting hearing at the state Capitol on Nov 21, 2023, in Madison, Wis. (AP)

tisan race quickly seized on Musk's involvement to make a fundraising pitch. Liberals also were highlighting comments from the Republicanbacked candidate earlier this month saying those who stormed the U.S. Capitol never got "a fair shot" in court. Harry Dunn, a former U.S. Capitol Police officer who was on duty during the attack, plans news conferences in Wisconsin on Tuesday to criticize the remarks critical of the prosecutions.

In the upcoming races, Democrats say they will portray the state high courts as a bulwark against the conservative majority on the U.S. Supreme Court, the Trump administration and a GOP-controlled Congress.

The issue of abortion rights is expected to play a major role this year, as it did in high court races last year and in 2023's state Supreme Court campaigns in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. Those races took place the year after the U.S. Supreme Court over-turned Roe v. Wade and ended nearly a half-century of a constitutional right to abortion.

Wisconsin's election is April 1 to replace a retiring liberal justice and will decide whether liberals or conservatives will control a 4-3 majority.

Nick Ramos, executive director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, which tracks spending in elections, said the race could go either way in a state where voters handed narrow victories in November to Trump, a Republican, and U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, a Democrat.

"After the presidential election season, people around the country are going to be looking at Wisconsin as a bellwether, as a litmus test of what the mood of the country is," Ramos said.

The Wisconsin Democratic Party has endorsed Dane County Circuit Judge Susan Crawford. Waukesha County Circuit Judge Brad Schimel, a former Republican attorney general, is endorsed by various conservative officeholders and groups. Significant cases looming in Wis-

consin's courts include challenges to the state's 1849 abortion ban and a 2011 law that all but ended collective bargaining for teachers and other public sector workers.

In Pennsylvania, November's general election will feature three Democrats running to retain their seats, putting Democrats' 5-2 majority on the line. All three justices - Christine Donohue, Kevin Dougherty and David Wecht - face a "yes" or "no" vote to win another 10-year term.

Pending in Pennsylvania courts are cases that challenge laws limiting the use of Medicaid to cover the cost of abortions and requiring certain mail-in ballots to be disqualified.

In 2023, business associations, political party campaign arms, Planned Parenthood, partisan advocacy groups, labor unions, lawyers' groups, environmental organizations and wealthy GOP donors, including Richard Uihlein and Jeffrey Yass, pushed spending above \$70 million in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

The Wisconsin race alone topped \$51 million, breaking national records for spending on a judicial race.

Abortion rights were the dominant theme in that contest, won by a Democratic-backed judge whose victory gave liberals majority control of the court for the first time in 15 years.

Grinding campaign to weaken Kyiv's grip

### Russia captures strategic town in eastern Ukraine



on Sunday claimed its troops had captured a strategically important town in eastern Ukraine as part of a grinding campaign to weaken Kyiv's grip on the country's industrial heartland, while uncertainty over the continued flow of US funding has reportedly halted the work of some Ukrainian NGOs. including those helping war veterans.

Russia's Defense Ministry an-nounced the fall of Velyka Novosilka, which had around 5,000 residents before the war, following a monthslong battle. Its statement could not be independently verified, and Ukraine claimed its troops had only strategically withdrawn from certain areas.

But if confirmed, it would make Velyka Novosilka the first significant town to capitulate in 2025 under Moscow's onslaught in the eastern Donetsk region against Ukraine's weary and shorthanded army. The war is set to reach its three-year milestone in February.

Ukrainian forces withdrew from certain parts of Velyka Novosilka to avoid encirclement, the 110th Separate Mechanized Brigade said in a statement on its official Telegram channel Sunday. The brigade is active in that patch of the frontline.

Analysts have long predicted that it's only a matter of time until Russian forces capture the settlement, which lies only 15 kilometers (9 miles) from the neighboring Dnipropetrovsk region.

The brigade said though they have approximate parity with Russian forces in terms of artillery and drones, the Russians have a huge advantage in manpower.

"Our units, using the weather conditions, skillfully withdrew from areas where there was a threat of encircle-

Thousands in Ireland

still without power

LONDON, Jan 27, (AP): Ireland

called in help from England and

France as repair crews worked to

restore power to hundreds of thou-

sands of people after the most dis-

ruptive storm for years. Even as the cleanup continued, more wet and windy weather hit the UK, Ireland

More than 1 million people in Ire-

land, Northern Ireland and Scotland

were left without electricity after

Storm Éowyn (pronounced AY-oh-

In Ireland, which suffered the

heaviest damage, the wind snapped

telephone poles, ripped apart a Dublin

ice rink and even toppled a giant wind

turbine. A wind gust of 114 mph (183

kph) was recorded on the west coast.

breaking a record set in 1945.

win) roared through on Friday.

and France on Sunday.



In this photo taken from video distributed by Russian Defense Ministry Press Service on Jan 26, Russian servicemen prepare a 'Orlan-10' drone in an undisclosed location in Ukraine. (AP)

ment. This does not mean that we have completely left the city, the fighting in Velyka Novosilka continues . All actions are aimed at minimizing our own losses and maximum damage to the enemy," the statement said.

The brigade said the withdrawal will make it topographically difficult for Russians to advance by making the river an obstacle for further advance.

"The enemy (...) will have no peace, any movement is cut off by shells and drones," the statement said.

Russia captured the Donetsk cities of Avdiivka and Vuhledar last year after long and grueling battles. Those cities were largely leveled by Russian artillery, glide bombs and drones before they fell.

Russian forces have also been trying for months to capture the key Donetsk

strongholds of Pokrovsk and Chasiv Yar

Elsewhere, Ukrainian NGOs catering to the needs of war veterans and their families have claimed a suspension of U.S. funding is forcing them to halt their work, days after newly sworn in U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced he would pause foreign aid grants for 90 days.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy later claimed that military aid to Ukraine would continue, but did not clarify whether humanitarian aid had been paused. Kyiv relies on the U.S. for 40% of its military needs.

According to news reports, Ukrainian NGOs receiving funding from Washington this weekend began receiving "stop work" orders, requiring them to pause all projects and related travel.

The head of the Central Commission of the Republic of Belarus Igor Karpenko, (center), and his colleagues attend a news conference on presidential election results in Minsk, Belarus on Jan 27. (AP)

### Election rejected by opposition, EU

### **Belarus strongman Lukashenko extends rule**

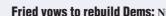
MINSK, Jan 27, (AP): Belarus' authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko extended his more than three decades in power in Sunday's orchestrated election that the opposition and the European Union rejected as a sham.

The Central Election Commission declared Lukashenko the winner in the early hours of Monday and reaffirmed it later in the morning, saying the strongman leader garnered nearly 87% percent of the vote after a campaign in which four token challengers all have praised his rule.

Lukashenko's opponents, many of whom are imprisoned or exiled abroad by his unrelenting crackdown on dissent and free speech, called the election a sham - much like the last one in 2020 that triggered months of protests that were unprecedented in the history of the country of 9 million people.

Over the following four years, more than 65,000 people were arrested and thousands beaten, with the crackdown bringing condemnation and sanctions

#### America



chair of the Florida Democratic Party, which is seeking to regain relevance in a state that has tilted decidedly toward the Republicans.

in 2023, got more than three-quarters of the vote from the party executive committee over state Sen. Audrey Gibson of Jacksonville. Fried will serve

from the West.

The European Union has rejected the Sunday's election as illegitimate and threatened new sanctions.

Lukashenko has been in power since 1994 and has ruled the country with an iron fist. He relies on subsidies and political support from Russia. Lukashenko allowed Moscow to use the country's territory to invade Ukraine in 2022 and later hosted some of Russia's tactical nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, Belarus has "unilaterally" freed an American woman from detention, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced Sunday.

Rubio's post on the X social network identified the US citizen as Anastassia Nuhfer. It said she was detained during former President Joe Biden's tenure, but did not specify when or why.

Rubio's statement came following waves of prisoner releases by Lukashenko, often dubbed "Europe's last dictator." Belarus' oldest rights group, Viasna, says that over 1,250 people remain in detention over their opposition

another

years in the role.

four



The US State Department said later on Sunday that Nuhfer was detained in early December 2024. It said that earlier this month, a consular officer from Washington was granted rare access to an American detainee in Belarus.

A former high-ranking Belarusian diplomat told AP that Nuhfer's arrest was linked to the 2020 protests, although he did not give details. The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity due to security concerns, said that Lukashenko himself offered to free the US citizen "as a gesture of goodwill," while declining to release any Belarusian opposition and rights activists.

Nuhfer's release took the public and even Belarusian activists by surprise. Her name hadn't been publicly released and hadn't featured on lists of political prisoners.v

Pavel Sapelka of the Viasna rights group, said that he and his colleagues had been unaware of her arrest or its circumstances.

#### Rain creates mudflows: More rain

fell Monday on parts of Southern California after causing mudflows over the weekend, helping firefighters but boosting the risk of toxic ash runoff in areas scorched by Los Angeles-area wildfires.

Flood watches were in effect for burn areas from recent fires that broke out around the Pacific Palisades neighborhood in Los Angeles, Altadena and Castaic Lake, said Joe Sirard, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Oxnard. (AP)



Workers clear a fallen tree on Grove Park Drive as ESB networks continue to reconnect homes and businesses across the country after Storm Eowyn, in Dublin, on Jan 26. (AP)

Fried vows to rebuild Dems: Nikki Fried was re-elected Saturdav as

Fried, who was first chosen as chair



office as agri-(AP)



She was the last Democrat to hold statewide

### INTERNATIONAL

### Beijing detains suspect in human trafficking cases

### China, India call for warmer relations but make no public mention of border dispute

BEIJING, Jan 27, (AP): The top dip-lomats of China and India called for their nations to provide further mutual support, but avoided publicly mentioning a long-standing border dispute in the Himalayas when they met Monday in Beijing.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told top Indian foreign affairs official Vikram Misri that the sides "should seize the opportunity, meet each other halfway, explore more substantive measures, and strive to understand, support and achieve each other, rather than be suspicious of, alienate and consume each other," China's official Xinhua News Agency reported.

It cited Misri as saying the nucleararmed Asian giants have "properly managed and resolved differences, and promoted the restart of practical cooperation in various fields.

Ties have been stable since the leaders of the two countries met last year on the sidelines of a multinational summit in Russia. Days before that meeting, India announced the two sides had agreed to a pact on military patrols along their disputed border in the Himalayas after a spike in tensions that began with a deadly clash in 2020. That turned into a long-running standoff in the rugged mountainous area,

where each side has stationed tens of thousands of military personnel backed by artillery, tanks and fighter jets.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi have since limited their joint public comments to pleasantries without openly discussing the border. India said the 2024 agreement would lead to the "disengagement" of troops at the Line of Actual Control, the long shared border in the Himalayas, although it's unclear whether that meant the withdrawal of the tens of thousands of additional troops stationed along their disputed border in the Ladakh region.

The Line of Actual Control separates Chinese and Indian-held territories from Ladakh in the west to India's eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, which China claims in its entirety. India and China fought a deadly war over the border in 1962.

Both India and China have withdrawn troops from face-off sites on the northern and southern banks of Pangong Tso, Gogra and Galwan Valley, but they maintain extra troops at Demchok and Depsang Plains.

The army standoff damaged business ties between the two nations with halted investments from Chinese firms and major projects banned. India also



In this image taken from a video footage run by Phoenix TV, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, (right), talks to India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri during a meeting in Beijing on Jan 27. (AP)

banned Chinese-owned apps, including TikTok, which is operated by Chinese internet firm Bytedance. It cited privacy concerns that it said threatened India's sovereignty and security.

Chinese products are ubiquitous in India, from toys to smartphones to made-in-China Hindu idols. According to Indian government data, twoway trade has grown by the tens of billions in the past two decades, with the balance strongly favoring China, while China has drawn many Indian specialists and students, particularly in

Meanwhile, Chinese authorities

### No cause yet revealed

the medical field.

#### have detained a key suspect in human trafficking cases linked to online scam networks near the borders of Myanmar and Thailand, China's Ministry of Public Security said, weeks after the high-profile disappearance of an actor sparked safety concerns.

The suspect, surnamed Yan, was captured through the joint efforts of the ministry, the Chinese Embassy in Theiland and Theila Thailand and Thai law enforcement officers, it said. Yan had returned to China on Saturday and an investigation is ongoing, it said in a statement late Sunday.

It vowed to deepen law enforcement cooperation with other countries and spare no effort in arresting suspects in the scam networks.

Earlier this month, Chinese actor Wang Xing was lured by a promise of an acting opportunity and traveled to Thailand but instead was taken across the border into Myanmar, where police believe he was put to work in a call scam operation targeting Chinese people, Thai police said.

Wang was eventually sent back to China, but his case has sparked fears about travel to Thailand among many Chinese, clouding the Southeast Asian country's tourism prospects during the Lunar New Year holidays, which begin Tuesday.

Last week, Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra used a video generated by artificial intelligence to assure Chinese tourists that her government is boosting security and attaches great importance to the safety of tourists.

But a series of recent human trafficking cases has already harmed Thai tourism

A concert by Hong Kong pop star Eason Chan in Bangkok in February was canceled due to safety concerns for Chinese citizens. Users on China's Weibo social media platform also expressed fears about visiting Thailand.

Criminal activity has flourished in border areas of military-ruled Myanmar, where fighting has pitted armed ethnic groups against the army for decades.

Chinese authorities say they have cracked down on criminal syndicates in joint operations with neighboring countries, leading to thousands of people being returned to China, but those campaigns did not include arrests of ring leaders in Myanmar.

People from Malaysia and the Philippines lured by job offerings in Myanmar have also been forced to work in call centers against their will.

### S.Korean plane crash report says bird remains found in engines

SEOUL, South Korea, Jan 27, (AP): The first report on last month's Jeju Air crash in South Korea confirmed traces of bird strikes in the plane's engines, though officials haven't determined the cause of the accident that killed all but two of the 181 people on board.

The preliminary accident report released by South Korea's Aviation and Railway Accident Investigation Board on Monday said that feathers and bird blood stains were found in both engines.

"The samples were sent to specialized organizations for DNA analysis, and a domestic organization identified them as belonging to Baikal teals,' the report said, referring to a migratory duck.

The report also said the plane's two black boxes - the flight data recorder and cockpit voice recorder - stopped recording about 4 minutes before the crash. This could complicate efforts to find the cause of the crash.

The Boeing 737-800 skidded off the runaway at Muan International Airport on Dec. 29 after its landing gear failed to deploy, slamming into a concrete structure and bursting into



The wreckage of a Boeing 737-800 plane operated by South Korean budget airline Jeju Air lies at Muan International Airport in Muan, South Korea, on Dec 31, 2024.

flames. The flight was returning from Bangkok and all of the victims were South Koreans except for two Thai nationals.

Many analysts said the concrete structure, which housed a set of antennas called a localizer that guides

aircraft during landings, should have been built with lighter materials that could break more easily upon impact. South Korea's Transport Ministry announced last week that it will remove the concrete structure at the airport. Investigators earlier said that air traffic controllers warned the pilots about possible bird strikes two minutes before the aircraft issued a distress signal confirming that a bird strike had occurred, after which the pilots attempted an emergency land-

ing. The preliminary report said the pilots also noticed a group of birds while approaching the runway at the Muan airport and that a security camera filmed the plane coming close to birds during an aborted landing as well.

The report said authorities will disassemble the engines, examine their components in depth, analyze the black box and air traffic control data, and investigate the embankment, localizer and bird strike evidence.

"These all-out investigation activities aim to accurately determine the cause of the accident," the report said.

The Transport Ministry said the preliminary report has been sent to the International Civil Aviation Organization, Thailand, the United States and France. It said the plane was built in the U.S. and its engines in France. It said the Muan airport will remain

closed until April 18.

PHNOM PENH, Jan 27, (Xinhua): The ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) added four additional members to its standing committee of the

central committee during an annual congress on Sunday, said an official statement.

The new members in cluded Deputy Prime Minister and Royal Pal-

ace

Kuy

Minister Hun Sen Sophal, Senate's Second

Vice President Thun Vathana, the CPP's Cabinet Chief Mam Sarin, and Tak Sun Y, head of the CPP Central Committee's Commission for Publicity and Education, said the statement released at the end of the 45th convention of the CPP's fifth term central committee.

The convention also set out key directions and tasks for 2025 in order to boost economic growth, ensure peace, political stability, and national security, strengthen national unity, and protect independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

The convention fully supported the government's efforts to successfully implement the first phase of the Pentagonal Strategy, aiming at ensuring economic growth, employment, equity, effectiveness, and sustainability.

"It will transform Cambodia into an upper-middle income country by 2030 and lay the foundation for achieving the Cambodia Vision 2050 of becoming a high-income nation,' the statement said.

Held at the CPP's headquarters in Phnom Penh, the two-day congress was presided over by CPP President Samdech Techo Hun Sen and was attended by approximately 3,555 central and local delegates from across

The CPP has ruled the Southeast

### Colombia agrees to take deported migrants after Trump tariff showdown: White House

BOGOTA, Colombia, Jan 27, (AP):

Cambodia's ruling party adds four

members to standing committee

The convention supported the government's efforts to achieve economic growth of 6.3 percent in 2025, after achieving 6 percent growth in 2024, the statement added.

the country.

Asian country since 1979, and its current standing committee comprises 60 members, with its central committee consisting of 1,312 members.



People displaced by the fighting with M23 rebels make their way to the center of Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo on Jan 26. (AP)

### Fear and gunshots after Rwanda-backed rebels claim takeover of eastern Congo's largest city

GOMA, Congo, Jan 27, (AP): Residents in eastern Congo's largest city, Goma, were fleeing on Monday after Rwandabacked rebels claimed to have captured the regional hub from Congolese forces as fighting escalated in recent days despite calls from the UN Security Council for the insurgents to withdraw.

Gunshots rang out across Goma overnight before dozens of rebels in military uniform early Monday morning marched into the capital of North Kivu province, which sits on the border with Rwanda. The Congolese government has not confirmed the fall of Goma, 1,500 kilometers (930 miles) east of capital Kinshasa, after severing ties with Rwanda on Saturday.

The Rwanda-backed M23 rebels are one of about 100 armed groups vying for a foothold in the mineral-rich region in the decades-long conflict, one of Africa's largest. The rebels temporarily took over Goma in 2012, before

they were forced to pull out under international pressure, and resurfaced in late 2021, with increasing support from Rwanda, according to Congo's government and United Nations experts. Rwanda has denied such support.

