



MPs to tackle PM interrogation in intense second session

Crucial debates ahead

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: The National Assembly will hold its second ordinary session on Nov 28-29, 2023 to discuss the following:

- Grilling motion of MP Mehalhal Al-Mudhaf against HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on failing to adhere to the directives included in the Amiri speech, confusing government strategies and not responding to parliamentary queries under the pretext that they are unconstitutional;
- Voting on nominating the State Audit Bureau (SAB) chairman after the resignation of Faisal Al-Shaya;
- Deliberation and voting on the second report of the Housing Affairs Committee about the real estate agencies and combating monopoly of plots, which was unanimously approved in the first reading on Nov 14, 2023;
- 11th report of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee on bills regarding the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI);
- Sixth report of the Disabled Affairs Committee on amending Law No. 8/2010;
- Ninth report of the Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee on the proposed amendment of Law No. 17/1960;
- First report of the Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee on amending Central Agency for Public Tenders Law No. 49/2016;
- Third report of the Oil and Energy Committee about the bill on establishing shareholding company for advanced oil industries;
- Ninth report of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee on amending Law No. 16/2008 to transform Kuwait Airways Corporation into a shareholding national company;

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Drone damages vessel

Israeli-owned ship targeted in suspected Iranian attack

DUBAI, Nov 25, (AP): A container ship owned by an Israeli billionaire came under attack by a suspected Iranian drone in the Indian Ocean as Israel wages war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip, an American defense official said Saturday.

The attack Friday on the CMA CGM Symi comes as global shipping increasingly finds itself targeted in the weeks-long war that threatens to become a wider regional conflict - even as a truce has halted fighting and Hamas exchanges hostages for Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

The defense official, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence matters, said the Malta-flagged vessel was suspected to have been targeted by a triangle-shaped, bomb-carrying Shahed-136 drone while in international waters. The drone exploded, causing damage to the ship but not injuring any of its crew.

"We continue to monitor the situation closely," the official said. The official declined to elaborate on what intelligence the U.S. military gathered to assess that Iran was behind the attack, though authorities suspect Tehran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard carried out the assault.

The same drones have been used by Russia in its war on Ukraine, as recently as in a barrage launched Saturday that Kyiv described as Moscow's biggest drone attack since the war began.

Al-Mayadeen, a pan-Arab satellite channel that is politically allied with the Iranian-backed Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, reported that an Israeli ship had been targeted in the Indian Ocean. The channel cited anonymous sources for the report, which Iranian media later cited.

CMA CGM, a major shipper based in Marseille, France, referred questions to the Symi's owner, Singapore-based Eastern Pacific Shipping. That company is ultimately controlled by Israeli billionaire Idan Ofer.

A statement issued on behalf of Eastern Pacific acknowledged the company being "aware of claims that a container ship under the company's management was targeted in a possible security incident overnight on Friday." "The vessel in question is currently sailing as planned," the statement said. "All crew are safe and well."

The company through representatives declined to answer any questions. The Israeli military referred questions to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, which did not respond.

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's Ministry of Defense (MoD) announced Saturday that all ground forces participating in the "Integration Ex I" due Sunday have arrived in Kuwait. The exercise will conclude on December 7.

The exercise will be hosted by the General Command of the Kuwaiti Army, represented by its ground forces, with the participation of the Peninsula Shield Force, the ministry said in a press release. (KUNA)

GAZA: Suad Al-Imam, Kuwait TV correspondent in the Gaza Strip, survived Thursday the Israeli occupation forces' bombardment, which targeted a house near Kuwait hospital, in Rafah City, to the south of the Strip.

Speaking in a statement to KUNA, Al-Imam said that she and her accompanying crew survived while they were standing in front of the hospital. (KUNA)

BEIRUT: Syrian government forces' shelling of a northwestern village Saturday killed at least nine people, including six children, as they picked olives, opposition activists said.

The shelling of the village of Qawqafeen, in Idlib province, is the latest violation of a truce reached in March 2020 between Russia and Turkey, who back rival sides in Syria's 12-year conflict that has killed half a million people. (AP)

TEHRAN: An avalanche killed five mountain climbers and injured four others from an all-Iranian climbing team in west Iran, state media reported on Saturday.

A report by the state-owned IRNA news agency said rescue teams recovered the bodies of five climbers from San Boran peak, some 300 kilometers (about 186 miles) southwest of the capital Tehran. The other four injured were taken to hospital. (AP)

BRUSSELS: The European Parliament Thursday adopted a resolution condemning the deterioration of the human rights' situation in Iran.

The text adopted by 516 votes in favour, four against with 27 abstentions "strongly condemn Iran's practice of arbitrary detention, withholding medical treatment, police violence, torture, capital punishment, and the alarming rise in the number of executions." (KUNA)

KUWAIT GEARS UP TO TREAT INJURED PALESTINIANS

Tears, joy as swap unfolds

■ Critical supplies reach Gaza ■ Filipino, Thai hostages among freed

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip, Nov 25, (Agencies): Hamas was preparing to release more than a dozen hostages Saturday for several dozen Palestinian prisoners held by Israel, part of an exchange on the second day of a cease-fire that has allowed critical humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip and given civilians their first respite after seven weeks of war.

While uncertainty remained around the details of the exchange, there was optimism, too, amid the scenes of joyous families reuniting on both sides. On the first day of the four-day cease-fire, Hamas released 24 of the about 240 hostages taken during its Oct. 7 attack on Israel that triggered the war, and Israel freed 39 Palestinians from prison. Those freed in Gaza were 13 Israelis, 10 Thais and a Filipino.

On Saturday, Hamas provided mediators Egypt and Qatar with a list of 14 hostages to be released, and the list has been passed along to Israel, according to an Egyptian official speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not permitted to talk about details of the ongoing negotiations. A second Egyptian official, also speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed the details.

Under the truce agreement, Hamas will release one Israeli hostage for every three prisoners freed. Israel's Prison Service said earlier Saturday it was preparing 42 prisoners for release. It was not immediately clear how many non-Israeli captives may also be released.

Overall, Hamas is to release at least 50 Israeli hostages, and Israel 150 Palestinian prisoners, during the four-day truce, all woman and minors. Israel has said the truce can be extended an extra day for every additional 10 hostages freed - something U.S. President Joe Biden said he hoped would occur.

Separately, a Qatari delegation arrived in Israel on Saturday to coordinate with parties on the ground and "ensure the deal continues to move smoothly," according to a diplomat briefed on the visit. The diplomat spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss details with the media.

Prepare

Elsewhere, Kuwaiti Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi has instructed the public medical facilities namely hospitals to prepare for hosting and treating injured Palestinians, the Ministry of Health announced on Friday.

The MoH said in a statement that the minister had given the instructions in line with the State of Kuwait unwavering support for the Palestinian cause and in accordance with guidelines by the political leadership and recommendations made by the National Assembly during a session held on November 1 for discussing the Zionist breaches of Gaza Strip.

The Ministry of Health will coordinate with other concerned public departments to organize reception of the injured Palestinian brothers and prepare for their transfer to Kuwait.

It lauded some private health institutions that decided to receive and treat some of the injured Palestinians expected to be brought to Kuwait.

The start of the truce Friday morning brought the first quiet for 2.3 million Palestinians reeling from relentless Israeli bombardment that has killed thousands, driven three-quarters of the population from their homes and leveled residential areas. Rocket fire from Gaza militants into Israel went silent as well.

For Emad Abu Hajer, a resident of the Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza City area, the pause meant he could again search through the rubble of his home, which was flattened in an Israeli attack last week.

Digging

He found the bodies of a cousin and nephew, bring the death toll in the attack to 19. With his sister and two other relatives still missing, he resumed his digging Saturday.

"We want to find them and bury them in dignity," he said.

The United Nations said the pause enabled it to scale up the delivery of food, water, and medicine to the largest volume since the resumption of aid convoys on Oct. 21. It was also able to deliver 129,000 liters (34,078 gallons) of fuel - just over 10% of the daily pre-war volume - as well as cooking gas, a first since the war began.

In the southern city of Khan Younis on Saturday, a long line of people with containers waited outside a filling station. Hossam Fayad lamented that the pause in fighting was only for four days.

"I wish it could be extended until people's conditions improved," he said.

For the first time in over a month, aid reached northern Gaza, the focus of Israel's ground offensive.



Former Palestinian prisoners who were released by the Israeli authorities, fly Palestinian and Hamas flags while they ride on top of a vehicle upon their arrival in the West Bank town of Beitunia, Friday, Nov. 24, 2023. (AP)



Marah Bakir, (right), a former Palestinian prisoner who was released by the Israeli authorities, is welcomed at her family house in the east Jerusalem neighborhood of Beit Hanina, Friday, Nov. 24, 2023. (AP)



Aseel al-Titi, wearing a Hamas headband, a former Palestinian prisoner who was released by the Israeli authorities, is greeted by friends and family members in Balata, a Palestinian refugee camp in Nablus, West Bank, Friday, Nov. 24, 2023. (AP)

'Collaborate on nuclear oversight'

Kuwait urges Iran to cooperate with IAEA

VIENNA, Nov 25, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait has called on Iran to pursue cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and fully adhere to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) set according to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231.

The official Kuwaiti stand was expressed by member of the permanent mission of the State of Kuwait at the UN in Vienna, counselor Bashar Al-Duwaisan, addressing a session of the IAEA Board of Governors for talks on verification and monitoring of the nuclear activities in Iran.

The State of Kuwait looks forward to Iran's endorsement and execution of the additional protocol so the agency would be able to present credible confirmation on nonexistence of undeclared nuclear materials and activities in the republic of Iran, counselor Al-Duwaisan said.

He touched on some points in the report of the IAEA director general dating on November 15, 2023, where he affirmed anew the agency's tasks were affected with Tehran's backing down from honoring its obligations, on February 23, 2021, as warranted by the comprehensive task plan.

Al-Duwaisan also indicated that the agency's latest report re-affirmed that the IAEA would not be able to re-establish its monitoring mechanisms of the nuclear activities in that country due to the government decision to abstain from adhering to the obligations with the agency.

Gender salary gap in Kuwait among highest globally: government report

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: A recent government report from the National Center for Development Research, affiliated with the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, has highlighted that Kuwait faces one of the highest gender salary gaps globally, reports Al-Rai daily.

Official statistics indicate a 30% disparity in salaries between male and female workers in the government sector. The report, based on June 2022 data from the labor market system, reveals that the average monthly wage for Kuwaiti women in the government sector stands at approximately 1,327 dinars, compared to 1,895 dinars for their male counterparts.

The World Economic Forum's global gender gap report on Kuwait notes a significant widening of the wage gap during the periods 2006-2010 and 2012-2022, with marginal improvements in 2020, 2021, and 2022. Overall, the average

percentage of equal wages for similar work between men and women is 67%, experiencing a 7% decline from 2006 to 2023.

The report emphasizes that the gender gap is not rooted in the fundamental salary structure based on job grades and qualifications but is evident in other benefits men receive, such as social allowances, promotions, and additional perks.

Examining annual incomes, the average annual income for females in Kuwait is \$25,597, compared to \$53,640 for males, resulting in a 52% difference in favor of males over the period 2006-2022. This income gap peaked in 2017 at \$56,059 annually for males.

Kuwait's global ranking in the overall Global Gender Gap Index has declined by 34 places since the index's inception in 2006.

Notably, the nation's weakest performance has been in economic participation and opportunities, where it dropped by 46 places. The summary of Ku-

wait's performance in the index from 2006 to 2023 underscores the need for concerted efforts to address and rectify gender disparities in various areas.

The analysis of Kuwait's standing, encompassing various fields and sub-indices, indicates a notable decline in the economic participation and opportunities sector. Since the inception of the index in 2006, Kuwait has experienced a significant drop of 46 places in this domain.

Notably, its most favorable performance occurred in 2020, achieving a score of 0.589 out of 1,000, signifying an average gender gap in this particular area. In 2023, Kuwait's ranking reflects a downturn across most sub-indices related to economic participation and opportunities.

However, there is a noteworthy improvement in the "percentage of equal wages between women and men for similar work" index, where Kuwait advanced by four places compared to the previous year.

Prayer Timings

Fajr	04:56	Asr	14:30
Sunrise	06:20	Sunset	16:50
Zuhr	11:35	Isha	18:11

Local

BIOMETRIC/FINGERPRINT APPOINTMENT: <https://meta.e.gov.kw/En/>

Weather

Expected weather for the next 24 hours.
By Day: Warm, cloudy to partly cloudy and humid especially over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speed of 08-32 km/h with a chance for fog forming at night.

By Night: Rather cold to cold and partly cloudy and with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speed of 06-30 km/h with a chance for fog forming over some areas.
Station Max Exp Min Rec
 Kuwait City 23 15

Kuwait Airport	24	11
Abdaly	20	09
Jahra	21	12
Salmiyah	20	14
Nuwaisib	20	13
Wafra	20	11

Humanitarian role lauded

EU envoy keen to boost partnership with Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Newly accredited European Union (EU) Ambassador to Kuwait Anne Koistinen affirmed that HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah warmly welcomed her when she presented her credentials recently, stressing it was a pleasure and honor to talk about ways to build strong partnership between the EU and Kuwait with His Highness, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Speaking to the local press in the headquarters of the EU Delegation in Al-Hamra Tower after the presentation of her credentials, Koistinen pointed out that several areas of mutual interest could further develop EU-Kuwait relations. She intends to jointly strengthen bilateral relations across various sectors; including political cooperation, trade and investment, energy, climate change, economic diversification, education, health, research and innovation, and regional security and stability.

She asserted: "We share with Kuwait the belief that humanitarian aid is vital in supporting vulnerable people in the region and beyond. In this context, I would like to praise Kuwait for its humanitarian aid to the Palestinians in Gaza. It is worth noting that the EU is the largest international donor to the Palestinian people. Since Oct 16, the EU has launched a humanitarian air bridge bringing over 550 tons of humanitarian supplies for the Palestinians in Gaza."

She then quoted High Representative of the EU for Foreign and Security Policy Josep Borrell as saying that "EU calls for a political solution based on the two-State solution. This is EU's shared objective with Kuwait, building on the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative. I am really sad due to the tragic loss of life among civilians. I hope that peace will eventually prevail."

She went on to disclosed that Borrell said during his visit to Kuwait last year that the EU is the second biggest trading partner for Kuwait, "but we can still do more together."



Anne Koistinen

My mission is to translate these words into action working in 'Team Europe' spirit together with EU-member states."

She indicated that a strengthened partnership is beneficial for both the EU and Kuwait, with the EU being the world's largest single market, a leader in research and innovation, an important security actor in the Gulf region, and the leading actor on global challenges such as climate change and digitalization.

She also highlighted other areas of cooperation between the EU and Kuwait — inter-cultural cooperation, mobility for youth and students, higher education cooperation and exchanges that will improve mutual understanding and trust between peoples. "The EU Delegation has been working with Kuwait also on women's empowerment, which is a subject I am keen to discuss in close cooperation with the government, civil society and private sector among others", she added.

She also stressed that easing travel procedures is an important element of enhancing people to people contacts, which is one of the pillars of the EU strategy towards the Gulf. She was happy when the European Commission adopted more favorable rules on the issuing of Schengen multiple entry visas to Kuwaitis last Sept 8. "Through the new visa regime — cascade — Kuwaiti nationals applying for Schengen visas in Kuwait, including first-time travellers, are eligible for a Schengen visa valid for years, provided the passport validity allows it," she revealed.

She expressed happiness over the visit of recently appointed EU First Special Representative for the Gulf Region Luigi Di Maio to Kuwait in October. "It was his first visit to Kuwait in this position. This very successful visit is proof of EU's new ambition to take EU-Kuwait joint cooperation to a new strategic level. His Excellency Luigi Di Maio was right when he said that he is seeking an EU-Gulf partnership based on dialogue, respect and results," she added.

She concluded by saying that she is really happy to be in Kuwait. "I have already met many Kuwaiti friends from all walks of life and I look forward to working with Kuwaitis to strengthen EU-Kuwait partnership," she stated.



Force from the 25th Commando Brigade upon departure for Pakistan.

KUNA photo

Kuwait Commando Brigade heads to Pakistan for joint drills

A force of Kuwait's 25th Commando Brigade, known as 'Maghaweer 25', has left for Pakistan to partake in military exercises, codenamed Fajr Al Sharq 5 (Dawn of the East 5), due next week, according to the country's Defense Ministry.

The two-week drills are meant to share expertise in research, inspection and counterterrorism, secure vital facilities, handle explosives and carry out medical evacuations, the ministry said in a press release.

Kuwait's participation in Pakistan-hosted exercises comes within the framework of promoting and bolstering joint military cooperation with all sisterly and friendly countries, it added. (KUNA)

Strict control on food prices

Ban on export of used cooking oil

'Rodents mostly found in food stores'

Rapid response eyed to exterminate rats

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Aiban has instructed the Commercial Control and Consumer Protection Sector in his ministry to monitor the prices of food items especially the basic commodities, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources disclosed that the intensified efforts of the sector led to the discovery of the violations of 15 companies selling meat as they failed to adhere to the official price list of the ministry and raised their prices illegally.

Sources said the ministry will soon forward seizure reports to the Commercial Prosecution for the latter to take legal measures against those proven to have violated the regulations. Sources added that Al-Aiban gave strict instructions during a series of meetings with inspectors to conduct a survey of prices in all governorates, especially the prices of basic commodities, including meat; because such an unjustified price hike directly affects the prices of meals in restaurants serving grilled meat, in addition to the rise in the price of meat sold to consumers.

Sources affirmed that the sector is implementing the approved plan for controlling prices as follows:

- Prevent traders from taking advantage of the recently approved pension increment for retirees,
- Tighten control over local markets to prevent unjustified or artificial price hikes that negatively affect the pockets of consumers,
- Limit all types of commercial fraud,
- Prevent the suppliers of cooperative societies from increasing the prices of their food products; especially since the ministry took a concrete step through a letter to the Consumer Cooperative Societies Union requesting the latter to immediately report suppliers who raise the prices of their products and attach proof documents to the reports,

'13K Kuwaitis hired in MEW'

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
 KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: The Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, and Acting Minister of Public Works Dr. Jassim Al-Ostad affirmed that the number of national cadres appointed in the Ministry of Electricity and Water reached 13,229 during the period from January 1, 2020 to November 2023.

In a memorandum issued in response to a parliamentary question submitted by the National Assembly member Mualhal Al-Mudhaf, Dr. Al-Ostad stressed that the ministry did not refuse to appoint Kuwaitis.

He affirmed the commitment of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to implement the Kuwaitization policy in accordance with the time plan stipulated by the Civil Service Council's resolution No. 11/2017.

Dr. Al-Ostad said the ministry also adheres to the letters received from the Civil Service Commission (CSC) regarding the implementation of the Kuwaitization policy, as the percentage of Kuwaiti employees compared to non-Kuwaitis has reached 97.5 percent.

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Two academics have sounded the alarm about the spread of rats, which transmit diseases that may be difficult to diagnose in public clinics, in parallel with growing complaints about their increasing numbers in various areas of Kuwait, and demands for the necessity of developing a more rapid response to complaints from residents and citizens to put an end to this menace.

Professor of Biology, Head of the Science Department at the College of Basic Education, Dr. Qais Majeed, warned the spread of rats could cause multiple diseases, explaining that "one of the most important dangers of the spread of rats is that they are found in food stores."

He pointed out, in a statement to Al-Rai, that "the solid and liquid wastes these mice transmit diseases to foodstuffs, which in turn transmit them to humans."

He explained that "in addition to being dangerous to human life, "these mice carry types of worms that cause diseases in poultry, cows, and livestock."

At a time when Majeed stressed that "the spread of mice in excess of their normal numbers is at the expense of the rest of living organisms," he pointed out that "this spread is accompanied by a decrease in the number of insects and reptiles that mice feed on."

He considered that "the spread of mice has reached the point of phenomenon, as any house that has a garden catches one or two mice every day," adding, "This happens in my house in one of the interior areas, and I tried to alert the concerned authorities, but to no avail, and added after some a person was sent to set traps."

In the same context, Dr. Sabah Al-Terkait, a professor at the College of Health Sciences, told Al-Rai that "the spread of rats and rodents is one of the biggest problems in residential areas and industrial cities," pointing out that "last August there was a sudden warning about the increase in the



The rodents nibbling on foodstuff.

spread of rats in a number of American and European cities, without a clear reason for this sudden increase.

Al-Terkait warned that "rats cause and transmit serious bacterial diseases, the most important of which is the Weil's disease, which is difficult to diagnose by medical staff in public clinics."

Al-Terkait considered that, "In Kuwait, there is no effective system to monitor the increase in the number of rats, but since Kuwait is a close-knit society, any increase in the spread of the number of rats will be noticed quickly," pointing out that "rats multiply in places of waste, construction, and densely populated cities, and sewage drains."

He stressed that "citizens must monitor their places of residence, especially places where food is stored, while placing mouse traps if possible, and the necessity of disposing of waste on a daily basis."

ning the export of used cooking oil or its waste, reports Al-Anba daily.

Article One: Used cooking oil or its waste can be sold only to a person licensed by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Environment Public Authority and Public Authority for Industry, who must have a place licensed by the concerned authorities to engage in this activity.

Article Two: The seller and buyer are obligated to receive and pay the corresponding amounts through electronic payment methods only.

Article Three: It is not permissi-

ble to export used cooking oil or its waste for a period of one year from the date of issuance of this decision.

The explanatory memorandum states that this decision was issued to achieve added value for the State of Kuwait through the production of biofuel from used cooking oil waste; through which the waste will be converted into value-added products for the State, create a new product to diversify sources of income, transfer modern technology, and funding shall come from the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises.

Instant bank account opening

KFH first bank to launch D-POS

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) remains committed to delivering innovative digital banking services, surpassing customer expectations, and meeting their aspirations. As part of this commitment, KFH has rolled out a cutting-edge paperless service that enables new customers to instantly open bank accounts.

This exclusive service is available for customers through the D-POS mobile device, which is tailored to facilitate immediate bank account opening. This transformative initiative is the result of a fruitful collaboration between KFH and K.A.S Fintech company, specializing in digital transformation solutions.

To get started, customers can insert their civil ID into the D-POS device, electronically sign on its screen, and follow simple and easy steps. From there, they will have a fully verified and ready-to-use bank account. Upon completion, customers will receive a notification including the IBAN number along with a printable receipt for record-keeping purposes.

KFH Manager of E-Channels and Cash Management Services, Meshal Mandani, said that the new service affirms KFH's commitment to adopting the latest trends in financial technology services to offer the best banking experience for customers within the highest efficiency and quality standards.

"KFH had already launched the instant card issuance service, using Hybrid Solution as the first bank in Kuwait. Hence, customers can instantly issue their cards following the successful bank opening using a D-POS device. Customers can also enjoy KFH's full banking services by registering in KFHonline," Mandani said.

"In line with KFH's slogan, 'New Generation of Easy Banking Services,' the new service complements the paperless banking efforts (instant card issuance, immediate bank account opening, KFHonline services). It is also in line with the sustainability and environment preservation principles by



POS device

shifting to an all-digital banking operation," he added.

He explained that D-POS devices will be available in all customers' touchpoints, direct sales locations, KFH Zone in Winter Wonderland, in addition to KFH branches, making the day-to-day banking procedures easier and faster for customers and employees.

"With these groundbreaking services, KFH affirms its leadership in digital transformation and promotes a new banking culture relying on new technologies and self-service devices, which in turn raises the customer service level and provides an easy and innovative banking experience," Mandani said.

He pointed out that KFH customers can instantly have banking cards issued, including credit and prepaid cards, through various ways; either via self-service using the civil ID or by using their smartphones and the QR code.

It is worth noting that KFH provides a comprehensive range of digital banking services that affirm its leadership in the field. It has recently launched a money transfer service through Western Union without any transfer fees for a limited period. Additionally, KFH has kept pace with the latest smart device trends by allowing customers to use their smartwatches to complete all their transactions through ATMs.

KFH also offers a personal finance application online through KFHonline. Customers can make local and international transfers, create investment deposits, open a gold account, sell and buy gold, request a cheque book, instantly issue a debit card via QR code, and deposit cheques. Additionally, customers can view financial transactions, pay instalments, view investment plans, and follow up on their deposits and account balances.

MPW handles 2,445 emergencies

630 campsite licenses issued

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Kuwait Municipality has announced the issuance of 630 temporary licenses through QR code for spring camps in the northern and southern parts of the country, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, the Municipality confirmed the issuance of 422 licenses in Jahra Governorate and 208 in Al-Ahmadi Governorate since the start of receiving applications from those wishing to establish spring camps.

The Municipality resumed receiving licensing applications on Tuesday, after temporarily suspending it for two days to make technical amendments to the reservation program.

Meanwhile, official statistics from the Ministry of Public Works revealed that it handled a total of 2,445 emergency reports in October, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily obtained a copy of the statistics, revealing that Jahra Governorate recorded the highest number of emergency reports with 559, followed by Farwaniya with 476, the Capital with 439, Ahmadi with 285, Hawally with 213 and Mubarak Al-Kabeer with 22.

Meanwhile, the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) dealt with 138 reports, followed by the Operations Unit with 109, and the Sanitary Engineering Sector with 104.



Al-Owaish

bank's 2025 strategy and Kuwait Vision 2035.

Al-Owaish also emphasized the bank's commitment to fostering innovation without constraints, even when ideas are in their early stages. The Innovation Office supports employees in developing and refining their concepts, aligning them with customer expectations and facilitating the creation of easily accessible innovative services that bring value

to Gulf Bank customers.

Recognizing Gulf Bank's abundant human capital and the wealth of talent and expertise across various fields, Al-Owaish stressed the importance of leveraging these capabilities to unlock ideas and innovations. She emphasized the collective commitment of different departments, employees, and officials within the bank to provide the best products and services to customers.

Al-Owaish concluded by reaffirming Gulf Bank's leadership in successful digital transformation, characterized by delivering technological solutions, promoting outstanding employee performance, and adhering to international standards in risk management practices.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Kuwait is doing well, so please don't worry'

"TO our beloved friends in the Gulf, we want to assure you that Kuwait is in good condition, so there's no need to worry," columnist **Dahoum Al-Qahtani** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"We hold a deep admiration for the Arab Gulf countries, and it is our firm belief that they should not be subjected to insult.

"Notably, Kuwait stands out as the sole Gulf nation with laws that not only apply but also penalize with imprisonment those who insult other Gulf countries.

"It's crucial to emphasize that Kuwait is not a monolith; it embraces freedom and a diversity of opinions without implying division. Political movements like the Muslim Brotherhood and the Shiites operate openly within the legal framework, subject to the law. Any violation of the law or the best interests of Kuwait is addressed promptly, showcasing the state's capability to halt such infringements.

"The flexibility of the Kuwaiti state should not be misconstrued as weakness, and a subdued voice does not signify inaction.

"Kuwait maintains positive relations with Iran and has employed these ties to serve the Arab Gulf states in dialogues with Iran.

"However, Kuwait has consistently demonstrated its solidarity with Saudi Arabia, standing at the forefront of the armies engaged in operations like the "Decisive Storm" and "Restoring Hope."

"Liberated by a coalition of armies, Kuwait has been a key ally of the United States outside the NATO framework. Despite this alliance, Kuwait has courageously opposed the Zionist entity, demonstrating resilience even in the face of pressures during President Trump's era.



Al-Qahtani

"Kuwait's political system has remained stable for 271 years, offering stability and a sense of security to its neighbors in the Arabian Gulf and the broader Arab world. Kuwait, with its rich history, continues to be a refuge and a starting point for others.

"To those who may not fully grasp Kuwait's geopolitical stance, we assure them that Kuwait is thriving and does not require guardianship or passive guidance. Well-versed in navigating geopolitics, Kuwait employs a high degree of flexible and decisive foreign diplomacy, adapting to various events and situations.

"For those who may be dealing with the situation superficially or lack political knowledge, we urge them to rest assured and not worry. Kuwait is resilient, and the security, borders, and sovereignty of the country remain impervious to the likes of "Popular Mobilization Forces," the Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah, or Iranian expansionists.

"The lessons learned from the treacherous Iraqi invasion have fortified Kuwait against potential threats, and the bravery of Kuwait and its people during that challenging time is a testament to its enduring strength.

"With all our love, we say it once again - Kuwait is doing well, so please don't worry."

Also:

"It is often said that if intelligence were equivalent to eloquence, the talkative person would be the most brilliant. If knowledge were synonymous with rote memorization, the student would surpass the teacher. If influence were synonymous with virtues, those lacking moral character would hold no sway. If wealth were interchangeable with wisdom, the affluent would be the wise, and the destitute would be deemed foolish. In reflecting on this, Shakespeare's timeless words from Hamlet come to mind: 'To be or not to be,'" columnist **Fatma**

Al-Muzayil, wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"Consider that each individual has the power to assert their existence uniquely and according to their own desires.

"You alone can leave an indelible mark that sets you apart, irrespective of societal measures such as prestige, wealth, or knowledge.

"This imprint may be rooted in self-respect and embracing one's individuality. Recognize that everyone possesses distinctive qualities, and perfection is elusive. By accepting oneself, faults and strengths alike, and cultivating self-confidence, one can forge a path to genuine self-worth.

"Assertiveness is another avenue through which one can make their mark. It involves expressing opinions boldly, defending needs with tact, and facing challenges with confidence. Courage is equally essential, ensuring that fear does not dictate one's life. Guard against becoming a mere automaton, detached from personal will, desire, and truth.

"Honesty emerges as a cornerstone of character. A commitment to truthfulness in actions and words engenders trust and elevates one's standing. Conversely, deceit tarnishes reputation and erodes trust. Upholding honesty and sincerity in dealings fosters respect and leaves a positive impression.

"Maintaining individual opinions, convictions, and principles, while remaining open to discussion without succumbing to dogmatism, positions one as both principled and adaptable. This approach garners admiration and influence.

"Possessing emotional intelligence further distinguishes an individual. A high level of emotional awareness and the ability to understand and navigate others' feelings facilitates positive interactions, making it easier to connect with and influence those around you."

— **Compiled by Mai Elsoukary**

Other Voices

Crime of the senior official

By **Ahmad alsarraf**

A senior official holding the rank of Assistant Undersecretary, was arrested on charges of forging a work fingerprint. He was sentenced to 7 years in prison, and the same period was given to the Iranian, whose mission was to cover his profile.



alsarraf

The court also obligated the undersecretary to return the 113 thousand dinars to the state.

The Assistant undersecretary was caught red-handed along with a number of other employees who continued to forge fingerprints. The fraud allowed them to avoid any deductions from their salaries.

Although the Assistant Undersecretary paid the entire amount of money owed to the state before the prosecution, the latter decided to refer him to the court, which issued a preliminary ruling imprisoning him, and required him to pay the aforementioned fine. It is expected that the ruling will be appealed before the rest of the levels of litigation.

The strangest thing is that this Assistant Undersecretary, since he was a director and then appointed assistant agent and assistant undersecretary in the principal position, has continued to engage in this forgery for many years, without his matter being exposed.

He also received an excellent work bonus for the past two years, 2021 and 2022, a large amount. He also received front-line bonuses during the "Corona" pandemic, as did tens of thousands of other underserving employees, and on top of that, he chaired the committee examining requests for front-line bonuses.

This undersecretary's issue raises a number of puzzling questions:

What prompted someone in his prestigious job to resort to this criminal method, just to avoid small deductions from his salary? How did he continue to follow this method for years without being exposed? How was he awarded a reward for excellent work, when he was often not at work? More importantly: How many instances of this agent are

there in the various ministries?

There is no doubt that the absence of an element of morality in the state, in general, has become a phenomenon, which is what prompted this undersecretary, and thousands of other officials, to commit such crimes, and perhaps some of them subsequently assumed much higher positions, and thus became members of the Legislative Council!

The story of this person, and the coincidence factor in his exposure, reminded me of an anecdote I wrote years ago, about a lion that escaped from the zoo, and no trace of it was found for years. But his matter was revealed, due to a mistake he committed, and he was returned to the zoo, to spend the rest of his life in a small prison, far from the space of freedom that he had enjoyed.

After his escape, the lion took refuge in the municipality building and hid in the most backward and corrupt municipality department, the archives. The lion had to devour a few auditors and some archive employees, whose absence was never missed by anyone, either because what they were doing was not important, or because they were already part of the group that was content to leave the fingerprint and then return home.

The lion's sin occurred during one of the long holidays, when there were neither auditors nor employees, and the active management staff was the first to show up for work that day, so the hungry lion proceeded to devour him.

The incident could have passed, like previous incidents, but the 'farash' was the only one who knew the location of any file in the archive, and his absence caused all municipal departments to be completely paralyzed.

Since the surveillance cameras showed that he entered the building and did not leave, he required the assistance of security and civil defense to search for him in the municipality's basements, corridors and tunnels.

The result was the discovery of the lion, and he was returned to his prison in the garden. Had it not been for his sin, he would have remained in the archives, free until today!

□ □ □

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



Damage caused by the fire.

Motorist dies in accident

569 cartons foreign liquor worth 'KD 1/2 mln' seized

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: The Criminal Security Sector of the General Administration for Narcotics Control has taken into custody an unidentified bootlegger for trafficking in imported booze, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

The suspect was caught on the outskirts of Farwaniya following a tip-off from a police agent. When his hideout was raided police seized 569 cartons of imported alcohol (6,828 bottles), with a street value of approximately half a million dinars.

The contraband and the suspect have been referred to the Directorate-General for Drugs and Alcohol Control.

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Building set on fire: Firefighters controlled a fire that broke out on Thursday in an abandoned building in the Salmiya area, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

The fire brigade stated that the Salmiya Fire Brigade dealt with a fire in an abandoned building in Salmiya on the ground floor.

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Motorist dead: A collision on the Seventh Ring Road killed one motorist on the spot at dawn today.

The accident was dealt with by firemen. One of the vehicles which was involved in the accident overturned upon impact, according to Ministry of Interior sources. It is not known what caused the accident.

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Probe launched: According to educational sources, the Ministry of Education has initiated an investigation into the circumstances of an incident that took place yesterday morning when a female student was run over by a car after she left school.

They explained that detectives went to the school today morning and began summoning the parties involved in the incident in order to determine the circumstances that led to the incident as well as find out the reasons why the two students left the school, the procedures that the school followed in this regard, and how the school learned of the two students' departure.

The ministry will complete its investigation and submit its report to the minister as a matter of urgency today in preparation for taking appropriate measures in this regard.

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Some oil sector workers held forging attendance

159 nabbed in immoral behavior

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: The **Ahmadi prosecutor, responsible for overseeing the Criminal Security Sector, has directed the Ahmadi Governorate Search and Investigation Department to arrest ten employees from an oil company, reports Al-Anba daily.**

This decision follows the arrest of four expatriates who were found in possession of ten silicone fingerprints. These fingerprints were confirmed to belong to the aforementioned employees, who allegedly used them to falsely log their attendance.

The Mina Abdullah Investigation Office received information about four expatriates at the Mina Abdullah Refinery engaging in fraudulent activities by forging fingerprints and signatures of employees. Subsequently, an investigation team was formed, and the information was verified. The four expatriates were arrested, and ten silicone fingerprints were seized from their office.

Upon questioning, the expatriates admitted that the fingerprints were provided to them by the ten employees.

They claimed that they were responsible for the fingerprinting process on behalf of these employees. The expatriates, however, denied knowledge of the origin of these fingerprints, asserting that they were given to them by the employees themselves.

The source revealed that the charges against the suspects include receiving salaries without actually working. Similar arrests have been made in various government institutions in connection to similar cases.

Currently, the detained defendants are under investigation, and those accused of forgery have been summoned to address the allegations against them.

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Forger arrested: The Farwaniya Governorate security men have arrested an unidentified expatriate who was wanted by law for forging a bank document.

The **Al-Anba** daily said the man was arrested in the suburb of Andalus. He has been handed over to the sentences enforcement department.

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Immoral behavior: The Ministry of Interior has arrested 159 expats during a raid on 49 hideouts including massage parlors for engaging in immoral activities using social media, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

The Public Morality Protection sector of the Criminal Investigation Department in collaboration with the CID personnel from the Ahmadi and Farwaniya governorates arrested the suspects during raids on massage parlors promoting immoral activities in Mahboula, Hawalli, Salmiya, Salwa and Farwaniya.

All the arrested persons have been referred to the concerned authorities. This operation reflects the dedication of the security authorities to maintain public morality and cracking down on illegal activities throughout the country.

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'Drifters' in custody: As part of the ongoing efforts to enhance traffic safety and security, **Al-Ahmadi** security personnel conducted a recent campaign to apprehend wanted individuals and traffic law violators. The Operations Department patrols initiated this security sweep in **Al-Sabahiya**, **Umm Al-Hayman**, and **Fahd Al-Ahmad** recently. The campaign targeted those violating traffic laws and engaging in reckless driving.

During the operation, 16 people were arrested, including 6 juveniles. Kuwaiti citizens were found driving vehicles recklessly, creating disturbances, and operating without valid licenses, thereby posing risks to their own lives and the safety of others, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The 6 juveniles have been referred to the Juvenile Prosecution, while the remaining individuals have been referred to the Traffic Department.

Additionally, 32 traffic violations were issued, and 15 cars were impounded at the traffic detention garage. In a related development, the Traffic Sector disclosed that it has placed 9 vehicle drivers in precautionary detention, with legal proceedings pending as they await court judgments.

Meanwhile, the traffic court judge issued prison sentences ranging from a week to a month to 9 reckless motorists for committing serious traffic violations, including reckless driving and organizing illegal races, says the judiciary.

Funds misappropriated

Eight govt officials probed

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Eight officials in various government agencies were investigated this year for misappropriation of public funds and awarding tenders to certain people in exchange for money and personal benefits, reports **Al-Qabas** daily quoting a reliable source.

The source has affirmed the issuance of travel ban orders against some of these officials, while others will be summoned for investigation in the coming days.

The source stated that the accused abused their power in government positions and obtained hundreds of thousands of Kuwaiti dinars by benefiting from public tenders and granting them to certain people unlawfully. They were referred for investigation immediately after the discovery of their unscrupulous acts, the source added.

The source revealed that these officials include former undersecretaries, explaining that investigation committees in several government agencies reported an increase in cases of exploitation and manipulation of tenders, projects and State capabilities; as well as the violations committed by former officials.

The source hinted that money laundering charges will be filed against some of the defendants, as it was proven that they obtained funds illegally. The source went on to say that the investigation authorities recently opened files implicating officials in profiting from and harming public funds, embezzlement and negligence.

9-13 C dip in temp over weekend

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Member of the Arab Union for Astronomy and Space Sciences, **Badr Al-Amira**, confirmed that the winter will set in beginning of next December 7, saying it is divided into three stars, with each star lasting 13 days.

In a statement to **Al-Rai**, **Al-Amira** said "the first star among these three stars, which are called square because they last for forty days, is the star Antares, whose coldness is

moderate and lasts until December 20 which lasts for 13 days." Then comes the Scorpius the coldest time of the year when temperatures drop below zero."

Meteorologist **Issa Ramadan** advised people who venture outdoors to "wear winter clothes, in anticipation of temperatures dropping during this weekend, with the lowest reaching between nine and thirteen degrees, and the highest between 23 and 24."

Case of betrayal, adultery adjourned to Wednesday

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: The Criminal Court has adjourned to Wednesday next week the case of adultery, abortion, and the burial of a fetus filed against three expatriates, in order to pronounce the verdict.

The first defendant was charged with selling abortion pills to another expatriate (his friend), who had asked his help to abort the fetus in his wife. The husband (the second defendant) presented them to his wife (the third defendant) so that she could abort the fetus that she had carried in her womb for seven months.

After the abortion, the woman and her husband buried the fetus in the yard of the building where they lived in Farwaniya and made a grave. When the expatriate friend (the informant) came to know that her friend had purchased abortion pills from her husband, aborted her fetus, and buried it, she informed the police.

Immediately, the detectives conducted their secret investigations and found out that the third suspect is married to the second suspect in a common law contract, she became pregnant and she aborted the fetus.

The Public Prosecution was notified, the grave in the building was dug up, the suspects were arrested, and a DNA test was carried out, through which it was discovered that the first suspect was the father of the fetus. Investigations revealed that the third suspect had cheated on her husband with his friend and became pregnant.

When confronted, the third suspect ad-

mitted that she had aborted the fetus with the help of her husband, who had decided to do so because of his intense love for her but without knowing that the fetus was not his.

When the husband (second suspect) was confronted with this, he was shocked to know that the fetus was not his own, but was of his special friend who betrayed him by having a secret affair with his wife.

The woman revealed that she had been married to her husband for six years but his friend managed to play with her mind and convince her into an adulterous relationship with him. She became pregnant but her husband bought abortion pills from her lover without knowing that the fetus was not his but of his friend's.

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Appeal considered: The Court of Cassation is considering the appeal submitted against the ruling issued on the Municipal bribery case to sentence a Municipal Council member and a former official of Kuwait Municipality to ten-year imprisonment, and a trader to five-year imprisonment with hard labor, and impose fines on them.

According to the case file, the Criminal Court had ruled in March to sentence a member of the Municipal Council and an employee to ten-year imprisonment each, remove them from their jobs, and impose fines on them. It also sentenced a businessman to five-year imprisonment with hard labor, after convicting them of crimes of bribery and peddling.



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HH the Crown Prince, Prime Minister send greetings

His Highness the Amir congratulates Suriname on National Day



Zain's team with the volunteers and children.



Event's many segments brought joy to the children.

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Saturday a cable to President of Suriname Chan Sandokhi, congratulating him on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness wished him everlasting health and

wellness, and further progress and prosperity for his country and people.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President Chan Sandokhi on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished him everlasting health.

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President Chan Sandokhi on his country's National Day.

Special event held in partnership with 'Sahabat Amal'

Zain marks World Children's Day with BACCH

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: In a step to foster the spirit of giving, sharing, and community, Zain joined a special initiative held to celebrate World Children's Day at Bayt Abdullah Children's Hospice (BACCH). The joyful event, organized by the 'Sahabat Amal' volunteer team in collaboration with the Kuwait Association for the Care of Children in Hospitals (KACCH), brought together children, families, and volunteers for a day of fun, laughter, and heartwarming moments.

Zain's contribution to this wonderful gathering came under its ongoing partnership with 'Sahabat Amal', BACCH, and KACCH, through which the company has had many fruitful initiatives and programs throughout the years to serve the humanitarian goals of the three non-profits. By actively supporting such projects, Zain seeks to reflect the commitment and key role of the private sector in shouldering civil society organizations to create a positive social impact in the community.

The event consisted of many entertaining segments that brought joy to the children and their families and friends, like reading interactive stories, distributing toys and gifts, offering science and culture sessions, drawing and coloring segments, a unique photo booth, and more. The event was also joined by some of Kuwait's renowned children's theater actors like Dawood Hussain, Mohammed Al Hemli, and Samah.

Registered as a non-profit, charitable organization by the Ministry of Social Affairs in 2003, KACCH continues its mission to offer programs and pediatric services providing psycho-social and emotional support for hospitalized children and their families in almost all government hospitals across Kuwait.

Bayt Abdullah Children's Hospice (BACCH) is the first children's hospice in the Middle East, giving children living in Kuwait the specialized care they need. BACCH works

on ensuring the emphasis is placed on quality of life and the best day-to-day care possible, and providing children and their families with expert clinical, psycho-social, emotional, and spiritual support.

'Sahabat Amal' is an active Kuwaiti volunteer team that was formed by a number of local and regional medical students. The team's members occasionally travel abroad to support underprivileged communities with medical and educational care. The team works to raise health awareness, provide essential vaccinations, train medical staff, conduct first aid and health checkups, supply medications, and more.

Zain continues to work towards fostering a spirit of giving, sharing, bonding, and community by directly supporting programs and initiatives that serve humanitarian needs. The company puts its social responsibility as a top priority, embodying and reflecting the values of its brand: Zain, A Wonderful World.

Development projects completion lowest in 2023 since 2010

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: An informed government source said the completion rate of government development plan projects in 2023 has been the lowest since 2010, and that 70 percent of them are late and face many complex challenges.

Reliable sources told Al-Rai that the General

Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development in its report for the current year said the completion rate was the lowest due to "lack of achievement," indicating money allocated for several development projects were returned to the Treasury due to lack of completion of projects and lack of spending.

The source pointed out that most prominent of these challenges was the lack of coordination between the ministries, lack of understanding among some parties at the helm of these projects, and the confusion between the development plan and the annual operational plan.

77 Kuwaitis register at dentistry varsities

Online scholarship registration

By Abdul Rahman Al-Shammari
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: The Ministry of Higher Education announced the start of the online registration procedures for scholarships on the ministry's website for the students who graduate in the 2023/2024 academic year and are enrolled in approved medical specialties at Alexandria University.

In conjunction with the ministerial resolution No. 412 issued on 16/11/2023, the ministry's circular stated that the new enrolled students must meet the conditions for direct delegation to the missions of the Ministry of Higher Education and have certified academic acceptance in one of the specializations of Human Medicine, Doctorate of Pharmacy or Pharmacy in the first semester of the academic year of 2023/2024 and the conditions of the scholarship regulations and the ministerial decisions in this regard.

They can now carry out online registration on the website of the Ministry of Higher Education in Kuwait - <https://www.mohe.edu.kw/eregistration/Home.aspx> - and must upload all of the required documents, which are:

- 1 - A certificate of registration approved and authenticated by the Cultural Office
- 2 - Academic acceptance approved by the Cultural Office
- 3 - High school certificate
- 4 - A copy of the civil ID of the student

and his/her guardian

Meanwhile, Kuwait dispatched up to 77 students to universities for high level dentistry studies in foreign countries this year, an official of the Ministry of Health said on Saturday.

Simultaneously, registration for local dentistry higher studies programs has been effected as part of Kuwait dentistry board programs, said Abdulrahman Al-Fares, the assistant undersecretary for administrative affairs at the Ministry of Health, in a statement he addressed on behalf of the Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi at the 23rd Kuwait Dental Conference.

Also at the domestic level, there has been expansion of specialization programs for orthodontics, gum treatment and artificial teeth.

Among the tangible accomplishments are the electronic link-up among dentistry clinics, medical centers and hospitals, Al-Fares said, also indicating that the inauguration of Taimaa dentistry center that features 18 clinics.

On future plans, Al-Fares revealed that a center for children teeth treatment would be open in Al-Jahraa district within weeks.

Elsewhere, renovation and equipping are underway to open Al-Assima dentistry program center in Dahiat Abdullah Al-Salem district. Moreover, the MoH is following up on the renovation of Sabah Al-Ahmad dentistry center that would comprise up to 41 clinics, he said, disclosing that its inauguration would be early next year.

For his part, the conference chairperson and the head of the Kuwaiti Dental Association Dr. Mohammad Dashti said in his lecture that the conference drew 2,000 dentists and 70 local and foreign lecturers. Many affiliated workshops would be held on its margins.

He revealed that up to 500 dentistry students graduate in Kuwait every year, indicating the need for their regular training.

Orthodontist Dr. Mubarak Al-Saeed said Kuwait is among the advanced nations in dentistry, expressing gratitude to the leadership for dispatching students to top dentistry universities abroad.

He has affirmed that high and digital technology have been widely applied in the sector.

Details discussed in several meetings

'List of communications towers submitted to Municipal Council'

By Inass Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: The Chairman of the Joint Committee of the Technical Committee and the Legal and Financial Committee of the Municipal Council Dr. Hassan Kamal announced that the list of telecommunications towers, which includes the special requirements and specifications for establishing public radio communications stations in all parts of Kuwait, has been submitted to the Municipal Council to take decisions regarding it in the upcoming session on Monday.

He explained that the details of the list were discussed in several previous meetings of the Municipal Council for several months in the presence of several parties, including the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), the Ministry of Health, and the various departments in the municipality's executive branch.

In a press statement, Dr. Kamal explained that the telecommunications towers regula-

tions will regulate the distribution of towers in various locations and determine the technical requirements for their construction, the aesthetic appearance of the towers, and their modern architectural designs.

It includes the sites where it is permissible to establish communications stations, towers, and antennas of all types, and the sites where it is not permissible to establish communications stations, towers, or antennas.

The regulations also include controls for allocating and licensing radio communications stations, communications towers, or antennas, which require approvals from several bodies including the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Electricity and Water, and the Ministry of Public Works and the Directorate General for Civil Aviation.

Dr. Kamal concluded by praising the efforts exerted by the members of the Municipal Council and the municipal executive body in preparing and completing the regulations, which had been circulating in the executive body and the municipal council for several previous years.



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Participating publishers express satisfaction

Kuwait International Book Fair lures people of various interests



Left: Ziad Mekhalallati from Dar Al-Asmaa, Damascus and (right) owner of Lebanese company 'Turn the Page', Asmaa Habbal.

Enrollment 'temporary halted' of Kuwaitis pursuing medical studies in Jordan, Egypt

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr Adel Al-Manea issued Ministerial Resolution number 412 on the temporary suspension of the enrollment of Kuwaitis pursuing medical studies in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Arab Republic of Egypt, reports Al-Anba daily.

Article One: Temporary suspension of the enrollment of Kuwaitis studying medical disciplines -- Human Medicine, Dentistry, Doctor of Pharmacy and Pharmacy -- in Jordanian universities mentioned in Ministerial Resolution number 150/2022 and the Egyptian universities mentioned in Ministerial

Resolution number 151/2022.

Article Two: New students, who are studying at their own expense and were admitted to various medical courses, are allowed to enroll in the abovementioned universities in the first semester of the academic year 2023/2024 within the scholarship plan and in accordance with the regulations and subsequent ministerial decisions.

Article Three: It is permitted to include all students (freshmen and continuing) studying at their own expense in medical specializations in accredited universities in Jordan and Egypt if they fulfill the admission conditions not later than the end of academic year 2023/2024.

KUNA mourns death of managing editor

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25, (KUNA): Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) mourned its managing editor Belal Saad, who passed away at the age of 53 on Friday after a long career journey at the agency.

KUNA and its staff offer heartfelt and sincere condolences to Saad's family, praying to Allah the Almighty to bestow mercy upon Saad's soul and bring solace to his family. Saad joined KUNA on July 16, 1995.

Third report of the Public Funds Protection Committee about amending Law No. 1/1993 on public funds; Third report of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee about the proposed amendment of Industry Law No. 56/1996;

First report of the Foreign Affairs Committee on ratifying the military exercises and cooperation treaty between Kuwait and Turkey;

First report of the Public Facilities Committee on the cancellation of Law No. 115/2014 concerning the establishment of Public Authority for Roads and Land Transportation;

First report of the Public Funds Protection Committee on the semi-annual report that Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority submitted to the National Assembly covering the period from April 1 to Sept 30, 2023.

By Shahed Kamal

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25, (KUNA): Kuwait International Book Fair has proven that it is a hub for literati and lovers of books and paper publications and the current edition has drawn many of this segment who have affirmed their resolve to continue attending the annual event.