Analysts have warned the latest escalation of hostilities could further destabilize the region, which is already home to one of the world's largest humanitarian crises with more than 6 million people displaced. More than a third of North Kivu's population are among the displaced, according to a U.N. report.

In a statement late Sunday, the UN Security Council called on the M23 to immediately reverse its advances.

"The members of the Security Council condemned the ongoing flagrant disregard for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the DRC ... and that the M23 put an end to the establishment of parallel administrations in the DRC territory," the statement added, referring to Congo's formal name, the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The rebels announced early Monday they had captured the city just as a deadline they gave to Congolese security forces to surrender was about to expire. The rebels asked the Congolese military to assemble at the central stadium and urged residents to remain calm.

Congolese government officials have said the country is "in a war situation" and accused Rwanda of committing "a frontal aggression (and) a declaration of war." Congo cut ties with Rwanda over the weekend as re cent attempts at diplomatic talks between the two countries failed.

The advance into Goma is the culmination of a prolonged battle between the rebels and the Congolese security forces that saw several towns along the Rwandan border falling to the insurgents

5 people killed in LPG tanker truck blast in Pakistan

MULTAN, Pakistan, Jan 27, (Agencies): A truck carrying liquified petroleum gas (LPG) caught fire and exploded overnight near an industrial area in central Pakistan, killing five people and injuring more than two dozen others, officials said Monday.

The explosion in Multan, a city in the eastern Punjab province, substantially damaged nearby shops and homes, and the deaths were caused by the fire and the collapse of roofs of houses, rescue official Mohammad Bilal said.

He said firefighters had extinguished the blaze and officers are investigating to determine exactly what the gas leak in the truck and the subsequent explosion.

Meanwhile, five people were killed and 31 others injured when fire engulfed a resident colony in Pakistan's eastern Punjab province in the early hours of Monday, officials said.

The incident happened at about 12:25 a.m. local time (GMT 1925 Sunday) in the Multan district where a massive explosion caused by a liquefied petroleum gas container leakage rocked the colony, sources from the district's police told Xinhua.

The gas leakage triggered the fire, and the force of the blast scattered debris over a wide area, severely impacting the densely populated colony.

The police confirmed that the blaze has been brought under control, following extensive firefighting efforts. The injured have been shifted to nearby hospitals, and several of them are in critical condition.

Officials are conducting an assessment of the total damage caused by the explosion, which also disrupted daily life in the vicinity.

Incidents involving gas explosions remain a concern in Pakistan due to inadequate safety measures and poor infrastructure, often leading to tragic consequences.

The White House claimed victory in a showdown with Colombia over accepting flights of deported migrants from the US on Sunday, hours after President Donald Trump threatened steep tariffs on imports and other sanctions on the longtime US partner.

Long close partners in anti-narcotics efforts, the US and Colombia clashed Sunday over the deportation of migrants and imposed tariffs on each other's goods in a show of what other countries could face if they intervene in the Trump administration's crackdown on illegal immigration. The White House held up the episode as a warning to other nations who might seek to impede his plans.

Earlier, the US president had ordered visa restrictions, 25% tariffs on all Colombian incoming goods, which would be raised to 50% in one week. and other retaliatory measures sparked by President Gustavo Petro's decision to reject two Colombia-bound US military aircraft carrying migrants after Petro accused Trump of not treating immigrants with dignity during deportation. Petro also announced a retaliatory 25% increase in Colombian tariffs on US goods.

Trump said the measures were necessary because Petro's decision "jeop ardized" national security in the U.S. by blocking the deportation flights.

"These measures are just the beginning," Trump wrote on his social media platform Truth Social. "We will not allow the Colombian Government to violate its legal obligations with regard to



Colombia's President Gustavo Petro arrives at the opening ceremony of COP16, a United Nations' biodiversity conference, in Cali, Colombia, Oct 20, 2024. (AP)

the acceptance and return of the Criminals they forced into the United States.' Press secretary Karoline Leavitt said in a late Sunday statement that the "Government of Colombia has agreed to all of President Trump's terms, including the unrestricted acceptance of all illegal aliens from Colombia returned from the United States, including on US military aircraft, without limitation or delay.

Leavitt said the tariff orders will be "held in reserve, and not signed." But Leavitt said Trump would maintain visa restrictions on Colombian officials and enhanced customs inspections of goods from the country, "until the first planeload of Colombian deportees is successfully returned."

The Colombian government late Sunday said it considered as "overcome" the episode with the Trump administration and Petro reposted the statement from the White House on X.

"We have overcome the impasse with the United States government," said Colombian Foreign Minister Luis Gilberto Murillo. "We will continue to receive Colombians who return as deportees, guaranteeing them decent conditions as citizens subject to rights."

### Asylum-seekers pushed to new extremes in Mexico

ATOTONILCO DE TULA, Mexico, Jan 27, (AP): When Dayana Castro heard that the U.S. asylum appointment she waited over a year for was canceled in an instant, she had no doubt: She was heading north any way she could.

The 25-year-old migrant, her husband and their 4- and 7-year-old children had nothing left at home in Venezuela. They already had trekked the perilous Darien Gap jungle dividing Colombia and Panama and criminal groups that prey on migrants like them. Castro was one of tens of thousands

of migrants across Mexico with appointments to apply for U.S. asylum at the border scheduled out through February until President Donald Trump took office and issued a series of executive orders to beef up border security and slash migration. One ended the use of the CBP One app that had allowed nearly 1 million people, many seeking asylum, to legally enter the U.S. since January 2023.

"We're going to keep going. We can't go home after all we've been through, after all the countries we've fought our way through, only to give



A Border Patrol agent, right, pats down a man after the group crossed the border illegally through a gap in two walls separating Mexico from the United States before turning themselves in on Jan 23 in San Diego. (AP)

up now," she said from a small shelter in central Mexico beside a freight train line they were riding north.

Now, migrants like her are adjusting

to a new and uncertain reality. Many remain determined to reach the US through more dangerous means, riding freight trains, hiring smugglers and dodging authorities. Some lined up in Mexico's refugee offices to seek asylum in that country, while others contemplated finding a way back home.

Trump on Monday declared a national emergency at the U.S.-Mexico border and announced plans to send US troops and restrict refugees and asylum, saying he wants to halt illegal entry and border crime. The measures follow a drop in illegal crossings in recent months.

Supporters of the CBP One app that people like Castro used to try to enter legally say it brought order to a chaotic border. Critics say it was magnet for more people to come.

Adam Isacson, defense oversight analyst for the human rights organization Washington Office on Latin America, said Trump's crackdown on illegal immigration will surely deter migrants in the short term but will also have cascading humanitarian consequences.

### ABK announces closure for Al-Isra' Wal Mi'raj

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) extends its greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Me-shal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, as well as the

government, people, and residents of Kuwait on the occasion of Al-Isra' Wal Mi'raj 2025. On this occasion, the Bank will be closed on Thursday, 30 January, 2025 and will resume operations on Sunday, 2 February, 2025.



Strategic initiative to foster innovative talent in private sector, delivered in partnership with IE Madrid over 3 months

### **NBK concludes successful participation in KFAS innovation challenge**

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) team successfully concluded its participation in the Innovation Challenge Program, organized by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) in collaboration with IE Business School, Madrid. Spanning three months, the program commenced with an introduction to the fundamentals of creativity and innovation, followed by an in-depth focus on a real-world innovation project. The initiative also included a field visit to the IE Business School campus in Madrid, Spain, enriching the participants' experience.

As part of the program, the NBK team presented their project, which focused on an innovative banking service. The project was reviewed and discussed with the bank's senior management, including Mr. Salah Al-Fulaij, CEO of NBK - Kuwait, Mr. Mohammed Al-Othman, CEO of Consumer and Digital Banking Group;Mr. Mohammad Al Kharafi COO - Head of Group Operations and Information Technology; Mr. Emad Al-Ablani General Manager, Head of Group Human Resources Mr. Faisal Al-Fulaij Head of Business Banking; and other esteemed executives from the bank

The program covered various key aspects, including the successful implementation of innovative initiatives, the innovative planning process, impact measurement, and the design of valuable propositions. Additionally, several workshops on innovation leadership were conducted. The program featured intense competition among participating teams, as participants spent three months engaged in training, education, and exploring strategies to drive meaningful change within their organizations by presenting innovative ideas

Launched by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) in 2015, the program aims to cultivate innovative human capabilities within the private sector. It seeks to foster a culture of creativity and knowledge-driven growth, aligning with efforts to transition Kuwait's economy into a knowledge-based model.

The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sci-



Salah Al-Fulaij and Dr. Bassam AlFeeli in a group photo with the National Bank of Kuwait team.

ences (KFAS) Innovation Challenge Program stands out as one of the most prestigious executive education initiatives. Through collaboration with IE Business School in Madrid, a select group of companies engages in developing new initia-tives and projects aimed at fostering a culture of innovation within their organizations.

On this occasion, Maryam Al-Nasrallah, Talent Management Manager, Group Human Resources at National Bank of Kuwait, said: "We strongly believe in the importance of fostering a culture of innovation and creativity. As such, we remain committed to launching and supporting pioneering initiatives across various fields and sectors while collaborating with state institutions and strategic partners to create a positive social impact and cultivate an inspiring environment for the next generation."

Al-Nasrallah further added: "Our involvement in this pioneering program underscores our unwavering commitment to fostering innovation and knowledge. We are dedicated to encouraging young researchers to deliver innovative solutions that benefit both society and the economy. The bank's

#### Al-Nasrallah:

■ We prioritize collaboration with strategic partners to drive social impact and cultivate an inspiring environment for the next generation

The program fosters a culture of innovation, supporting Kuwait's transition to a knowledge-based economy

NBK remains steadfast in its commitment to community development, consistently striving to create an ecosystem that nurtures creativity and innovation

strategy is firmly rooted in innovation and continuous development, a commitment that has been demonstrated through our leadership in the banking sector, positioning us at the forefront both locally and regionally.

Al-Nasrallah emphasized that NBK will persist in its efforts to develop society and foster an environment that en-courages creativity and innovation. This will be achieved through ongoing participation in various programs and initiatives designed to cultivate highly skilled national talent. He highlighted that Kuwaiti youth possess untapped potential and capabilities, and with the right guidance, they can contribute significantly to the sustainable development journey.

Furthermore, She praised KFAS for its pivotal role in enhancing and promoting investment in technology and innovation. He emphasized the Foundation's commitment to learning from global experiences and utilizing leading professional and academic expertise from around the world.

NBK places significant emphasis on the development of its human resources, recognizing them as the cornerstone of the bank's excellence and leadership. The bank offers toptier specialized training programs that adhere to the highest international standards, ensuring that its professional talent is equipped to take on future leadership roles.

### **Boursa Kuwait general** index rise 53.84 points

Main market index up 0.28%

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait concluded Monday's trading session with its general index gaining 53.84 points (0.69%) to close at 7,830.81 points. A total of 484.10 million shares were traded through 22,716 transactions, with a total value of 131 million Kuwaiti dinars (approximately \$403.4 million).

The Main Market Index rose

by 19.98 points (0.28%) to settle at 7,256.94 points, as 178.14 million shares changed hands in 9,074 transactions valued at 29.5 million dinars (around \$90.8 million).

The Premier Market Index increased by 65.40 points (0.79%) to reach 8,361.11 points, with 305.9 million shares traded through 13,642 transactions worth 101.5 million dinars (about \$312.6 million).

Meanwhile, the Major 50 Index dipped 8.06 points (0.11%) to close at 7,262.34 points, with 122 million shares traded in 5,251 transactions valued at 22.6 million dinars (approximately \$69.6 million).

#### **CEO** highlights petrochemical sector's role

To ensure its customers' comfort and safety during travel season KIB enhances financial security with 'Let's Be Aware' campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced that it will continue to provide advice that ensures its customers an exceptional and seamless banking experience with outstanding security standards, both in Kuwait and abroad. This initiative supports the ongoing financial awareness campaign, 'Let's Be Aware' (Diraya), which aims to enhance understanding of essential banking safety practices within the community. As part of these efforts, the Bank highlights the importance of following the campaign's tips and recommendations on using various types of bank's channels and cards - credit, debit, and prepaid to help customers avoid fraud and theft while traveling.

During an interview with KTV's morning show 'Good Morning Kuwait', Basil Al-Suwaidan, General Manager of the Information Security, Privacy and Anti-Fraud Department, said: "At KIB, we continue equipping our customers with the knowledge and tools necessary to ensure their financial security, whether they are in Kuwait or abroad. We foster a culture focused on continuous communication with customers and the community, enabling secure access to all their banking needs, in line with KIB's comprehensive social responsibility strategy. Additionally, the Bank remains a leader in providing essential information, guidance, and advice on safe banking practices for customers who are traveling. This is achieved through our website, branches, digital channels, social media accounts, and all official media outlets, in support of



Basil Al-Suwaidan

#### Before traveling:

1. You should consider updating customer information regularly through visiting a branch or calling the KIB Call Center.

2. Check the expiration/validity date of your bank cards and make sure they cover the period of your travel

3. Ensure that you have sufficient credit limits available in your credit cards. Also, make sure to check your bank account balance.

4. It is recommended to utilize the digital wallets vailable on your mobile device instead of using the



#### Diraya logo

edge, holds you fully responsible for all transactions made on it.

5. When using an ATM, make sure the machine is checked and there are no foreign objects ordevices installed on the machine. Your password must also be protected and prevented from being accessed by fraudsters; you can use your shoulders as a barrier while entering the password to prevent intruders.

### Chemikuwait increases sulfuric acid production to meet growing demand

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The CEO of Chemikuwait for Chemical Industries Company Engineer Alaa Hassan affirmed the company's belief in the utmost importance of the petrochemical sector in improving opportunities for benefiting from national wealth.

She affirmed that the sector's strong ties to complementary industries, combined with Chemikuwait's experience and belief that countries' development rely on diversifying their local production, play a key role in supporting economic development.

Hassan emphasized that the petroleum sector is a vital sector for Chemikuwait due to its rapid growth and diversification of income sources.

She explained that the increase in the daily sulfuric acid (H2SO4) production to 24 tons per day is an initial step to meet the growing demand in the local market and neighboring countries. The increase in sulfuric acid consumption signals an overall increase in industrial production in the region.

Chemikuwait has also invested in tanks of high standards and specifications to store sulfuric acid as a finished



#### **CEO** Alaa Hassan

product that is ready for shipment.

Chemikuwait is the only factory in Kuwait that produces sulfuric acid. In addition, the company manufactures various chemical products such as battery acid and distilled water (DM water) to serve the Kuwaiti market.

It is worth highlighting that Chemikuwait is a strategic partner with Halliburton in the oil sector for producing materials used by the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC).

the 'Let's Be Aware' financial awareness campaign."

In this regard, KIB advises all customer segments to follow practical financial security and privacy tips while traveling. These include optimizing the use of bank application and cards, specifying currencies for payments while shopping, and reporting a lost or stolen card. Customers should also avoid sharing any financial or personal information with suspicious parties that might exploit it to access account and card details. Additionally, they should take advantage of the KIB Mobile app to track and monitor financial transactions, set card security preferences, and receive instant notifications.

It is worth noting that KIB is dedicated to being a genuine partner and supporter for its customers while they travel abroad. The Bank provides personalized services, tailored guidance and advice, and account statement reviews for customers who inform them of their travel destinations and planned expenses in advance. Bank representatives are available for aroundthe-clock communication, whether through phone calls via the customer service center at the number (1866866), or the number (+96522957300) designated for international calls. The Bank's electronic channels of communication include Live Chat and KIB Online services on the website www.KIB.com.kw and the video phone service through the KIB Mobile application on smartphones. Customers can also contact the Bank via the WhatsApp account registered on the local KIB number (1866866). All these communication channels are intended for general inquiries about products and services offered by the Bank all year long.

KIB's tips to avoid falling victim to fraudulent activities while traveling:

traditional card payment methodsto prevent your physical bank card from being lost or stolen.

5. Make sure to download and activate the KIB Mobile application, while allowing notifications, on your mobile device to keep track of your card usage and expenses while traveling.

6. Make sure you have access to the internet in order to benefit from your online banking services and to facilitate some banking operations.

7. Do not tell anyone your card password or your passcode for 3D Secure.

8. KIB has never and will never ask you for password information via email, text or phone calls. Never click on any internet link received from emails that you do not know or do not trust.

9. Make sure to activate the SMS text messaging service in order for you to be notified of the transactions made on your accounts and cards.

10. Activate your digital wallet.

While traveling:

1. It is preferable not to use Wi-Fi services or public computers to access the bank's website and login to bank accounts, or open any message that requires clicking on any internet link on the smartphone or computer.

2. All cards must be kept in a safe place and not left away from you for any reason.

3. Cards should not all be kept in one place or in your wallet. They should be kept out of direct sunlight to prevent damage.

4. Do not give your card or password to anyone. And be sure to keep your card in your hand when you are making purchases. Note that lending your card to a family member or friend, with or without your knowl-

6. Do not ask for help from anyone, even if they appear dressed like bank employees or security guards, and remember not to leave the receipt on the machine after the withdrawal process.

7. In case the card gets stuck in an ATM, please contact KIB immediately without leaving the ATM to ensure that the card is blocked by the bank.

8. It is always preferred to pay in the local currency of the country in which you are located and not in the Kuwaiti dinar.

9. Check the screen of the "Point of Sale" device to confirm the amount that you will pay before entering the password.

10. Uphold all your receipts and receipts of rejected transactions, and review your operations and expenses regularly through the KIB Mobile application, its notifications, or SMS text message service.

11. Activate the mobile service (roaming service) or provide an alternative contact number for the bank to enable it to contact you when you are abroad.

12. If your card was lost, or if you face any problem related to credit cards, contact the call center immediately on: (+96522957300), designated for international calls.

After returning from travel:

1. We recommend that you change your password after returning from travel, through the bank's branches or the ATMs deployed by the bank.

2. Check all statements of accounts for your cards and review all receipts carefully along with your monthly statements when you return to Kuwait, and in case of any discrepancies or suspicious transactions, you must contact the bank immediately.

New closing date set for Feb 11

### Skyrocketing housing prices strain Dubai's population

### Dubai faces traffic woes amid rapid growth **KOTC** revises tender for LNG supply

#### By Najeh Bilal

#### Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) has revised its tender for the supply of 100,000,000 commercial guarantee covers for the Shuaiba and Umm Al-Aish LNG filling branches.

The updated tender is now classified as a global, local, and general tender, which

can be divided into two groups, instead of the previous general local tender that could also be divided into two groups.