Publishers partaking in the 26th book fair expressed satisfaction, in remarks to KUNA, at the high turnout and good sales, involving the educated and citizens of various ages and interests.

Ismail Al-Hufi of the Saudi "Al-Mu-

tanabi" bookstore" said in an interview with KUNA that managers of the event succeeded in bringing in elite publishers and presenting new topics for the readers.

It is like a large library full of books on the Arabic language, philosophy, logic, sociology, education, psychology, Islamic jurisprudence and literature, he said.

Mousa Al-Mousawi from the Bahraini "Al-Fradis" publishing house said the house is participating in the exhibition for the first time, noting the eye-catching high turn-up.

Ziad Mekhalallati of the Syrian "Al-Asmaa Publishing House" affirmed

keenness on regular participation in the Kuwaiti cultural event and branded sales as excellent.

Marwa Mesleh of "Al-Watad Publishing House" said the house is participating for the third time, noting her impression that many of the comers are culturally enlightened.

Idriss Al-Shalloul of the Jordanian Cultural Book Publishing House said that his house is partaking for the first time after a hiatus that began in 2011.

Owner of the Lebanese company "Turn the Big," Asmaa Habbal, said she was elated to partake in the event and advised visitors to examine arts books.

Call to drive carefully, leave no charcoal burning inside camps

Medical dept ready to deal with winter season

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Director of the Medical Emergency Department Dr. Ahmad Al-Shatti has warned about the number of cases of road accidents and carbon monoxide suffocation during the winter camping season.

He revealed the distribution of 86 ambulance centers in all areas of the country, and the provision of about 200 ambulances and five medical clinics in remote areas to deal with the winter season accidents.

In a televised statement, Dr. Al-Shatti said the department is fully ready and prepared to deal with potential incidents in the winter season, affirming the arrival of a new batch of 80 ambulances during the coming period.

He expressed appreciation for the harnessing of all technical and administrative capabilities and cadres to cover emergency events during this period.

Dr. Al-Shatti also confirmed the provision of about 3,000 emergency medical technicians, administrators and auxiliary medical services to deal with the daily reports and incidents it receives.

He revealed that between 300 and

MEW issues 13K MW power to Gulf network, receives 9K MW

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy issued 13,582 megawatts through the Gulf inter-connection network in October, and received 9,224 megawatts through the network, which is a difference of 4,358 megawatts in favor of the Kuwaiti network.

According to a recently-issued report of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, the

ministry received support from the Gulf network for seven days in the month of October, during which the loads coming into the network increased compared to those issued due to the high energy consumption loads. The difference in loads during those days ranged between 3 megawatts and 204 megawatts. The maximum load used was 574 megawatts, and the lowest load was 145 megawatts. The highest load exported to the Gulf network by the Kuwaiti network was 775 megawatts.

350 reports are received per day during the winter season, indicating that deaths in the winter season are caused either by road accidents or suffocation as a result of inhaling carbon monoxide gas from half-burned coal.

Dr. Al-Shatti stressed the need to be careful while driving, maintain the permitted speed limits on the roads, pay attention when lighting charcoal inside the camps, and make sure not to leave it burning inside the tent while sleeping because it causes great risks to a person's life such as cause fainting, coma, and then death.

Relief aid for Gaza: The 27th planeload of relief supplies destined for Gaza flew to the Egyptian Al-Arish airport on Thursday as part of Kuwait's aid air bridge for people of the war-hammered enclave.

The flight, bearing 40 tons of food, medical supplies and tents, will be followed with other air dispatches in the coming days in line with the State of Kuwait's efforts to relieve the brothers in Gaza, said Khaled Al-Zaid, Director of Public Relations and Information at the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA).

Kuwait Investment Authority - Debts Purchased for the State's Account Settlement and Management Office Announces:



A summary of a report on the bankruptcy proceedings and a list of temporary debts for the bankruptcy of / National International Contracting Company Khaled Khaled Al Khader & Partners (W.L.L) Submitted to the Bankruptcy Department in Case No. 64/2004 Bankruptcy General Debts /1 dated 15/6/2004

First: Financial and accounting procedures:
1) The debt as of 1/8/1990 amounts to: KD 11,711,127/275
2) The debt in accordance with Article 13 amounts to: KD 16,844,285/614
3) The amounts collected after the bankruptcy declaration ruling amount to: KD 1,062,039/926
Second: Debts that the Authority deems acceptable in its capacity:
1) Gulf Bank, a debt purchased by the state amounting to KD 16,844,285/614 in accordance with Article (13) of Law No. 41 of 1993
2) The Public Authority for Housing Welfare, KD 4,149,344/500 according to the ruling issued in the two cases No. 244,218/2004 Administrative Appeal/2 dated 19/6/2005.
3) Kuwait Aluminum Company, KD 75,488/873 according to the company's letter submitted to the Authority on 25/1/2006 based on the ruling issued in Case No. 94/2927 Commercial First Instance/5 dated 19/11/1995
4) Abdul Sabour Mohammad Abdullah, KD 471,870 according to the creditor's letter submitted to the Authority on 26/5/2008 based on the ruling issued in Case No. 88/1004, Partial Civil Commercial Capital / 14, dated 4/4/1989
5) Kuwait News Agency, KD 9,070/219 according to the ruling issued in the Case No. 528/2002 Fifth Administrative dated 17/1/2011
6) Bahrain International Arab Bank's liquidation of 6,604,213/230 US dollars according to the letter of the creditor's attorney submitted to the Authority on 14/2/2008 based on the contract for debt settlement and mortgage of shares and store No. 316, volume 83
7) Motokif General Contracting Establishment, owned by / Mishari Mohammad Al-Khasram, represented by the Public Authority for Investment in its capacity as its receiver, KD 257,701/228 based on the ruling issued in Case No. 86/175, First Instance Commercial / 10, dated 21/4/1987
Third: Debts that the Authority deems excluded:
1) Boodai Trading Company Limited, KD 190,885/669 according to the letter submitted by the creditor's attorney dated 9/5/2006, attached to a copy of the ruling issued in Case No. 86/2550, Civil Commercial First Instance 2, dated 13/10/1986, as it has expired under the statute of limitations according to the text of Article No. 2/118 of the Trade Law
2) Mohammad Mohammad Hashem, KD 33,252/652 according to the creditor's letter addressed to the Authority dated 30/4/2006, as he did not submit documents proving the validity of the debt
3) Kuwait Prefabricated Buildings Company, KD 154,002/239 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
4) Labor dues for 78 workers, KD 136,446/443 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditors submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020.
5) Al-Awail General Trading and Contracting Company, KD 27,333/089 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
6) Arab Engineer Electrical Company, KD 195,945/100 according to the former receiver report. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
7) Fayza Suleiman Samaan Al-Shamas, KD 7,301/430 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
8) Factories Company for Insulating Materials, KD 12,238/460, according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority, in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
9) Jaafar Mohammad Hussein Al-Sayegh, KD 33,657/890 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
10) Kushana Fayel Naitel, KD 584/920 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
11) Abdul Fattah Abu Al-Enein, KD 302/590 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
12) Suad Khamis Abdul Hamid, KD 32/090 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
13) Mustafa Hassan Suwaidi, KD 204/490 according to the report of the former receiver. However,

he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
14) Abdul Ibrahim Barsoum, KD 152/370 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020.
15) Moheeb Labib Younan, KD 2,764/786 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
16) Adel Mohammad Al-Sayed Ali, KD 2,752/555 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
17) Mohammad Zain Al-Abidin Abdul-Ati, KD 7/415 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
18) Mohammad Abdul Muttalib Sharif, KD 422/158 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority, in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020.
19) Manicure Arsan Ater, KD 4,108/264 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
20) Mohammad Radha Al-Sayid Ahmad, KD 213/000 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
21) Lobojon Sebastian, KD 520/500 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
22) Mussaed Mu'taq Saad Sudani, KD 960/500 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
23) Mansour Yousef Salem, KD 3,455/480 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
24) Mohammad Ali-Din Madani, KD 8,894/869 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
25) Bader Ibrahim Abdul Aziz, KD 320/320 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
26) Hamza Mohammad Sayed Al-Tayyar, KD 709,800 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
27) Jabot Jalaluddin Rahma Khan, KD 5,375,750 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
28) Hakam Jamil Ismail, KD 5,204,060 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
29) W.G. Towell Agency, KD 89,152,375 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
30) Al-Juman Construction Materials Establishment, KD 7,156,953 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
31) Kuwait Hamra Company, KD 21,483,850 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with

the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
32) Hussein Fahmi Mohammad Ahmad, KD 39,094,354 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
33) Manika Dance Atheer Jan, KD 7,851,920 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
34) Ibrahim Fouad Al-Hajj, KD 8,904,809 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority, according to the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
35) Modern Center Building Contracting Company, KD 25,008,810 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority, in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
36) Gulf Insurance Company, KD 638,471 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
37) Abdul Hamid Yousef Al-Issa Foundation, KD 198,895,952 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority, in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
38) Al-Marjan General Trading and Contracting Company, KD 123,254,910 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
39) Adnan Mohammad Abdul Qadir Saleem, KD 8,425,200 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
40) Al Khalifa International Sons Company, KD 91,267,339 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
41) Arab Company for Insulating Materials, KD 2,621,567 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority, in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
42) Salaries owed to employees, KD 2,110,320 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditors submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
43) End-of-service reward allocation, KD 65,611/- according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditors submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
44) Abdul Wahab Sabt Ali bin Sabt (liquidator), KD 77,471,300 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
45) The partners current account, KD 65,710,000 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
46) Lawyer / Abdullah Khaled Al-Ayoub, KD 33,648,000 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with (10) of Law No. (71) of 2020
47) Lawyer/ Abdul Hamid Mansour Al-Sarraf, KD 32,500,000 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority, in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
48) Lawyer/ Jallil Al-Tabbakh, KD 20,000,000 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority, in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
49) Lawyer/ Adel Al-Tabtaba, KD 9,000,000 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority, in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
50) Al-Emad Real Estate Company, KD 1,825,000 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with the

documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020
51) Mas Equipment and Trading Company, KD 22,400 according to the report of the former receiver. However, he did not provide the Authority with documents proving the validity of their indebtedness, nor did the creditor submit a request to list his indebtedness to the Authority in accordance with the text of Article (105) of Law No. (71) of 2020

A summary of a report on the bankruptcy proceedings and a list of temporary debts for the bankruptcy of / Bassem Tahseen Abdul Qader Yassin, Guarantor of Ramzi Trading and Contracting Company (heirs of Jassim Mohammad Bukhadour W.L.L) Submitted to the Bankruptcy Department in Case No. 23/2011 Bankruptcy General Debts /1 dated 10/8/2011

First: Financial and accounting procedures:
1) His share of the debt as it exists on 1/8/1990 amounts to: KD 429,927/000
2) His share of the debt in accordance with Article 13 amounts to KD 3,064,284/428
3) The amounts collected after the bankruptcy ruling is none
Second: Debts that the Authority deems acceptable in its capacity:
Commercial Bank of Kuwait, the debt purchased by the state amounting to KD 3,064,284/428, its share of the indebtedness guaranteed for Ramzi Trading and Contracting Company in accordance with Article 13 of Law No. 41 of 1993.

A summary of a report on the bankruptcy proceedings and a list of temporary debts for the bankruptcy of / Jassim Mohammad Suleiman Bukhadour, Guarantor of Ramzi Trading and Contracting Company (heirs of Jassim Mohammad Bukhadour W.L.L) Submitted to the Bankruptcy Department in Case No. 23/2011 Bankruptcy General Debts / 1 dated 10/8/2011

First: Financial and accounting procedures:
1) His share of the debt as it exists on 1/8/1990 amounts to: KD 429,927/000
2) His share of the debt in accordance with Article 13 amounts to KD 3,056,955/064
3) The amounts collected after the bankruptcy ruling is none
Second: Debts that the Authority deems acceptable in its capacity:
Commercial Bank of Kuwait, the debt purchased by the state, amounting to KD 3,056,955/064, his share of the indebtedness guaranteed for Ramzi Trading and Contracting Company in accordance with Article 13 of Law No. 41 of 1993.

A summary of a report on the bankruptcy proceedings and a list of temporary debts for the bankruptcy of / Khaled Khaled Hussein Al-Khader, Guarantor of National International Contracting Company, Khaled Khaled Al-Khader and Partners (W.L.L) Submitted to the Bankruptcy Department in Case No. 64/2004 Bankruptcy General Debts /1 dated 15/6/2004

First: Financial and accounting procedures:
1) His share of the debt as of 1/8/1990 amounts to KD 2,241,304/426
2) His share of the debt in accordance with Article 13 amounts to KD 3,226,847/879
3) The amounts collected after the bankruptcy ruling amounts to KD 304,012/734.
Second: Debts that the Authority deems acceptable in its capacity:
Gulf Bank, the debt purchased by the state amounting to KD 3,226,847/879 the bankrupt's share of the debt guaranteed for the National International Contracting Company Khaled Khaled Al-Khader and Partners (W.L.L) in accordance with Article (13) of Law No. (41) of 1993.

A summary of a report on the bankruptcy proceedings and a list of temporary debts for the bankruptcy of / Aysel Trading and Contracting Company (Abdullah Jassim Mohammad Al-Shehab and Partners W.L.L) Submitted to the Bankruptcy Department in Case No. 32/2009 General Debts Bankruptcy / 1 dated 10/6/2009

First: Financial and accounting procedures:
1) The indebtedness as it exists on 1/8/1990 amounts to KD 1,271,635/933
2) The indebtedness according to Article 13 amounts to KD 7,306,205/406
3) The amounts collected after the bankruptcy ruling is none
Second: Debts that the Authority deems acceptable in its capacity:
Commercial Bank of Kuwait, the debt purchased by the state amounting to KD 7,306,205/406 in accordance with Article 13 of Law No. 41 of 1993.

A summary of a report on the bankruptcy proceedings and a list of temporary debts for the bankruptcy of / Ramzi Trading and Contracting Company (heirs of Jassim Mohammad Bukhadour W.L.L) Submitted to the Bankruptcy Department in Case No. 23/2011 Bankruptcy General Debts / 1 dated 10/8/2011

First: Financial and accounting procedures:
1) The indebtedness as it exists on 1/8/1990 amounts to KD 859,854/000
2) The indebtedness according to Article 13 amounts to KD 6,121,239/492
3) The amounts collected after the bankruptcy ruling is none
Second: Debts that the Authority deems acceptable in its capacity:
Commercial Bank of Kuwait, the debt purchased by the state amounting to KD 6,121,239/492 in accordance with Article 13 of Law No. 41 of 1993.
According to the Provision of Article 111 of Law No. 71 of 2020, "The debtor and each creditor, even if his name is not included in the list of debts, may appeal to the Bankruptcy Department against debts included in the list, within ten days from the date of announcing the list.

According to the Provision of Article 111 of Law No. 71 of 2020, "The debtor and each creditor, even if his name is not included in the list of debts, may appeal to the Bankruptcy Department against debts included in the list, within ten days from the date of announcing the list.

World News Roundup

Europe

Russia launches attack

Sunak under pressure to act as migration up

LONDON, Nov 25, (AP) — UK Prime Minister **Rishi Sunak** faced heavy pressure from his own Conservatives to take swift action to bring down migration, as new data published showed net migration numbers were higher than previously thought.

The Office for National Statistics revised its estimates for net migration to the UK — meaning the number of people arriving minus those leaving — in the year to December 2022 to 745,000. That is a new record and significantly higher than the previous estimate of 606,000 for the same period.

The more hard-line wing of the Tories called for Sunak to “act now” as a general election looms next year.

“The word ‘existential’ has been used a lot in recent days but this really is ‘do or die’ for our party,” said a statement by a group of lawmakers known as the “New Conservatives.”

“Each of us made a promise to the electorate. We don’t believe that such promises can be ignored.”

The Conservatives were reelected in 2019 on the back of a manifesto to “take back our borders” and break away from the constraints of the European Union. Britain completed its divorce with the trade bloc in 2020.

Migration continues to be a political hot potato, although Sunak’s government has focused less on legal migration than the issue of unauthorized asylum-seekers arriving on small boats across the English Channel.

The latest figures do show that net migration in the 12 months up to June 2023 was 672,000. The Office for National Statistics said that it was too early to tell if that’s the start of a new downward trend.

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Russia launches largest drone attack on Ukraine:

Russia launched Saturday morning its most intense drone attack on Ukraine since the beginning of its full-scale invasion in 2022, targeting the Ukrainian capital, military officials said.

“Kyiv was the main target,” wrote Ukrainian Air Force Commander Mykola Oleschuk, on his Telegram channel.

In total, Russia launched around 75 Iranian-made Shahed drones against Ukraine, of which 71 were destroyed by air defense, Ukraine’s armed forces said.

The attack was “the most massive air attack by drones on Kyiv,” said Serhii Popko, head of the Kyiv city administration, noting that air defense shot down more than 60 air targets over the capital throughout the morning.

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Kasyanov added to Russia ‘foreign agent’ list:

Russia’s Justice Ministry on Friday added Mikhail Kasyanov, who was President Vladimir Putin’s first prime minister but then became one of his opponents, to its register of “foreign agents.”

Russian law allows for figures and organizations receiving money or support from outside the country to be designated as foreign agents, a term whose pejorative connotations could undermine the designee’s credibility.

The law, which has been extensively used against opposition figures and independent news media, also requires material published by a designee to carry a prominent disclaimer stating that it comes from a foreign agent.

The ministry’s website says Kasyanov “took part in the creation and dissemination of messages and materials of foreign agents to an unlimited circle of people, disseminated false information about the decisions taken by public authorities of the Russian Federation and the policies pursued by them” and “opposed the special military operation in Ukraine.”

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‘China cooperation vital in ending war’: French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna said Friday that China’s cooperation is vital on an issue that has divided it and much of Europe: ending the war in Ukraine.

She encouraged China to continue working on its Ukrainian peace proposal while also ensuring that Chinese entities do not aid Russia in what she called “the ongoing war of aggression in Ukraine” — phrasing the Chinese side would disagree with.

“France underlines once again how its cooperation with China is essential to promote a just and lasting peace,” she said after talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. “We are counting on the vigilance of the Chinese authorities so that no structure in China, particularly private, contributes directly or indirectly to Russia’s illegal war effort in Ukraine.”

Her meetings in Beijing underscored an effort by both sides to continue a dialogue despite their growing differences, whether on the Ukraine war, the Israel-Hamas war or Europe’s huge trade deficit with China. The talks in some ways foreshadowed an EU-China leaders meeting next month.

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Ireland PM condemns anti-immigrant protesters:

Ireland’s prime minister on Friday condemned anti-immigrant protesters who rampaged through central Dublin after three young children were stabbed, saying the rioters simply wanted to cause chaos, not protect the country’s way of life.

Police made a number of further arrests on Friday evening as they mounted a significant security operation in Dublin to ensure that there was no repeat of Thursday’s disorder. A number of people were taken away in police vans following sporadic altercations.

Police arrested 34 people after Thursday night’s rioting when up to 500 people looted shops, set fire to vehicles and threw rocks at crowd control officers equipped with helmets and shields.

The violence began after rumors circulated that a foreign national was responsible for the attack outside a Dublin school on Thursday afternoon. Authorities haven’t disclosed the suspect’s nationality.

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Ruling party won’t join new govt: A senator from the Netherlands’ Party for Freedom was appointed Friday to investigate possible governing coalitions after the far-right party’s election victory, while the party of outgoing Prime Minister Mark Rutte said it would support a center-right administration in parliament but not join the next government.

The Party for Freedom, or PVV, led by veteran lawmaker Geert Wilders, won 37 seats in the 150-seat lower house, indicating a seismic shift to the right for the Netherlands. Rutte’s People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy won 24 seats, 10 fewer than in the previous election, according to a near complete count of Wednesday’s votes.

After a meeting of party leaders at the parliament, PVV Senator Gomm van Strien was appointed to investigate possible coalitions. Newly elected lawmakers will debate his findings on Dec. 6.

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US President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden visit shops in Nantucket, Mass. on Nov 24. (AP)

Family lunch, some shopping, a Christmas tree lighting: Biden’s day out in Nantucket

It wasn’t all work and no play for US President Joe Biden on Friday on this picturesque Massachusetts island.

He spent much of the day in multiple briefings with national security aides, who were updating him as the first phase of hostages were released in Gaza earlier Friday. Biden then delivered brief remarks on the hostage deal, saying it is “only a start, but so far, it’s gone well.”

But then the president joined in the traditional

Biden day-after-Thanksgiving festivities — lunch with his family, perusing local shops and mingling with the Nantucket crowd as the town Christmas tree is lit.

Because of the remarks on hostages, the traditional family lunch happened later than usual. But like always, it was at Brotherhood of Thieves, a cozy bar and grill that advertises itself as an “1840s whaling bar.”

Then the president’s shopping outing began. His first stop was just a couple doors down from

the restaurant at Nantucket Books, where first lady Jill Biden and daughter Ashley were already browsing.

“Can’t come without going to the bookstore,” the president said as he ducked inside. “We’ve got a tradition.”

He left about 20 minutes later, carrying a copy of “Democracy Awakening” by the historian Heather Cox Richardson, who interviewed Biden at the White House last year. (AP)



This photo provided by Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management shows a helicopter arriving near mile 11 of the Zimovia Highway where ground teams, including search and rescue dogs, work to search areas that state geologists have determined safe for entry on Nov 22, in Wrangell, Alaska, following a massive landslide. Authorities on Nov 24, identified those missing or killed in the Alaska landslide this week as five family members and their neighbor, a commercial fisherman who made a longshot bid for the state’s lone seat in the US House last year. (AP)



Cuomo



Chauvin

America

Cuomo accused of harassment: Former New York gov **Andrew Cuomo** is being sued by a former aide who says Cuomo sexually harassed her while he was still in office.

Cuomo’s former executive assistant Britany Comisso filed the case against the ex-governor in state Supreme Court in Albany. The filing, a three-page summons, came just before the expiration for lawsuits under the Adult Survivors Act, a special law which gave victims of sexual abuse a one-year window for claims that would otherwise be barred by time limits.

Comisso was one of at least 11 women who accused Cuomo of sexual misconduct, leading to his abrupt 2021 resignation in a #MeToo-era scandal that marked a severe fall from grace for the Democrat. He has denied the allegations.

Comisso’s lawsuit alleges sexual harassment and unwanted touching from Cuomo and said she was punished for reporting the incidents. The case seeks monetary damages. (AP)

Chauvin stabbed in prison: **Derek Chauvin**, the former Minneapolis police officer convicted of murdering George Floyd, was stabbed by another inmate and seriously injured Friday at a federal prison in Arizona, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press.

The attack happened at the Federal Correctional Institution, Tucson, a medium-

security prison that has been plagued by security lapses and staffing shortages. The person was not authorized to publicly discuss details of the attack and spoke to the AP on the condition of anonymity.

The Bureau of Prisons confirmed that an incarcerated person was assaulted at FCI Tucson at around 12:30 pm local time Friday. In a statement, the agency said responding employees contained the incident and performed “life-saving measures” before the inmate, who it did not name, was

taken to a hospital for further treatment and evaluation. (AP)

Adams accused of 1993 assault: New York City Mayor Eric Adams has been accused of sexually assaulting a woman in 1993, according to a legal summons filed.

The three-page filing does not contain details of the alleged assault but names Adams, the transit bureau of the New York Police Department and the New York Police Department Guardians Association as defendants.

“Plaintiff was sexually assaulted by Defendant Eric Adams in New York, New York in 1993 while they both worked for the City of New York,” the summons reads. (AP)

Victims in crash identified: The two people killed when their luxury car crashed into a border checkpoint in Niagara Falls and exploded in a fiery wreck were identified Friday as a western New York husband and wife whose family owns a lumber business and several hardware stores in the Buffalo area.

The investigation into what caused the 2022 Bentley Flying Spur to race through an intersection, hit a low median and become airborne Wednesday continued, with investigators looking at whether medical or mechanical issues may have contributed, Niagara Falls Police Chief John Faso told local media. (AP)



Britain’s Prince William, the Prince of Wales and Colonel-in-Chief, 1st Battalion Mercian Regiment, rides in a Warrior Armoured Fighting Vehicle as he takes part in an attack exercise during a visit to the regiment, in the south west of the UK, during a visit to the regiment, for the first time following his appointment to the role by King Charles III, in Salisbury, England on Nov 23. (AP)

Politics

Eshoo announces retirement

Phillips won’t run for re-election to Congress

MINNEAPOLIS, Nov 25, (AP) — Democratic Rep Dean Phillips, who is running for president and challenging Joe Biden in the primary, announced Friday he will not seek reelection to Congress in 2024.

“My journey to public service began the morning after the 2016 election, when I faced the reality that democracy requires participation — not observation,” the Minnesota congressman said in a statement.

“Seven years have passed, each presenting historic opportunities to practice a brand of optimistic politics that repairs relationships and improves people’s lives. We have met those moments, and after three terms it is time to pass the torch,” he added.

Avoid

While Phillips has been effusive in his praise for Biden, the 54-year-old also says Democrats need younger voices to avoid a scenario where Trump wins another election next fall.

Several prominent Democrats — including Minnesota Gov Tim Walz — have criticized Phillips’ decision to run against Biden, likening it to a “political side show.”

Ken Martin, chair of Minnesota Democrats and a Democratic National Committee vice chair, said in a statement he appreciates Phillips’ service and his “100% voting record supporting President Biden’s historic record of accomplishments.”

Martin added there are a number of Democrats who “understand the importance of reelecting President Biden” and keeping Phillips’ congressional seat in Democratic hands. Mar-

tin said he is confident the party will have a “strong and loyal” nominee.