Also, the company announced a change in the closing date for its tender for the supply of 230,000 12 kg LNG cylinders made of solid iron with valves for the Shuaiba and Umm Al-Aish LNG filling branches. The new closing date is Feb 11, instead of the previously set date of Jan 28

### IRU issues new licensing decisions

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: The Insurance Regulatory Unit has made significant updates in its latest resolutions regarding individual licenses and approved rating agencies, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Resolution No. 1 of 2025 -- This resolution licenses Noura Omar Shams El-Din, an employee of Kuwait Insurance Company, to practice insurance professions in the actuarial expert activity.

The license is valid for three years from the issuance date and individuals are required to pay prescribed fees for obtaining or renewing the license.

Resolution No. 2 of 2025 -- The individual practice license of Salman Abdul Hamid Suleiman Al-Nassar, a risk

assessment and loss estimation expert, has been canceled. Resolution No. 3 of 2025 -- This decision mandates that foreign companies operating in Kuwait must submit documents proving their parent company has obtained a credit rating from

approved international rating agencies. These agencies include AM Best, Standard & Poor's, Moody's Investors Service and Fitch Ratings.

DUBAI, Jan 27, (AP): Skyscraper-studded Dubai has been on a hot streak for the last five years - and

The city-state has seen record-breaking real estate transactions and as more and more people come to live there, and its state-owned airline Emirates is booking record earnings. But all that growth comes

Traffic feels worse than ever on Dubai's roads. The price of housing continues to spike even with new real estate projects being announced almost daily. Caught in the middle are both its Emirati citizens and the vast population of foreigners who power its economy -

report he wrote for the global data firm Tellimer, where he's a managing director.

its current estimated population in just 15 years. around 255,000 to around 3.8 million.

when the desert sheikdom began allowing foreigners to own property. After sharp falls during both the 2008-2009 financial crisis and Dubai's brief coronavirus lockdown, prices have been soaring.

Today, average prices per square foot are at alltime highs, according to Property Monitor. Rental prices increased as much as 20% in key neighborhoods last year, with further rises likely this year, with some residents moving to communities further out in the desert, the real estate firm Engel & Völkers said.

Even before the boom, some people who worked in Dubai chose to live in the neighboring emirate of Sharjah, some 20 kilometers (12 miles) north of the city's downtown, or further away. Some 1 million commuters from other emirates jam the 12-lane Sheikh Zayed Road that runs through the center of the city and other highways every day, as studies suggest that as many as four out of five employees drive to work alone.

That traffic has only intensified with Dubai's new arrivals.

While the rest of the world saw as much as a 4% increase in the number of registered vehicles in the last two years, the city's Road and Transportation Authority says there's been a 10% increase in the number of vehicles.

So many vehicles have been registered that the city has had to make license plates longer.

And while the city keeps building new flyovers and other road improvements, more cars are coming from more directions than ever before.

"Dubai is very attractive, more and more people are coming," said Thomas Edelmann, the founder and managing director of RoadSafetyUAE, which advocates about traffic issues. "I think it's easier to get people quickly to come to Dubai and to convince them about Dubai, then to build a new intersection or a new highway.

Congestion has got so bad that it's driving even prominent Emiratis to break their customary silence on public affairs.

Ĥabib Al Mulla, a prominent Emirati lawyer, wrote on the social platform X in December that while authorities were working on congestion, the problem demanded "a set of immediate and long-term mechanisms." He followed up by publishing an opinion piece twice mentioning "congestion" as being among "pressing issues" for global cities like Dubai

While phrased in mild language, Al Mulla's comments represented rare public criticism in the United Arab Emirates, where speech is tightly controlled by criminal law and social norms favor raising issues at a "majlis" - a semiprivate setting convened by a traditional ruler.

"The concentration of wealth and opportunities created in global cities may cause income inequality that pushes out lower-income residents," Al Mulla warned in the English-language Khaleej Times newspaper on Jan. 15.

"The problem becomes acute when the wealth and opportunities remain inaccessible to segments of the national population who witness the city's allure being seized by outsiders. This may carry significant social risks, if not mitigated."

some residents are starting to feel burned.

with strains for the city's population.

sparking rare public expressions of concern.

"Dubai is on steroids but affordability risks are increasing," warned Hasnain Malik in a starkly titled

Under Dubai's current plans, the city aims to have

5.8 million residents by 2040, adding more than half Since 1980, its population has already soared from Real estate lit the fire in Dubai's growth in 2002,

### **BUSINESS**

Firm's improved ESG rating reflects ethical leadership and sustainability efforts

## Zain Group's MSCI rating for ESG upgraded to 'BBB'

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Zain Group, a leading provider of innovative technologies and digital lifestyle and ICT communications operating in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, announces a significant improvement in its Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) rating in ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance), which was upgraded from 'BB' to 'BBB' as of December 2024.

The renowned MSCI ESG Ratings methodology evaluates companies on their management of material ESG risks and opportunities including climate change, human capital, and corporate governance, with a focus on policies, performance metrics, and controversies. Ratings are industry-relative and range from 'AAA' to 'CCC,' with scores determined by a company's exposure to ESG risks and the effectiveness of its management strategies.

MSCI's upgrade for Zain from BB to BBB reflected the company's ethical leadership that oversaw the implementation of enhanced governance frameworks; evolving sustainability programs; stronger environmental policies and reducing carbon emissions; advancements in transparency and reporting; improving data protection and privacy policies. Notably, in the environmental pillar Zain scored 10/10 - a best-in-class recognition.

Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO, Bader Al-Kharafi commented,

"This ESG upgrade reaffirms Zain's commitment to sustainability, corporate governance, and ethical leadership, that is value creative for all stakeholders. It also marks an important milestone for the company as we continue to align with global industry standards and strive for further improvements in our ESG performance in line with our recently



announced '4WARD'-Progress with Purpose five-year sustainable corporate strategy.'

"Zain operates within a complex geopolitical context and we will continue to invest in ESG initiatives and focus on mitigating risks through the integration of advanced technologies. We are relentless in our ongoing efforts to engage and collaborate with regulators, shareholders, and the wider community, to drive sound sustainable and corporate governance practices.

"As a leading entity listed on the

AI-Ajeel approves new trademark rings for key jewelers

### Kuwait Minister restructures trademark procedures for imported precious metals

#### By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel has restructured the procedures for stamping trademarks and approving trademark rings for imported precious metal products.

The new procedures will include six trademarks for three companies - Ali Bin Ali Watches and Jewelry Company, Hamad Abdullah Al-Fares and Sons Company, and Al-Sarhan United General Trading and

Contracting Company. In addition, Minister Al-Ajeel, who also serves as the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Industry, issued a decision to approve two Kuwaiti technical regulations. These regulations outline energy efficiency requirements, operating standards, and the labeling

of lighting products within the Public Authority for Industry system.

The decision mandates the registration and issuance of an energy efficiency card with a unique serial number for each model, which must be printed on the product packaging in accordance with the regulation's requirements.

The decision will come into effect one year after its publication in the official gazette yesterday.

Firm targets ESG-focused growth

### Kamco Invest acquires stake in EGLS

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Kamco Invest, a regional nonbanking financial powerhouse with one of the largest AUMs in the region, acquired a significant stake in European Green Logistics Space (EGLS), a specialist pan-European developer, investor, and manager of logistics assets across Europe. Co-founded by an expert team led by logistics real estate veteran Ian Worboys, EGLS operates through four offices in Europe namely Prague, London, Paris, and Frankfurt. Worboys, who boasts more than 40 years' experience

working in the European industrial and logistics market, including leadership roles at Gazeley, Panattoni, P3 Logistic Parks and, latterly, Trammell Crow Company, has co-founded EGLS with Amos Chia, former head of acquisitions at pan-European urban logistics platform, Crossbay, and Glen Lonie, former head of asset management for Central & Eastern Europe at Cushman & Wakefield. Worboys is EGLS's Chief Executive Officer, Chia is the Chief Investment Officer and Lonie is the Chief Financial Officer.

With a robust presence across the MENA region, an esteemed client base, and deep connections within the regional investment community, Kamco Invest is well positioned to support EGLS in broadening its offerings and reaching a



European Green Logistics Space (EGLS).

Kamco Invest has AUM of over USD16.2bn as of 30September 2024 allocated to various asset classes and jurisdictions, making it one of the largest asset managers in the MENA region. It has acted as investment banker to deals exceeding \$39.5bn from its inception to 30 September 2024 in equity capital markets, debt capital markets and mergers & acquisitions.

## **Kuwait attends 10th Arab Finance Undersecretaries Meeting in UAE**

Finance leaders discuss energy, growth and tax policies

ABU DHABI, Jan 27: Kuwait participated in the 10th meeting of Arab Fi-Undersecretaries, nance held on January 20-21 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab **Emirates.** 

Boursa Kuwait Premier Market,

sound ESG practices are becoming

an increasingly important differen-

tiator for organizations with respect

to giving all stakeholders confidence

that the company is being run in a

sustainable, compliant and transpar-

ent manner. This MSCI upgrade to

BBB reaffirms Zain's Investor Re-

lations and Corporate Governance

Framework as it helps Zain miti-

gate risks and facilitates an effective

Board oversight over the company's

executive management by promoting

strong internal controls to improve

According to a press release issued by the Ministry of Finance, the Kuwaiti delegation was headed by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance Aseel Al-Saad Al-Munifi.

The event witnessed the participation of finance undersecretaries from Arab countries, as well as representatives from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OEĈD).

The meeting covered a range of important topics relevant to the Arab finance ministries, including energy support in the Arab region, lessons learned from successful reforms, and the role of incentives in developing renewable energy sources.

Discussions were also held on an analysis of growth drivers in the region, and the impact of fiscal policy. A session was held on the management of public debt and public finance risks.



Arab Finance Undersecretaries Meeting in UAE.

The meeting also reviewed the experiences of Arab countries in digital transformation in public finance and addressed issues such as the global minimum tax and taxes on the profits of multinational companies.

On the first day of the meetings, Al-Munifi delivered a visual presentation on public debt management and public finance risks.

She reviewed the experience of the Ministry of Finance in Kuwait in establishing a public debt management system, outlining its role and the important considerations for government borrowing to finance projects with a positive financial impact aimed at achieving financial sustainability

On the second day, Al-Munifi gave a visual presentation on the global minimum tax and taxes on the profits of multinational companies.

The presentation highlighted the efforts of the Ministry of Finance in Kuwait to comply with the rules of the OECD's second pillar by introducing a tax on multinational entities, which is set to take effect in January 2025.

integrity of financials and establishing a culture of compliance.' Al-Kharafi concluded, "This framework is a cornerstone of the company's regional appeal, and haswon

Vice-Chairman & Group CEO, Bader Al-Kharafi, "This upgrade

Enhanced governance frameworks; evolving sustainability

reaffirms Zain's commitment to sustainability, corporate govern-ance and ethical leadership, that is value creative for all stake-

programs, implementation of stronger environmental policies

and reducing carbon emissions; advancements in transparency

and reporting; improving data protection and privacy policies, all contributed to upgrade from BB to BBB

In the environmental pillar Zain scored 10/10 – a best-in-class

the confidence and admiration from shareholders, the banking community, industry analysts, regulatory authorities and other globally recognized indices, attracting global investors.'

holders.

recognition

Zain is one of the most active organizations in the region with respect to delivering meaningful connectivity that leads to equitable systemic change through its ESG initiatives, with the company playing a crucial role in empowering the markets in which it operates to reap the benefits of digital transformation for the benefit of the communities it serves and beyond.

wider network of investors in the MENA region.

EGLS will deliver modern, sustainable big box and urban logistics facilities through a two-pronged strategy. It will acquire standingassets which can be improved, retrofitted and turned into modern, sustainable facilities and it will also carry out ground-up developments. For all its projects, it will aim to work with investors and occupiers to meet the highest standards of sustainability.

EGLS will work with Kamco Invest, along with a number of other large investors, with different investment strategies, on a separate account basis. It has already lined up a strong pipeline of sites and standing assets to be acquired.

Geographically, EGLS will invest initially in the UK, France, Germany and Czech Republic before branching out into Spain, the Netherlands and Italy.

Ian Worboys, co-founder and CEO of EGLS, said: "I am very excited to be re-entering the European logistics market at this time of the real estate cycle with Amos and Glen in partnership with Kamco Invest. I have more than 40 years' experience in the sector, building European businesses, and this feels like an opportune time to be investing when demand for modern, sustainable facilities remains strong but supply is decreasing. "Sustainability is at the heart of



Al Othman



ments our suite of alternative investment offerings, providing clients with access to ESG-focused opportunities in the logistics domain".

what we do, and we believe there is a great brown-to-green opportunity, converting outdated units into mod-

ern, sustainable facilities as well as carrying out new developments that

ior Executive Director of Alternative

Investments at Kamco Invest, said: "We are delighted to partner with an

expert management team on this stra-

meet modern ESG requirements". Mohammad F. Al Othman, Sen-

Worbovs

Worboys has recruited a team of 18 seasoned logistics real estate operators as department and country heads,

sharing more than 300 years of logistics and real estate experience. They include Simon Stacey, former director of ARA Dunedin, as head of asset management for Europe, Phil Sutton, the former UK managing director of Scannell Properties, as head of the UK, Mario Sander, the former head of Germany and Austria at Trammell Crow Company, as head of Germany, Austria and Poland, Patrick Rebel, the former head of acquisitions and asset management for France at EQT Exeter, as head of France and Dominika Surovcová, former commercial director at Trammell Crow Company, as head of the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

#### **About Kamco Invest**

Kamco Investment Company K.S.C (Public) "Kamco Invest" is a regional non-banking financial powerhouse headquartered in Kuwait with offices in key regional financial markets, established in 1998 and listed on Boursa Kuwait in 2003. It is an Independently managed subsidiary of KIPCO Group adopting highest standards of corporate governance and regulated by the Capital Markets Authority and Central Bank of Kuwait. The Company offers a comprehensive range of investment solutions covering asset management, investment banking and brokerage.

#### **European Green Logistics Space (EGLS)**

European Green Logistics Space (EGLS) is a logistics real estate investment and development company operating in UK and Europe. It was founded in 2024 by Ian Worboys, Amos Chia and Glen Lonie in partnership with Kuwaitbased financial powerhouse Kamco Invest. Its strategy involves creating modern, sustainable big box and urban logistics facilities both by improving, retrofitted, retrofitting and modernizing existing assets and through ground-up developments. For all its projects, it will aim to work with investors and occupiers to meet the highest standards of sustainability. It works with a small number of large investors with different investment strategies on a separate account basis, one of whom is Kamco Invest.

### Kuwait and Uzbekistan discuss bilateral economic cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Under-secretary of the Ministry of Finance Aseel Al-Saad Al-Munaifi received today the Deputy Minister of Investment, Industry, and Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shokhrov Gulamov, Deputy Minister of Economy and Finance Ilhomjon Umurzakov,

and their accompanying delegation. According to a press release issued by the Ministry of Finance, they discussed various topics related to bilateral cooperation between the two friendly countries, particularly in the economic and trade sectors, during the meeting.

Both parties agreed to continue working together in the next phase according to the plans established between them.

It is worth highlighting that this meeting is part of the official visit of the Republic of Uzbekistan delegation to Kuwait.

### **Invitation Announcement**

### The Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting of Warba Bank's shareholders

The Board of Directors of Warba Bank is pleased to invite its esteemed shareholders to attend the Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) scheduled to be held - God willing - on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 12:30 p.m. at the Bank's headquarters located in Sharq, Omar Bin Al-Khattab Street, Arraya Tower, 13th Floor, to discuss the items of the agenda as follows

#### Agenda of the Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting of Warba Bank's shareholders

Increase the Bank's authorized capital by 100% from the amount of KWD 218,360,000 (two hundred and eighteen million, three hundred and sixty thousand 1) Kuwaiti Dinars) distributed over 2,183,600,000 shares (two billion, one hundred and eighty-three million, six hundred thousand shares), to the amount of KWD 436,720,000 (four hundred and thirty-six million, seven hundred and twenty thousand Kuwaiti dinars) distributed over 4,367,200,000 shares (four billion, three hundred and sixty-seven million, two hundred thousand shares), and authorize the General Assembly of the Board of Directors to call up the issued and paid-up capital within the limits of the authorized capital, with authorization of the Board of Directors to determine the amount and methods of the increase, the dates of its call, and all its terms and conditions, as well as to determine the issuance premium for the new shares.

2) Approval of the amendment of Article (7) of the Memorandum of Association and Article (6) of the Articles of Associations of the Company to read as follo

Article before amendment	The authorized, issued and paid-up capital of the company is set at KWD 218,360,000 (two hundred and eighteen million, three hundred and sixty thousand Kuwaiti dinars) distributed over 2,183,600,000 shares (two billion, one hundred and eighty-three million, six hundred thousand shares), the value of each share is 100 (one hundred) fils, and all shares are in cash.
Article after amendment	The authorized capital of the company is set at KWD 436,720,000 (four hundred and thirty-six million, seven hundred and twenty thousand Kuwaiti dinars) distributed over 4,367,200,000 shares (four billion, three hundred and sixty-seven million, two hundred thousand shares), and the issued and paid-up capital of the company is set at KWD 218,360,000 (two hundred and eighteen million, three hundred and sixty thousand Kuwaiti dinars) distributed over 2,183,600,000 shares (two billion, one hundred and eighty-three million, six hundred thousand shares) the value of each share is 100 (one hundred) fils, and all shares are in cash.

Shareholders who wish to attend the EGM online should visit the website of the Kuwait Clearing Company at www.Maqasa.com, and complete their registration on the "eAGM Registration" portal to be able to participate and vote online on the meeting's agenda items.

Should the quorum required by law not be met, the EGM will not be held, and a second date will be scheduled for Sunday, March 2, 2025, at 12:30 p.m. at the same venue and with the same agenda. This invitation applied for the rescheduled EGM, which will take place should the shareholders of more than half of the issued and paid-up capital be present

#### **Board of Directors**



182 55 55 warbabank.com

Let's Own Tomorrow

### **BUSINESS**

'The new center is a crucial addition to Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital and the healthcare sector in Kuwait'

### KFH pledges KD 15 mln for cardiac diseases and research center at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Chairman, Hamad Abdulmohsen Al-Marzouq, expressed KFH's gratitude for the esteemed decision of Kuwait's Council of Ministers, approving KFH's pledge of KD 15 million to fund the creation and equipping of a dedicated cardiac diseases and research center at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital.

Al-Marzouq extended his sincere appre-ciation to His Highness the Amir of Ku-wait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may Allah safeguard him, His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, for their distinguished directives aimed at fostering cooperation

between national and governmental institu-

"This initiative, in line with national guidelines, underscores KFH's leading role in serving Kuwait. It reflects the bank's commitment to social responsibility by supporting crucial sectors like healthcare, education, the environment, and diverse community program,"He added.

In partnership with the Ministry of Health and all relevant stakeholders, Al-Marzouq said that KFH will be responsible for the design, construction, and complete equipment of the center, ensuring it meets the highest standards. The center will be named theKuwait Finance House Center. He expressed his confidence that the center would serve as a vital healthcare facility offering advanced



Hamad Abdulmohsen Al-Marzoug

medical services with state-of-the-art systems and devices.

Strategic Community Contributions KFHboasts a strong track record of strate-gic community contributions. Most notably, the bank donated KD 8 million towards the reconstruction of the area damaged in the Al Mubarakiya fire incident. This site holds significant historical and cultural importance to Kuwait and its people. Additionally, KFH has contributed KD 4.5

million to the establishment of the Addiction Treatment Center, and KD 20 million to develop 15 ambulance centers, strengthening Kuwait's healthcare and medical infrastructure

KFH also partnered with the Ministry of Justice to launch an initiative aimed at settling the debts of insolvent individuals facing legal action, with a contribution exceeding KD 20 million, benefiting around 10,000 indebted individuals.

Demonstrating its commitment to national well-being, KFH made a substantial contribution of KD 10 million to the government support fund during the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative was supplemented by an additional, separate contribution from the bank

KFH continues to play a leading role in supporting the community, evident through its contributions to KFAS, the national employment program, and the Institute of Banking Studies, demonstrating its strong commitment to social responsibility and creating



The TikTok app logo is shown on an iPhone on Friday, Jan. 17, 2025, in Houston. (AP)

#### ByteDance could retain TikTok's ownership

New bid for TikTok from Perplexity AI could give US government 50% stake

WASHINGTON, Jan 27, (AP): Perplexity AI has presented a new proposal to TikTok's parent company that would allow the U.S. government to own up to 50% of a new entity that merges Perplexity with Tik-Tok's U.S. business, according to a person familiar with the matter.

The proposal, submitted last week, is a revision of a prior plan the artificial intelligence startup had presented to TikTok's parent ByteDance on Jan. 18, a day before the law that bans TikTok went into effect.

The first proposal, which ByteDance hasn't responded to, sought to create a new structure that would merge San Francisco-based Perplexity with TikTok's U.S. business and include investments from other investors.

The new proposal would allow the U.S. government to own up to half of that new structure once it makes an initial public offering of at least \$300 billion, said the person, who was not authorized to speak about the proposal. The person said Perplexity's proposal was revised based off of feedway that China would ever let us have something like that in China."

The Perplexity proposal comes as several investors are expressing interest in TikTok. President Donald Trump said late Saturday that he expects a deal will be made in as soon as 30 days.

On a flight from Las Vegas to Miami on Air Force One, Trump also said he hadn't discussed a deal with Larry Ellison, CEO of software maker Oracle, despite a report that Oracle, along with outside investors, was considering taking over TikTok's global operation.

"Numerous people are talking to me. Very substantial people," Trump said. "We have a lot of interest in it, and the United States will be a big beneficiary. ... I'd only do it if the United States benefits."

Under a bipartisan law passed last year, TikTok was to be banned in the United States by Jan. 19 if it did not cut ties with ByteDance. The Supreme Court upheld the law, but Trump then issued an executive order to halt enforcement of the law for 75 days.

## Fed likely to hold interest rates steady amid economic growth

Trump's deregulation push could help lower inflation

WASHINGTON, Jan 27, (AP): The Federal Reserve is nearly certain to keep its key interest rate unchanged at its policy meeting this week, just a few days after President Donald Trump said he would soon demand lower rates.

Fed officials, led by Chair Jerome Powell, have cut their rate for three meetings in a row, to about 4.3%, from a two-decade high of 5.3%. Yet with several recent economic reports showing healthy hiring and some progress on inflation, policymakers have said that the pace of rate cuts will slow this year. Some have suggested that few reductions are needed at all.

While the two-day meeting that ends Wednesday may be uneventful, it nevertheless kicks off what is likely to be a turbulent year for the Fed. Trump, last Thursday, made clear he expects to comment on interest-rate policy and said, "I know interest rates much better than they do."

At the same time, Fed officials are also navigating a delicate period for the economy: They want to keep borrowing costs high enough to push inflation back to their 2% target, without keeping them too high for too long and plunging the economy into a recession.

The last time he was in the White House, Trump threatened to fire Powell, whom he appointed in late 2017, but he has more recently backed off such threats. Powell's term as chair ends in May 2026, when Trump can name a replacement.

Until then, Trump's comments Thursday suggest he expects to regularly second-guess the Fed in public, despite a decades-long tradition among previous presidents of taking a hands-off aproach to the central bank. Former president Joe Biden reappointed Powell, rather than replacing him, in a nod to central bank independence from politics.

Vincent Reinhart, chief economist at BNY In-



In this July 31, 2019, file photo, Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell speaks during a news conference following a two-day Federal Open Market Committee meeting in Washington. (AP)

#### policy decisions.

"If you like your independence, then you got to live with criticism," Reinhart said. "If it's all talk, it's not a particular concern to the Fed. I think Chair Powell understands that's the rules of the game." Meanwhile, Fed officials have clearly signaled

they expect to skip a rate hike, at least in January, to evaluate the job market and economy.

"In January, we kind of need to see what's going to happen," Fed governor Christopher Waller said earlier this month in an interview on CNBC. Fed officials "need to see a little more progress on inflation," he added, though he also said it is getting "very close" to their target.

Annual inflation was just 2.4% in November, according to the Fed's preferred gauge, only modestly above its goal, but it has been stuck there for about six months. Still, there are signs that prices should cool later this year. A spurt of apartment construction is bringing down the growth in rental costs, and car insurance inflation has also slowed.

including Beth Hammack, presi

a positive impact.

that the persistence of inflation means the Fed should keep its key rate elevated. Hammack voted against the Fed's quarter-point cut last month.

Hiring rebounded in December, reversing a downshift in the fall that had unnerved the Fed. Policymakers had agreed to cut the Fed's key rate by a half-point in September, partly because they worried that a then-weakening job market could lead to a recession. Yet the jobless rate ticked down to a low 4.1% last month. A sharp slowdown in hiring would likely spur the Fed to cut rates more quickly.

Fed officials in December signaled that they expected to reduce rates just twice this year. But the 19-member committee that makes interest rate decisions is clearly divided. Some officials, such as Waller and Austan Goolsbee, president of the Fed's Chicago branch, expect inflation to keep cooling and argue that the Fed's rate doesn't need to be so high.

Others, such as Hammack and Jeffrey Schmid, president of the Kansas City branch, say that with inflation still above target and the economy healthy, there is no need to reduce borrowing costs, or at least not by much.

A big unknown for the Fed this year is whether Trump will impose tariffs, how sweeping they will be, and whether they will push up prices. Mass deportation of immigrants could also force employers to pay more for workers to fill jobs, which could also lift inflation.

Most economists forecast that widepread tariffs will likely lift inflation by roughly several-tenths of a percentage point - not a large amount, but potentially enough for the Fed to postpone rate cuts. It could take months for the tariffs to be formally imposed and then to evaluate their impact on the economy. Some economists don't think the impact will be apparent until next year.

Kevin Warsh, a former Fed governor and a potential candidate to replace Powell, argued in a recent column in the Wall Street Journal that Trump's promises to reduce regulation could push

back from the Trump administration.

If the plan is successful, the shares owned by the government would not have voting power, the person said. The government also would not get a seat on the new company's board.

ByteDance and TikTok did not immediately responded to a request for comment.

Under the plan, ByteDance would not have to completely cut ties with TikTok, a favorable outcome for its investors. But it would have to allow a "full U.S. board control," the person said.

Under the proposal, the Chinabased tech company would contribute TikTok's U.S. business without the proprietary algorithm that fuels what users see on the app, according to a document seen by the Associated Press. In exchange, ByteDance's existing investors will get equity in the new structure that emerges.

The proposal seems to mirror a strategy Steven Mnuchin, treasury secretary during Trump's first term, discussed Sunday on Fox News' Sunday Morning Futures - that a new investor in TikTok could simply "dilute down" the Chinese ownership and satisfy the law. Mnuchin has previously expressed interest in investing in the company.

"But the technology needs to be disconnected from China," he added. "It needs to be disconnected from ByteDance. There's absolutely no

Google for a fraction of the cost.

dustrial Average declined 0.8%.

Futures for the S&P 500 sank 2.3%

before the bell, while futures for the

technology-heavy Nasdaq tumbled

3.9%. Futures for the Dow Jones In-

The same tech companies that have

benefitted from the AI frenzy in the past

year were getting pummeled before mar-

kets even officially opened on Monday.

both lost around 12%, while software

giant Oracle lost 8%. Microsoft slid

more than 6% and Amazon was down

4.5%. Google parent company Alpha-

bet and Facebook parent Meta each lost

Chipmakers Nvidia and Broadcom

Trump, on Air Force One, noted that Ellison lives "right down the road" from his Mar-a-Lago estate, but added, "I never spoke to Larry about TikTok. I've spoken to many people about TikTok and there's great interest in TikTok.'

TikTok briefly shut down in the U.S. a week ago, but went back online after Trump said he would postpone the ban. Trump had unsuccessfully attempted a U.S. ban of the platform during his first term. But he has since reversed his position and has credited the platform with helping him win more young voters during last year's presidential election.

TikTok CEO Shou Chew attended Trump's inauguration Jan. 20, along with some other tech leaders who've been forging friendlier ties with the new administration.

Congress voted to ban TikTok in the U.S. out of concern that TikTok's ownership structure represented a security risk. The Biden administration argued in court for months that it was too much of a risk to allow a Chinese company to control the algorithm that fuels what people see on the app. Officials also raised concerns about user data collected on the platform.

However, to date, the U.S. hasn't provided public evidence of TikTok handing user data to Chinese authorities or allowing them to tinker with its algorithm.

### said Powell won't let Trump's attacks affect his

dent of the Fed's Cleveland branch, have argued nesses, and bring down inflation.

r direction, by re in the other ucing costs for busi-

#### **U.S. Steel defends Nippon deal**

### Ancora seeks to block Nippon Steel's U.S. Steel takeover

CLEVELAND, Jan 27, (AP): An asset manager is seeking to quash Nippon Steel's takeover of U.S. Steel and oust the leadership of the U.S. steelmaker after taking a stake in the company. Ancora reported acquiring a 0.18% stake in the

Pittsburgh company and said Monday that the board of U.S. Steel and its CEO David Burritt have prioritized the sale to Nippon because they stand to receive more than \$100 million if it goes forward.

Earlier this month Nippon Steel and U.S. Steel filed a federal lawsuit challenging a Biden administration decision to block Nippon's proposed \$15 billion acquisition citing national security.

Ancora is seeking an independent slate of directors at U.S. Steel and new CEO that are committed to walking away from the Nippon deal. In an open letter on Monday, the firm said it has nominated nine independent directors for election at U.S. Steel's annual shareholders meeting this year. Those directors have a plan that includes making Alan Kestenbaum, former Chairman and CEO of Stelco, the new CEO of U.S. Steel's.



A staff enters doorway next to Nippon Steel logo at the company's Kashima Plant in Kashima, Japan on Friday, Dec. 6, 2024. (AP)

U.S. Steel's turnaround, not trying to find alternative bidders or selling the company. It also wants them to pursue the \$565 million breakup fee.

"U.S. Steel is now in a dire state due its excessive capital spending, high debt, soft earnings and nonexistent contingency plan," Ancora wrote.

"There are consequences associated with hav-

ing out-of-touch leadership with weak involvement in local communities. Absent a miracle, Ancora believes a substantial and urgent reconstitution of the company's leadership is necessary," it continued.

U.S. Steel, based in Pittsburgh, said early Monday that it remains committed to pursuing a deal with Nippon, believing it is the best deal for the U.S. steel industry, supply chains and job market. It expressed concern over Ancora's plans.

"Ancora's interests are not aligned with all U. S. Steel stockholders," U.S. Steel said. "Our stockholders will not be well served by turning over control of the company to Ancora. We are also concerned about the motivations behind these nominations, given Ancora's and Alan Kestenbaum's recent dealings with failed bidder Cleveland-Cliffs.'

U.S. Steel rejected a bid from rival U.S. steelmaker Cleveland-Cliffs in favor of the offer from Nippon in 2023. Cleveland-Cliffs CEO Lourenco Goncalves said this month that he wanted to make a new bid for U.S. Steel.

Ancora is also based in Cleveland.

#### Ancora wants new board members to focus on

### China's delivery services at full throttle to meet festival shopping boom

BEIJING, Jan. 27, (Xinhua): When Wang Lijun returned to his hometown in Hebei for the Spring Festival this year, he didn't carry the usual load of holiday goods, as his New Year purchases -- juicy navel oranges from Jiangxi and wild vegetables from the northeast -- had already arrived at his doorstep via express delivery.

"Returning home for the Spring Festival used to be physically exhausting, but now it's a breeze," said the 50-year-old man, who spent eight months constructing cliffside roads deep in the Taihang Mountains.

Wang's shipments were just a fraction of the billions of parcels crisscrossing China as people shop for gourmet treats, festive goods and gifts for Chinese New Year, which falls on Jan. 29 this year. With e-commerce now an integral part of daily life, the holiday season has become one of the busiest times for the country's delivery network.

At Sanya Phoenix International Airport, a major hub in China's tropical island province of Hainan, packages of mangoes, dragon fruits and coconuts are flown across the country to eager holiday shoppers.

"Over 70 percent of the air-shipped parcels are fruits, and during peak times, more than 70 tonnes are dispatched daily," said Zhao He from the YTO Express branch at the airport. Even in the snowcovered northeastern regions, deliveries can arrive in as little as 24 hours.

Data from JD.com, a leading ecommerce platform, showed that Chinese consumers are enjoying a greater variety of specialties from across the country for the festival. For instance, the sales of local products from the coastal city of Shanghai have surged by 277 percent year on year in the inland Qinghai Province on the platform. Driven by the holiday shopping

frenzy, China's express delivery network has been operating at high capacity since the beginning of this year, according to the State Post Bureau.

During the first three days of the Spring Festival travel rush, which kicked off in mid-January, the daily average of express deliveries handled nationwide exceeded 670 million, a 29 percent jump from the same period in 2024, according to the bureau.

Festive shopping gained momentum as China tapped into its growing domestic consumption potential, driven by the rise of online retail and the rapid expansion of its delivery network. In 2024, the country's courier sector handled 174.5 billion parcels, with 974 million Chinese people shopping online by year-end.

In the distribution center of Yunda Express in Shanghai, the pre-holiday delivery is in full swing. To handle the surge in parcels, the company has activated all of its smart sorting lines in the center, expanded its fleet of vehicles and upgraded the equipment.

"We are also considering hiring more temporary workers to meet the business demand," said Yang Shuai, who is in charge of the center.

Logistics companies may face further challenges as many delivery workers, like all fellow Chinese, are returning to their hometowns for the Spring Festival, leading to a seasonal manpower shortage.

According to Ye Wenhui, manager of ZTO Express's Fengxian branch in Shanghai, only 30 percent of the couriers in the branch will stay on their post during the eight-day holiday which starts on Tuesday.

To boost staffing, couriers will be paid three times their usual pay during the holiday, with bonuses that guarantee daily incomes of 400 to 600 yuan (about 56 to 84 U.S. dollars) for delivering 200 to 300 packages. They'll also be able to take time off once their colleagues return.

Ye said that innovative solutions

have been put in place to address the staff shortage, such as setting up unattended pickup stations and adding delivery lockers to courier stores.

Cainiao Network, the logistics arm of Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba Group, has further alleviated labor shortages by deploying unmanned delivery vehicles.

These automated systems would handle the most labor-intensive transportation tasks, allowing on-site workers to focus on sorting and last-mile deliveries. A dedicated operation team has been established to ensure smooth functionality of unmanned vehicles during the holiday period.

According to a Cainiao delivery manager in east China's Hangzhou, this year, six unmanned vehicles will handle the transportation work, allowing 60 percent of the staff to enjoy their Spring Festival holiday, significantly higher than about 30 percent in past years.

Wang Lei, manager of a YTO Express branch in Shanghai's Xuhui District, said that a decline in delivery volumes is expected in the first three days of the holiday. "But it will surge afterward as people ship local specialties back to the metropolitan cities like Shanghai where they reside and work."

NEW YORK, Jan 27, (AP): Investors about 3.5% dumped technology stocks in premar-

US tech stocks plunge as

Chinese AI rival emerges

ket trading Monday, sending U.S. indexes sharply lower after Chinese artificial intelligence startup DeepSeek demonstrated a chatbot that it says riregard to AI infrastructure. vals the top versions from OpenAI and

guage) model for consumer use cases is one thing," Ives wrote in a note to clients. "Launching broader AI infrastructure is a whole other ballgame and nothing with DeepSeek makes us believe anything different.'

In early European trading, Germany's DAX dropped 1.1% to 21,178.37, while the CAC 40 in Paris shed 0.8% to 7,863.70. Britain's FTSE 100 declined 0.3% to 8.473.33.

In Asia, Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 0.7% to 20,197.77, with shares in e-commerce giant Alibaba gaining 2.9% while search engine company Baidu jumped 4.9%.

Analyst Dan Ives of Wedbush Secu-

rities said that while the DeepSeek AI technology is impressive, the U.S. tech sector is still far ahead of China with

"Launching a competitive (large lan-

# Features



### JLo gets standing ovation for musical performance

### Condon, Lopez unveil musical thriller at Sundance

PARK CITY, Utah, Jan 27, (AP): A lavish, MGM-style musical is not typical Sundance Film Festival fare. But Sunday night Bill Condon brought such a creation-well, part of one-to Park City, Utah, with his adaptation of "Kiss of the Spider Woman," starring Jennifer Lopez.

Audiences broke out in spontaneous applause during the screening for Lopez's song and dance numbers. She plays an old Hollywood screen siren in a movie-withinthe movie. The packed Eccles Theater also gave Lopez, wearing a glittery spiderweb themed frock, a standing ovation after the show.

"I've been waiting for this moment my whole life," Lopez said.

The story, which revolves around the conversations between two cellmates in an Argentine prison, was first a novel by Manuel Puig in 1976 and has been adapted for stage and screen over the years. A 1985 film adaptation starred William Hurt and Raul Julia. Hurt won an Oscar for his performance. On Broadway, it won multiple Tony Awards.