Anna Mathews, executive director of the Republican Party of Minnesota, said in a Friday message to The Associated Press that “Dean Phillips has been openly sharing what no other Democrat will: Joe Biden’s failed policies are going to be detrimental to Democrats up and down the ticket next year.”

She added the state’s GOP looks forward to bringing Republican representation back to voters in Minnesota’s 3rd Congressional District next November.

Phillips’ term in Congress will end on Jan 3, 2025.

He is a moderate from the largely well-to-do suburbs of Minneapolis. Before Phillips won the seat as a Democrat in 2018, the area had a history of electing Republicans to the U.S. House.

In October, Phillips became the first elected Democrat to challenge Biden for the nomination.

His run offers a symbolic challenge to national Democrats trying to project the idea that there is no reason to doubt the president’s electability — even as many Americans question whether the 81-year-old Biden should serve another term.

Phillips is one of the wealthiest members of Congress and heir to his stepfather’s Phillips Distilling Company empire, which holds major vodka and schnapps brands. Phillips once served as that company’s president but also ran the gelato maker Talenti. His grandmother was the late Pauline Phillips, better known as the advice columnist “Dear Abby.”

Also:

HARRISBURG, Pa: Former federal prosecutor **Katayoun “Kat” Copeland** will run for attorney general of Pennsylvania in 2024, she said this week.

Copeland, a Republican, recently left her job in the US attorney’s office in Philadelphia ahead of announcing her candidacy for attorney general, the state’s top law enforcement official.

The office has an annual budget of about \$140 million and plays a prominent role in arresting drug traffickers, fighting gun trafficking, defending state laws in court and protecting consumers from predatory practices.

It played a key role in defending **Joe Biden’s** 2020 victory in the battleground state, fighting repeated attempts to overturn it in state and federal courts by **Donald Trump’s** campaign and Republican allies.

□ □ □

WASHINGTON: Rep. **Anna Eshoo**, a Democrat representing parts of California’s Silicon Valley, announced that she will not run for reelection next year, marking the end of her more than three decades in Congress.

“I’m choosing this beautiful season of Thanksgiving to announce that I will not be seeking reelection,” Eshoo said in a video posted on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter. “And I do so with a heart filled with unending gratitude to you, my magnificent constituents.”

Eshoo’s retirement will likely kick off a fierce race for her seat in California’s 16th Congressional District, which encompasses Silicon Valley as well as parts of Santa Jose and San Mateo County.

Africa

Nations form alliance

South African Olympic runner granted parole

PRETORIA, South Africa, Nov 25, (AP): Double-amputee Olympic runner **Oscar Pistorius** was granted parole on Friday, more than a decade after shooting his girlfriend through a toilet door at his home in South Africa in a killing that jolted the world.

He will be released from prison on Jan 5, but will be constantly monitored by parole officials for five years until his sentence expires, the Department of Corrections said.

Pistorius' parole will come with other conditions. Department of Corrections spokesman Singabakho Nxumalo said outside of the prison where Pistorius has been incarcerated in the South African capital, Pretoria, for killing Reeva Steenkamp.

Pistorius won't be allowed to leave the area of Pretoria where he is set to live without permission from authorities. He will also attend a program to deal with anger issues and another program on violence against women. He will have to perform community service.

"Parole does not mean the end of the sentence. It is still part of the sentence. It only means the inmate will complete the sentence outside a correctional facility," Nxumalo said. "What will happen is that Mr. Pistorius will be allocated a monitoring official. This official will work with him until his sentence expires."



Pistorius

Notified

Nxumalo said the monitoring official would need to be notified of any major events in Pistorius' life, including if he wants to move to another home or get a job. "We have to be informed of each and every activity," Nxumalo said.

Pistorius won't wear a monitoring bracelet as that is not part of South African parole procedure, Nxumalo said. Pistorius' sentence will expire on Dec. 5, 2029.

The decision to grant parole was made at a hearing at the prison earlier Friday.

Pistorius, who turned 37 this week, has been in jail since late 2014 for the Valentine's Day 2013 killing of model Steenkamp, although he was released for a period of house arrest in 2015 while one of the numerous appeals in his case was heard. He was ultimately convicted of murder and sentenced to 13 years and five months in prison.

Serious offenders in South Africa must serve at least half of their sentence to be eligible for parole, which Pistorius has done.

Pistorius was at the height of his fame and one of the world's most admired athletes when he killed Steenkamp. He shot her multiple times in the bathroom of his Pretoria villa in the predawn hours with his licensed 9mm pistol.

Pistorius' parole hearing was his second in the space of eight months. He was wrongly ruled ineligible for early release at a first hearing in March.

Comparable

Pistorius was initially convicted of culpable homicide - a charge comparable to manslaughter - for killing Steenkamp. That conviction was overturned and he was convicted of murder after an appeal by prosecutors. They also appealed against an initial sentence of six years for murder, and Pistorius was ultimately sentenced to 13 years and five months in prison.

Pistorius testified at his murder trial that he killed Steenkamp by mistake when he fired four times through the door thinking she was a dangerous intruder hiding in his bathroom in the middle of the night. Prosecutors argued that Steenkamp, a 29-year-old model and reality TV star, had fled to the toilet cubicle during a late-night argument and Pistorius killed her in a rage.

Pistorius was eventually convicted of murder on a legal principle known as *dolus eventualis*, which means he acted with extreme recklessness and should have known that whoever was behind the door would likely be killed. It's comparable to third-degree murder. Steenkamp's mother, Barry Steenkamp, died in September. Her mother, June Steenkamp, didn't oppose Pistorius' parole, but said in a statement before the hearing that she didn't believe Pistorius had been fully rehabilitated and was still lying about the killing.

Also:

ABUJA, Nigeria: Three West African nations led by military juntas met this week to strengthen a newly formed alliance described by some analysts on Friday as an attempt to legitimize their military governments amid coup-related sanctions and strained relations with neighbors.

In his first foreign trip since the July coup that brought him into power, Niger's junta leader, **Gen Abdourahmane Tchiani** held separate meetings Thursday with his Mali and Burkina Faso counterparts.

During their meetings, the leaders pledged security and political collaborations under the Alliance of Sahel States (AES), a partnership the three countries announced in September as a measure to help fight the extremist violence they each struggle with and across the Sahel, the vast arid expanse south of the Sahara Desert.

The alliance provides a "path of sovereignty" for the countries and for their citizens, Gen. Tchiani told reporters after his meeting with Malian leader **Col. Assimi Goita**. "Through this alliance, the peoples of the Sahel affirm that ... nothing will prevent them from the objective of making this area of the Sahel, not an area of insecurity, but an area of prosperity," Tchiani said.

ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar: Madagascar President **Andry Rajoelina** is on course for reelection in a vote boycotted by most opposition candidates, while supporters of his party claimed they had been promised money in return for backing him.

Rajoelina had received 60% of the votes after 68% of polling stations declared their results by late Wednesday, according to the national electoral commission. It put him on course for a third term as leader of the Indian Ocean island of 28 million.

Rajoelina, a former DJ and mayor of the capital, Antananarivo, was president of a provisional government in Madagascar in 2009-2014 after a coup. He was elected president in 2019 and gained a degree of notoriety during the coronavirus pandemic by promoting a herbal drink as a cure for COVID-19.

The leadup to last Thursday's election was marked by protests against Rajoelina led by opposition candidates. Security forces fired tear gas grenades at the demonstrators and two opposition candidates sustained minor injuries. Some polling stations were torched ahead of the election, which was delayed for a week because of the trouble.



Lawmakers and invited guests attend the inauguration ceremony of President-elect Daniel Noboa, in the National Assembly in Quito, Ecuador on Nov 23. Inset: Noboa waves from a balcony of the Carondelet presidential palace. (AP)

Asia

Nationalist Party announces vice presidential candidate

NZ new govt promises tax cuts, more police

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, Nov 25, (AP): New Zealanders can expect tax cuts, more police on the streets and less government bureaucracy, according to the three leaders who signed an agreement Friday to form a new government.

The coalition deal ended nearly six weeks of intense negotiations after New Zealand held a general election on Oct 14.

The deal will see Christopher Luxon serve as prime minister after his conservative National Party won 38% of the vote, the largest proportion of any party.

Luxon thanked New Zealanders for their patience during the negotiations and said each party had made policy compromises to close the deal.

"Our government will rebuild the economy to ease the cost of living, and deliver tax relief to increase the prosperity of all New Zealanders," Luxon said. "Our government will restore law and order, and personal responsibility, so that Kiwis are safer in their own communities."

Focuses

The leaders agreed to make cuts to the public service and train 500 more police within two years. They also agreed to change the mandate of the nation's Reserve Bank so it focuses solely on keeping inflation low, rather than its current dual mandate to keep low inflation while maintaining maximum employment.

The deputy prime minister role will be split between the other two leaders. It will be held for the first 18 months of the election cycle by maverick 78-year-old lawmaker Winston Peters, who leads the populist New Zealand First party, before he hands the baton for the remaining 18 months to David Seymour, leader of the libertarian ACT Party.

Peters, who has long had an acrimonious relationship with the news media, took aim at some reporters.

"Look, please don't start off this government with your antagonistic attitude," he said, grinning, in response to one reporter's question. "You've lost. You lost. Right?"

Peters, who will also be foreign minister, said he didn't foresee any changes to New Zealand's current foreign policy on China. New Zealand depends on China to buy many of its agricultural exports but has also expressed growing concern about

China's increased assertiveness in the Pacific.

Seymour, who will take on the newly created role of regulation minister, said the country had been going in the wrong direction under the previous liberal government, with prices and crime rising, and society becoming too divided.

"We must now draw a line under that and work to ensure New Zealanders have hope that a government can, indeed, deliver better public services and return for their hard-earned taxes," Seymour said.

Under New Zealand's proportional voting system, parties typically need to form alliances in order to command a governing majority.

On the election night count, the closely aligned National and ACT parties had just enough votes to govern. But a final count, which included special votes, changed the equation and made for the tougher three-way negotiations.

Outgoing Prime Minister Chris Hipkins, who decided he wouldn't work with Peters, had already conceded to Luxon on election night.

Hipkins, who leads the liberal Labour Party, held the top job for just nine months. He took over from Jacinda Ardern, who unexpectedly jettisoned down in January, saying she no longer had "enough in the tank" to do the job justice.

Ardern won the previous election in a landslide, but her popularity waned as people got tired of COVID-19 restrictions and inflation threatened the economy.

Also:

TAIPEI, Taiwan: Taiwan's main opposition Nationalist Party announced its vice presidential candidate Friday as hopes fractured for a cross-party alliance to challenge the ruling Democratic Progressive Party and relations with China remained tense.

The outcome of the election could have major effects on relations between China and the United States, which is bound by its own laws to provide Taiwan with the weapons it needs to defend itself. Differences over Taiwan are a major flashpoint in US-China relations.

Hou Yu-ih said former legislator and Cabinet member **Chao Shao-kang** would be his running mate in the January polls. Chao had led a breakaway faction of Nationalist politicians

who established the New Party in the 1990s, but has since returned the Nationalist camp as the DPP has held on to power in both the presidential office and the legislature.

The announcement comes days after the DPP announced that its presidential candidate, serving vice president **William Lai**, had recruited former de facto ambassador to the United States **Bi-khim Hsiao** as his running mate. The Lai-Hsiao ticket is favored to win in the January polls, taking over from incumbent President Tsai Ing-wen, who is limited to two terms.

The parties are largely divided by their attitudes toward China, which claims Taiwan as its own territory to be annexed possibly by force. The Nationalists, also known as the Kuomintang or KMT, agree the sides are part of the same country - albeit under separate governments - while the DPP holds that Taiwan is effectively an independent nation with no need to make a formal declaration that could draw greater military, economic and diplomatic pressure from China.

SEOUL, South Korea: The top diplomats from South Korea, Japan and China are to gather in South Korea over the weekend to discuss resuming their leaders' summit, Seoul's Foreign Ministry said Friday.

An annual trilateral meeting among the leaders of the three Northeast Asian nations hasn't been held since 2019 due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the often touchy ties among them. The three-way summit began in 2008.

While the three nations are close economic and cultural partners with one another, their relationships have suffered on-and-off setbacks due to a mix of issues such as Japan's wartime atrocities, the US-China rivalry and North Korea's nuclear program.

The foreign ministers of the three countries are to meet in the southeastern South Korean city of Busan on Sunday to prepare for their leaders' summit and exchange views on ways to strengthen three-way cooperation and other regional and international issues, Seoul's Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The three ministers are to hold bilateral meetings on the sidelines as well.

In September, senior officials of the three nations agreed to restart the trilateral summit "at the earliest convenient time."



Britain's Prince Edward, Duke of Edinburgh, delivers a speech during the Duke of Edinburgh's International award presentations at the British School, in Jakarta, Indonesia on Nov 24. (AP)



Aguayo



Lasso

Lat/Am

Noboa sworn in as Ecuador prez: Daniel Noboa, an inexperienced politician and heir to a fortune built on the banana trade, was sworn in as Ecuador's president, a role that citizens are demanding he uses to restore the public safety that drug cartels and other criminal organizations robbed them of at the decade's start.

Noboa's term will run only through May 2025, which is what remains of former president **Guillermo Lasso's** tenure. Lasso cut his term short when he dissolved the National Assembly in May as lawmakers pursued impeachment proceedings against him.

The head of the country's newly elected legislature, Henry Kronfle, placed the presidential sash on Noboa during a ceremony in Quito, the capital.

Under Lasso's watch, violent deaths in Ecuador soared, reaching a record 4,600 in 2022, which was double the number from the year before. Killings, kidnappings, robberies and other criminal activities became part of Ecuadorians' everyday life.

The assassination of presidential candidate and anti-corruption crusader **Fernando Villavicencio** as he left a campaign rally in August underscored the country's fragile security situation. Noboa's only experience in government was as a member of National Assembly that Lasso dissolved. He is inheriting a weakened economy and serious fiscal challenges as well as the leadership of a country mired by violent crime.

"The economy and security are indivisible issues; it is an important front on which President Noboa must work," Andrés Briones, an analyst and professor at Casa Grande University in Guayaquil, Ecuador, said. Noboa's government will have to "undertake tax reforms to encourage growth and the revitalization of the economy."

But any actions he wishes to take to address Ecuador's crucial issues will first require him to negotiate with the National Assembly, where his party lacks enough seats to govern on its own. (AP)

Mexico cancels conference: Mexico's Department of the Interior reportedly revoked funding on Friday for a conference on the government's violent anti-insurgency policy from the 1960s to the 1980s, raising claims of censorship.

The conference had been scheduled to begin in two days. Organizers said they were forced to cancel the event, which would have focused on the period known in Mexico as the "dirty war."

The decision has caused confusion among academics, some of whom have accused the government of censoring debate about an infamously violent period of modern Mexican history.

The event, hosted by the Colegio de

Mexico, would have included presentations from historians from the United Kingdom to Argentina, members of Mexico's "dirty war" inquiry panel, and officials from the Department of the Interior itself.

One of the speakers, academic and human rights activist **Sergio Aguayo**, first announced the news on the social media platform X, formerly Twitter, claiming a

government official had expressed concerns to him that "enemies of the government" were participating in the conference.

"There are different points of view because that is why there is academic freedom," Aguayo posted, calling the government's decision "absurd." The government's "dirty war" inquiry, which was co-organizing the event, later confirmed on



New Zealand Prime Minister-elect Christopher Luxon (centre), watches as his coalition partners, New Zealand First leader Winston Peters (left), and ACT leader David Seymour shake hands following a signing ceremony in Wellington, New Zealand on Nov 24. (AP)

social media that funding had been cut, and the conference was cancelled. (AP)

3 jornos, 2 relatives abducted: Prosecutors said Thursday that three journalists and two of their relatives have been abducted by armed men in a violence-plagued state in Mexico, which press groups say is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists, outside of war zones.

The prosecutors office in southern Guerrero state said all five people were abducted between Sunday and Wednesday in Taxco, a colonial town frequented by tourists. One journalist was abducted Sunday along with his wife and adult son, and a husband-and-wife team of journalists were kidnapped Wednesday.

The online news site The Afternoon Chronicle in the nearby city of Chilpancingo said its reporter in Taxco, Marco Antonio Toledo, had received threats earlier this year from a drug cartel, which had ordered him not to publish a story. Toledo had also recently reported on a case of local corruption.

The news site called on authorities to find Toledo, and said the area "has been silenced by the drug cartels."

"Previously, other journalists have been kidnapped by drug cartels ... and have exiled themselves to other parts of the state and other states to save themselves," the news site reported. The press freedom group Article 19 said Toledo, his wife and son had been pulled from their home by at least five armed individuals on Sunday. They have not been heard from since. (AP)

oil price up

The price of Kuwaiti crude oil rose by 24 cents to USD 85.98 per barrel on Friday, compared to USD 85.74 pb the day before, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Saturday.

The Brent crude and West Texas Intermediate in the global markets fell each by 84 cents and USD 1.56 to settle at USD 80.58 per barrel and USD 75.54 per barrel respectively. (KUNA)

KIB's Bukhamseen honored with 'Kuwaiti Visionary CEO' award

The 2023 Islamic Finance Awards, presented by World Finance, has bestowed Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, Vice Chairman and CEO of Kuwait International Bank (KIB), with the esteemed "Kuwaiti Visionary CEO - Development & Growth Driver" award for yet another year. The recognition comes as a testament to Bukhamseen's remarkable leadership and unwavering commitment to driving KIB's development and growth.

Distinguishably among the honorees this year came Bukhamseen, chosen

for his visionary guidance, under which KIB has established a clear strategy and vision for the future, demonstrating outstanding corporate communication and management across all sectors. According to World Finance, Bukhamseen's exceptional leadership has driven year-on-year growth and outstanding financial performance for the Bank, while his investment in employee training and development has resulted in a culture of innovation and excellence across all levels. The magazine also stressed

that KIB's embrace of advanced fintech standards is a testament to Bukhamseen's innovative and forward-thinking approach to banking.

Celebrating his award, Bukhamseen said: "Receiving this accolade for the year 2023 from such a prestigious entity continues to make me proud of what we do. I would like to thank the Central Bank of Kuwait and all regulatory authorities for their invaluable support and distinguished supervisory role in the banking industry."



Raed Jawad Bukhamseen – Vice Chairman & CEO of KIB

Market Movements

24-11-2023

Change Closing pts

	Change	Closing pts
EUROPE - EURO STOXX 50	+10.78	4,372.10
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	+23.30	6,269.50
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+262.54	59,173.34
UAE - DFM	+7.01	3,992.00
UK - FTSE 100	+4.62	7,488.20

Business

Commercial Bank of Kuwait's deposit ratings outlook positive, says Moody's

Event risk from government deposits mitigated by stability

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Moody's Investors Service ("Moody's") has today affirmed the long-term and short-term foreign and local currency deposit ratings of Commercial Bank of Kuwait K.P.S.C. (CBK) at A3/Prime-2 (P-2) and changed the outlook on the long-term deposit ratings to positive from stable. Concurrently, Moody's has affirmed the Baseline Credit Assessment (BCA) and the Adjusted BCA of CBK at ba1, long-term and short-term foreign and local currency Counterparty Risk Ratings at A2/P-1, and long-term and short-term Counterparty Risk Assessments at A2(cr)/P-1(cr).

Ratings Rationale

Affirmation of BCA and deposit ratings

The affirmation of CBK's ratings reflects the bank's strong capitalisation and healthy liquidity buffers which mitigate the risk of large borrower and depositor concentrations. The affirmation also takes into consideration Moody's unchanged assumption of the very high probability of support from the Government of Kuwait (A1 stable) for CBK's depositors at times of stress.

Strong core capital supported by sizeable loan loss reserves

CBK's tangible common equity / risk weighted asset ratio of 15% as of end-June 2023 is the highest in the system and is a key consideration for its standalone strength. The bank has consistently maintained this ratio at or above this level and the agency expects the same going forward. This relatively high capitalization is driven by the bank's elevated loan concentrations which remain a credit

weakness.

CBK's loss absorption capacity is further supported by the sizeable loan loss reserves which at 7.3% of gross loans at end-June 2023 provide a substantial cushion to absorb expected losses.

Moody's expects CBK to maintain its high capital buffers supported by solid internal capital generation while loan growth remains moderate.

High market funding and deposit concentration mitigated by strong liquidity buffers

Market funding for CBK (market funds / tangible banking assets) is slightly above the peers in Kuwait at 21% as of end-June 2023. Additionally, deposit concentration from government and government-related entities subjects the bank to some event risk in case of funding stress which is common to most banks in Kuwait. However, these deposits have proven to be sticky over multiple credit cycles across the Kuwaiti system. Additionally, these risks are largely mitigated by the sizeable liquidity buffers for CBK which at 41% of tangible banking assets as of end-June 2023 were above the average for its local peers. Moody's does not expect a significant shift in CBK's funding and liquidity profiles in the next 12-18 months.

Sound asset quality and strong profitability

CBK continues to report zero NPLs since the policy of writing off all NPLs was introduced in 2018. The bank asset quality has improved in recent years as reflected by the lower provisioning cost (loan loss provisions / average gross loans) that bank has recorded which reached a high of 3.8% for 2019 and 3.1% for 2020 and now has shifted to positive charge. Going forward the agency expects net provisioning cost for CBK to be muted supported by improved asset quality on the back of strong operating conditions for banks in Kuwait and continued recovery efforts.

The bank's profitability is strong and is supported by improved margins and strong fee-based

income. CBK's net interest margin improved to 2.5% for the first six months of 2023 up from 1.7% for the year 2021 supported by higher rates environment and good balance of CASA deposits. Additionally, CBK's fee-based income continues to be a significant contributor to its bottom line contributing 34% of operating income for the first six months of 2023 and compares favorably with domestic peers. CBK's profitability has significantly improved also on the back of lower provisions. The bank reported zero profits in 2019 and 2020. However, profitability recovered strongly since then with return on assets at 3.3% for the first six months of 2023.

Unchanged very high government support assumption

The affirmation of the bank's deposit ratings reflects Moody's unchanged assumption of a very high probability of support from the Government of Kuwait (A1 stable). This continues to result in four notches of uplift from the bank's ba1 Adjusted BCA reflecting the authorities' strong track record of supporting all banks in case of need.

Rationale for positive outlook

The change of outlook to positive on long-term deposits captures Moody's expectation that the bank's recovering profitability and improved asset quality if sustained could drive an upgrade of CBK's ratings and assessments.

Factors that could lead to an upgrade or downgrade of the ratings

CBK's ratings could be upgraded if the bank maintains its sound asset quality and low provisions and at the same time capital buffers remain strong.

Given the positive outlook there is currently no downward pressure on CBK's ratings. The outlook would be revised to stable if there is a reversal from recent improvements in profitability and asset quality or the agency sees significant deterioration in the bank's capitalisation from their current levels.

Bank raises policy rate to 40%

Turkey's Central Bank enacts another significant rate hike

ANKARA, Nov 25, (AP) - Turkey's central bank delivered another huge interest rate hike on Thursday as it tries to curb double-digit inflation that has left households struggling to afford food and other basic goods.

The bank pushed its policy rate up by 5 percentage points, to 40%, marking its sixth big interest rate hike in a row focused on beating down inflation that hit an eye-watering 61.36% last month.

However, the bank said its rate hikes would soon end.

"The current level of monetary tightness is significantly close to the level required to establish the disinflation course," the bank said. "Accordingly, the pace of monetary tightening will slow down and the tightening cycle will be completed in a short period of time."

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has long been a proponent of an orthodox policy of cutting interest rates to fight inflation and had fired central bank governors who resisted his rate-

slashing policies.

That runs counter to traditional economic thinking, and many blamed Erdogan's unusual methods for economic turmoil that has included a currency crisis and an increasingly high cost of living. Other central banks around the world have raised interest rates rapidly to target spikes in consumer prices tied to the rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic and then Russia's war in Ukraine.

Following Erdogan's reelection in May, he appointed a new economic team, which has quickly moved toward reversing his previous policy of keeping interest rates low.

The team includes former Merrill Lynch banker Mehmet Simsek, who returned as finance minister, a post he held until 2018, and Hafize Gaye Erkan, a former U.S.-based bank executive, who took over as central bank governor in June.

Under Erkan's tenure, the central bank has hiked its main interest rate from 8.5% to 40%.



A man purchases food from a street vendor at Kadikoy ferry terminal in Istanbul, Thursday, Nov. 16, 2023. Turkey's central bank delivered another huge interest rate hike on Thursday, Nov. 23, 2023 continuing its effort to curb double-digit inflation that has left households struggling to afford food and other basic goods. (AP)

Other Voices

Decline of oil demand projected in '24

OPEC meeting postponed, intrigue surrounds change

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

OPEC has postponed its meeting by four days from Sunday, November 26 to Friday, December 1 for reasons unknown. It is not usual for OPEC to reschedule meetings that have been fixed, so we wonder what led to such a decision. And why on the first day of the United Nations COP28 in Dubai?

It is certain that the upcoming meeting will be a hard and difficult one, as we are entering the new year with all indications of slower demand for oil in 2024 and with more volumes of oil hitting the market. Therefore, it looks like the postponement of the meeting is due to in-house discussions on how to go about the coming months, and how to face the growing crude oil volumes that are coming from different parts and pouring into the world markets, including two from the oil organization - Iran and Venezuela - which are free to produce with no quota restrictions.

Certainly, the discussions next week will be focused on how much to reduce, and how to redistribute the cut/cuts. While some are resisting any cuts, others were promised increased quota volume to pay for their investments in new oil fields, which are ready to move it to international markets.