Condon wrote and directed this new version, which is seeking a distributor. Diego Luna plays an imprisoned revolutionary Valentin Arregui, whose new cellmate Luis Molina (Tonatiuh) loves movies, celebrity and glamour and enthusiastically recounts the story of a favorite movie musical, called "Kiss of the Spider Woman" to Valentin, giving them and the audience a break from their bleak reality.

While the film has memorable moments of escapist spectacle, it also delves into serious topics of gender identity. Molina tells Valentin that they don't feel like a man or a woman-which Valentin finds odd at first but grows to understand.

Before the screening, Condon said that one of the things the movie is about is "the attempt to bridge the incredible differences that separate us so often." He quoted President Donald Trump's recent remarks about two genders as official policy. "That's a sentiment I think you'll see that the movie

has a different point of view on," said Condon.

After the film, the discussion of gender identity and tolerance continued. Tonatiuh said it was difficult growing up as a "femme queer Latin kid in a culture that doesn't necessarily praise those things" and was told that it would be limiting in an acting career.

"When I got this material, I knew this person spiritually," Tonatiuh said. I understood someone who felt like a loser in their own life and learns how to be the hero of their own story. I got to show the entire spectrum from feminine to masculine and everything in between."

But most of all everyone was just excited to be in a real movie musical.

"I did write that line, 'I pity people who hate musi-cals," Condon said. "All the things that movies can do can happen in a musical."

Lopez said it was watching "West Side Story" every Thanksgiving on television that made her want to become a performer.

Condon, Lopez said through tears, "made my dreams come true.



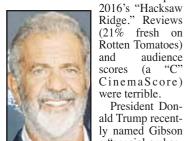
Jennifer Lopez, a cast member in 'Kiss of the Spider Woman,' poses at the premiere of the film during the Sundance Film Festival on Sunday, Jan. 26, 2025, in Park City, Utah. (AP)

#### 'Brutalist' expands

### **Flight Risk soars** to top box office

NEW YORK, Jan 27, (AP): Critics lambasted it and audiences didn't grade it much better. But despite the turbulence, Mel Gibson's "Flight Risk" managed to open No. 1 at the box office with a modest \$12 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

On a quiet weekend, even for the typically frigid movie-going month of January, the top spot went to the Li-onsgate thriller starring Mark Wahlberg as a pilot flying an Air Marshal (Michelle Dockery) and fugitive (Topher Grace) across Alaska. But it wasn't a particularly triumphant result for Gibson's directorial follow-up to



Gibson

were terrible. President Donald Trump recently named Gibson a "special ambassador" to Holly-

(21% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes)

audience

wood, along with Jon Voight and Sylvester Stallone. Going into the weekend, Hollywood's attention was more focused on the Sundance Film Festival and on Thursday's Oscar nominations, which were twice postponed by the wildfires in the Los Angeles region.

#### **Nominations**

The weekend was also a small test as to whether the once more common Oscar "bump" that can sometimes follow nominations still exists. Most contenders have by now completed the bulk of their theatrical runs and





are more likely to see an uptick on VOD or streaming.

But the weekend's most daring gambit was A24 pushing Brady Corbet's "The Brutalist" a three-anda-half-hour epic nominated for 10 Academy Awards, into wide release. Though some executives initially greeted "The Brutalist," which is running with an intermission, as "undistributable," Corbet has said, A24 acquired the film out of the Venice Film Festival and it's managed solid business, collecting \$6 million in limited release.

In wide release, it earned \$2.9 million - a far from blockbuster sum but the best weekend yet for "The Brutalist.

The audience was downright minuscule for another best-picture nominee: RaMell Ross' "Nickel Boys." Innovatively shot almost entirely in first-person POV, the Amazon MGM Studios release gathered just \$340,171 in 540 locations after expanding by 300 theaters.

Coming off one of the lowest Martin Luther King Jr. weekends in years, no new releases made a major impact.

Steven Soderbergh's "Presence," a well-reviewed horror film shot from the perspective of a ghost inside a suburban home, debuted with \$3.4 million in 1,750 locations. The film, released by Neon and acquired out of last year's Sundance, was made for just \$2 million.

The top spots otherwise went to holdovers. The Walt Disney Co.'s "Mufasa: The Lion King," in its sixth weekend of release, scored \$8.7 million to hold second place. After starting slow, the Barry Jenkins-directed film has amassed \$626.7 million globally.



### Sundance film sparks debate on photo authorship

### 'Stringer' probes iconic 'napalm girl' photo

PARK CITY, Utah, Jan 27, (AP): After a half-century of public silence, a freelance photographer from Vietnam has asserted he took one of the most renowned and impactful photos of the 20th century - the image of a naked girl fleeing a napalm attack in South Vietnam that has long been credited to a staff photographer from The Associated Press.

Nguyen Thanh Nghe claimed authorship of the Pulitzer Prizewinning "napalm girl" photograph in the new documentary "The Stringer" and on the sidelines of its premiere Saturday night at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

The AP conducted its own investigation and said it has no reason to conclude that no one other than the long-credited photographer, Nick Ut, made the picture. The news agency said it was "surprised and disappointed" that filmmakers portrayed it as having reviewed the film's materials and being dismissive. The AP said it saw the film for the first time at Sundance.

Nghe joined the filmmakers for the post-screening Q&A where he said, through a translator, "I took the photo." The audience cheered enthusiastically. He did not say why he waited so long to make the claim. vThe AP said it would review the material but wants to speak to contributors who signed non-disclosure materials for the filmmakers, including Nghe. "We cannot state more clearly that The Associated Press is only interested in the facts and a truthful history of this iconic photo.'

Nguyen says he took the iconic photo of Kim Phuc on June 8, 1972. Nghe said he went to the town of Trang Bang that day as a driver for an NBC news crew and captured the image of Phuc running down the street, crying and naked with arms outstretched. He said he sold his image to the AP for \$20, and they gave him a print of the photo that his wife later destroyed.

Representatives for the AP, who saw the film for the first time Saturday at the premiere, are contesting the film's implication that the company reviewed their findings and dismissed them.

"As recently as December, we reiterated our request to see the filmmakers' full materials and they did not respond, nor did they include AP's full response in the film," Lauren Easton, an AP spokesperson, said Sunday. "We were surprised and disappointed that the film portrayed AP as having reviewed the film's materials and being dismissive of the allegations, which is completely false.'

The film's investigation was led by husband-and-wife team of Gary Knight, founder of the VII Foundation, and producer Fiona Turner. Bao Nguyen, a Vietnamese American filmmaker, directed.

#### Responsibility

"I'm not a journalist by any stretch of the imagination," Nguyen said. "I had a healthy skepticism, as I think anyone would, going against a 53-year-old truth. ... But as a storyteller and a filmmaker, I thought it was my both or my responsibility and my privilege to be able to uplift the story of individuals like Nghe.'

Before having seen the film, the AP conducted its own investigation over six months and concluded it had "no reason to believe anyone other than Ut took the photo." Now, the AP is calling on the filmmakers to lift the non-disclosure agreements they placed on their subjects to allow the company to investigate more fully.

"AP stands ready to review any and all evidence and new information about this photo," Easton said.

Knight and Turner met with AP in London last June about the allegations. According to the AP, filmmakers requested the news organization sign a non-disclosure agreement before they provided their evidence. AP would not. The film suggests that evidence was presented to the AP, which the AP says is not true.

A primary source in the film is Carl Robinson, then an AP photo editor in Saigon, who was overruled in his judgment not to use the picture by Horst Faas, AP's Saigon chief of photos. Robinson says in the film

that Faas instructed him to "make it staff" and credit Ut for the photo. Both Faas and Yuichi "Jackson" Ishizaki, who developed the film, are dead. Robinson, 81, was dismissed by the AP in 1978.

On Saturday, a Sundance Institute moderator asked why he wanted to come forward with the allegations now. "I didn't want to die before this story came out," Robinson told the audience after the screening. "I wanted to find (Nghe) and say sorry."

A variety of witnesses interviewed by AP, including renowned correspondents such as Fox Butterfield and Peter Arnett and the photo's subject herself, Phuc, say they are certain Ut took the photo.

Robinson was one such person the AP attempted to speak to during their investigation but "were told we could only do so under conditions" that they said would have prevented them from "taking swift action if necessary.'

The film's investigation took over two years. The journalists enlisted a French forensics team, INDEX, to help determine the likelihood of whether Ut had been in a position to take the photo. The forensics team concluded that it was highly unlikely that Ut could have done it.

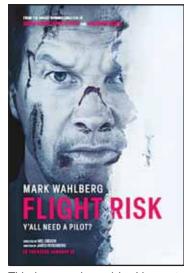
Ut's attorney, James Hornstein, had this to say Sunday after the premiere: "In due course, we will proceed to right this wrong in a courtroom where Nick Ut's reputation will be vindicated."

Knight referenced AP's investigation Saturday, telling the audience that the company's statement is available online. "They said they're open always to examining the truth. And I think it was a very reasonable thing to say," Knight said. "Our story is here and it's here for you all to see.'

He added: "Things happen in the field in the heat of the moment. We're all stronger if we examine ourselves, ask tough questions,

and we're open and honest about what goes on in our profession. Now more than ever, I would argue.'

"The Stringer" does not yet have distribution plans.



This image released by Lionsgate shows promotional art for 'Flight Risk.' (AP)

### Variety

KANSAS CITY, Mo.: You could say that Taylor Swift's championship era has reached its second consecutive season.

The 14-time Grammy Award-winning superstar returned to Arrowhead Stadium on Sunday night to watch her boyfriend,

Travis Kelce, and the rest of the Kansas City Chiefs beat the Buffalo Bills 32-29 for a spot in their third consecutive Super Bowl.

As confetti rained down on the field afterward, Swift and Kelce kissed in celebration. Swift gave Chiefs coach Andy Reid a big hug, and she continued the party with Kelce's mother, Donna, and some 80,000 fans who simply refused to leave their seats.

"I'm very thankful that I'm here in Kansas City, playing with the guys and everybody in this building," said Kelce, who had just two catches for 19 yards as the Bills

refused to let him beat them single-handedly. "It's a special, special place. We feel that every single day and we just try to take advantage of it and not let it slip out of our hands.

Swift began her high-profile romance with Kelce last season, when he invited the "Anti-Hero" singer to watch him in a September matchup with the Bears. And their relationship only seemed to blossom into the playoffs last season, with Swift celebrating on the field with Kelce after the Chiefs had beaten the Ravens in Baltimore for the AFC championship.

Then came the Super Bowl, and Swift's much-watched dash from a concert in Tokyo for kickoff of the big game in Las Vegas.

She made it with plenty of time to spare, of course. And Swift became the focus of attention in her own right, winning what appeared to be a beer-chugging contest, partying with celebrity suite mates such as Blake Lively, Ice Spice and Lana Del Rey, and standing next to Kelce's mother, Donna, while he held aloft the Lombardi Trophy following the 25-22 win over the 49ers.

On Sunday, Swift walked toward her usual suite about 90 minutes before kickoff against Buffalo. And while she was decked out in Chanel for their divisional-round win over Houston, Swift opted for a sleek black-and-gold Louis Vuitton look for the AFC title game, including a jacquard knit jacket that retails for \$5,000 and a stocking cap with a list price of \$830.

Modest fare compared to what suite prices for the Super Bowl will probably run. Swift will almost certainly be in New Orleans with her celebrity friends when the Chiefs go for an unprecedent-

ed third straight Lombardi Trophy against the Eagles on Feb. 9. They got a big game from Patrick Mahomes - no surprise there - and some key stops from their defense to end the Bills' season for the fourth time in the last five years. (AP)

#### 

AUCKLAND, New Zealand: Chinese sculptor Xu Hongfei has been showcasing his celebrated "Chubby Women" sculptures in the Auckland city center.

"Happiness and humour are the common languages of the world," Xu said. Through "Chubby Women" sculptures, he aims to share China's stories with the world.

The Auckland exhibition particularly featured the sculptor's latest artworks of a rugby team to celebrate the success of the New Zealand women's rugby sevens team as Olympic champions at the 2024 Olympic Games.

Hailing from Guangzhou in Guangdong Province, Xu is one of China's leading contemporary sculptors. His "Chubby Women" series has gained him international fame as the works celebrate body positivity, joy, and self-expression.

The exhibition, from Jan. 26 to Feb. 16, is part of the Chinese New Year celebrations in Auckland supported by the Auckland Council and city center. (Xinhua)



### **NEWS/FEATURES**



The Nation's Library in the Turkish capital, Ankara.

KUNA photo:

#### Nation's Library in Ankara ... colossal cultural architectural edifice

Fashion

The Nation's Library in Ankara is considered a huge cultural architectural edifice spanning 125,000 meters, which was inaugurated by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in February 2020.

The library can host nearly 5,500 people and houses four million printed books, 550,000 electronic books, more than six million online publications and numerous scientific sources. Situated at the Presidential Complex, the

uniquely designed facility is deemed the largest in Turkiye's history as it contains thousands of rare books and manuscripts in different languages and across various domains of knowledge. (KUNA)

#### Books

### Fedarko honored

### **Everett's 'James' wins** 2025 Carnegie Medal

NEW YORK, Jan 27, (AP): For author Percival Everett, libraries have long been a source of knowledge and discovery and pleasure, even of the forbidden kind.

"I remember making friends at age 13 with the librarian at the University of South Carolina, and she used to let me go through the stacks when I wasn't supposed to," Everett, who spent part of his childhood in Columbia, said during a telephone interview Sunday.

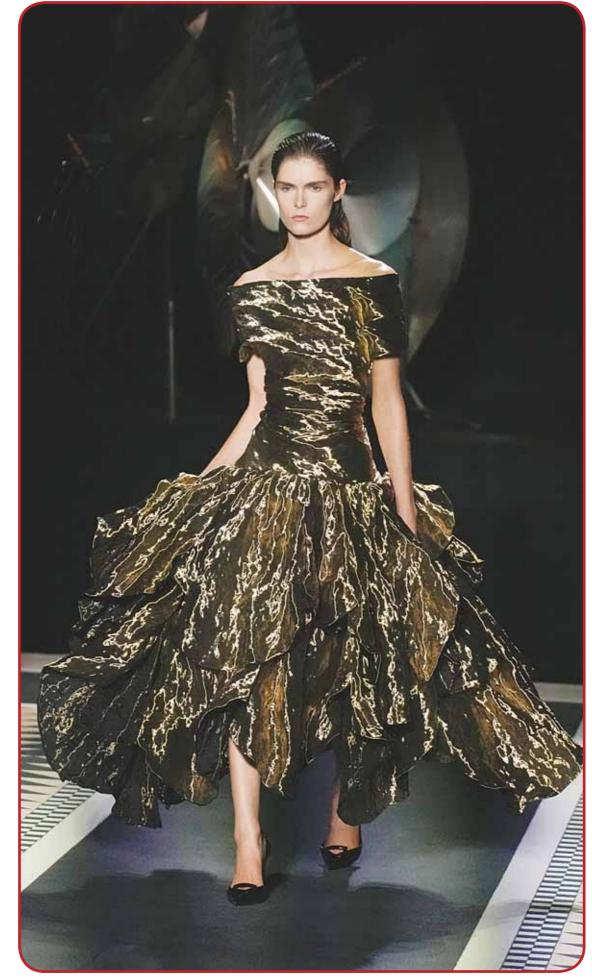
"One of the wonderful things about libraries is that when you're looking for one book, it's surrounded by other books that may not be connected to it. That's what you get (online) with links, but (in libraries) no one's decided what the links are.'

Everett's latest honor comes from the country's public libraries. On Sunday, the American Library Association announced that Everett's "James" was this year's winner of the Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction, which includes a \$5,000 cash award. Kevin Fedarko's "A Walk in the Park: The True Story of a Spectacular Misadventure in the Grand Canyon" was chosen for nonfiction.

Everett's acclaimed reworking of Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" from the perspective of Jim, Huck Finn's enslaved companion, has already received the National Book Award and the Kirkus Prize and is a finalist for a National Book Critics Circle award. "James" has even topped The New York Times fiction hardcover list, a rare feat in recent years for a literary work that wasn't a major book club pick or movie tie-in.

#### Masterpiece

"Percival Everett has written a modern masterpiece, a beautiful and important work that offers a fresh perspective from the eyes of a classic character," Allison Escoto, chair of the award's





### **Relief efforts**

### Carpenter, Eilish to rock the Grammys

NEW YORK, Jan 27, (AP): The 2025 Grammy Awards are right around the corner, which means it is time to get those viewing party plans in action. Allow us to help.

The 67th annual Grammy Awards will still take place Sunday, Feb. 2, at the Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles - though the Recording Academy has refocused its aim to support relief efforts following the devastating Los Angeles-area wildfires.

Here's what you need to know about watching the 2025 Grammys, including how to stream and where you can see music's biggest stars walking the red carpet.

The main show will air live on CBS and Paramount+ beginning at 8 p.m. Eastern. Paramount+ with Showtime subscribers can also watch live and on demand.

Benson Boone, Billie Eilish, Chappell Roan, Charli xcx, Doechii, RAYE, Sabrina Carpenter, Shakira and Teddy Swims will perform at the Grammys.

Comedian Trevor Noah will host the show for the fifth consecutive time.

The only other people to host five or more Grammy telecasts were musical artists: Andy Williams hosted seven shows, followed by John Denver with six and LL Cool J with five.



be watched through live TV streaming services that in-

clude CBS in their lineup, like Hulu + Live TV, YouTube TV and FuboTV.

Paramount+ subscribers will be able to stream the Grammy Awards the day after the ceremony. The Associated Press will stream a three-hour ed carpet show with interviews and fashion foot-

The Grammys can also Carpenter

selection committee, said in a statement. "Kevin Fedarko's unforgettable journey through the otherworldly depths of the Grand Canyon shows us the triumphs and pitfalls of exploration and illuminates the many vital lessons we can all learn from our precious natural world."

Fedarko is a former Time magazine correspondent whose work also has appeared in The New York Times and Esquire. A Pittsburgh native fascinated by distant places, Fedarko has a long history with libraries - Carnegie libraries. He remembers visiting two while growing up, notably one in the suburb of Oakmont near the hairdressing salon his parents ran. He would read biographies of historical figures from George Washington to Daniel Boone, and otherwise think of libraries as "important threads running through his life," windows to a "wider world."

Now a resident of Flagstaff, Arizona, Fedarko says that he relied in part on the library at the nearby Northern Arizona University campus for both "A Walk in the Park" and its predecessor, also about the Grand Canyon, "The Emerald Mile."