Saudi Arabia cannot continue with its volunteer cut of one million barrels per day forever, without the help of others, while some of its members are exceed-

ing their quota volumes. Therefore, OPEC+ must be prepared for a further cut of one million barrels, perhaps from early next year, as oil prices could go down further and hit below \$80 a barrel. This could sound the alarm bell, as most OPEC+ refuse to accept such a level with their annual expenditures, which need at least a price level of \$85 a barrel to balance their budgets without deficits by year end.

Oil is pouring faster from non-OPEC+ countries, like the USA with production of 12.9 million, Canada with 4.5 million and the newcomer Brazil with 3.7 million barrels per day, and with most of its volumes targeting US markets.

Iran is producing 3.5 million barrels and Venezuela 850,000 barrels from its low of 200,000 barrels of production, which is growing fast with the approval of the USA administration to keep the gasoline prices at an acceptable level in anticipation of 2024 presidential elections.

The concern however is that Saudi Arabia, with its commitment to volunteer cuts of one million barrels per day, has a time limit, should OPEC refuse further combined cuts, or may be higher cuts of maximum of 1.5 million barrels per day. A higher oil production, and not accepting any further volunteer cut, is required, if its members do not accept further cuts in order to stabilize prices. Some oil sources claim that Saudi Arabia may threaten to produce more oil and cancel its one million barrels commitment.

The postponement of the OPEC meeting is an unusual routine for the organization; however, oil consumers should expect positive results from the delay.
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Al-Harami

Water scarcity in MENA threat to sovereigns, economy & stability

Kuwait and UAE lead in unsustainable withdrawals

By Moody's Investor Service

Water stress and water management risks are key drivers of environmental risk exposure for all MENA sovereigns

Aside from carbon transition risks, which primarily impact hydrocarbon-exporting sovereigns such as the GCC members and Iraq (Caal stable), water-related risks are the key driver of environmental risk exposure for the entire MENA region. These risks stem mainly from MENA's acute water scarcity and a very high level of water stress, which is the core factor driving exposure to physical climate risk.

Elevated water stress, whereby freshwater withdrawals exceed total renewable resources, increases a government's exposure to water management risks, such as those related to ensuring stability of adequate water supply, guaranteeing broad-based access to water under basic public services, and longer-term water (and, relatedly, food) security. Water stress and water management risks are both important environmental considerations in our environmental, social and governance (ESG) risk assessment framework.

MENA is the most water-scarce region in the world because of its very limited internal renewable freshwater resources, such as rivers, lakes and groundwater aquifers that are regularly replenished from local precipitation. This scarcity stems from the region's geographic location, which governs its very hot and arid climate. Most MENA countries, including all those in the GCC region, fall significantly below the absolute water scarcity threshold, which is commonly defined as a condition where internal renewable water resources are less than 500 m³/person/year.

Shortages

Water scarcity does not necessarily imply outright water shortages. Available water supply also typically includes external water resources, such as rivers and aquifers flowing from other countries (as in the case of Egypt and Iraq), water produced through desalination (such as across GCC), treated municipal wastewater and agricultural drainage. However, even if these other water resources are included, all MENA sovereigns except Iraq remain chronically water scarce, with internal renewable water resources adding up to less than 1,000 m³/person/year.2 This means that for most MENA sovereigns, water use is either severely constrained by limited water supply and insufficient to support agriculture and other water-intensive sectors of the economy, or has to be met through depletion of finite groundwater or surface water resources, which is unsustainable and increases longer-term water security risks, or through imports of water-intensive goods.

Moreover, the size of MENA's water scarcity challenge, measured against a stylized per capita water demand of 1000 m³/year, is understated by the fact that the amount of water required in hot climates with low precipitation and very high evaporation rates is significantly higher than in the regions of the world with more abundant rainfall, which reduces the need for regular irrigation throughout the year.

The standard water scarcity metric also ignores regional and seasonal variability of the availability of freshwater resources and issues related to water

access. For example, a relative abundance of aggregate water resources in Iraq belies acute shortages in the hotter and more arid south of the country, where two-thirds of the population resides and where average annual rainfall is only one-tenth of what it is in the cooler and more rain-abundant northeast. Because of a sharp decline, over past decades, in river flows to Iraq from Turkey and Iran (through Syria), and increased frequency of droughts, large areas of Iraq - which were once a cradle of the Mesopotamian civilization given the abundance of water and experienced regular flooding until at least the 1950s - are now facing acute desertification. While the volume of precipitation varies throughout the year in most geographies, most MENA countries experience virtually no rainfall for five to six consecutive months (May-October). Similarly, relative abundance of renewable groundwater resources in Lebanon ignores constrained access to those water resources given weak infrastructure and significant obstacles to the supply of electricity needed to pump water from the wells.

Scarcity

Water stress is closely related to water scarcity and denotes a condition in which total freshwater withdrawals from lakes, rivers and underground aquifers exceed total renewable resources, including cross-border inflows. Based on this metric, also known as water withdrawal intensity, pressure on the country's renewable freshwater resources is greatest in Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Qatar and stands out in stark contrast to the rest of the world. High water stress means that to meet its water needs, a country must either be drawing down its finite, nonrenewable water resources, such as water from underground aquifers, or producing a large amount of water through desalination, or a combination of both.

In coming years, MENA's water-related challenges are likely to be compounded by the effects of climate change and rapid population growth.

Climate change, mainly in the form of rising temperatures, risks further reducing the availability of freshwater through lower rainfall and higher evaporation rates while increasing the need for regular irrigation to support agriculture and general quality of life. Furthermore, rising sea levels increase the risk of flooding and salinization of deltas and aquifers in coastal areas. Lastly, climate change is increasing the incidence and the severity of meteorological droughts.

Meanwhile, rapid population growth and urbanization will continue to push up demand for water by increasing agricultural as well as municipal water needs. MENA has some of the world's highest rates of demographic growth in the world (1.8% during the past 10 years on average), second only to Sub-Saharan Africa (2.7%). For rated MENA sovereigns, the overall population increased by nearly 75% over the past 25 years, with the GCC population growing by more than 120%, supported by large inflows of expatriate workers. During the same period, annual freshwater withdrawals in MENA increased by nearly 20%, with the rate of growth for GCC exceeding 35%. This excludes the use of produced desalinated water, which for four of the six GCC countries meets 35%-75% of total annual water demand.

Water-related risks curb sovereign creditwor-

through multiple channels

Environmental considerations related to water stress - and, hence, physical climate risks - and water management risks constrain the credit strength of MENA governments through several interlinked channels. These curb a sovereign's economic and fiscal strength, and can increase its susceptibility to event risk.

Our opinions of a sovereign's exposure to these considerations are captured by our environment issuer profile scores (E-IPS), incorporating any meaningful mitigants (such as existing capacity to produce desalinated water in GCC), while the extent to which the credit rating would have been different in the absence of these considerations (in addition to social and governance factors) is captured by our credit impact scores (CIS).

In most cases in MENA, these considerations already weaken the credit rating, indicated by scores of CIS-4 or CIS-5. For the other sovereigns, which are scored CIS-3, the current limited impact on the rating has the potential to increase over time. This is particularly so if governments are unable to mitigate longer-term risk exposures, for example, by recalibrating their water allocation mechanisms and policies or by securing alternative water resources, such as through cost-effective seawater desalination.

Across MENA, water scarcity weighs on economic strength by limiting economic opportunities and growth in water-intensive sectors, especially agriculture and certain types of manufacturing. By extension, water scarcity may limit potential for economic diversification, such as for the GCC sovereigns which are exposed to carbon transition risks because of their heavy economic and fiscal reliance on the hydrocarbon sector.

Demand

Globally, agriculture accounts, on average, for about 70% of all freshwater withdrawals, with another 15%-20% directed to meet industrial demand. However, because of limited rainfall, most agricultural production in MENA has to be irrigated compared to the global average (median) share of only 24% (9%).3 This implies much greater pressure on water withdrawals from aquifers and rivers to sustain a similar level of production and achieve a comparable degree of food security in MENA.

In terms of industry, the sectors with highest water use intensity include manufacturing of textiles and apparel, paper and paper products, food processing, as well as chemicals and power generation. Even if agricultural and manufacturing activities are not currently constrained, helped by measures such as water cost subsidization, large withdrawals from nonrenewable water resources point to risks sustaining such activities over the longer term, when water stress will be exacerbated by the effects of climate change and global warming. According to a 2016 World Bank study, MENA faces the largest potential economic losses from the effects of climate change-induced water scarcity. Those losses could be as high as 14% of GDP by 2050 under a business-as-usual scenario where current water allocation policies remain unchanged. Even if water allocation shifted between and within economic sectors to better reflect the value of water in the region, losses would remain significant at around 6% of GDP.

2nd installment of Sri Lanka's bailout delayed

The governor of Sri Lanka's Central Bank said he's confident it will receive the second instalment of a \$2.9-billion bailout package from the International Monetary Fund before the end of the year, after payment was delayed due to inadequate oversight and debt restructuring.

"I am confident that we are making very good progress. We are moving in the right direction,"

said Nandalal Weerasinghe. Sri Lanka plunged into economic crisis in 2022, suffering severe shortages and drawing strident protests that led to the ouster of then-President Gotabaya Rajapaksa. It declared bankruptcy in April 2022 with more than \$83 billion in debt - more than half of it to foreign creditors. The IMF agreed in March to a \$2.9-billion bailout package, releasing the first pay-

ment shortly thereafter. The IMF's review in September said Sri Lanka's economy was recovering, but it needed to improve its tax administration, eliminate exemptions and crack down on tax evasion. Over the past year, Sri Lanka's severe shortages of essentials like food, fuel and medicine have largely abated, and authorities have restored a continuous power supply. (AP)

BRI offers common development

The China proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has brought the vision of "heart connectivity" to reality, and it is a path to common development, multiple ambassadors and officials from BRI partner countries said on Wednesday during a roundtable held in Fuzhou, East China's Fujian Province.

"The BRI has brought changes in the mind of the world," said Bishnu Pukar Shrestha, Ambassador

of Nepal to China, noting that the initiative focuses on connectivity, not only in transportation, but also in minds and hearts. "This vision and concept have now become possible to access," Shrestha continued. Nepal has benefited a lot from the BRI, and there are different projects that have been completed in Nepal, including railways and roads, which have energized bilateral cooperation and allowed

the country to continue to develop, he said. Shrestha made the remarks during a roundtable on the Belt and Road Global Chambers of Commerce and Association Conference, which is the world's first international cooperation and exchange platform with chambers of commerce, industry associations and other social organizations as the main participants. (PRNewswire)

Russian leader says the status quo is 'unacceptable and dangerous'

Putin to boost AI work in Russia to fight a Western monopoly

MOSCOW, Nov 25, (AP): Russian President Vladimir Putin has announced a plan to endorse a national strategy for the development of artificial intelligence, emphasizing that it's essential to prevent a Western monopoly.

Speaking at an AI conference in Moscow, Putin noted that "it's imperative to use Russian solutions in the field of creating reliable and transparent artificial intelligence systems that are also safe for humans."

"Monopolistic dominance of such foreign technology in Russia is unacceptable, dangerous and inadmissible," Putin said.

He noted that "many modern systems, trained on Western data are intended for the Western market" and "reflect that part of Western ethics, norms of behavior, public policy to which we object."

During his more than two decades in power, Putin has overseen a multi-pronged crackdown on the opposition and civil society groups, and promoted "traditional values" to counter purported Western influence - policies that have become even more oppressive after he sent troops into Ukraine in February 2022.

Putin warned that algorithms developed by Western platforms could lead to a digital "cancellation" of Russia and its culture.

"An artificial intelligence created in line with Western standards and patterns could be xenophobic," Putin said.

"Western search engines and generative models often work in a very selective, biased manner, do not take into account, and sometimes simply ignore and cancel Russian culture," he said. "Simply put, the machine is given some kind of creative task, and it solves it using only English-language data, which

is convenient and beneficial to the system developers. And so an algorithm, for example, can indicate to a machine that Russia, our culture, science, music, literature simply do not exist."

He pledged to pour additional resources into the development of supercomputers and other technologies to help intensify national AI research.

"We are talking about expanding fundamental and applied research in the field of generative artificial intelligence and large language models," Putin said.

"In the era of technological revolution, it is the cultural and spiritual heritage that is the key factor in preserving national identity, and therefore the diversity of our world, and the stability of international relations," Putin said. "Our traditional values, the richness and beauty of the Russian languages and languages of other peoples of Russia must form the basis of our developments," helping create "reliable, transparent and secure AI systems."

Putin emphasized that trying to ban AI development would be impossible, but noted the importance of ensuring necessary safeguards.

"I am convinced that the future does not lie in bans on the development of technology, it is simply impossible," he said. "If we ban something, it will develop elsewhere, and we will only fall behind, that's all."

Putin added that the global community will be able to work out the security guidelines for AI once it fully realizes the risks.

"When they feel the threat of its uncontrolled spread, uncontrolled activities in this sphere, a desire to reach agreement will come immediately," he said.



Russian President Vladimir Putin, center, and Sberbank CEO German Gref, left, visit an exhibition of an artificial intelligence conference AI Journey in Moscow, Russia, Friday, Nov. 24, 2023. Putin says he will endorse a national strategy for the development of Artificial Intelligence, emphasizing that it's essential to prevent a Western monopoly. (AP)

Canada and EU agree to new 'partnerships'



From left: European Council President Charles Michel, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and European Commission President Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen arrive for a news conference in St. John's, Newfoundland on Friday, Nov. 24, 2023 on the second day of the Canada-EU Summit. (AP)

Trudeau welcomes European leaders

ST. JOHN'S, Newfoundland, Nov 25, (AP): Canada and the European Union said Friday they are making strides toward new partnerships on green energy, digital transformation and research funding, as a Canada-EU Summit got underway in the Atlantic coast province of Newfoundland.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced during opening remarks Thursday evening that Canada is joining Horizon Europe, a \$100 billion scientific research program. Afterward, the two parties said in a joint statement on Friday that substantive negotiations are complete and they are working toward its "prompt signature and implementation."

"Canadian companies are already benefiting from Horizon and have for many years, but there is much more that we'll be able to access now that we are full partners," Trudeau said.

"It is an exciting articulation of what have been long-

standing partnerships between scientists on both sides of the Atlantic."

Ottawa and Brussels started negotiations on Canada joining it a year ago, with an initial goal of signing the agreement this past spring.

Canada has also worked out a deal to build water bombers and ship them to the EU, after both regions faced devastating forest fires this past summer.

And Canada and the EU have announced what they are calling a new Green Alliance, which is focused on deepening existing partnerships on fighting climate change, halting biodiversity loss and intensifying technological and scientific co-operation.

A new digital partnership was also part of the package of announcements on Friday.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said Canada "is a perfect match" for Europe's resource needs, and she urged Ottawa to join a global partnership on the issue that the EU will launch within weeks.

Trudeau also said Canada and the EU are committed to helping Ukraine continue in its fight against the Russian invasion, and announced that Canada is donating additional small arms and ammunition to the country.

Officials looking for ways to fill budget hole

Germany's economy shrank, and it's facing a spending crisis that's spreading more gloom

FRANKFURT, Germany, Nov 25, (AP): Germany's economy shrank in recent months and business confidence is still in the dumps, according to figures released Friday, while the government is struggling to overcome a budget crisis that threatens to exacerbate problems in what was already the world's worst-performing major developed economy.

Europe's largest economy shrank 0.1% in the July-to-September quarter as inflation eroded people's willingness to spend, Germany's statistics office confirmed Friday.

Meanwhile, the closely watched Ifo institute survey of business optimism showed a tiny uptick to 87.3 for November from 86.9 in October but remained well below its July level.

The downturn figures come as the country's budget crisis raises the possibility of deep spending cuts next

year. A court ruled last week that previous spending violated constitutional limits on deficits, forcing Chancellor Olaf Scholz's government to put off a final vote on next year's spending plan.

Economists say the budget uncertainty and the possibility of reduced spending worsen the challenges facing the stagnating German economy as it struggles to adapt to long-term challenges such as a shortage of skilled workers and the loss of cheap natural gas from Russia after the invasion of Ukraine.

Germany is the only major economy expected to shrink this year, according to the International Monetary Fund, which foresees a decline of 0.5%.

Officials are searching for ways to fill a 60 billion euro (\$65 billion) budget hole over this year and next after the country's Constitutional Court ruled that the government could not re-purpose unused funding meant to ease

the impact of COVID-19 into projects to fight climate change.

The court said the move violated rules in the constitution that limit new borrowing to 0.35% of annual economic output. The government can go beyond that in an emergency it didn't create, such as the pandemic.

The ruling has tied Scholz's quarrelsome, three-party coalition in knots as the cabinet tries to comply with the decision, raising uncertainty about which government programs will be cut.

Analysts say about 15 billion euros had already been spent in this year's budget, some of it on relief for consumers' high energy bills.

Finance Minister Christian Lindner has proposed invoking an emergency again this year to bring spending in line. But the bigger problem is the 35 billion to 40 billion euros that the government can no longer borrow and

spend next year.

That could mean cuts in the climate and transformation fund, which spends on projects that reduce emissions from fossil fuels. Those include renovating buildings to be more energy efficient; subsidies for renewable electricity, electric cars and railway infrastructure; and efforts to introduce emissions-free hydrogen as an energy source.

It also includes support for energy-intensive companies hit by high energy prices and for computer chip production.

Scholz's office says he will address parliament next week on the budget crisis.

"There doesn't seem to be a strong growth driver in sight," said Carsten Brzeski, chief eurozone economist at ING bank.

He termed the uptick in the Ifo survey of business managers as "a bottoming out" rather than a rebound.

High inflation persists in Russia

Shoppers feel pinch at supermarkets

MOSCOW, Nov 25, (AP): The shelves at Moscow supermarkets are full of fruit and vegetables, cheese and meat. But many of the shoppers look at the selection with dismay as inflation makes their wallets feel empty.

Russia's Central Bank has raised its key lending rate four times this year to try to get inflation under control and stabilize the ruble's exchange rate as the economy weathers the effects of Russia's military operation in Ukraine and the Western sanctions imposed as a consequence.

The last time it raised the rate - to 15%, doubled that from the beginning of the year - the bank said it was concerned about prices that were increasing at an annualized pace of about 12%. The bank now forecasts inflation for the full year, as well as next year, to be about 7.5%.

Although that rate is high, it may be an understatement.

"If we talk in percentage terms, then, probably, (prices) increased by 25%. This is meat, staple products - dairy produce, fruits, vegetables, sausages. My husband can't live without sausage! Sometimes I'm just amazed at price spikes," said Roxana Gheltkova, a shopper in a Moscow supermarket.

Asked if her income as a retiree was enough to keep food on the table, customer Lilya Tsarkova

said: "No, of course not. I get help from my children."

Without their assistance, "I don't know how to pay rent and food," the 70-year-old said.

Figures from the state statistical service Rosstat released on Nov. 1 show a huge spike in prices for some foods compared with 2022 - 74% for cabbage, 72% for oranges and 47% for cucumbers.

The Russian parliament has approved a 2024-2026 budget that earmarks a record amount for defense spending. Maxim Blant, a Russian economy analyst based in Latvia, sees that as an indication that prices will continue to rise sharply.

"It is simply impossible to solve the issue of inflation in conditions ... when the military-industrial complex receives unlimited funding, when everything they ask for is given to them, when the share of this military-industrial complex in the economy grows at a very rapid pace," he told The Associated Press.

The central bank's rate hikes have slightly cooled the ruble's exchange rate slide - the rate is now about 88 to the U.S. dollar from more than 100 earlier. But that's still far higher than in the summer of 2022, when it was about 60 to the dollar.

That keeps the cost of imports high, even as import possibilities shrink because of Western sanctions.



People buy fruits at a hypermarket in Moscow, Russia, on Nov. 3, 2023. The shelves at Moscow supermarkets are full of fruit and vegetables, cheese and meat. But many of the shoppers look at the selection with dismay as inflation makes their wallets feel empty. (AP)

Lord Cameron defends push for 'golden' relations with Beijing

LONDON, Nov 25, (KUNA): UK Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs Lord Cameron has defended his pro-China policy as former prime minister, insisting that it is still right to "engage" with Beijing.

In his first interview with BBC since taking up the current post four days ago, Lord Cameron said China is key to solving big issues like climate change.

He noted that he supported the government's current "realistic, hard-headed policy" towards China.

Lord Cameron has been criticised for his close involvement with Chinese investment in recent years.

He has given speeches praising a port development in Sri Lanka owned ultimately by a Chinese state company.

He tried to set up a £1bn China-Investment fund. And he met senior Chinese figures on visits to Beijing.

This has raised fears among some MPs that Lord Cameron could seek to soften the government's attitude towards China.

"We also need to align more care-

fully with our allies to make sure we can counter any malign threats coming from China. So, it is a realistic hard headed policy."

But he defended his previous policy in Downing Street that sought a new "golden era" in Sino-UK relations.

He said, "When I became prime minister, the greatest need was for Britain to grow again, trade again, with exports to help our businesses around the world."

The government should still deal with Beijing today, he said, adding, "Engaging China is one part of the approach we need to take."

Lord Cameron said Britain should engage more closely with the European Union on foreign, defence and security policy.

He said Britain had decided not to be a member of the EU but had to be "a friend, a neighbour and the best possible partner" and the UK had to make that work.

Even in his first few days back in office, Lord Cameron has been a strong advocate for boosting Britain's international development policy.

ENVIRONMENT

Business Plus



States recycle and donate food headed to landfills

US tackles climate change and alleviating hunger



Betsy Quiroa shops at a market-style food pantry at the Carver Center in Port Chester, N.Y., on Nov. 15, 2023. A growing number of states are working to keep food out of landfills over concerns that it is taking up too much space and posing environmental problems. Some states including New York are requiring supermarkets and other businesses to redirect food to food pantries. (AP)

What's shocking to people often is not only how much we waste ... but also the impact. Food waste causes about 8% to 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions

ELMSFORD, N.Y., Nov 25, (AP): When Sean Rafferty got his start in the grocery business, anything that wasn't sold got tossed out.

But on a recent day, Rafferty, the store manager for ShopRite of Elmsford-Greenburgh in New York, was preparing boxes of bread, donuts, fresh produce and dairy products to be picked up by a food bank. It's part of a statewide program requiring larger businesses to donate edible food and, if they can, recycle remaining food scraps.

"Years ago, everything went in the garbage ... to the landfills, the compactors or wherever it was," said Rafferty, who has 40 years in the industry. "Now, over the years, so many programs have developed where we're able to donate all this food ... where we're helping people with food insecurities."

New York is among a growing number of states targeting food waste over concerns it is taking up diminishing landfill space and contributing to

global warming as meat, vegetables and dairy release the greenhouse gas methane after being dumped in a landfill. Rescuing unwanted fruits and vegetables, eggs, cereals and other food also helps to feed hungry families.

Globally, about a third of food is wasted. In the United States, it's even higher, at 40%, according to the Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic. The U.S. spends about \$218 billion each year growing and producing food that is wasted. About 63 tons (57 metric tons) goes to waste, including 52.4 tons (47.5 metric tons) that ends up in landfills and 10 tons (9 metric tons) never harvested from farms.

"What's shocking to people often is not only how much we waste ... but also the impact," said Emily Broad Leib, a Harvard University law professor and director of the school's Food Law and Policy Clinic. "Food waste causes about 8% to 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions."

Broad Leib says 20% of water in

the U.S. is used to grow food "that we then just throw away, so we're basically taking water and putting it directly into a landfill."

But she and others also note there is growing awareness of the need to do something about food waste in the U.S.

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Environmental Protection Agency announced a goal of 50% food waste reduction by 2030.

That has prompted a number of state-led initiatives, along with smaller, nonprofit efforts.

Ten states and the District of Columbia have passed legislation or executed policies to reduce, compost or donate waste. All 50 states have passed legislation shielding donors and recovery organizations from criminal and civil liability linked to donated food.

California and Vermont have launched programs converting residents' food waste into compost or energy, while Connecticut

requires businesses, including larger food wholesalers and supermarkets, to recycle food waste. Farmers in Maryland can get a tax credit of up to \$5,000 per farm for food they donate.

Several states have joined New York in setting up systems allowing food to be donated. Rhode Island requires food vendors servicing education institutions to donate any unused food to food banks, while Massachusetts limits the amount of food that businesses can send to landfills, which Broad Leib said has increased food donations in the state by 22% over two years.

New York's program is in its second year, and state officials believe it's having a significant impact.

As of late October, the program had redistributed 5 million pounds (2.3 million kilograms) of food - the equivalent of 4 million meals - through Feeding New York State, which supports the state's 10 regional food banks and is hoping to double that number next year. Among those

required to donate food include colleges, prisons, amusement parks and sporting venues.

"Certainly, we should be reducing the amount we waste to start with, but then we should be feeding people before we throw food away if it's good, wholesome food," said Sally Rowland, supervisor with the state Department of Environmental Conservation's Organics, Reduction and Recycling section. "To me, it's a commonsense kind of thing and I think it's just kind of built that momentum of people understanding about how much food we're really wasting."

New York's Westchester County has eight refrigerated trucks that pick up all types of perishable food, according to Danielle Vasquez, food donations coordinator for Feeding Westchester, one of the state's food banks.

The group started working with businesses in 2014 but has seen participation ramp up since the donation law went into effect last year. Much of the food collected goes to nearly 300 programs and partners throughout the county, including a mobile food pantry and the Carver Center, a nonprofit serving Port Chester's families and children, which has a pantry.

"This time of year is very important for us and a lot of families across Westchester," Vasquez said. "There is the high cost of food. There is a high cost of living. Westchester is a very expensive county to live in ... We are here to supplement our families as much as we can so, that way, they can focus that money on paying their bills."