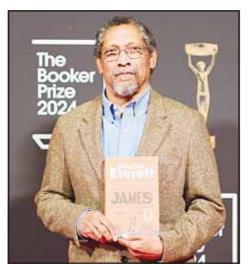
"The library has an important and unique collection about the Grand Canyon, and it's the backbone of the kind of history that helps form the framework of both books," he says. "Neither of them could have been done without the library.'

Previous winners of the medals, established in 2012 with a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, includes Donna Tartt's "The Goldfinch," Colson Whitehead's "The Underground Railroad" and Doris Kearns Goodwin's "The Bully Pulpit."

This year's finalists besides "James" in the fiction category were Jiaming Tang's "Cinema Love" and Kavin Akbar's "Martyr!'

Adam Higginbotham's "Challenger: A True Story of Heroism and Disaster on the Edge of Space" and Emily Nussbaum's "Cue the Sun! The Invention of Reality TV" were the nonfiction runners-up.

All three fiction nominees were published by Penguin Random House and all three nonfiction finalists by Simon & Schuster.



Percival Everett arrives at the Booker Prize award dinner in London, Tuesday, Nov. 12, 2024. (AP)

A model wears a creation for the women's Lanvin Fall-Winter 2025-2026 collection, that was presented in Paris, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2025. (AP)

### Kenzo finds its groove

### Sacai brings wild nostalgia to Paris

PARIS, Jan 27, (AP): Sacai, Japan's

biggest fashion powerhouse, brought the wild side to Paris Fashion Week with Sunday's collection that reimagined childhood nostalgia through a lens of cutting-edge design.

Inspired by the 1963 children's picture book "Where the Wild Things Are" by Maurice Sendak, Chitose Abe delivered a playful, untamed vision that blended beastly textures with her trademark precision, resulting in a spectacle both bold and innovative.

The show leaned into functionality and whimsy, with shaggy fauxknit pelts adorning utility olive suits, oversized scarves, and knit blousons that channeled the spirit of untamed creatures. Faux fur trims added flair to skirts and reimagined outerwear, while nostalgic nods to Maurice Sendak's iconic illustrations brought

a touch of whimsy. Collaborations added an extra edge, with workwear staples elevated into fashion statements, rugged boots offering a wild twist, and polished footwear tying together the

refined evening looks. Accessories like branded water

bottles and utility bags infused the show with a modern, outdoorsy aesthetic, capturing the thrill of untamed creativity and leaving the audience enthralled.

Meanwhile, Kenzo brought an electrifying jolt to Paris Fashion Week with a collection that blended nostalgia, cultural exchange and sharp tailoring under the leadership of Nigo.

With the graffiti artist Futura as a collaborator, the collection offered a fresh take on the brand's signature aesthetic, fusing archival motifs with urban edge. The creative partnership channeled decades of shared influences, layering Kenzo's heritage with the raw energy of 1990s street culture.

Bold patterns and thoughtful craftsmanship defined the runway. Futura's iconic atom logo appeared reimagined with Kenzo's florals on bombers, wide-leg pants, and tailored jackets.

Accessories, inspired by every-

day objects like shopping bags and bouquet wraps, played with Japanese calligraphy and nostalgic cultural tags, adding tactile depth to the collection. These pieces reflected the era of cross-cultural exchange between Tokyo and New York, a key theme throughout the show.

The collection unveiled on Friday also showcased archival references with a contemporary twist. Train motifs, a nod to Kenzo's late 1990s designs, appeared on suits and outerwear, while refined paisleys were integrated into modern workwear.

Weathered denim and six-button jackets brought a touch of sophistication to the nostalgic energy, blending vintage charm with precise tailoring. The collection's footwear - chunky loafers and revisited Mary Janes added playful contrast, grounding the designs in an approachable yet avant-garde aesthetic.

The atmosphere in the venue echoed the creative energy on display, with notable guests from fashion and music worlds contributing to the buzz.

age. It will be streamed on YouTube and APNews. com.

#### Most nominated

Beyoncé leads the Grammy nods with 11, bringing her career total to 99 nominations. That makes her the most nominated artist in Grammy history.

As of 2023, she's also the most decorated artist, having earned 32 trophies across her career.

Post Malone, Billie Eilish, Kendrick Lamar and Charli XCX follow with seven nominations.

Taylor Swift and first-time nominees Sabrina Carpenter and Chappell Roan boast six nominations each.

The 2025 Grammy Awards will go on as planned but will focus its attention on wildfire relief efforts.

Each year, the Recording Academy hosts a multitude of events to welcome the music industry during Grammy week; record labels do the same. However, many institutions have canceled their plans - Universal Music Group, BMG and Warner Music Group among them - and instead are allocating resources to Los Angeles-area wildfire relief and rebuilding efforts.

On Wednesday, the Recording Academy announced it had condensed pre-Grammy week plans to just four events, each featuring a fundraising element.

Events like the annual pre-Grammy Black Music Collective event, Grammy advocacy brunch, and others scheduled to take place at the immersive pop-up Grammy house have been canceled. In all, at least 16 pre-Grammy events sponsored by the Recording Academy have been canceled.

"We understand how devastating this past week has been on this city and its people. This is our home, it's home to thousands of music professionals, and many of us have been negatively impacted," Recording Academy CEO Harvey Mason jr. said in a statement.

Last week, the Recording Academy and Musi-Cares launched the Los Angeles Fire Relief Effort with a \$1 million donation. According to the letter, thanks to additional contributions, they've already distributed \$2 million in emergency aid.

Spotify has canceled all of its Grammy week events, including its annual Best New Artist showcase. "We've decided that the most impactful approach is canceling all our Grammy Week events, including our annual Best New Artist party, and redirecting funds to support efforts to reach local fans and charitable organizations," Spotify's Global Head of Music Partnerships & Audience Joe Hadley wrote in an announcement.

Universal Music Group, one of the big three major record labels, has canceled all of its Grammy-related events. Those include its annual artist showcase, held on Saturday, and its after-party on the Sunday of Grammy week. Instead, it will redirect those funds to wildfire relief.

BMG will no longer host its pre-Grammy party and a representative for Warner Music Group confirmed to The Associated Press that the major label will not host a party this year and are instead "redirecting funds to support efforts." Earlier this week, WMG and the Blavatnik Family Foundation Social Justice Fund pledged \$1 million to Los Angeles area fire relief and rebuilding efforts.

Sony Music Group confirmed it has canceled its events during Grammy week and after the ceremony and will instead redirect efforts and money to local relief efforts.

### Experts weigh on risks and benefits of GLP-1 drugs

## Weight loss drugs lower health risks with added dangers

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

### **By Ziyad Al-Aly**

#### Washington University in St. Louis

Several years ago, a little-known drug named Ozempic - previously used only to treat diabetes - emerged as a promising new drug for weight management.

The Food and Drug Administration's approval of Ozempic in 2021 for weight loss treatment ushered in a new era for the class of drugs called glucagon-like peptide-1 agonists, or GLP-1.

Today, GLP-1 drugs, including Wegovy, Mounjaro and Zepbound, have be-come household names and key tools in the fight against obesity: 1 in 8 American adults say they have used a GLP-1 drug, and forecasts show that by 2030, 1 in 10 Americans will likely be using these medications.

Now, research from my lab and others suggests that GLP-1 drugs could help treat dozens of other ailments as well, including cognitive issues and addiction problems. However, my colleagues and I also found previously unidentified risks.

I am a physician-scientist and I direct a clinical epidemiology center focused on addressing public health's most urgent questions. My team works to address critical knowledge gaps about COVID-19, long COVID, influenza, vaccines, effectiveness and risks of commonly used drugs, and more.

On Jan. 20, 2025, my team published a study of more than 2.4 million people that evaluated the risks and benefits of GLP-1 drugs across 175 possible health outcomes. We found that these drugs lowered risks of 42 health outcomes, nearly a quarter of the total that we analyzed. These include neurocognitive disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia, substance use and addiction disorders, clotting disorders and several other conditions.

Unfortunately, we also found that GLP-1 drugs come with significant side effects and increase the risk of 19 health conditions we studied, such as gastrointestinal issues, kidney stones and acute pancreatitis, in which the pancreas becomes inflamed and dysfunctional.

One of the most important health benefits we found was that the GLP-1 drugs lowered the risk of neurodegenerative disorders, including Alzheimer's disease and dementia. These findings align with other research, including evidence from preclinical studies showing that these drugs may reduce inflammation in the brain and enhance the brain's ability to form and strengthen connections between its cells, improving how they communicate with one another. These effects contribute to mitigating cognitive decline.

Two other key studies have shown that patients treated with a GLP-1 drug for diabetes had a lower risk of dementia.

All of these studies strongly point to a potential therapeutic use of GLP-1 drugs in treatment of the cognitive decline. Ongoing randomized trials - the gold standard for evaluating new uses of drugs - are looking at the effects of GLP-1 drugs in early Alzheimer's disease, with results expected later in 2025.

#### Addiction

GLP-1 drugs have also demonstrated potential in reducing risks of several substance use disorders such as those involving alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, opioids and stimulants. This may be due to the ability of these drugs to modulate reward pathways, impulse control and inflammatory processes in the brain.

The effectiveness of GLP-1 drugs in curbing addictive behavior may explain their spectacular success in treating obesity, a chronic disease state that many have suggested is indeed a food addiction disorder.

Our study demonstrated a reduced risk of suicidal thoughts and self-harm among people using GLP-1 drugs. This finding is particularly significant given earlier reports of suicidal thoughts and self-injury in people using GLP-1 drugs. In response to those reports, the European Medicines Agency conducted a review of all available data and concluded that there was no evidence of increased risk of suicidality in people using GLP-1 drugs. Now at least two studies, including our own, show that GLP-1 drugs actually reduce the risk of suicidality. In addition to the well-documented effects of GLP-1 drugs in reducing risks of adverse cardiovascular and kidney outcomes, our study shows a significant effect in reducing risk of blood clotting as well as deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism.

One puzzling finding in our study is the reduced risk of infectious diseases such as pneumonia and sepsis. Our data complements another recent study that came to a similar conclusion showing that GLP-1 drugs reduced risk of cardiovascular death and death due to infectious causes, primarily COVID-19.

This is especially important since COVID-19 is regarded as a significant cardiovascular risk factor. Whether GLP-1 drugs completely offset the increased risk of cardiovascular disease associated with COVID-19 needs to be thoroughly evaluated.

GLP-1 drugs may also be useful in treating fatty liver disease and conditions ranging from asthma to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, sleep apnea, osteoarthritis, depression and eve disorders.

Despite their broad therapeutic potential, GLP-1 drugs are not without risks. Gastrointestinal issues, such as nausea, vomiting, constipation and gastroesophageal reflux disease are among the most common adverse effects associated with GLP-1 drugs.

Our study also identified other risks, including low blood pressure, sleep problems, headaches, formation of kidney stones, and gall bladder disease and diseases associated with the bile ducts. We also saw increased risks of druginduced inflammation of the kidneys and pancreas - both serious conditions that can result in long-term health problems. These findings underscore the importance of careful monitoring in people who are taking GLP-1 medications.

A significant challenge with using GLP-1 drugs is the high rates at which patients stop using them, often driven by their exorbitant cost or the emergence of adverse effects. Discontinuation can lead to rapid weight gain.

That's a problem, because obesity is a chronic disease. GLP-1 drugs provide effective treatment but do not address the underlying causes of obesity and metabolic dysfunction. As a result, GLP-1 drugs need to be taken long term to sustain their effectiveness and prevent rebound weight gain.

In addition, many questions remain about the long-term effectiveness and risks of these drugs as well as whether there are differences between GLP-1 formulations. Addressing these questions is critical to guide clinical practice. (AP)

### Food reform versus vaccine worries

### US health groups prepare for the unthinkable: Working with RFK Jr.

WASHINGTON, Jan 27, (AP): When President Donald Trump tapped Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to become the nation's top health official, his administration inherited a sprawling list of ideas to "Make America Healthy Again," from banning TV drug advertisements to dropping restrictions on raw milk.

While those unorthodox proposals - and Kennedy's discredited views on vaccines - have dominated recent headlines, a slate of more familiar ideas have attracted interest on Capitol Hill and across the US: making school lunches healthier, banning certain food additives and cracking down on ultraprocessed foods linked to obesity and diabetes.

For decades, public health groups have called for similar steps, lobbying federal leaders and mounting public campaigns about the risks of American diets loaded with salt, sugar and fat.

As Kennedy faces Senate confirmation hearings Wednesday and Thursday, health advocates find themselves in an uncomfortable position: voicing cautious support for some of Kennedy's ideas while warning of the catastrophic consequences of others.

"If there's an opportunity to advance the public health, you have to seize it," said Dr. Peter Lurie, a former FDA official who now leads the nonprofit Center for Science in the Public



Robert F. Kennedy Jr. attends the 60th Presidential Inauguration in the Rotunda of the US Capitol in Washington, Monday, 2025. (AP) Jan. 20,

Control and Prevention under Barack Obama. "In medicine we say: 'Above all, do no harm.' I'm certainly not convinced that RFK Jr. wouldn't do a lot of harm to our vaccine policy and to our kids.

Still, such worries haven't stopped some Democrats from finding shared fornia parents concerned about food dyes in cereal and Midwestern factory workers resentful of COVID-19 vaccine mandates.

But the clash between Trump's antiregulatory approach and Kennedy's anticorporate stance has many observers skeptical that much of the so-called MAHA agenda will ever happen.

Requiring healthier foods in school lunches, for example, has long been opposed by food and agriculture companies that overwhelmingly backed Trump in the last election, donating to his campaign by a nearly 4-to-1 margin over Kamala Harris, according to records compiled by Opensecrets.org. During Trump's first term, political appointees weakened school nutrition guidelines introduced as part of Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" campaign. The rules required schools to offer more fruit and vegetable options.

Making major changes to the federal program involves coordination between the Agriculture Department, the Department of Health and Human Services and dozens of state educational programs.

"They don't have the policy coherence to make that happen," said Dr. Georges Benjamin of the American Public Health Association. "People have been talking about improving the quality of school lunches for many years, but it takes a lot of money and collaboration to do it at a national level.'

### **India records 1st GBS death**

Polio vaccines

NEW DELHI, Jan 27, (Xinhua); A man suspected to have contracted Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS) has died in the western Indian state of Maharashtra, health officials said Monday.

The GBS is a neurological disease that causes sudden numbness, weakness and pain, besides triggering loose motions.

This is the first death in Maharashtra suspected to have been caused by the GBS.

According to officials, a GBS outbreak has been reported in Pune, about 150 km southeast of Mumbai, where the number of cases has risen to 101

Reports said the health department's rapid response team and officials from Pune Municipal Corporation have intensified their surveillance in the affected areas.

Doctors say bacterial and viral infections generally lead to the GBS as they weaken the immunity of patients. Although it is prevalent in both small children and young people, it will not lead to an epidemic or pandemic.

People have been urged not to panic as most patients recover fully with treatment, health officials said

### **Cervical cancer awareness** HPV vaccine, routine tests can save lives: Dr. Noura

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Dr. Noura Al-Ibrahim, a gynecological oncology and advanced laparoscopic surgery specialist, highlighted the importance of raising awareness about cervical cancer during Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, which is being observed every January, reports Al-Jarida daily.

She emphasized that cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer globally and the third most common in Kuwait among individuals aged 15 to 44.

Dr. Al-Ibrahim explained that 99 percent of cervical cancer cases are caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV) and the best prevention method is the HPV vaccine.

This vaccine is available free of charge in all government hospitals in Kuwait for both men and women aged 9 to 45. The goal is to prevent transmission of the virus between spouses.

She also mentioned that early detection of cervical cancer greatly improves recovery rates, as the disease s more treatable in its early stages.

Routine screening is vital to identify the disease early, ensuring higher chances of successful treatment, she said.

Regarding symptoms, Dr. Al-Ibrahim noted that early cervical cancer



Dr Noura Al-Ibrahim

often shows no symptoms. As the disease progresses, symptoms may include changes in menstrual cycles, abdominal pain and swelling in the legs.

She urged women to prioritize regular check-ups to detect the disease early, as untreated advanced cases can be fatal.

Dr. Al-Ibrahim reassured that despite its severity, cervical cancer is one of the cancers that can be prevented through early detection and vaccination against HPV.

#### '12 mln doses delivered'

13

Interest. "So you can't ignore the guy on everything because you oppose him on some things."

Like many experts, Lurie says Kennedy's record on vaccines should disqualify him from becoming health secretary. And he's deeply skeptical Kennedy can deliver on his ideas for food and nutrition.

Kennedy's confirmation is far from certain in the Senate, where he is expected to face pointed questioning from both Republicans and Democrats on the chamber's health and finance committees. Kennedy has been downplaying his long history in the antivaccine movement, but experts say that's where lawmakers should focus.

"The elephant in the room is vaccine policy," said Dr. Tom Frieden, former director of the Centers for Disease interests.

Former Ohio congressman Tim Ryan penned an op-ed last month ti-"Hey Democrats: We should tled: work with RFK Jr. on fixing America's food system.'

Sen. Cory Booker, a vegan, told reporters that he and Kennedy are "talking out of the same playbook" when it comes to food reforms.

Booker's office did not respond to a request for comment.

Trump's unlikely alliance with Kennedy, a lifelong Democrat until 2023, reflects a diverse segment of Americans who increasingly worry about chemicals in their food and water and distrust medical experts, government officials, and big food and drugmakers.

Supporters of Kennedy's longshot presidential campaign included Cali-

Even seemingly smaller goals like banning potentially harmful food additives would require new regulations and staffers at FDA - which Kennedy has vowed to "clear out."

U.S. foods contain hundreds of ingredients that aren't permitted in Europe because American companies aren't required to seek FDA approval before introducing them. Companies can self-certify that new colors or chemicals are "generally recognized as safe.'

Efforts to reform the decades-old system have been rejected in court and defeated in Congress, with backing from industry lobbyists.

Polio: Afghanistan initiated its first vaccination campaign in 2025, targeting over 6 million children under the age of 5 from poliovirus, the Ministry of Public Health reported.

Scheduled from Monday through Wednesday, the campaign will deliver anti-polio drops to children in 16 out of the country's 34 provinces, the state-run National Radio and Television quoted the ministry as reporting.

In his message, Noor Jalal Jalali, acting minister of public health, urged tribal elders, religious scholars and parents to support polio workers. Social support plays an essential role in preventing polio, he said.