Among those visiting the Carver Center earlier this month was Betsy Quiroa, who lamented how the cost of everything had gone up since the coronavirus pandemic. She was counting on getting milk, eggs, fruits and vegetables during her visit and said she didn't care if the produce was dented or slightly damaged.

"Coming here is good," said Quiroa, a mother of four who relies on Social Security. "If you are not working, you buy nothing. This is the problem."

Despite New York's success, advocates for food waste worry not enough is being done to meet the 2030 goal. Broad Leib and others have called for a national effort to coordinate the various state and local policies.

There is a goal, "but we don't really have a great roadmap ... and how we're going to actually achieve that end goal by 2030, which is kind of crazy," Broad Leib said, adding that a one-person liaison office in the USDA isn't sufficient to address the problem.

Kathryn Bender, a University of Delaware assistant professor of economics, said donation programs are helpful, but she worries they might shift the burden from businesses to nonprofits, which could struggle to distribute all the food.

"The best solution for food waste is to not have it in the first place," Bender said. "If we don't need to produce all that food, let's not put all the resources into producing that food."

Research highlights staggering human health risks and urgency for global action

Study reveals shocking death toll from coal plant pollution

By Lucas Henneman
George Mason University

Air pollution particles from coal-fired power plants are more harmful to human health than many experts realized, and it's more than twice as likely to contribute to premature deaths as air pollution particles from other sources, new research demonstrates.

In the study, published in the journal *Science*, colleagues and I mapped how U.S. coal power plant emissions traveled through the atmosphere, then linked each power plant's emissions with death records of Americans over 65 years old on Medicare.

Our results suggest that air pollutants released from coal power plants were associated with nearly half a million premature deaths of elderly Americans from 1999 to 2020.

It's a staggering number, but the study also has good news: Annual deaths associated with U.S. coal power plants have fallen sharply since the mid-2000s as federal regulations compelled operators to install emissions scrubbers and many utilities shut down coal plants entirely.

In 1999, 55,000 deaths were attributable to coal air pollution in the U.S.,

according to our findings. By 2020, that number had fallen to 1,600.

In the U.S., coal is being displaced by natural gas and renewable energy for generating electricity. Globally, however, coal use is projected to increase in coming years. That makes our results all the more urgent for global decision-makers to understand as they develop future policies.

A landmark study in the 1990s, known as the Harvard Six Cities Study, linked tiny airborne particles called PM2.5 to increased risk of early death. Other studies have since linked PM2.5 to lung and heart disease, cancer, dementia and other diseases.

Following that research, the Environmental Protection Agency began regulating PM2.5 concentrations in 1997 and has lowered the acceptable limit over time.

PM2.5 - particles small enough to be inhaled deep into our lungs - comes from several different sources, including gasoline combustion in vehicles and smoke from wood fires and power plants. It is made up of many different chemicals.

Coal is also a mix of many chemicals - carbon, hydrogen, sulfur, even metals. When coal is burned, all of these chemicals are emitted to the

atmosphere either as gases or particles. Once there, they are transported by the wind and interact with other chemicals already in the atmosphere.

As a result, anyone downwind of a coal plant may be breathing a complex cocktail of chemicals, each with its own potential effects on human health.

To understand the risks coal emissions pose to human health, we tracked how sulfur dioxide emissions from each of the 480 largest U.S. coal power plants operating at any point since 1999 traveled with the wind and turned into tiny particles - coal PM2.5. We used sulfur dioxide because of its known health effects and drastic decreases in emissions over the study period.

We then used a statistical model to link coal PM2.5 exposure to Medicare records of nearly 70 million people from 1999 to 2020. This model allowed us to calculate the number of deaths associated with coal PM2.5.

In our statistical model, we controlled for other pollution sources and accounted for many other known risk factors, like smoking status, local meteorology and income level. We tested multiple statistical approaches that all yielded consistent results. We compared the results of our statistical

model with previous results testing the health impacts of PM2.5 from other sources and found that PM2.5 from coal is twice as harmful as PM2.5 from all other sources.

The number of deaths associated with individual power plants depended on multiple factors - how much the plant emits, which way the wind blows and how many people breathe in the pollution. Unfortunately, U.S. utilities located many of their plants upwind of major population centers on the East Coast. This siting amplified these plants' impacts.

In an interactive online tool, users can look up our estimates of annual deaths associated with each U.S. power plant and also see how those numbers have fallen over time at most U.S. coal plants.

Engineers have been designing effective scrubbers and other pollution-control devices that can reduce pollution from coal-fired power plants for several years. And the EPA has rules specifically to encourage utilities that used coal to install them, and most facilities that did not install scrubbers have shut down.

The results have been dramatic: Sulfur dioxide emissions decreased about 90% in facilities that reported

installing scrubbers. Nationwide, sulfur dioxide emissions decreased 95% since 1999. According to our tally, deaths attributable to each facility that installed a scrubber or shut down decreased drastically.

As advances in fracking techniques reduced the cost of natural gas, and regulations made running coal plants more expensive, utilities began replacing coal with natural gas plants and renewable energy. The shift to natural gas - a cleaner-burning fossil fuel than coal but still a greenhouse gas contributing to climate change - led to even further air pollution reductions.

Today, coal contributes about 27% of electricity in the U.S., down from 56% in 1999.

Globally, however, the outlook for coal is mixed. While the U.S. and other nations are headed toward a future with substantially less coal, the International Energy Agency expects global coal use to increase through at least 2025.

Our study and others like it make clear that increases in coal use will harm human health and the climate. Making full use of emissions controls and a turn toward renewables are surefire ways to reduce coal's negative impacts. (AP)

editor's choice



'Festival an invitation for discovery, empathy and sharing'

Marrakech kicks off film festival in the shadow of war in ME

MARRAKECH, Morocco, Nov 25, (Agencies): Film industry leaders in Marrakech attending one of the Arab world's largest film festivals emphasized Friday the importance of elevating cinema and artistic expression amid a shadow cast by Israel's war with Hamas and an earthquake that struck Morocco less than three months ago.

"In the weeks leading up to the festival, we were not sure that we would even be able to be here. The world we share is shattered and devoured," said American actor Jessica Chastain, serving as the president of the festival's jury, in a speech on the festival's opening night.

"Throughout history, art has been used as an accessible tool for communication, raising awareness about social issues and affecting positive change," she added.

Surrounded by red carpet crowds and flashing camera lights, others agreed.

"We know what's happening and don't forget it," said Melita Toscan Du Plantier, director of the Marrakech International Film Festival. "But heart is important. Heart is a weapon against obscurity and against conflict. We're here to talk about heart, show movies and talk about directors from this region."

Organizers said they looked forward to showcasing cinema from Morocco, the Middle East and Africa. Throughout the week, they plan to honor Moroccan director Faouzi Bensaïdi, and workshop films from throughout the region in a developmental program presided over by

director Martin Scorsese.

The festival opened Friday with Richard Linklater's action-comedy "Hit Man." Danish actor Mads Mikkelsen was honored with a career achievement award for his films including "Another Round," "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" and "Casino Royale," in which he played a Bond villain.

The festival is expected to feature more than 70 additional films, including Michel Franco's "Memory," starring Chastain, and Matteo Garrone's Italian immigration drama "Io Capitano."

Communities

It's one of Morocco's most widely publicized international events and comes in the aftermath of an earthquake that wreaked particular havoc on the mountain communities surrounding Marrakech. Moroccan Prince Moulay Rachid, who leads the foundation responsible for the festival, called it a "bastion of peace that brings people closer together."

The prince said in a statement that the festival was an "invitation for discovery, empathy and sharing."

The Marrakech International Film Festival, along with Saudi Arabia's Red Sea Film Festival that is scheduled to open next week, are taking place as protests sweep North Africa and the Middle East, including Morocco, over the war in Gaza. That's in contrast to the Cairo International Film Festival and Tunisia's Carthage Film Festival, both

of which were canceled due to the war.

The festival is scheduled to run through Dec. 2.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Adam Sandler plays a 74-year-old class lizard named "Leo" in the latest Netflix animation offering. Worried he's wasted his life in a cage, Leo tries to plot his escape when a kid in the school is assigned to take him home. But some mishaps ensue and he ends up befriending some of the elementary school kids when they learn he can talk. Sandler is joined by a strong comedic voice cast including **Bill Burr, Cecily Strong, Jason Alexander, Jo Koy** and, of course, **Rob Schneider**.

Meanwhile, good golly, Miss Molly, is Little Richard the uncrowned king of rock 'n' roll? The documentary "Little Richard: I Am Everything," directed by **Lisa Cortés** and streaming on Max, makes a solid case. His flamboyant and boundary pushing lyrics, style and music had a direct influence on famous acts to follow, including the Beatles, **David Bowie, Elton John, Mick Jagger** and even filmmaker **John Waters**, who calls his own mustache a "twisted tribute" to Little Richard. In his review, AP critic **Mark Kennedy** wrote "Cortés' film is also the story of American rock itself, the way transistor radios allowed teens in the '50s to rebel against their parents' staid music and how Black music was appropriated by white bands."

Film

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This image released by Universal Pictures shows Cillian Murphy in a scene from 'Oppenheimer.' (AP)

Film

The artistry behind the blockbuster unveiled

'Oppenheimer' crew shares insider stories

LOS ANGELES, Nov 25, (Agencies): Impossible is often just a starting point on a Christopher Nolan film and "Oppenheimer," about the father of the atomic bomb, was no exception. In fact, it's often where inspiration was born.

During one especially stressful stretch, filmmakers lost their White House set five days before they had one day to shoot with Gary Oldman, who was flying in to play President Harry S. Truman. The wild scramble to find and construct a new Oval Office is detailed in a making-of documentary included in the newly available home entertainment release.

Looking back on that moment now, producer Emma Thomas can't help feeling bad about the timing. But she marveled at what the crew accomplished. She told them at the time that if there were ever a zombie apocalypse, they were the people she'd want to be with.

"There's nothing film crews can't do. They will move mountains if they have to," Thomas told The Associated Press. "Every day there's something that happens and you have to figure out a way out of it. But that's where the magic happens."

For some, like production designer Ruth De Jong, that would involve building Los Alamos and finding Washington D.C. in New Mexico. For others, like cinematographer Hoyte van Hoytema and editor Jennifer Lame, it was making an "opera of faces and emotions" compelling for three hours.

Key craft department heads spoke to the AP about the challenges and triumphs of making this film, which has earned more than \$950 million at the box office.

"Because Chris holds himself to the same standards, everyone's willing to go there with him," Thomas said.

Aging 18 principal actors across multiple decades is hard enough, but as makeup lead Luisa Abel and head of hair design Jaime Leigh McIntosh quickly learned, there is no hiding in IMAX. There would be no help from CGI, either.

"We were in the elements a lot and a lot of the actors have prosthetic pieces on. Even younger actors have pieces on before they were meant to be older because I think everybody looks a lot younger now than people did in that era," Abel said.

They mapped out detailed aging diagrams for each character, which helped enormously in a non-chronological shoot. And Nolan was involved in it all - down

to Cillian Murphy's haircuts.

"He really pays attention to every detail for every department," McIntosh said. "As an artist it's incredibly helpful to have a director who is communicative and can give you feedback."

For as precisely planned as "Oppenheimer" was there were still some last-minute fits of inspiration. A day before they shot Oppenheimer's post-Trinity test speech in the auditorium, Nolan asked costume designer Ellen Mirojnick to put the audience in bright colors.

Luckily, she was able to get her assistant to pull a big batch of 1940s clothes, in reds, yellows, greens and blues in Los Angeles and ship them to New Mexico within 20 hours. It wasn't part of the plan but, Mirojnick said, it was the right note for this disorienting scene where Oppenheimer starts having horrific visions about his creation.

Imagine

"I can't imagine what it would be if it wasn't that, because it feels like this kind of crazy dream ... and an insight into his state of mind," Thomas said. "Who would have thought that the color of the costumes could do that? But they do."

There was old tape on one of the walls of the narrow, dingy room De Jong found in a shaving company's old headquarters in Southern California used for Oppenheimer's security clearance hearing. It was the perfect claustrophobic, unglamorous and period-specific setting for a humiliating ordeal designed to make Oppenheimer feel small.

"Don't clean this up," Nolan said. They didn't. It was tight, and hot, and the only people who could fit in the room were the actors (usually at least 6 at any given time), Nolan and van Hoytema.

"We like shooting in small spaces with these cameras," van Hoytema said, recalling the small boat hulls in "Dunkirk." "All clumped up together is our favorite modus operandi."

And those scenes ended up being some of Lame's favorite to edit.

"There's nothing more interesting than to watch amazing actors sitting in a room. I find it challenging but also immensely satisfying," Lame said. "It's amazing what Hoyte and Chris did with room 2022. Every time you went in there, it felt like a totally different kind

of scene: It had a different feeling to it, or it had slightly different lighting or the shots were more menacing on certain characters."

Someone told her that they could have watched Kitty's testimony, a big moment for actor Emily Blunt near the end of the film, for "20 minutes." That moment also provided an opportunity for musical innovation with Ludwig Göransson's score, blending blends Kitty's theme - a piano and cello - with Oppenheimer's - a violin.

"It's a waltz," he said. "It's like they're dancing together."

For Göransson, "Oppenheimer" was a personal journey that's allowed him to work alongside his wife, violinist Serena Göransson, and also one that challenged him in unexpected ways.

On the first recording of "Can You Hear the Music," which has 21 big tempo changes, they did it eight bars at a time. When he glued it all together, it sounded perfect - but perfect felt wrong.

"What I wanted to capture was the energy that I'd seen in the visuals, when I sat there with Andrew Jackson and Chris Nolan in the IMAX theater and they showed me the first visual experiments - like the molecules going around and the energy of being on the brink of discovery," he said.

They went back and recorded the piece in one take. "It was like night and day," he said. "There's a there's an energy and a flow that comes in that room of four to six string players playing together and changing tempo together."

That song alone has been streamed almost 60 million times and viewed 1.5 billion times on TikTok.

Nolan knew that the Trinity test, the first detonation of a nuclear weapon, would have to be the showstopper for the film both visually and sonically. He even built in about 30 seconds of near-silence before the sound of the explosion hits the spectators, at three different distances.

It was a high-pressure moment for sound designer Richard King, who knows that explosions are uniquely hard to record.

"You can rarely get them to sound as impressive as you want them to sound," he said. "I knew it should have a unique quality to it, something you've never heard before. It needed to be like a wall hitting you, like a cosmic door slamming."

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif.: Tiffany Haddish was arrested Friday on suspicion of driving under the influence, police said.

The actor and comedian was detained after Beverly Hills police received a call about 5:45 a.m. Police said she appeared to be found slumped over the wheel of the vehicle while the car engine was still running.

Haddish, an Emmy and Grammy winner, performed at the Laugh Factory in Los Angeles on Thursday night. It was the comedy club's 43rd annual free Thanksgiving feast for the community.

A representative for Haddish did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comment.

Last year, Haddish was arrested on suspicion of DUI in suburban Atlanta.

Haddish has starred in the films including the comedy "Girls Trip," "Night School," "Like a Boss" and "The Kitchen." She wrote the New York Times best seller "The Last Black Unicorn," which earned a Grammy nomination. (AP)

NASHVILLE, Tenn.: Daryl Hall has sued his longtime music partner John Oates, arguing that his plan to sell off his share of a joint venture would violate the terms of a business agreement the Hall & Oates duo had forged.

The move quickly prompted a judge to temporarily block the sale while legal proceedings and a previously initiated arbitration continue.

A Nashville chancery court judge issued the temporary restraining order on Nov. 16, writing that Oates and others involved in his trust can't move to close the sale of their share of Whole Oats Enterprises LLP to Primary Wave IP Investment Management LLC until an arbitrator in a separately filed case weighs in on the deal, or until the judge's order expires - typically within 15 days, unless a judge extends the deadline.

Chancellor Russell Perkins issued the order the same day Hall filed his lawsuit, which was largely brought forth under seal, obscuring most details. An order Wednesday by the judge allowed more filings to be made public, though many details about the pair's business agreement and the proposed sale remain under wraps. Writing in favor of sealing certain filings, Hall's attorneys reasoned that it's a private dispute under an agreement with confidential terms, concerning a confiden-

tial arbitration process.

Although the publicly released version of the lawsuit didn't specify what's at stake in the sale, Primary Wave has already owned "significant interest" in Hall and Oates' song catalog for more than 15 years. In a 2021 interview with Sky News, Hall alluded to disappointment with the sale of his back catalog.



Haddish



Hall

"Oh, in the early days, it got sold off for me and I didn't get the money," he said. In the same interview, he advised artists to retain their publishing rights, saying "all you have is that."

The lawsuit contends that Hall opened an arbitration process on Nov. 9 against Oates and the other defendants in the lawsuit, Oates'

wife, Aimee Oates, and Richard Flynn, in their roles as co-trustees of Oates' trust. Hall was seeking an order preventing them from selling their part in Whole Oats Enterprises to Primary Wave Music.

According to the lawsuit, Oates' team intimated at the time that the sale could close within days, although no arbitrator had been picked

yet to sort through the conflict.

The lawsuit says Oates' team entered into a letter of intent with Primary Wave Music for the sale, and alleges further that the letter makes clear that the music duo's business agreement was violated to Primary Wave Music in violation of a confidentiality provision. (AP)

People & Places

People

Foxx in assault case

Combs hit with more sexual abuse claims

NEW YORK, Nov. 25, (AP) — Two more women have come forward to accuse Sean “Diddy” Combs of sexual abuse, one week after the music mogul settled a separate lawsuit with the singer Cassie that contained allegations of rape and physical abuse.

Both of the new suits were filed Thursday on the eve of the expiration of the Adult Survivors Act, a New York law permitting victims of sexual abuse a one-year window to file civil action regardless of the statute of limitations.

The filings detail acts of sexual assault, beatings and forced drugging allegedly committed in the early 1990s by Combs, then a talent director, party promoter and rising figure in New York City’s hip-hop community.



Combs

One of the accusers, Joi Dickerson, said she was a 19-year-old student at Syracuse University when she agreed to meet Combs at a restaurant in Harlem in 1991. After their date, Combs “intentionally drugged” her, then brought her home and sexually assaulted her, according to the filing.

Without her knowledge, Combs videotaped the assault and later shared it with several friends in the music industry, the suit alleges. The public exposure sent Dickerson into a “tailspin,” contributing to severe depression that landed her in the hospital and forced her to drop out of college.

In a separate lawsuit filed Thursday, an unnamed woman accused Combs and an R&B singer, Aaron Hall, of sexually assaulting her and a friend, then beating her several days later.

The woman — identified only as Jane Doe — said that she and her roommate returned to Hall’s home with him and Combs after a music industry event in 1990 or 1991. The accuser said she was coerced into having sex with Combs. Afterward, as she was getting dressed, “Hall barged into the room, pinned her down and forced Jane Doe to have sex with him,” the suit states.

Information

When the victim later spoke to her friend, who is also not named, she learned that her friend “had been forced to have sex with Combs and Hall in another room,” according to the suit. “Upon information and belief, when Combs finished with Jane Doe, he and Hall switched, and they commenced assaulting Jane Doe’s friend,” the suit states.

A few days later, an “irate” Combs allegedly showed up at the home of the two women in an attempt to stop them from speaking out about the abuse. He then choked the woman identified as Jane Doe until she passed out, the suit states.

In an emailed statement, a spokesperson for Combs denied the allegations, accusing the two women of seeking to exploit the New York law that temporarily extended the statute of limitations.

An email inquiry to Hall was not returned. Tyrone Blackburn, an attorney for the unnamed accuser, said his client was in the process of securing medical documents and witness statements to support her suit, which was filed late Thursday “in an effort to preserve the statute of limitations.”

The suit brought by Dickerson notes that the victim filed police reports in New York and New Jersey after the abuse. Inquiries to the New York City Police Department were not immediately returned. It was not clear which other jurisdictions the reports may have been filed.

After the filmed assault, Dickerson said she approached friends in the music industry asking them to confirm the existence of the “revenge porn” tape, but was rebuffed by those who were “terrified that Combs would retaliate against them and that they would lose future business and music opportunities.”

The Associated Press does not typically name people who say they have been sexually abused unless they come forward publicly, as Dickerson has done.

In years after the alleged assaults, Combs, now 54, would found his own label, Bad Boys Records, helping to produce Mary J. Blige and Biggie Smalls on his way to becoming one of the most influential hip-hop producers and executives in the genre’s history.

The pair of lawsuits follow a separate set of explosive allegations made last week by Cassie Ventura, who said that Combs subjected her to a pattern of abuse during their yearslong relationship, which began in 2005, when she was 19 and he was 37.

Also:

NEW YORK: A woman has alleged in a lawsuit that actor, singer and comedian **Jamie Foxx** sexually assaulted her at a rooftop bar in New York in 2015, an incident the actor says “never happened.”

The lawsuit filed Wednesday in state Supreme Court in **Manhattan** by a woman known in the documents only as Jane Doe alleges that Foxx rubbed her breasts and groped her under her pants against her will.

The suit says she and a friend were seated at a table next to Foxx’s at Catch NYC in 2015. The woman asked Foxx for a photo, and the two women took several pictures with him, the suit says. It says that afterward, he began complimenting her “super model body” and told her she looked like the actor Gabrielle Union.

He then grabbed her by the arm and took her to a secluded area, where he put both hands under her crop top and felt her breasts, the suits says. She tried to pull away from Foxx as he reached into her pants with his hands and touched her genitals, the suit also alleges.

When the woman’s friend found them, he stopped and the women walked away, the suit says. A statement in response released Thursday from a representative for the 55-year-old Foxx said the alleged incident never happened.

“In 2020, this individual filed a nearly identical lawsuit in Brooklyn. That case was dismissed shortly thereafter. The claims are no more viable today than they were then. We are confident they will be dismissed again. And once they are, Mr. Foxx intends to pursue a claim for malicious prosecution against this person and her attorneys for re-filing this frivolous action,” the statement said.

The woman is seeking damages to be determined at trial, the suit says.



The jury of the Marrakech International Film Festival pose for photos on the red carpet on the opening ceremony, in Morocco, Friday, Nov. 24. (AP)

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This image released by Far Out Productions shows ‘The World Is a Ghetto’ by War, the 50th Anniversary Collector’s Edition. (AP)



Hilton



Peters

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Paris Hilton had a Thanksgiving surprise to share: a daughter named **London**.

Hilton on Friday shared an Instagram photo of a pink baby outfit with “London” printed on the top.

“Thankful for my baby girl,” read the caption.

She followed with several Thanksgiving TikToks that further demystified the new arrival, including one in which she and husband **Carter Reum** chant “big brother” to their baby son Phoenix. London was welcomed via surrogate, Hilton’s representative confirmed to The Associated Press on Friday.

Hilton has been open about her journey to motherhood, freezing eggs and surrogacy. On her podcast earlier this year, Hilton had said that she was excited for Phoenix to have a baby sister named London.

“It’s my favorite city and I’ve always wanted to name my daughter London,” Hilton said at the time. “I had actually picked that name for a long time now, probably over 10 years. I always wanted London. I love that name for my daughter.”

Hilton and Reum announced the arrival of Phoenix, also via surrogate, in January. The couple married in a lavish ceremony in November 2021. (AP)

WASHINGTON: Charles Peters, founding editor of The Washington Monthly and its editor-in-chief for three decades, died Thursday at age 96.

In confirming his death in his Washington home, the journal reported that Peters had been in declining health for several years, mainly from congestive heart failure.

Peters, a native of **Charleston, West Virginia**, brought an influential neoliberal voice to the politics of his day, challenging the left as well as the right in political circles cleaved along those ideological lines. He served as the magazine’s editor from 1969 to 2000.

The author and journalist **James Fallows**, who began his career at the magazine, told readers of Peters’ death on the journal’s website.

“He matters in the ideals he has set for his country,” Fallows wrote. “That it should be patriotic but not jingoistic, that it can respect the military without being pro-war, that it can celebrate ambition and entrepreneurship without forgetting those left behind, that it should be skeptical of government failures precisely because effective government is so crucial to America’s success.”

He said Peters’ wife, **Beth**, had been caring for him with hospice support in the same Washington house where they had lived since coming to the capital in 1961. (AP)

Music

Snider’s ‘Crank It’ finally arrives

War remasters ‘World Is a Ghetto’

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 25, (AP) — A remastered and well-presented five LP box set of War’s best-selling album “The World Is a Ghetto” recaptures that slice of time when multicultural rock reached its first peak.

War dependably delivered a fusion of rock and Latin rhythms in the early ‘70s, coming out of the age of musical psychedelia. The Southern California band — originally called Eric Burdon and War — gave us music for the working class, with lyrics bemoaning political infighting and frequently urging social harmony.

The band, initially formed to back Burdon as he plotted his next musical endeavor after the Animals, took on a life of its own and was spurred into success by a fan base that crossed cultural boundaries.

“The Cisco Kid” sounds clean and defined as rendered on the 50th anniversary remaster on gorgeous gold colored vinyl. The instrumentals are nicely separated for this side one song on Billboard’s best-selling album of 1973.

The stabs of keyboard work from founding member **Lonnie Jordan** are a mainstay of War’s music, and shine on tracks like “City, Country, City,” a long-winded jam session. Bonus tracks on separate vinyl in the set include “Lee’s Latin Jam” with its upbeat, heavy horn work.

The highlight is hearing the band work through the making of “The Cisco Kid,” with an entire 25 minute track occupying an entire LP side as the group hashes out different percussion approaches for the beginning, and searching for the right tone

on vocals. The liner notes explain the song was the band’s nod to the heroic Mexican caballero of comic book and television fame, because he was “the only non-Anglo superhero on television.”

War’s music maintained through decades, earning the band more than 20 gold, platinum and multi-platinum records. They were Santana with a little less guitar and a few more horns, and quickly became a Southern California car culture favorite.

Best of all, War endured.

□ □ □

A singer-songwriter with the persona of a fried folkie can be expected to work at a poky pace, as is the case of **Todd Snider**. His “Crank It, We’re Doomed” album has been a long time coming, despite the urgency of its title.

Snider recorded the 15-song album in 2007 before shelving it. Much of the material subsequently surfaced elsewhere and will be familiar to fans when “Doomed” is finally released Friday.

Even so, it ranks among Snider’s strongest collections. Four songs have never been released before, including the bluesy stomper “Juice” and “What Made You Do It,” a marvel of cool jazz that evokes Tom Waits singing to Billy Joe Shaver.

Other highlights include a brief star turn by **Kris Kristofferson** on “Good Fortune” and Snider’s duet with **Loretta Lynn** on “Don’t Tempt Me,” which they co-wrote. “Anyone can see you’re stoned as a rock,” she

sings.

These garage-folk versions of tunes, available elsewhere, are often significantly different. “Mercer’s Folly” combines the words for one later song with the music for another. A cover of **Jimmy Buffett**’s “West Nashville Grand Ballroom Gown” is stripped down to two acoustic guitars, while fiddle and organ underpin “America’s Favorite Pastime,” a great song written about performance-enhancing drugs.

Snider strings together non sequiturs that seem seamless as he contemplates love and greed, war and peace, the cycle of life and what matters most.

Whether he’s singing a song that’s old or new, Snider always sounds like a busker on the corner of sanity and madness.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Take That, the gargantuan British boy band turned man-pop group that gave the world **Robbie Williams**, are releasing their ninth studio album. Titled “This Life,” it is their first full-length album in seven years, a rare reunion for a band not on a break. It’s also an exciting listen: there’s a plucky warmth to these songs, like on the acoustic single “Windows” — no doubt the influence of **Savannah, Georgia**, where the band made most of the record. It’s a lovely album from one of the most successful bands in British chart history — the result of getting the guys back together and finding a new sound with some old friends.

NEW YORK: Beloved characters like **Snoopy** and **SpongeBob SquarePants** soared through the skies above New York City Thursday while bands march along the streets below as the annual Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade ushered in the holiday season.

The parade started on **Manhattan’s Upper West Side** making its way alongside Central Park in front of big crowds and a national television audience before ending in front of Macy’s flagship store on 34th Street.

Among the big names performing is **Cher**, who just released her first Christmas album. The Oscar-, Emmy- and Grammy Award-winner has a prime spot — perform-

ing just before the arrival of Santa Claus, which marks the end of the parade.

Other celebrities and musical groups taking part include **Jon Batiste**, **Bell Biv DeVoe**, **Brandy**, **Jessie James Decker**, **Pentatonix** and **Miss America 2023 Grace Stanke**. The parade also includes performances from the casts of some Broadway shows.

New balloons debuting this year include **Leo the lizard**, a character from a Netflix film, who is more than 40 feet (12.5 meters) tall, as well as ones that have been there before — like **SpongeBob**, coming in at 44 feet (13.4 meters).

Some characters, like **Snoopy**, have been

in the parade for many years, but this year’s balloon is a new **Beagle Scout Snoopy** version — celebrating the 50th anniversary of his first appearance in the **Peanuts** comics.

The parade isn’t just about what’s going on in the skies, though. At street level, the procession includes more than two dozen floats, interspersed with marching bands from around the country and a number of clown crews among the 8,000 people participating, organizers said.

Thousands lined the streets in coats on a sunny morning. Children were on the shoulders of their parents, shouting as **Snoopy** and **SpongeBob** and **Leo the Lizard** went by.

Terri Brown, her husband and their children, ages 3, 5 and 8, were groggy after the 30-mile (50-kilometer) drive from **Westfield, New Jersey**. But their faces lit up as the parade started.

“I’ve always wanted to bring them here since I used to come as a kid,” Brown said. “I’m happy it’s good weather.”

Ross Greenstein drove 10 hours from **Michigan** to catch the parade with his daughter, who is studying law in New York, as well as his wife and two other children. Before Thursday, he had only seen the parade on TV.

“I grew up every Thanksgiving, waking up and jumping on the couch and watching the parade,” Greenstein said. “We came to see the parade for the first time in my life and it feels very surreal.”

This is the 97th time the parade has been held since 1924.

The broadcast is hosted by **Savannah Guthrie**, **Hoda Kotb** and **Al Roker** from “Today” and airs on NBC.

President **Joe Biden** and his wife **Jill** called NBC during the parade. The president told Al Roker that people should take a moment to be thankful to live in a country with so much. (AP)



Park Jeong-min, Ko Min-si, Yum Jung-ah and Zo In-sung, (from left to right), pose for photographers upon arrival during the red carpet event for the Blue Dragon Film Awards in Seoul, South Korea, Friday, Nov. 24. (AP)

Dr. Rajan advocates awareness on dangers of tobacco

WHF new policy urges stricter nicotine rules for heart health

By Dr. Rajesh Rajan

Cardiologist – Al Amiri Hospital Kuwait & Chairman of the IACC

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: The World Heart Federation (WHF) is pleased to announce the launch of a new Policy Brief that highlights the connection between nicotine and cardiovascular disease. Dr. Rajesh Rajan, a respected Indian cardiologist at Al Amiri Hospital Kuwait and Chairman of the Indian Association of Clinical Cardiologists (IACC), has emphasized the need for stricter regulations on nicotine and tobacco products in a recent interview. The interview follows the release of an important Policy Brief

by the World Heart Federation, titled "Nicotine and Cardiovascular Health: When Poison is Addictive."

The Policy Brief sheds light on the link between nicotine and cardiovascular disease, aiming to raise awareness about the harmful effects of nicotine and call for stronger regulations on tobacco and nicotine products. Currently, tobacco products are responsible for a staggering eight million deaths per year, with cardiovascular disease accounting for one in six of these fatalities.

Addictive

Contrary to popular belief, nicotine is highly addictive, comparable

to drugs like heroin or cocaine. Dr. Rajan explains that many individuals who use tobacco products would not do so if nicotine were not present. He emphasizes that nicotine can cause damage to various organs, including the respiratory and cardiovascular systems.

The WHF Policy Brief consolidates existing evidence on the detrimental health effects of nicotine, dispels common misconceptions, and provides recommendations for individuals and policymakers to mitigate the harmful impact of tobacco and nicotine products on a global scale.

In the interview, Dr. Rajan highlights the urgent need for action to

address the global burden of cardiovascular disease caused by tobacco use. He argues that stricter regulations on tobacco and nicotine products are crucial to reduce accessibility and prevent initiation among vulnerable populations, particularly the youth. Additionally, raising public awareness about the dangers of nicotine and providing support for smoking cessation are vital steps in combating the global tobacco epidemic.

Dr. Rajan's expertise and dedication to improving cardiovascular health have made him a prominent figure in the field of cardiology. He currently serves as the Chairman of



Dr. Rajesh Rajan

the Indian Association of Clinical Cardiologists and has been instrumental in overseeing various clinical research registries focused on heart failure. Dr. Rajan is also affiliated with renowned cardiac care institutions like Sabah Al Ahmad Cardiac Center, Al Amiri Hospital Kuwait, and holds positions in multiple medical associations.

The combined efforts of organizations like the WHF and professionals like Dr. Rajan are crucial in raising awareness about the dangers of nicotine, advocating for stricter regulations, and ultimately combating the global burden of cardiovascular disease caused by tobacco use.

FDA expands cantaloupe recall

1.35m chickens killed on bird flu fear

NEW YORK, Nov 25, (AP) - More than 1.3 million chickens are being slaughtered on an Ohio egg farm as the bird flu continues to take a toll on the industry.

The US Department of Agriculture said all 1.35 million chickens on the farm in Ohio's Union County will be slaughtered to help limit the spread of the highly contagious virus after a case was confirmed in the flock this week.

The outbreak that began in early 2022 has been much less severe this year as fewer cases of the virus are being found among the wild birds that spread it. But there have still been 8.1 million birds killed this year to help control the spread of the disease and 5.8 million of those have come just this month as several large egg farms have been struck. That includes 1.2 million birds at one Iowa egg farm and another 940,000 chickens at one Minnesota egg farm that had to be killed.

Egg farms tend to be much larger than turkey or chicken farms, sometimes with millions of birds. That's a big part of why Iowa - the nation's largest egg producing state - has been hit the hardest in this outbreak with nearly 17.3 million birds killed. Ohio is also one of the top egg producing states but it has seen only 5.1 million birds killed because of bird flu.

Confirmed

This week, there have also been sizeable bird flu cases confirmed on farms in Minnesota, Maryland, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Georgia and California. But the biggest one of those cases was the Maryland chicken farm where 198,200 birds were killed.

In 2022, nearly 58 million birds were slaughtered as part of the outbreak. The highly contagious virus is spread easily by wild birds through droppings and nasal discharges.

Farmers are working hard to keep the virus from infecting their flocks by taking steps like requiring workers to shower and change clothes before entering barns, sanitizing trucks that enter a farm and investing in separate sets of tools for every barn. But the virus is difficult to keep out particularly along the main pathways for migrating birds who are headed south for the winter.

Officials say bird flu doesn't represent a significant health threat. Human cases are extremely rare and none of the infected birds are allowed into the nation's food supply. Properly cooking poultry and eggs to 165 degrees Fahrenheit (73.89 degrees Celsius) will also kill any viruses.

Salmonella infections:

US health officials recalled three more brands of whole and pre-cut cantaloupes Friday as the number of people sickened by salmonella more than doubled this week.



A hen stands next to an egg, Jan. 10, 2023, at a farm in Glenview, Ill. More than 1.3 million chickens are being slaughtered on an Ohio egg farm as the bird flu continues to take a toll on the industry. (AP)

Nearly 100 people in 32 states have gotten sick from the contaminated fruits. Arizona, Missouri, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Ohio have the highest number of cases. Two people have died of the infections in Minnesota, and 45 people are hospitalized nationwide.

The US Food and Drug Administration's original recall included Malichita brand whole cantaloupe, Vinyard brand pre-cut cantaloupe and ALDI whole cantaloupe and pre-cut fruit products. Rudy brand whole cantaloupes and Freshness Guaranteed brand and RaceTrac brand pre-cut cantaloupes joined the list Friday.

Health officials say anyone who bought the recalled fruits should throw them away and wash surfaces that touched them with hot, soapy water or in a dishwasher.

Most people infected with salmonella develop diarrhea, fever and stomach cramps within six hours to six days after consuming food contaminated with the bacteria. Illnesses typically last four to seven days. Vulnerable people, including children, people older than 65 and those with weakened immune systems may develop severe illnesses that require medical care or hospitalization.

Also:

LONDON: The World Health Organization said it has confirmed sexual transmission of mpox in Congo for the first time as the country experiences its biggest-ever outbreak, a worrying development that African scientists warn could make it more difficult to stop the disease.

In a statement issued late Thursday, the U.N. health agency said a resident of Belgium traveled to Congo in March and tested positive for mpox, or monkeypox, shortly afterward. WHO said the individual "identified himself

as a man who has sexual relations with other men" and that he had gone to several underground clubs for gay and bisexual men.

Among his sexual contacts, five later tested positive for mpox, WHO said.

"This is the first definitive proof of sexual transmission of monkeypox in Africa," Oyawale Tomori, a Nigerian virologist who sits on several WHO advisory groups, said. "The idea that this kind of transmission could not be happening here has now been debunked."

Mpox has been endemic in parts of central and west Africa for decades, where it mostly jumped into humans from infected rodents and caused limited outbreaks. Last year, epidemics triggered mainly by sex among gay and bisexual men in Europe hit more than 100 countries. WHO declared the outbreak as a global emergency, and it has caused about 91,000 cases to date.

WHO noted there were dozens of "discrete" clubs in Congo where men have sex with other men, including members who travel to other parts of Africa and Europe. The agency described the recent mpox outbreak as "unusual" and said it highlighted the risk the disease could spread widely among sexual networks.

WHO added that the mpox outbreak this year in Congo, which has infected more than 12,500 people and killed about 580, also marked the first time the disease has been identified in the capital of Kinshasa and in the conflict-ridden province of South Kivu. Those figures are roughly double the mpox toll in 2020, making it Congo's biggest-ever outbreak, WHO said.

Virologist Tomori said that even those figures were likely an underestimate and had implications for the rest of Africa, given the continent's often patchy disease surveillance.

The Conversation

Experts strive to improve pandemic predictions

COVID-19 Modeling Hub offers real-time projections for effective policy decisions

By Emily Howerton, Penn State; Cecile Viboud National Institutes of Health, and Justin Lessler, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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

How can anyone decide on the best course of action in a world full of unknowns?

There are few better examples of this challenge than the COVID-19 pandemic, when officials fervently compared potential outcomes as they weighed options like whether to implement lockdowns or require masks in schools. The main tools they used to compare these futures were epidemic models.

But often, models included numerous unstated assumptions and considered only one scenario - for instance, that lockdowns would continue. Chosen scenarios were rarely consistent across models. All this variability made it difficult to compare models, because it's unclear whether the differences between them were due to different starting assumptions or scientific disagreement.

In response, we came together with colleagues to found the US COVID-19 Scenario Modeling Hub in December 2020. We provide real-time, long-term projections in the US for use by federal agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, local health authorities and the public. We work directly with public health officials to identify which possible futures, or scenarios, would be most helpful to consider as they set policy, and we convene multiple independent modeling teams to make projections of public health outcomes for each scenario. Crucially, having multiple teams address the same question allows us to better envision what could possibly happen in the future.

Since its inception, the Scenario Modeling Hub has generated 17 rounds of projections of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths in the US across varying stages of the pandemic. In a recent study published in the journal Nature Communications, we looked back at all these projections and evaluated how well they matched the reality that unfolded. This work provided insights about when and what kinds of model projections are most trustworthy - and most importantly supported our strategy of combining multiple models into one

ensemble. A founding principle of our Scenario Modeling Hub is that multiple models are more reliable than one.

From tomorrow's temperature on your weather app to predictions of interest rates in the next few months, you likely use the combined results of multiple models all the time. Especially in times like the COVID-19 pandemic when uncertainty abounds, combining projections from multiple models into an ensemble provides a fuller picture of what could happen in the future. Ensembles have become ubiquitous in many fields, primarily because they work.

Analysis

Our analysis of this approach with COVID-19 models resoundingly showed the strong performance of the Scenario Modeling Hub ensemble. Not only did the ensemble give us more accurate predictions of what could happen in the future overall, it was substantially more consistent than any individual model throughout the different stages of the pandemic. When one model failed, another performed well, and by taking into account results from all of these varying models, the ensemble emerged as more accurate and more reliable.

Researchers have previously shown performance benefits of ensembles for short-term forecasts of influenza, dengue and SARS-CoV-2. But our recent study is one of the first times researchers have tested this effect for long-term projections of alternative scenarios.

While scientists know combining multiple models into an ensemble improves predictions, it can be tricky to put an ensemble together. For example, in order for an ensemble to be meaningful, model outputs and key assumptions need to be standardized. If one model assumes a new COVID-19 variant will gain steam and another model does not, they will come up with vastly different results. Likewise, a model that projects cases and one that projects hospitalizations would not provide comparable results.

Many of these challenges are overcome by convening as a "hub." Our modeling teams meet weekly to make sure we're all on the same page about the scenarios we model. This way,

any differences in what individual models project are the result of things researchers truly do not know. Retaining this scientific disagreement is essential; the success of the Scenario Modeling Hub ensemble arises because each modeling team takes a different approach.

At our hub we work together to design our scenarios strategically and in close collaboration with public health officials. By projecting outcomes under specific scenarios, we can estimate the impact of particular interventions, like vaccination.

For example, a scenario with higher vaccine uptake can be compared with a scenario with current vaccination rates to understand how many lives could potentially be saved. Our projections have informed recommendations of COVID-19 vaccines for children and bivalent boosters for all age groups, both in 2022 and 2023.

In other cases, we design scenarios to explore the effects of important unknowns, such as the impact of a new variant - known or hypothetical. These types of scenarios can help individuals and institutions know what they might be up against in the future and plan accordingly.

Although the hub process requires substantial time and resources, our results showed that the effort has clear payoffs: The information we generate together is more reliable than the information we could generate alone.

Because Scenario Modeling Hub projections can inform real public health decisions, it is essential that we provide the best possible information. Holding ourselves accountable in retrospective evaluations not only allows us to identify places where the models and the scenarios can be improved, but also helps us build trust with the people who rely on our projections.

Our hub has expanded to produce scenario projections for influenza, and we are introducing projections of respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV. And encouragingly, other groups abroad, particularly in the EU, are replicating our setup.

Scientists around the world can take the hub-based approach that we've shown improves reliability during the COVID-19 pandemic and use it to support a comprehensive public health response to important pathogen threats. (AP)

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SPORTS

Lopez matches career high with 39 points as Bucks edge Wizards

Knicks stay alive, Kings unbeaten, Bulls eliminated in In-Season Tournament

MILWAUKEE, Nov 25, (AP): Brook Lopez matched a career high with 39 points and hit a 3-pointer with 2:40 left to put the Milwaukee Bucks ahead for good in a 131-128 In-Season Tournament victory over the Washington Wizards on Friday night.

Milwaukee's Khris Middleton exited the game early in the third quarter with left Achilles tightness. Middleton, who has been playing limited minutes this season after undergoing surgery on his right knee over the summer, had seven points and five assists in 13 minutes.

Giannis Antetokounmpo and Damian Lillard each added 31 points as the Bucks improved to 3-0 in the East Group B standings. This was the first time in franchise history that the Bucks had three players score at least 30 points in the same game.

Knicks 100, Heat 98

In New York, Jalen Brunson scored 24 points, Immanuel Quickley came off the bench to add 20 and spark a huge turnaround, and the New York Knicks rallied from a 21-point deficit to beat the Miami Heat 100-98 and stay alive in the NBA's In-Season Tournament.

RJ Barrett finished with 18 points for the Knicks, who fell way behind after surrendering a 19-0 run to begin the second half, then rallied by outscoring the Heat 29-11 in the fourth quarter.

Jimmy Butler scored 23 points but missed a potential winning 3-pointer just before the buzzer.

Pacers 136, Pistons 113

In Indianapolis, Tyrese Haliburton had 26 points and 10 assists, Myles Turner scored 10 of his 23 points in the final quarter, and the Indiana Pacers earned a quarterfinal home game in the NBA In-Season Tournament with a 136-113 home victory over the Detroit Pistons.

The Pacers, 4-0 in East Group A play, will host the next tournament opponent on Dec. 4 or 5.

The Pistons, after opening the season 2-1, have lost 13 consecutive games. The Pacers outscored the Pistons 39-17 in the final quarter.

Raptors 121, Bulls 108

In Toronto, O.G. Anunoby matched



Milwaukee Bucks' Cameron Payne (15) shoots between Washington Wizards' Deni Avdija (8) and Danilo Gallinari (88) during the first half of an NBA basketball In-Season Tournament game Friday, Nov. 24, 2023, in Milwaukee. (AP)

his season high with 26 points, Pascal Siakam had 18 and the Toronto Raptors beat Chicago 121-108 in the NBA's In-Season Tournament, eliminating the Bulls for contention.

The Raptors, eliminated when Orlando beat Boston earlier Friday, improved to 1-2 in the tournament. Chicago fell to 0-3 in the tournament. The Bulls have lost three straight and six of seven.

BASKETBALL

Dennis Schroder added 17 points in Toronto's balanced attack. Gary Trent Jr. had 16 points, Jakob Poeltl chipped in 15 points and 10 rebounds and Scottie Barnes had 13 points and 10 rebounds.

Pelicans 116, Clippers 106

In Los Angeles, Zion Williamson scored a season-high 32 points, Brandon Ingram added 30 and the New Orleans Pelicans finished group play in the NBA In-Season Tournament on a winning note, defeating the Los Angeles Clippers 116-106.

Williamson scored nine points in the final 12 minutes as the Pelicans improved to 3-1 in West Group B play.



Sacramento Kings guard De'Aaron Fox (5) attempts to shoot as Minnesota Timberwolves center Rudy Gobert, right, defends during the second half of an NBA basketball In-Season Tournament game, Friday, Nov. 24, 2023, in Minneapolis. (AP)

Houston is 2-1 in the group but would take the top spot in the group with a win over Dallas on Tuesday by virtue of its win over New Orleans earlier in the tournament.

Warriors 118, Spurs 112

In San Francisco, Stephen Curry scored 35 points and matched his season high with seven 3-pointers while also dishing out six assists, and the Golden State Warriors held off Victor Wembanyama and the slumping San Antonio Spurs 118-112 in an In-Season Tournament game.

Cedi Osman's 3 with 21 seconds left pulled the Spurs within 112-109 before Curry converted four free throws the rest of the way and Klay Thompson made a pair.

Dario Saric added 20 points with four 3s and seven rebounds off the bench, while Thompson contributed 15 points and six assists.

Kings 124, Timberwolves 111

In Minneapolis, De'Aaron Fox had 36 points and 12 assists, and the Sacramento Kings prevented the Minnesota Timberwolves from clinching a spot in the quarterfinals of the NBA In-Season Tournament with a 124-111 victory.

The Kings improved to 3-0 in Group C of the Western Conference, which they could clinch later Friday if Golden State lost to San Antonio. The quarterfinals start on Dec. 4.

Harrison Barnes had 10 of his 18 points in the first quarter, Malik Monk scored 17 points and Domantas Sabonis added 15 points and 11 rebounds for the Kings.

Rockets 105, Nuggets 86

In Houston, Jalen Green scored 25 points, Alperen Sengun added 21 points and 14 rebounds and the Houston Rockets beat the slumping Denver Nuggets 105-86 in the NBA's In-Season Tournament.

Houston improved to 2-1 in the tournament with a game left next week at Dallas. Denver completed group play 2-2. The defending champion Nuggets have lost five of seven after opening 8-1.

Suns 110, Grizzlies 89

In Memphis, Tenn., Devin Booker scored a season-high 40 points, Eric Gordon added 20 and the Phoenix Suns defeated the Memphis Grizzlies 110-89 in an NBA In-Season Tournament game.

Jordan Goodwin and Grayson Allen finished with 14 points each for the Suns, who played without leading scorer Kevin Durant, a late scratch due to right foot soreness.

BASKETBALL

two early 3-pointers to finish with 10 points and eight rebounds.

The Gamecocks finished with seven players in double figures. Milaysia Fulwiley had a game-high 17 points while Ashlyn Watkins had 14.

UCLA 78, UConn 78-67

In George Town, Cayman Islands, Kiki Rice scored 24 points and No. 2 UCLA held off No. 6 UConn 78-67 in the Cayman Islands Classic.

Rice also had 11 rebounds and eight assists for the Bruins (5-0), who led by as many as 23 points in the second half. Charisma Osborne added 18

Texas reaches Big 12 champ's game

Oregon crushes Oregon State to secure spot in Pac-12 title game

EUGENE, Oregon, Nov 25, (AP): Bo Nix threw for two touchdowns and ran for another, securing No. 6 Oregon a spot in the Pac-12 championship game with a 31-7 victory Friday night over No. 15 Oregon State in the final scheduled matchup between the in-state rivals.

The Ducks (11-1, 8-1 Pac-12, No. 6 CFP) will face No. 4 Washington next Friday in Las Vegas, the last conference championship before 10 of the league's teams bolt next season. The winner has a chance at learning a spot in the four-team College Football Playoff.

It was Oregon's sixth straight win since a 36-33 loss at Washington on Oct. 14. The rematch next week will mark the first meeting between the teams in the Pac-12 title game.

Nix, among the Heisman Trophy favorites, completed 33 of 40 passes for 367 yards. Troy Franklin caught nine passes for 128 yards and a score.

Texas 57, Texas Tech 7

In Austin Texas, Keilan Robinson returned a kickoff 95 yards for one of his two touchdowns, Bert Auburn made five field goals and Texas overwhelmed Texas Tech to reach the Big 12 championship game.

Leaving with Oklahoma for the Southeastern Conference after this season, Texas (11-1, 8-1) has won six straight since a loss to Oklahoma. The



Oregon State quarterback DJ Uia-galelei (5) is tackled by Oregon defensive back Evan Williams, front right, during the first half of an NCAA college football game Friday, Nov. 24, 2023, in Eugene, Ore. (AP)

UConn improves

FAU passes early test, outscores Texas A&M

KISSIMMEE, Florida, Nov 25, (AP): P Johnell Davis scored 26 points, Alijah Martin added 25 and No. 19 Florida Atlantic beat No. 12 Texas A&M 96-89 in a semifinal at the ESPN Events Invitational on Friday.

Davis and Martin combined for 11 3-pointers as FAU (4-1) went 16 of 30 (53.3%) from behind the arc.

Wade Taylor IV had 35 points for Texas A&M (5-1).

Texas A&M played the second half without Henry Coleman III, who was hurt with three minutes left in the opening half and limped off the court.

UConn 90, Manhattan 60

In Hartford, Conn., Tristen Newton recorded his third career triple-double and UConn beat Manhattan to win its 23rd consecutive nonconference game.

Newton finished with 15 points, 13 assists and 10 rebounds.

Cam Spencer scored 18 points, hitting four 3-pointers, for the Huskies (6-0). Donovan Clingan added 17 points, Alex Karaban scored 12 and Hassan Diarra finished with 11.

Seydou Traore scored 13 points to lead Manhattan (3-2).