### Vaccines cut malaria cases in Africa

NAIROBI, Jan 27, (Xinhua): The delivery of 12 million malaria vaccine doses in 17 African countries since 2023 has contributed to a significant drop in caseload and fatalities among high-risk demographics including children, according to the Gavi vaccine alliance.

About 5 million children in the 17 malaria-endemic African countries, which represents more than 70 percent of the global malaria burden. have been protected from the disease after being inoculated, Gavi said in a statement issued Thursday in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital.

Gavi Chief Executive Officer Sania Nishtar described the consistent rollout of the malaria vaccine as a game changer in combating the mosquito-transmitted disease. "This early data is a small indicator

of the potential public health impact of a program we hope to scale up dramatically by the end of this decade, protecting tens of millions of children around the world, and reducing the stress malaria imposes on African health systems," Nishtar said.

The successful implementation of pilot malaria vaccination programs in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi from 2019 to 2023, which reached 2 million children and led to a 13 percent drop in overall child mortality, has informed rollout in other high-burden countries on the continent, according to Gavi.







الفداديل

### **SPORTS**

### Oklahoma City 17-5 on the road

## Shai scores 33 points, NBA-leading OKC beats Trail Blazers



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander drives to the basket as Portland Trail Blazers forward Toumani Camara defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Portland, Ore. (AP)

PORTLAND, Ore., Jan 27, (AP): Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 33 points and the NBA-leading Oklahoma City Thunder beat the Portland Trail Blazers 118-108.

Jalen Williams added 24 points and eight assists, and Isaiah Hartenstein had 14 points and 11 rebounds to help the Thunder rebound from a home loss to Dallas on Thursday night. Oklahoma City is 37-8 overall and 17-5 on the road. Deni Avdija had 28 points, eight assists and seven re-

bounds for Portland.

Portland made things interesting in the final period, cutting it to 93-88 on Anfernee Simons' free throws. The Thunder Oklahoma City leads the league in steals for the second straight season. According to coach Mark Daigenault, the biggest reason is the defensive prowess of their best players, not anything he is coaching. "On our level, it's the quality of defensive personnel," he said.

Trail Blazers rookie center Donovan Clingan has been in and out of the lineup this season with injuries. He returned Friday night in a win over Charlotte, finishing with 13 rebounds and four blocks. "I'm happy to have him back out there," coach Chauncey Billups said.

The Thunder outscored the Trail Blazers 39-27 in the second quarter.

Oklahoma City had a 52-22 edge in points in the paint and a 28-13 advantage on second- chance points.

The Thunder are at Golden State on Wednesday night. The Trail Blazers host Milwaukee on Tuesday night.

Things are looking up for the Phoenix Suns on the basketball court these days. The same can't be said for Jusuf Nurkic.

The struggling Nurkic has gone from the starting center to a benchwarmer in the space of about a month. Coach Mike Budenholzer doesn't seem like he's going to reverse that decision any time soon - especially with the Suns winning eight of their last 11 games and the emergence of newcomer Nick Richards. Nurkic made waves when the center told The Arizona Republic before a 119-109 victory over the Washington Wizards that he didn't have a conversation with Budenholzer for a stretch that lasted two months and that the two "don't have a relationship."

"He hasn't played," Budenholzer said when asked about Nurkic's comments. "I'm sure he's frustrated, so I respect that."

The 30-year-old Nurkic has been a starting center for most of the past decade, but his numbers have fallen since joining the Suns before last season. This season, he's averaging just 8.2 points and 9.6 rebounds while shooting 45.4% from the field.

He's had other problems, too. He was suspended three games after a fight with Dallas' Naji Marshall and P.J. Washington. He also missed the team's most recent fivegame trip after dealing with the flu.

Nurkic was available Saturday against the Wizards, but didn't play.

Richards - who was added in a trade with Charlotte with Jan. 15 - has taken the bulk of the minutes in the post over the past four games. He's averaged 13.2 points and 12.2 rebounds and had 20 points and 19 rebounds against the Wizards.

ards. "We've got three of four guys who play the same position," Budenholzer said. "We're going to go with who we think gives us our best chance. You've got to earn your minutes. That's been communicated."

The Suns could deal Nurkic before the Feb. 6 trade deadline, but it's not a certainty given the team's salary cap situation and the center's poor performance this season. He's in the third season of a \$70 million, four-year deal.

Phoenix came into this season with high expectations thanks to the star trio of Kevin Durant, Devin Booker and Bradley Beal, but have struggled with consistency.



after winning the Farmers Insurance

Open golf tournament at Torrey Pines

in San Diego. (AP)

**Del Rey wins Ras Al Khaimah Championship** 

RAS AL KHAIMAH, United Arab Emirates, Jan 27, (AP): Alejandro del Rey of Spain won the Ras Al Khaimah Championship for his first European tour title, shooting a third straight 6-under 66 for a four-stroke victory.

Del Rey had a bogey-free weekend at Al Hamra Golf Club, finishing at 22 under. He was making his 70th tour start.

"I'm just grateful and I'm very happy that this finally came," Del Rey said. "I've always felt about myself that I'm a great closer of golf tournaments. It just felt great today, felt very natural and very easy." Marcus Armitage of England

### Spaniard claims 1st European tour title

was second after a 68

Daniel van Tonder of South Africa overcame a seven-stroke deficit with a 5-under 67, then beat countryman Altin van der Merwe with a par on the first playoff hole in the SDC Open.

Van Tonder won for the third time this season on the Sunshine Tour - all in playoffs - to regain top spot on the money list.

Van Tonder birdied the final four holes at Zebula Golf Estate and Spa to get into the playoff at 16-under 272. Van Der Merwe shot 74, making a double bogey on No. 7 and bogeys on 13 and 17. He had another double bogey on the par-5 18th in the playoff.

PGA Tour Champions player Michael Wright won the Webex Players Series Victoria at age 50, beating fellow Australian Jak Carter with a par on the second hole of a playoff. Wright hit a bunker shot inside 3 feet on the deciding hole, while Carter made a double bogey

en route to his third playoff loss of the season. Wright closed with a 2-under 68 to match Carter at 15 under at Rosebud Country Club. Carter, 10th entering the round, shot a 64.

Wright won for the first time since the 2011 WA PGA Championship.

Julien Sale of France won the Philippine Open for his first professional victory, overcoming a closing bogey to become the first Asian Tour member to win in his tour debut.

Sale shot a 5-under 65 on Manila Southwoods' Masters layout for a one-stroke victory over Japan's Ikemura (68) and Thailand's Sadom Kaewkanjana (67). Sale, a 27-year-old Parisian born on Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean - finished at 11-under 269. Harris English clearly relishes a challenge. When he faced months of rehabilitation after hip surgery, he says he welcomed it. When he encounters ferocious wind or devilish course setups at his beloved Torrey Pines, he embraces the idea of thriving when par equals success.

And when English had to protect a one-shot lead in daunting conditions on that coastal course Saturday, he methodically put in the work necessary to grind out a win.

"Doesn't have to look pretty," he said. "But I just had to get the job done."

English held off hard-charging Sam Stevens to win the Farmers Insurance Open by one shot, securing his fifth career PGA Tour victory with a 1-over 73 in challenging weather.

English finished his first tour win since 2021 at 8-under 280.

### World champ lands 6 quad jumps

### Malinin cruises to third consecutive title

WICHITA, Kansas, Jan 27, (AP): Ilia Malinin laid in the middle of the ice at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships on Sunday as everyone else stood in ovation.

He has that effect on people. In another stunning display of athleticism, the reigning world cham-



God" landed a quad flip and a quad lutz-triple toe loop combination but chose to skip over his quad axel for a triple axel instead.

Malinin was philosophical about it afterward, saying, "There's the pressure of trying to do (the quad axel) at every competition. People might want to see something bigger and better, but I want to make sure I am consistent." That hasn't been a problem. Penske's pair of Porsches dominate

## The Captain wins Rolex 24 at Daytona for 2nd straight year

pion landed six of his seven planned quad jumps - including the quad axel, the jump that only Malinin has ever landed in competition - and finished with 333.31 points after his free skate to win his third consecutive national championship at INTRUST Bank Arena in Wichita, Kansas.

Andrew Torgashev landed a pair of quads during his free skate and finished second with 286.49 points, while Camden Pulkinen took advantage of a sloppy free skate from Jimmy Ma to secure the bronze medal with 252.92 points.

Malinin was trying to become the first skater ever to land seven clean quads in competition, and he came close. He opened with the quad flip, easily landed his quad axel and hit his quad lutz - the second-hardest of the quads. But then came his only miscue, when Malinin fell on his quad loop, and he punched the air in mid-routine as if he was miffed at himself.

He landed three more quads, all of them leading into other jumps, and finished it all off with a crowd-pleasing backflip.

"It wasn't the perfect program that I exactly wanted, but I think I gave a good, solid start for what is working in this program," said Malinin, who was Ilia Malinin performs during the men's free skate competition at the U.S. figure skating championships in Wichita, Kan. (AP)

using nationals as a dress rehearsal for the upcoming world championships in Boston.

If it had been international competition, Malinin's score would have nearly matched Nathan Chen's record of 335.30 points.

"I'm still not at my full potential yet and there's a lot bigger limit, I guess, that I can go for," Malinin said.

Malinin went into the free skate with a record margin for nationals - 19.14 points over anyone else in the field after a sublime short program Saturday that was even a bit tame by his standards. The self-proclaimed "Quad The 20-year-old from Fairfax, Virginia, has won eight consecutive competitions since a second-place finish at the Grand Prix de France last year. That stretch of podium perfection included his second national title, two victories at the prestigious Grand Prix Final, and a world championship that Malinin will attempt to defend on home soil in March.

It's a run that prompted Ma to vault Malinin into the same category of greatness as Chen, the retired Olympic champion.

"I don't even think of Ilia as competition anymore because it's not something I think I can achieve," Ma said. "It's just an honor to be friends and compete with two people who can be considered GOATs in their own way."

The 23-year-old Torgashev, who was third at the Grand Prix de France, was so pumped about his performance to the symphonic suite "Scheherazade" that earned him a silver medal that he said stepping off the ice Sunday, "I ... crushed it."

Pulkinen rounded out the podium with a second consecutive bronze medal at nationals.



Porsche Penske Motorsport team members, from left to right, Belgium's Laurens Vanthoor, Brazil's Felipe Nasr and Britain's Nick Tandy display their Rolex watches they received after winning the IMSA Rolex 24 hour auto race at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla. (AP)

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla., Jan 27, (AP): Roger Penske started his 59th season in motorsports the same way he closed last year - as a champion.

Porsche Penske Motorsport on Sunday won the Rolex 24 at Daytona for the second consecutive year, and third time overall, to continue the domination "The Captain" flexed all of last season.

Penske opened 2024 by winning the most prestigious sports car race in North America, added a 20th victory in the Indianapolis 500, won a third consecutive NASCAR championship and his pair of Porsches won both the World Endurance Championship title and the IMSA crown.

Now back at Daytona International Speedway for the Rolex, the same place and race where Team Penske debuted in 1966, Penske returned to victory lane. And, as he always does, the billionaire who turns 88 next month stayed awake and sat with the team on the timing stand for the entire 24 hours.

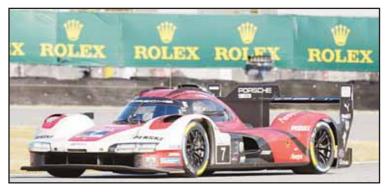
His two cars dominated the twiceround-the-clock endurance race and finished first and third. Once attrition hit other entries in the top prototype class, the Porsches ran first and second for large portions of the race. It was the No. 7 full-time IMSA entry that won, making it back-to-back victories for that car despite a different driver lineup.

"What an incredible day for the entire Porsche Penske Motorsport organization. Both of our Porsche 963s and the drivers showed great speed and reliability," Penske said. "The crews performed flawlessly, which is a result of meticulous preparation by everyone on the team.

"2024 was an unmatched season of success starting with a win at the 24 Hours of Daytona and it's great to repeat that success to start 2025 with the third overall win for Team Penske and the 20th victory for Porsche." Felipe Nasr won last year with Dane Cameron and Josef Newgarden, but Cameron was let go at the end of 2024 and Newgarden wasn't part of this year's Rolex lineup. So it was Nasr again, only this time he was paired with Nick Tandy, who will be his IMSA co-driver all season, and Laurens Vanthoor, Penske's reigning WEC champion.

It was Nasr's second overall victory, and he also won a Rolex watch for a class victory in 2022. Tandy also earned a Rolex with a 2014 class victory, but Sunday was his first overall win. It was the first watch for Vanthoor, who had finished in the top five of class in six of the last seven years. All three drivers were in tears after the race.Nasr said it is Penske who pushes the team to achieve the excellence he demands.

"The feeling is amazing, just to see how much energy he brings into the team. You get out of the car, he's like: 'How's the car? How's the handling?' Like, he's very interested in every detail," Nasr said. "He doesn't miss a pit stop when the cars are coming in, and he's looking at it all and making comments. I just have a lot of admiration for everything he does, and it stands for the team. It's a very, very unique opportunity to be driving for Porsche Penske Motorsport here." Even though the No. 7 was so dominant - especially after sunrise on Sunday - the drivers were still challenged until the checkered flag.



Laurens Vanthoor, of Belgium, comes out of a turn in the Porsche 963 during IMSA Rolex 24 hour auto race at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla. (AP)

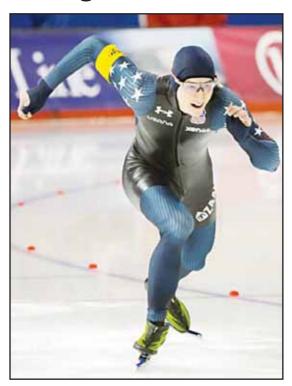
### **Stolz completes golden hat-trick in Calgary**

OTTAWA, Jan 27, (Xinhua): Jordan Stolz of the United States completed his golden hat-trick at the ISU Speed Skating World Cup in Calgary, Canada as he captured the title of the men's 500 meters.

Having reaped victories in the 1,500m on Friday and 1,000m on Saturday, the 20-year-old American crossed the line in 33.85 seconds, only 0.16 seconds off the track record he had set at last year's World Single

#### Change Name

I, AAMIR holder of Indian passport no. N9727668 having permanent address MOHAMMEDIYAH VPO GALIAKOT Dist DUNGARPUR PIN CODE 314026 RAJASTHAN, INDIA residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as under: Given Name-AAMIR MUSTANSIR and Surname: DALWALA



United States' Jordan Stolz races in the men's 500-meter event at the ISU World Cup speedskating competition in Calgary, Alberta. (AP) Distance Championships. "I felt like, technically, I

raced really well, although I was a little tired from the last two days," Stolz said. Jenning de Boo of the

Jenning de Boo of the Netherlands, who had finished runner-up to Stolz in Saturday's men's 1,000m race, finished 0.02 behind for another silver.

"(When I crossed the line), I was celebrating, but then again not all-out, because I saw that I was just behind (Stolz's) time. It was a little short, but good enough for me. Next time I hope to get past him," said de Boo.

Damian Zurek of Poland took home a bronze in 34.07 seconds.

Stolz's compatriot Greta Myers clinched her career first World Cup podium finish as she clocked eight minutes and 36.64 seconds to win the women's mass start. Chinese Jin Wenjing also took her career first podium in second with the bronze medal going to Michelle Uhrig of Germany.

#### ARAB TIMES, TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2025

#### Montpellier moves off bottom of league

### Nice blanks Marseille to move up to fourth place in France

PARIS, Jan 27, (AP): Striker Evann Guessand scored one goal and set up Mohamed-Ali Cho as Nice handed Marseille a 2-0 defeat to move up to fourth place in the French league.

The loss also dented second-placed Marseille's flagging bid to catch Ligue 1 leader Paris Saint-Germain, which is 10 points clear. Nice is one point behind Monaco in third and four points adrift of Marseille, which lost for the fourth time this season.

It was a bad night for Marseille with the visitors' attack failing to click and its malfunctioning defense yet again conceding a soft goal, this time after seven minutes

Lilian Brassier carelessly lost the ball near midfield

and, after winning it back, then got the ball caught in his feet as Guessand took it off him. Guessand sprinted through before adroitly clipping the ball over goalkeeper Gerónimo Rulli, with Brassier trying to roll the ball off the line with his boot.

The second goal came in the 51st as Guessand expertly controlled the ball on his chest and advanced powerfully to the edge of the penalty area before passing to Cho, who finished neatly in the bottom right corner.

Earlier, striker Othmane Maamma came off the bench to score the decisive goal as Montpellier won 2-1 at Toulouse to move off the bottom of the league.

The 19-year-old Maamma headed in a pinpoint cross from creative midfielder Téji Savanier in the 83rd minute

Midfielder Cristian Casseres gave Toulouse the lead in the 59th minute, but central defender Modibo Sagnan equalized three minutes later for Montpellier.

A second straight win put Montpellier into 17th place in the 18-team league and dropped Le Havre down to last.

Seventh-place Lens beat Angers 1-0 at home, with Facundo Medina setting up Poland winger Przemyslaw Frankowski for the only goal shortly after halftime

Elsewhere, imposing striker Ludovic Ajorque found

the net as eighth-placed Brest won 1-0 at Le Havre, boosting team confidence before facing Real Madrid on Wednesday in the final league-phase game of the Champions League.

On a low-scoring day, striker Mostafa Mohamed grabbed a last-minute goal for Nantes in a 1-1 home draw with Lyon.

Forward Ernest Nuamah put Lyon ahead in the 10th when he turned in Argentina left back Nicolás Tagliafico's first-time cross past former Lyon goalkeeper Anthony Lopes.

PSG remains unbeaten but was held to a 1-1 home draw by Reims , with new star signing Khvicha Kvaratskhelia setting up PSG's goal on his debut.

### **Ronaldo reacts angrily to VAR** decision in Al-Nassr's victory

RIYADH, Jan 27: Despite his legendary football career, Cristiano Ronaldo, the captain of Al-Nassr Saudi Club, continues to amaze with his relentless goal-scoring, record-breaking, and achievements.

Approaching his 40th birthday, Ronaldo played a crucial role in securing three points for Al-Nassr in the Saudi Pro League by defeating Al-Fateh 3-1 in the 17th round of the competition.

Ronaldo made his mark in the 87th minute, converting a precise pass from Sadio Mané into what seemed like a guaranteed goal, briefly raising his tally to 15 goals at the top of the league's scoring chart. However, his joy turned to frustration when the referee ruled the goal offside after consulting VAR.

The decision left Ronaldo visibly upset, with his frustration captured by photographers as he gestured angrily on the pitch. Following the final whistle, Ronaldo expressed his discontent directly to the TV broadcaster's camera, waving his hands in frustration, clearly feeling a sense of injustice.

Before heading to the locker room, Ronaldo had a brief exchange with his friend, renowned British journalist Piers Morgan, who humorously remarked, "You were robbed - it was a beautiful goal."

Elsewhere in the league, Al-Khaleej edged past Al-Akhdoud with a 2-1 victory, Al-Ahli domi-nated Al-Riyadh 5-0, and Al-Taawoun and Al-Arabi played out a goalless draw.



Al-Fateh players chase Cristiano Ronaldo for the ball during the league match between Al-Nassr and Al-Fateh.

#### Al-Qadasiya cruises past Al-Nasr

### Al-Qurain moves closer to the Golden Square

#### **By Khaled Al-Enezi** Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Al-Qadasiya cruised to a decisive 101-71 victory over Al-Nasr, while Al-Qurain triumphed over Al-Sulaibikhat 90-81 in the Basketball Federation Hall at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex, as part of the general basketball league competitions.

With this win, Al-Qadasiya boosted its tally to 12 points from six matches, securing second place in the standings. Al-Qurain also climbed to 11 points from seven matches,

moving closer to securing a spot in the "golden square" alongside Kuwait Club, Al-Qadasiya, and Kazma. Meanwhile, Al-Sulaibikhat's record now stands at 11 points from eight games

The clash between Al-Qurain and Al-Sulaibikhat was highly competitive. The "Red" team edged out the first quarter with a four-point lead (24-20). The second quarter, however, saw the lowest scoring in the game, with Al-Sulaibikhat managing 13 points to Al-Qurain's 11, giving Al-Ŝulaibikhat a six-point advantage at halftime (37-31).

third quarter proved

## West Indies levels series with **120-run win against Pakistan**

Hosts pushed to bottom of World Test Championship table

MULTAN, Pakistan, Jan 27, (AP): West Indies spun out Pakistan for 133 on a rank turning pitch to record a series-leveling 120run win inside three days of the second and final test on Monday.

Pakistan, which needed a further



Indies' famous win with more than an hour to go until lunch on Day 3 by clean bowling Sajid Khan.

It was a remarkable turnaround for West Indies which lost the first test by 127 runs at the same venue and were 7-38 on Day 1 of the second test before its tailenders lifted them to 163 all out for a slender first innings lead of nine runs

Captain Kraigg Brathwaite's half



Players battling for the ball.

for Al-Qurain, as they erupted with 31 points, thanks to a cohesive team effort led by standout performances. Jones Mom scored 18 points before leaving the game due to injury, while center Waverly Austin added 24 points and dominated defensively. The young trio of Mustafa Al-Rifai (8 points), Adel Al-Saeed (13 points), and Walid Dazzaz (18 points) also contributed significantly to the victory

On the other hand, Al-Sulaibikhat struggled to match expectations, with most players underperforming except for the outstanding American Mikey Dixon, who delivered a remarkable 46-point performance. Dixon impressed with his long-range shooting and penetration ability but could not turn the tide for his team. Al-Qurain maintained control of the game until the final whistle.

178 runs for an improbable win on its own engineered spinning wicket, fell quickly to Jomel Warrican's left-arm spin on Day 3 as the West Indies gained its first test win in Pakistan in over 34 years.

"We haven't won here in a while so to come here and do it as a young group is incredible," West Indies captain Kraigg Brathwaite said, referring to the tourists' last win in Pakistan by seven wickets at Faisalabad in Nov. 1990.

"On this pitch, there's a ball with your name on it around the corner... it was a good experience. When you get on better pitches, you can have a similar mindset and it will help you in the long run." Warrican claimed 5-27 to finish the series with a series-leading 19 wickets and also pushed Pakistan to the bottom of the World Test Championship table as both teams ended its two-year campaigns.

West Indies Jomel Warrican, center, celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of Pakistan's Salman Ali Agha during the day-three of the second cricket test match between Pakistan and West Indies, in Multan, Pakistan. (AP)

Resuming at 76-4 Monday, Pakistan lost both overnight batters without adding to the total, as Kevin Sinclair (3-61) had Saud Shakeel caught in the slips off the third ball of the morning and Warrican clean bowled nightwatchman Kashif Ali in the next over.

Mohammad Rizwan (25) and Salman Ali Agha (15) added 39 runs while trying to use their feet against the spinners before both fell to the leftarm spin of Warrican.

Salman had already survived a close stumping chance off Warrican but was finally deceived by a looping delivery and was out lbw, while Rizwan couldn't read Warrican's brilliant delivery that spun back into him and knocked back the stumps.

The spinner then wrapped up West

century in the second innings then led West Indies to post 244 for an overall lead of 253 runs before Pakistan's batters fell into their own trap of a turning pitch against the tourists spinners.

Pakistan captain Shan Masood believed his bowlers allowed the opposition's tailenders too many runs in the first innings and that pushed his team behind in the game.

"Yes, they batted well, but we have to learn too," Masood said. "It's been a habit, it happened in South Africa as well." West Indies finished eighth on the WTC table and Pakistan was at No. 9 with Australia and South Africa already qualifying for the final at Lord's in June.

Masood defended Pakistan's ploy of making spin pitches which saw them using industrial-sized fans and patio heaters against both England and West Indies which earned them three successive home wins before Monday's defeat.

### 'They barely miss'

### Sinner's style draws comparisons to Djokovic

MELBOURNE, Australia, Jan 27, (AP): Of all the praise bestowed on Jannik Sinner after he won his second consecutive Australian Open championship, and third Grand Slam title overall, nothing felt as significant as the comparison made by runner-up Alexander Zverev.

Facing Sinner, particularly on hard courts, reminded Zverev a lot of trying to solve the challenge presented by none other than 24-time major champion Novak Djokovic.

'He's very, very similar to Novak when he was at his best. They barely miss. Like, barely miss. They make you think like you have to overhit all the time to have a chance in a rally against them," Zverev said after losing to Sinner 6-3, 7-6 (4), 6-3 at Melbourne Park on Sunday night.

"It's very, very difficult to win a point from the back of the court against them - against Novak and him," said Zverev, who is ranked No. 2 but felt much further away from No. 1 Sinner in Rod Laver Arena. "(Both) move, obviously, tremendous. They're constantly on the baseline. They don't give you any space. They don't give you any time.

Sinner, still just 23, is a long way from achieving just a fraction of what Djokovic has at 37, of course.

And just as Djokovic had a couple of hurdles by the names of Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal to deal with, Sinner is not alone among the newest generation of tennis stars.

His top rival at this point is Carlos Alcaraz, who has four Slam victories at age 21 - and won all three matches he played against Sinner in 2024. Still, it made sense to think of Djokovic while watching Sinner extend his record in major finals to 3-0, which includes a U.S. Open title in September.

The never-give-an-inch court coverage. The squeaking sneakers while sprinting, stretching, sliding to reach shots that most other players wouldn't. The ability to flip from defense to offense in a split second. The wherewithal and reflexes to neutralize even the biggest servers. Add it all up - plus a serve good enough to avoid any break points against Zverev - and Sinner is cer-tainly formidable.

Those Djokovic-like tendencies are not mere coincidence.

Sinner, who is from Italy, modeled himself after the Serbian star.

"Game style-wise I looked up to him, trying to understand what he's doing, how he handles the pressure moments and important moments," Sinner said. "I still believe we are different as players, because everyone is different, but for sure we have



Jannik Sinner of Italy plays a backhand return to Alexander Zverev of Germany during the men's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia. (AP)

similarities. The similarities are having quite clean ball-striking from the baseline, having good movement, understanding a little bit where your opponent (is going to play) the ball."

The swift improvement Sinner has made over the past couple of years is unmistakable

It's why he ascended atop the rankings last June and hasn't budged. It's why he is 80-6 with nine titles since the start of last season. It's why no one wants to play him these days.

Zverev was 4-2 against Sinner before Sunday, including wins at the U.S. Open in 2021 and 2023.

How much has Sinner changed since then?

"He serves better. He returns better. He hits his forehand better. He hits his backhand better. He moves better. He volleys better. I mean, there's nothing that he doesn't do better right now," Zverev said. "I remember those matches. Before, I always felt like once I was getting on top of the rally, I was winning most of those rallies. Now it's like he's prime Novak. It's so difficult to go through him."

The upcoming task will be to get better on clay and grass, the surfaces at the French Open and Wimbledon. Before play begins at Roland Garros in May, Sinner has a hearing scheduled in April in the World Anti-Doping Agency's appeal of a ruling that cleared him in a doping case.





#### Petrovic and Nebojsa pose for camera after the press conference for the Super Cup.



'The chances of both teams winning are equal'

### **Qadsia's Petrovic acknowledges the steep challenge of facing Kuwait Club**

#### By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 27: Qadsia coach Zeljko Petrovic acknowledged the challenge of facing Kuwait Club in the Super Cup final, a sentiment echoed by Kuwait Club's Montenegrin coach, Nebojsa Jovovic, during a press conference at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium.

Petrovic emphasized his goal of securing the Super Cup title at Kuwait Club's expense, acknowledging that it would be a tough task for the reigning champions, given the quality players Kuwait Club possesses.

"I have full trust in all the Qadsia players, but I rely on the players who are match-ready," Petrovic said. He hinted at possible inclusions in the lineup, with the return of key players who had been sidelined by injuries, such as Khaled Ibrahim who featured in part of the semifinal match—Abdullah Mutawa, and goalkeeper Khaled Al-Rashidi.

"My aim is to win my first title with Qadsia, to make the fans happy, and to add another championship to the team's collection," Petrovic added.

He went on to praise Kuwait Club as a tough and well-equipped opponent, highlighting their deep squad, including 6 or 7 international players on the bench, and expressing satisfaction with his team's progress.

Qadsia goalkeeper Ali Jarrah underlined the importance of the match, acknowledging the strength of Kuwait Club, a team with a history of winning championships. He called for strong fan support, recognizing that the fans are a key motivator for the players.

Meanwhile, Jovovic shared his



Kuwait Club and Al-Qadsiya both looking for their first local title this season.

enthusiasm, noting that both he and the players are motivated to achieve a positive result and secure the Super Cup, the first title of the current season. "The chances of both teams winning are equal. The most important thing is to score goals and not concede," he said. Kuwait Club player Ali Hussein

expressed the team's commitment to

putting in a performance worthy of the club's history and winning the title for their fans. "I'm happy to serve my team in whatever role is needed, showing that the team values me," he said.

ment

Kuwait Club faces Qadsiya at

7:15 pm. This marks the seventeenth

edition of the prestigious tourna-

The two teams have previously met 9 times in the Super Cup final, with Kuwait Club emerging victorious 6 times and Qadsiya 3 times. The most recent meeting between

compared to 3 for Al-Arabi.

Kuwait Club leads the tournament's history with 7 titles, while

Qadsiya has secured 6 victories,

the two sides in the competition was in 2019, where Qadsiya triumphed with a 1-0 win. Tonight's clash will be the third encounter between Kuwait Club and Qadsiya this season. The teams first met in the Zain Premier League, with Kuwait winning the first leg by a narrow margin of 1-0. However, in January, Qadsiya handed Kuwait Club its first league defeat of the sea-

son with a 2-1 victory. Kuwait Club will be without the services of strikers Ibrahim Kamil and Tunisian Yassin Al-Khenisi for today's match. Kamil is sidelined for about two months due to a hamstring tear, while Al-Khenisi is dealing with a severe muscle strain.

Meanwhile, The coordination meeting for the Super Cup final of the 2024-2025 sports season was held at the meeting hall of Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium. The session was attended by Dr. Saleh Al-Majroub, Secretary-General of the Kuwait Football Association, along with members of the working committees and representatives from various state ministries.

Dr. Al-Majroub took the opportunity to provide a detailed explanation regarding the entry procedures for the public, media, and VIPs, emphasizing the importance of collaboration with security personnel and volunteers to ensure smooth operations.

## **Barcelona blitzes Valencia**

### Four goals in opening 24 minutes

seven points off leader Real Madrid, which won 3-0 at Valladolid on Saturday with a hat trick by Kylian Mbappé. Atletico was held 1-1 by Villarreal.

"We hadn't been doing well in the league and we needed to bounce back with a victory like that" I forge said "We have to keep fighting"

that," López said. "We have to keep fighting." Barcelona was coming off victories in the Champions League, Copa del Rey and the Spanwas coming off a 5-4 win over Benfica in the Champions League and beating Real Betis 5-1 in the Copa del Rey and Real Madrid 5-2 in the Spanish Super Cup. Valencia is 19th in the 20-team standings.

The club had the return of defender Mouctar Diakhaby 11 months after he sustained a serious knee injury. "The only positive from this game was the re-

the third minute, Ferran Torres added to the lead in the eighth, Raphinha found the net in the 14th and Fermín López struck in the 24th at Montjuic stadium.

MADRID, Jan 27, (AP): Barcelo-

na got back on track in the Span-

ish league by overwhelming Valen-

cia with four players scoring in the

Frenkie de Jong opened the scoring in

first 24 minutes of a 7-1 rout.

López added the fifth in first-half stoppage time as Barcelona ended the first half with a 5-0 lead.

Valencia got its goal with Hugo Duro in the 59th before Barcelona scored again with Robert Lewandowski in the 66th and an own-goal by César Tárrega in the 75th.

The victory moved Barcelona within three points of second-placed Atletico Madrid and

ish Super Cup, but had been winless in its last four league games.

Hansi Flick became the second-fastest coach to reach 100 goals with Barcelona, which has now scored 101 goals in 32 games in all competitions under the German. Helenio Herrera reached the mark in 31 matches in the 1950s.

Luis Enrique and Tito Vilanova each needed 34 games to reach the 100 mark, three quicker than Pep Guardiola at 37 matches.

Barcelona has scored five goals or more in four of its last five games across all competitions. It

turn of Diakhaby," Valencia coach Carlos Corberán said. "We all know how important he is for us."

Midtable Real Sociedad fell 3-0 at home against 14th-placed Getafe, losing for the third time in a row across all competitions.

Randy Nteka scored in the 80th and 83rd minutes as seventh-placed Rayo Vallecano came from behind to beat eighth-placed Girona 2-1.

Fourth-placed Athletic Bilbao was held to a 0-0 home draw against struggling Leganes.



Valencia's Cesar Tarrega, left, and Barcelona's Robert Lewandowski challenge for the ball during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Barcelona and Valencia at the Lluis Companys Olympic Stadium in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

Mike creates siege mentality

amid Dortmund's struggles

### World Cup experience will shape team's future

### Kuwait wraps up campaign against Japan

#### By Khaled Al-Enezi

#### Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

ZAGREB, Jan 27: Kuwait concluded its journey in the 29th Handball World Cup, held across Croatia, Denmark, and Norway, with a final match against Japan tonight at 8:00 pm to determine 27th and 28th place in the "President's Cup" classification round.

This marked Kuwait's ninth participation in the tournament and its first in 15 years, following its last appearance in the 2009 World Cup in Croatia.

In the current tournament, Kuwait competed in Group Three during the preliminary round, facing tough losses against Austria, France, and Qatar. In the classification stage, the team was placed in Group Two, securing victories over Guinea (26-24) and Algeria (38-31) but falling to Poland (32-42). This performance set up its match against Japan, the runnerup of Group One, to determine final rankings.

Faisal Saywan, Technical Director of Kuwait's handball teams, outlined the federation's strategy to sustain development and prepare for future international competitions, including the 2027 World Cup in Germany. He emphasized the importance of competing in the Asian Championship in January 2026, with goals to advance as far as possible and secure a qualification spot for the next World Cup.

Saywan praised the national team's participation in the World Cup, stating that competing at a global level greatly benefited the players, particularly the younger athletes. He highlighted the opportunity to face world-class teams and gain experience in one of the most competitive handball tournaments. He acknowledged the challenges posed by the fast pace and tightly scheduled matches, which required frequent player rotations and significant effort to maintain performance levels. He noted that while it took time for the team to adjust to the championship atmosphere, the experience was invaluable for the players, technical staff, and administrators alike.

Saywan described Kuwait's participation as successful in many respects, providing insights into international tournament operations and building connections with teams, players, and experts. He stressed that this experience would be instrumental in shaping the future of Kuwaiti handball, laying the foundation for continued growth and success.

The Kuwaiti delegation aims to capitalize on the lessons learned during this championship to elevate the nation's handball program and achieve greater milestones in upcoming events.



Faisal Saywan, Technical Director of Kuwait's handball teams.

BERLIN, Jan 27, (Xinhua): With one notable exception, things seem to be business as usual for Mike Tullberg. While the 39-year-old Dane typically prepares Borussia Dortmund's under-19 side for the Youth League, he now finds himself coaching the senior team in its upcoming clash against Shakhtar - an interim solution after Nuri Sahin's

dismissal. Given that direct qualification for the next round of the newly formed 2024-2025 UEFA Champions League appears unlikely, and with the play-offs already secured, Tullberg's task is to deliver a respectable performance amid a deep sporting and structural crisis for last year's Champions League finalists.

BVB remains in limbo, seemingly in need of a squad overhaul and leadership restructuring. On top of that is the pressing need to find a new head coach - possibly two - one to guide the team until season's end and another to oversee a more extensive rebuild.

"I can't reinvent football in six days," said the former Hearts striker. "My focus is attitude, body language, passion, and courageous forward-bound defending." In the midst of this turmoil, Tullberg's chances of keeping the senior role for any extended period are slim; the club has so far only confirmed his presence for Wednesday's match. Undeterred, he is trying to instill a sense of robust self-confidence in the team despite the uncertainty.

Off the pitch, media reports suggest a possible dismissal of Technical Director Sven Mislintat, linked to a power struggle with Sporting Director Sebastian Kehl. Although Kehl recently extended his contract until 2027, the German transfer window closes on February 3, making it a challenge to sign new arrivals or manage potential departures. Winger Karim Adeyemi, for instance, is said to be on Napoli's wish list.

Meanwhile, CEO Lars Ricken is scrutinizing coaching options, while Tullberg attempts to create a siege mentality to shield the squad from outside pressures. He is taking the team's 2-2 league draw against Bremen as a fresh starting point after a series of discouraging defeats.

With modest objectives set, Tullberg's day-to-day approach sees him throwing all his energy into the job until Wednesday's final whistle. "All of this is not about me, but I can't hide what I am," he said. Fans caught a glimpse of his passion when he paced the touchline against Bremen.

The hope is that Tullberg can translate his drive into a positive impact on the players.



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The players hold final training for the match against Japan.

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