Houston 79, Montana 44

In Houston, L.J. Cryer scored a season-high 24 points, J'Wan Roberts added 13 and Houston beat Montana.

BASKETBALL

Cryer, a transfer from Baylor, finished 9 of 16, including 5 of 12 on 3-pointers. He has scored in double figures in six straight games for Houston (7-0).

Jamal Shead had 13 points and seven assists. He became the seventh Houston player to surpass 500 career assists. Money Williams scored 15 points and Te'Jon Sawyer added eight for Montana (2-3).

Duke 80, S. Indiana 62

In Durham, N.C., Kyle Filipowski had 21 points and 14 rebounds as Duke pulled away from Southern Indiana in the second half.

Jeremy Roach added 18 points for the Blue Devils (5-1), who fell behind by 10 points six times before halftime and trailed 35-31 at the break against a team that had yet to beat a Division I opponent this season.

Jeremiah Hernandez scored 15 points for the Screaming Eagles (1-6).

Baylor 95, Florida 91

In New York, Ray J Dennis had 24 points and eight assists, and Baylor beat Florida in the championship game of the NIT Season Tip-Off.

Jonathan Tchamwa Tchatchoua hit a 3-pointer - his only basket of the game - to snap a tie and put Baylor (6-0) ahead for good with 9:56 left as the Bears won their seventh regular-season tournament title under coach Scott Drew.

UCLA women hold off UConn 78-67

No. 1 South Carolina overwhelms Devilettes

COLUMBIA, S.C., Nov 25, (AP): Kamilla Cardoso had 14 points, 10 rebounds and five blocks as No. 1 South Carolina won its record-tying 45th straight home game, 101-19 over Mississippi Valley State on Friday.

This one was never in doubt as the Gamecocks (5-0) led by double digits just five minutes in, by 40 at the half and held the Devilettes (1-5) to the fewest points allowed in coach Dawn Staley's 16 seasons.

Te-Hina Paopao, an Oregon transfer, returned from missing a game with an ankle injury and shored up South Carolina's outside shooting with

points and Lauren Betts had 13 points. Paige Bueckers led all scorers with 31 points for UConn (3-2).

Colorado 96, Kentucky 53

In St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, Aaronette Vonleh scored 19 points and No. 3 Colorado picked up another big win in the Paradise Jam tournament with a 96-53 rout of Kentucky.

Jaylyn Sherrod added 15 points, Kindyl Wetta had 11 points, and Quay Miller and Tameiya Sadler each had 10

points for the Buffaloes (6-0), who shot a season-high 59.7% (37 of 62) in winning their sixth straight by double digits.

Eniya Russell had 14 points, Maddie Scherr added 13 points and Ajae Petty scored 11 points for the Wildcats (2-4), who committed 27 turnovers.

Stanford 100, Florida State 88

In Herderson, Nev., Kiki Iriafen had 30 points and 17 rebounds, and No. 4 Stanford beat No. 13 Florida State 100-88 in the championship game of the Ball Dawgs Classic.

Stanford (6-0) overcame an early seven-point deficit thanks to defensive adjustments against the up-tempo Seminoles and outscored Florida State 72-54 over the final three quarters. The Cardinal's point total was their season high. Iriafen was named tournament MVP after combining for 44 points and 26 rebounds in two games.

Iowa 98, Purdue Fort Wayne 59

In Estero, Fla., Caitlin Clark scored 29 points and moved into the top 20 of Division I's all-time scoring list, and No. 5 Iowa eased past Purdue Fort Wayne 98-59 in the quarterfinals of the Gulf Coast Showcase.

Clark finished the night with 2,901 career points. She passed Jess Koyach (2,874) and Maddy Siegrist (2,896) during the game, and has gone from 37th to 19th on the all-time list already this season - now within 626 points of Kelsey Plum's Division I record of 3,527.



UConn's Paige Bueckers shoots as UCLA's Charisma Osborne, right, defends during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game at the Cayman Islands Classic in George Town, Cayman Islands, Friday, Nov. 24, 2023. (AP)

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'It is an honor to be part of this great leading family with long-standing achievements'

Toyota & Al Sayer announce Makhseed as GR brand ambassador

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: As part of reinforcing motorsports in the region, Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Est. Co. and Toyota have signed a new partnership agreement with Ali Makhseed, a prolific Kuwaiti racer with exceptional record in the field of motorsport and drifting, onboarding him as GR (Gazoo Racing) Brand Ambassador Program in Kuwait.

The sponsorship signing ceremony was attended by Faisal Bader Al Sayer Chairman, Bengt Schultz COO, Martin Aherne Senior Business Director Toyota Sales.

According to Martin Aherne "We are delighted to start this new partnership with renowned Kuwaiti race driver Ali Makhseed in the national and international racing arena include: ■ Became the first Middle East driver to take top spot during the third round of Oman International Drift Championship (OIDC) 2023



Ali Makhseed with Faisal Al Sayer – Chairman & Bengt Schultz COO

wait International Motorsport Club driver Ali Makhseed in the national and international racing arena include:

■ Winner of Kuwait King of Drift in 2018 in the Red Bull Car Park Drift

■ Silver medal of the drifting race of the second international motorsports games, organized by the International Automobile Federation (FIA), in Marseille City/France, October 2022

■ Winner of Kuwait King of Drift in 2018 in the Red Bull Car Park Drift



Ali Makhseed poses by Gazoo Racing cars.

Series

Speaking on this occasion Ali Makhseed said "Global history is witnessing Toyota's mark in the world of car racing that is full of victories and championships. Furthermore, Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons

Company has always been a pioneer in supporting motor sports in Kuwait through Kuwait International Rally in the late seventies and eighties."

"It is an honor to be part of this great leading family with long-standing achievements. I would like to ex-

tend my gratitude to Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Company for their constant support to youth and sports. Thank you, Toyota Gazoo Racing for your trust," added Ali.

As part of the one-year sponsorship contract, ALSAYER will provide Toyota GR models on quarterly lease along with a GR 86 to be built as competition car for the 2024-25 racing season in addition to the agreed sponsorship fee. Ali will also play an integral part in several activities under the GR calendar carrying the true spirit of motorsports.

As part of the first grass root level FIA Certified one-make race "GR Yaris Cup season 2023-24", Ali Makhseed will be driving along guests on Kuwait Motor Town track offering a thrilling hot lap experience along with offering guests a special drift experience. Ali has also played a vital role in transferring the technical know-how when it comes to modifying the GR Yaris stock cars and preparing it to be race ready.



Abdul Rahman Al-Fazia displays Show Jumping Championship trophy.

Equestrian excellence

Al-Fazia secures win in Messila 'Show' Jumping Championship

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Abdul Rahman Al-Fazia, an accomplished equestrian, secured the championship title at the Al-Messila Club Show Jumping Championship.

The event, held at the Al-Messila Equestrian Club track in the Subhan area, drew a significant turnout, with over 350 male and female riders representing various local clubs.

In the main stage's differentiation round at a height of 130 cm, Al-Fuzai demonstrated excep-

tional skill, clocking the fastest time at 38.69 seconds with no penalty points.

He outpaced competitors such as Fawaz Al-Subaie, Ghazi Al-Jariri, Hamad Al-Hajri, Shaker Al-Kazemi, and Ahmed Al-Ansari.

At the 120 cm height level, jockey Nick Channing claimed the top spot, followed by Ali Al-Sayegh and Madi Al-Khamis. In the third round at a height of 110 cm, jockey Mohammed Al-Shammari secured the lead.

The refereeing committee, led by Nadhar Al-Mustafa and featuring Raghad Al-Dabbous, Lama Abdel-AI, and Ali Hussein, ensured fair play.

EQUESTRIAN

The meticulously designed track was the work of Bahraini coach Adnan Al-Alawi, with assistance from Ghadeer Nemati. Badr Al-Haifi served as the arena referee, and Shahad Awad managed the warm-up field.

Adnan Al-Alawi, the coach of the Messila Equestrian Club, highlighted the championship as the kickoff for the sports season at the Messila Club.

The robust participation, especially in the beginner category rounds, reflects the growing enthusiasm for equestrian sports in Kuwait.



Swimming coach Ahmed Rashwan

Rashwan represents Kuwait in Special Oly training

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Special Olympics Kuwait actively participated in an advanced regional training course designed for chief swimming coaches of the Special Olympics. The event, organized by the regional presidency of the International Special Olympics and the Saudi Special Olympics, took place at the Prince Faisal bin Fahd Olympic Complex, drawing representation from 14 Arab countries. Ahmed Rashwan, the chief swimming coach of the Kuwaiti Special Olympics, represented Kuwait in this significant course.

PARALYMPICS

The comprehensive four-day training covered various aspects, including an introduction to the Special Olympics and its official competitions, division in competitions, the critical role of swimming and its significance for individuals with intellectual disabilities, the teacher's role in handling players with intellectual disabilities, the selection process, and addressing common mistakes in education with corrective strategies.

Rehab Bouresli, the National Director of Special Olympics Kuwait, expressed appreciation for the course's content and highlighted its positive impact on developing the capabilities of the technical staff involved in the Special Olympics. She emphasized the importance of staying abreast of developments in the training field.

Australia reach second straight Davis Cup final

MALAGA, Spain, Nov 25, (AP): Alex de Miñaur and Alexei Popyrin put Australia back into the Davis Cup final for a second straight year after winning their singles matches in a 2-0 victory over Finland.

Popyrin gave Australia a 1-0 lead in the semifinal match after beating Otto Virtanen 7-6 (5), 6-2. De Miñaur then finished off Finland by beating Emil Ruusuvuori 6-4, 6-3. "No Davis Cup match is easy and you don't take anything for granted, rankings get thrown out the window," said Australia captain Lleyton Hewitt. "We knew they were going to be tough opponents. I'm really proud of the boys."

Bouresli extended gratitude to the Saudi Special Olympics, acknowledging Dr. Maha Al-Juffali, President of the Olympics, Abdul Rahman Al-Quraishi, the National Director, and all members for their support.

She commended the ambitious Oly program for hosting a series of courses aimed at advancing and improving the Special Olympics system and activities.

Kazma dominate Al-Shabab

Al-Qadsia lead the pack in volleyball league

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Al-Qadsia Club's volleyball team claimed the top spot in the overall standings of the league, securing a decisive victory against Al-Tadamon in three straight sets 25-23, 25-19, 25-19 during the second round of the tournament. In other second-round results, Kuwait triumphed over Al-Arabi 3-1 25-21, 23-25, 26-24, 25-16, Kazma secured a similar result against Al-Shabab 20-25, 25-16, 25-15, 25-16, Burgan dominated Al-Sahel 25-18, 25-17, 25-19, and Yarmouk emerged victorious against Sulaibikhat 25-19, 25-19, 25-21.

VOLLEYBALL

Currently, Al-Qadsia leads the league standings with 6 points, closely followed by Burgan and Al-Kuwait with 5 points each. Yarmouk and Kazma hold 4 points each, while Al-Shabab and Al-Arabi have 3 points. Al-Tadamon, Al-Sahel, and Sulaibikhat are yet to score.

The league employs a home-and-away system, with the top four teams at the conclusion advancing to the semi-finals, also following the same format. The championship title will be awarded to the team with the highest point total. International scoring rules apply, where a 3-0 or 3-1 victory earns three points for the winner, and no points for the loser. In case of a 3-2 outcome, the winner receives two points, and the loser gets one point.

This General Volleyball League Championship marks the third tournament of the current season, with Kuwait having previously secured victories in the Refresher and Super Championships.

Best of the Rest

US teen Ziegler surges to first: Ava Marie Ziegler performed a near-flawless free skate Saturday to win the NHK Trophy and lead a U.S. 1-2 finish on the podium.

Fifth after the short program, Ziegler landed all of her jumps cleanly to score a personal-best 138.46 points in the free skate for her first title in the Grand Prix series with a total of 200.50, also a personal best.

Lindsay Thorngren, who led after the short program, fell on a double salchow but was solid with all her other jumps and placed second with 198.73 points.

Nina Pinzarrone of Belgium was third with 194.66, a result that allowed her to secure a place in the Dec. 7-10 Grand Prix Final at Beijing. South Korea's Lee Hae-in was fourth with 188.95 points.

The 17-year-old Ziegler, skating to "Liberation" and "Bound to You" by Christina Aguilera, landed a triple flip-double axel-double axel sequence as well as six more triple jumps. (AP)

Argentina and Brazil charged: FIFA opened disciplinary cases against Argentina and Brazil on Friday after fan violence at the Maracana Stadium delayed the start of a World Cup qualifying game.

The Argentine soccer federation was charged with crowd disturbances and the late kick off at Tuesday's game in Rio de Janeiro.

The Brazilian federation was charged with failures of manag-

ing security at a game it organized, FIFA said.

Fights among fans broke out after the national anthems. The teams were led back to the locker rooms and the game started 27 minutes late. (AP)

Wasim retires from int'l cricket: Pakistan all-rounder Imad Wasim has retired from international cricket with immediate effect.

The 34-year-old Wasim made the announcement on X, formerly known as Twitter, on Friday. Wasim played for Pakistan in 55 ODIs and 66 T20s, scoring 1,472 runs overall and claiming 109 wickets with his left-arm spin - 44 in one-day internationals and 65 in Twenty20 games.

Wasim thought the time was right for him to quit international cricket. "I would like to thank the PCB (Pakistan Cricket Board) for all their support over the years - it has truly been an honor to represent Pakistan," Wasim wrote on X. "Each of my 121 appearances across the ODI and T20I formats was a dream come true."

"It's an exciting time for Pakistan cricket going forwards with new coaches and leadership incoming. I wish all involved every success and I look forward to watching the team excel."

Wasim made his ODI debut against Sri Lanka at Colombo in 2015, but hasn't played for Pakistan in a one-day international match since facing Zimbabwe at Rawalpindi in 2020. (AP)



Players battle for the ball during the volleyball league.

Photo by Mahmoud Jadeed

PSG move 4 pts clear at the top

Mbappé scores 14th league goal of season

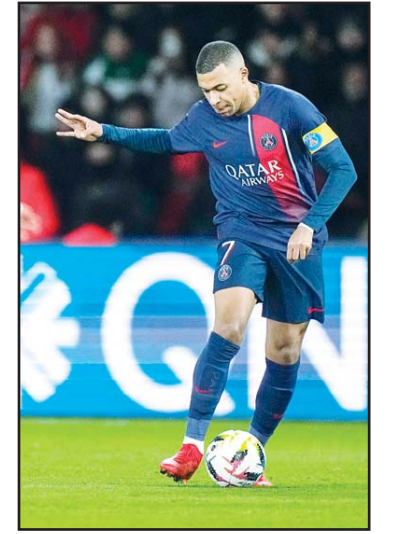
PARIS, Nov 25, (AP): Star striker Kylian Mbappé scored his 14th league goal of the season as French leader Paris Saint-Germain beat third-place Monaco 5-2 to move four points clear at the top.

Second-place Nice can keep the gap at one point if it beats Toulouse at home on Sunday.

SOCCER

After striker Gonçalo Ramos put PSG ahead in the 18th minute, Monaco equalized four minutes later following a mistake from goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma.

He was under pressure from Mona-



PSG's Kylian Mbappé controls the ball during the French League One soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Monaco, at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris, France. (AP)

co forward Folarin Balogun, hesitated, and shot the ball straight at Japan forward Takumi Minamoto, who finished confidently for his fourth league goal of the season.

PSG regained the lead through Mbappé in the 39th when defender Soungoutou Magassa tried to clear the ball and clipped the leg of winger Ousmane Dembélé for a penalty. Mbappé, who joined PSG from Monaco for 180 million euros (\$197 million) in 2017, sent his spot kick into the top left corner.

Dembélé made it 3-1 in the 70th, expertly controlling a long pass from midfielder Fabian Ruiz and netting with a powerful shot. It was his first PSG goal since joining in August from Barcelona.

Two minutes later, Mbappé picked out Portugal midfielder Vitinha and he curled a fine shot into the top right corner.

Moments after that goal, however, PSG's defense fell asleep and allowed Balogun to score with a low shot after being put through by Minamoto. It was the United States forward's fourth league goal of the season.

There was still enough time for France forward Randal Kolo Muani to grab PSG's fifth goal in the sixth minute of stoppage time, as Monaco fell six points behind PSG with its third defeat of the campaign.

Alaves got just its second win in the last 10 Spanish league games, with forwards Samu Omorodion and Abde Rebbach playing starring roles in its 3-1 triumph at home to struggling Granada.

The home side took the lead after 11 minutes. Former Granada player Omorodion and defender Raul Torrente both dived for Rebbach's low cross from the left but it was the defender who was adjudged to have touched the ball over his 'keeper and into the net.



Liverpool's Kostas Tsimikas (right), challenges for the ball with Manchester City's Phil Foden during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester City and Liverpool at Etihad stadium in Manchester, England. (AP)

Sports

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Liverpool hold City as Haaland sets record

Goalkeeper Al-Qallaf stars

Barcelona need own goal to salvage draw at Rayo

Kuwait win bronze in inaugural Arab Handball 'Championship'

MANCHESTER, Nov 25, (AP): Trent Alexander-Arnold scored an 80th-minute equalizer to earn Liverpool a 1-1 draw with Manchester City in the Premier

League on Saturday.

Erling Haaland had given defending champions City a first-half lead at Etihad Stadium, becoming the quickest player to score 50 goals in the league.

But Liverpool capitalized when the

Norwegian failed to add a second from close range in the 79th. The visitors immediately went on the attack, and Alexander-Arnold swept a shot past City goalkeeper Ederson.

Haaland opened the scoring with a low effort from the edge of the box in 27th. Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson missed a clearance that was intercepted by Nathan Ake, who played in Haaland.

From there, it felt inevitable where the ball would end up as the forward turned and fired into the bottom corner, despite Alisson getting a hand to his shot.

The landmark goal came in 48 games and broke the record held by former Manchester United and Newcastle striker Andy Cole, who reached 50 total in 65 games.

SOCCER

There was a double fist pump in the executive seats where Haaland's dad, former City player Alf-Inge, was celebrating joyously.

Back on the field, the player was mobbed by blue shirts after giving the home side the advantage against the team that is likely to be one of its closest challengers for the title this season.

But he was left to regret his failure to convert in the second half after Liverpool quickly punished City.

□ □ □

Barcelona needed an own goal by Rayo Vallecano defender Florian Lejeune in the final minutes to salvage a 1-1 draw in Madrid on Saturday.

Rayo midfielder Unai López put the hosts ahead with a shot from well outside the area in the 39th minute at Vallecas Stadium.

Barcelona was held in check until late in the second half. Minutes after substitute Raphinha hit the post, Lejeune inadvertently turned a cross by Alejandro Balde intended for Robert Lewandowski into his own net in the 82nd.



Junior handball team celebrates its bronze medal.

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: Kuwait junior handball team secured the third position in the inaugural Arab Championship of 2006, in Tunisia.

They clinched the bronze medal by defeating Algeria 29-24.

The outstanding performance of Kuwait's goalkeeper, Abbas Al-Qallaf, earned him the best player award.

Tunisia claimed the championship title after defeating the Saudi Arabia 28-24. Fadel Al-Nimr, the President of the Arab and Saudi Handball Federations, honored the top three teams in a crowning ceremony.

Shabib Al-Hajri, the head of the Kuwaiti delegation, commended the strong performance of the Kuwaiti players, who overcame the challenge with minimal preparation, consisting of local training and friendly matches with Saudi and Bahraini teams in Kuwait. Despite the disparity in preparation methods, the Kuwaiti team's dedication secured them the third-place position.

Al-Hajri expressed the commitment to groom this team for the future, citing their promising potential. He stated, "with proper refinement, this team will become of great importance."

Youssef Al-Shaheen, the team's manager, affirmed that the players met expectations, putting in significant efforts during the matches. He also praised the technical and administrative staff for their contributions.

HANDBALL

Kuwait delegation, led by Shabib Al-Hajri, included key figures such as Faisal Siwan, director of the national teams, Youssef Al-Shaheen, the manager, coach Marko Martinovic, assistants Hussein Habib, Ayman Al-Sheikh, and Gerard Powell, along with players Abbas Al-Qallaf, Saad Al-Khamis, Muhammad Al-Anazi, Fahd Al-Shammari, Hassan Ahmed, Ali Badr, Obaid Al-Shammari, Khaled Al-Khalfan, Yaqoub Hajia, Salem Al-Mahmoud, Abdul Latif Walid Fayrouz, Youssef Muhammad Madouh, Abdul-Wahab Ahmed Al-Mutawa, Khairallah Al-Shammari, Yaqoub Hajia, Hassan Boland, Hussein Boland, Faraj Saleh, Hussein Mandani, and Issa Al-Obaid.

The delegation is set to return to the country at six in the morning today.

Festival wraps up

Kuwait's rhythmic gymnastics takes center stage

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25: The inaugural rhythmic gymnastics festival, organized by the Gymnastics Federation, concluded successfully at the Kazma Club Hall. The event, held under the patronage of Fatima Hayat, a member of the Board of Directors of the Olympic Committee and Chairperson of the Women's Sports Committee, marked a significant moment in the presence of the Federation's President, Board members, and a substantial audience of parents and fans.

A total of 54 participants from various age groups, representing the officially affiliated Gymnasia, Akro, and Salto academies, along with the Quick Steps Academy, showcased their talents during the competitions.

GYMNASTICS

Fatima Hayat expressed her joy at witnessing the inaugural rhythmic gymnastics festival, commending the exceptional organization and the outstanding performances of the girls. She described the sport as deserving of comprehensive support, foreseeing a bright future due to the increasing demand and continuous development it is experiencing.

Hayat expressed pride in the female players and the promising talent displayed during the festival.

Verstappen takes pole position for season-ending Abu Dhabi GP

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates, Nov 25 (AP): Max Verstappen took pole position for the season-ending Abu Grand Prix on Saturday and will look to finish a crushing dominant year with a 19th win.

Victory on Sunday would take the Red Bull driver onto 54 career wins, past Sebastian Vettel and into third place all time.

The three-time F1 champion's 12th pole of the season took him to 32 overall. He starts the race ahead of Ferrari's Charles Leclerc in second place and McLaren's Oscar Piastri in third.

Horner informed Verstappen that he had won a bet for 500 euros (\$547) made with Red Bull boss Helmut Marko as to where Verstappen would qualify.

"You've just won me 500 euros," Horner told Verstappen over radio when he crossed the line.

With a few minutes left, Verstappen led from McLaren's Lando Norris and Piastri under floodlights at the Yas Marina circuit.

Norris slid late while pushing too hard on his last timed lap and Piastri moved ahead of him, while Leclerc jumped up the leaderboard with an excellent lap to place .14 seconds behind Verstappen.

MOTOR RACING

"Everything felt good, I'm very happy with that lap because I didn't expect to be on the front row," Leclerc said. "It's a good surprise."

Mercedes driver George Russell qualified in fourth ahead of Norris with AlphaTauri's Yuki Tsunoda in sixth and Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso seventh. Nico Hulkenberg (Haas), Sergio Perez (Red Bull) and Pierre Gasly (Alpine) completed the top 10.

She called upon the General Sports Authority to give due attention to rhythmic gymnastics and collaborate with the federation for its further development. Highlighting the consistent improvement in results at

international championships, she extended gratitude to parents for their unwavering interest and continuous support, enabling their daughters to independently represent the Kuwaiti team in foreign championships.

Qatar's WCup encouraged Arab states to pursue hosting dreams

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 25, (KUNA): The outstanding success of the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar inspired many Arab countries to pursue their own dream of hosting this prestigious event, which began way back in 1930.

Morocco, along with Spain and Portugal, will be hosting the 2030 championship, an announcement made by FIFA in this regard on October fourth, 2023.

Due to Morocco's success, Saudi Arabia submitted its nomination to host the 2034 World Cup. According to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), the Kingdom submitted its file to FIFA on October ninth. Saudi Arabia is the sole bidder for the tournament and is expected to host the event.

Speaking on the ambitions of the Arab countries, an official in the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy in Qatar Khaled Al-Molawi told KUNA that hosting the FIFA World Cup was a great challenge for Qatar, which exceeded in all elements during its hosting duties.

A project like the FIFA World

Cup posed many challenges and Qatar introduced new principles to hosting major events, he added.

The tournament, the first to have been held on Arab soil, had proved to the world that the region had much potential, said the official who hoped that other fellow Arab countries would benefit from the experience and skills learned from the Qatar tournament.

On his part, former Kuwait international footballer and sports analyst at the Saudi sports channel Waleed Ali affirmed that Saudi Arabia had a higher chance for success in hosting the 2034 World Cup.

Saudi Arabia's capabilities, infrastructure, and financial strength are the main points of strength that would hopefully lead to the success of the tournament.

The Kingdom's football league had attracted major players including Portuguese superstar Cristiano Ronaldo, Brazilian mainstay Neymar and many more, attracting viewers from far and wide, said Ali who affirmed that such attention to the national league would push Saudi Arabia to showcase to the world that it would be the capital of Football by 2034.

Sharing similar sentiments, Hamad Al-Tayyar – also a former Kuwaiti Football international – said Saudi Arabia was able to host a successful World Cup tournament.

SOCCER

The vast development in Saudi Arabia, under the guidance of its leadership, is a good indication that the Saudis were willing and able to make the 2034 World Cup an unforgettable event.

On his part, Abdulaziz Attiya – a media sports personality – said that the success of the Qatar World Cup opened the doors for other Arab countries to take the necessary steps to host this important global event.

He expressed confidence that Saudi Arabia would use all of its capabilities to win the hearts and minds of those having doubts in regard to their abilities.



Participants display their certificates at the end of the festival.