



HH Amir to grace 'Story of a Homeland' operetta

Amir receives PM, defense minister

KUWAIT CITY, March 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will be patronizing and attending the national operetta – Story of a Homeland – in the Bayan Palace stage on March 4, Monday, at 10:00 am local-time.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

Also:
KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at

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Opinion

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef ... 'A horse is known through its rider'

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

UNDOUBTEDLY, the speech of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef highlighted a number of issues that have been waiting a long time to be tackled.

His rationality, especially with regard to opening up the country, highlights the huge loss the country incurred because it was closed down. This begs us to ask: "Why are we closing down Kuwait? For whose interest?"

In an interview with the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef said, "When family members and visitors were prohibited, Kuwait lost a significant number of experiences. We became a country that expels experiences. Whoever wants to visit Kuwait is welcome."

This man lived through the problem even when he was outside the ministerial position. Therefore he realized that the solution was to open the country and benefit from everyone, including the violators, whose numbers have become about 130,000 as a result of the stringent controls and lack of solutions.

Giving violators the room to remedy their status means reducing the security burden firstly, and secondly, facilitating the use of the existing labor force in the country, which will automatically reduce the wages that have reached very high levels.

A craftsman who used to earn KD 15 daily now gets KD 35 to KD 40, and the worker now gets KD 20. All of this has increased the costs in all projects.

Job stability is an important factor for the renaissance of any country. The country needs to revitalize most of its sectors, especially the industrial sector, which suffers from a major defect as a result of the impromptu decisions that hinder its progress. Therefore, His Highness the Prime Minister must work to resolve this issue and prevent what could be termed as oppression over the industrialists.

If there is an actual intention to advance the country, then the demographic composition cannot be used as an excuse, given that the millions of expatriates in the Emirates are the ones who built its cities, likewise Saudi Arabia.

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Election surveys need permits: Info ministry

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: A number of former MPs have reacted negatively to the decision of Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah on the need to obtain a special permit to organize gatherings at Erada Square.

The former MPs argued this decision violates the Constitution, which guarantees the freedom of individuals to gather and meet. They said the decision distorts the image of Kuwait; especially in terms of its position to support the Palestinian cause, since the affected gathering was aimed at supporting the people of Gaza in their resistance against Israeli attacks.

Former MP Thamer Al-Suwaiti pointed out that the decision contravenes Article 44 of the Constitution, stressing such a decision is unacceptable.

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Kuwait's visa doors still shut for 7 nationalities

Rely on official channels for visa info: MoI

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Ministry of Interior, through its official website, refutes the misinformation circulating on social media platforms regarding visa openings to specific

countries. It emphasizes that all official decisions will be disseminated exclusively through the Ministry's official channels. Individuals are strongly advised to rely on credible news sources and regularly check the Ministry of Interior's official

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Pre-Ramadan price surge alarms consumers

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: As the countdown to the blessed month of Ramadan begins, concerns about potential price hikes and shortages of essential goods have emerged among many families in Kuwait. These concerns are fueled by geopolitical tensions in the region, challenges in supply chains, and the threat of war, all of which could impact prices and availability of goods.

Some consumers have already noticed a significant increase in prices of essential items, such as oil, sugar, and various food products, with some products experiencing up to a 50% price hike. This has led to frustration among citizens, who feel that government control over prices is lacking.

Citizens are calling on the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to take action to curb price increases and hold merchants accountable for price manipulation. Many express disappointments that promise to pursue price manipulators have not been fulfilled, urging tighter control mechanisms over markets.

The increase in prices is not limited to food items; household cleaning tools and other essentials have also experienced significant price hikes. Consumers are finding it increasingly difficult to afford basic necessities, especially with the approach of Ramadan, during which demand traditionally rises.

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait will extend its voluntary oil production cut of 135,000 barrels per day for the second quarter of 2024, said Deputy Prime Minister and Oil Minister Dr. Imad Al-Atiqi Sunday.

In a press statement, the minister affirmed that this decision comes in coordination with some countries participating in the OPEC+ agreement.

He stated that Kuwait's production will continue at 2.413 million barrels per day until the end of June 2024. (KUNA)

RAMALLAH: Up to 90 Palestinians fell as martyrs and 177 others suffered injuries in Israeli attacks on Gaza Strip during the past 24 hours, the Palestinian health authority announced on Sunday.

With the new casualties, the death toll of the ongoing Israeli occupation's aggression on the enclave has soared to 30,410 and the number of injury cases has hit 71,700. (KUNA)

WASHINGTON: The US Central Command said the US Air Force and the Royal Jordanian Air Force conducted a combined humanitarian assistance airdrop into Gaza on Saturday.

The combined operation, which took place between 3:00 and 5:00 p.m. (Gaza time), aims to provide essential relief to civilians affected by the ongoing conflict, according to a CENTCOM press release. (KUNA)

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The 159th GCC ministerial meeting kicks off on Sunday with participation of the State of Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya.

Gaza crisis exposes int'l community's failure: Egyptian FM

Kuwait FM joins GCC colleagues in 159th meeting

Other Voices

ICJ not able to stop Gaza genocide

By Tareq Yousef AlShumaimry

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has indeed taken significant steps to address the risk of genocide in Gaza. However, its effectiveness in enforcing its decisions remains a subject of ongoing debate. Here are some key points:

ICJ ruling on genocide prevention: The ICJ ordered "immediate and effective measures" to protect Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip from the risk of genocide.

Israel's compliance: Despite the ICJ's ruling, Israel has failed to take even the bare minimum steps to comply.

Challenges to enforcement: While the ICJ has issued orders to prevent genocide, the lack of effective enforcement mechanisms remains a challenge. Urgent international cooperation is necessary to protect civilians and alleviate the suffering in Gaza.

The ICJ's powers are limited by the unwillingness of the losing party to abide by its rulings.

Last week the International Court of Justice saw the conclusion of the public hearings held from 19 to 26 February, 2024 on the request for an advisory opinion in respect of the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem.

During the hearings, the State of Palestine, 49 Member States of the United Nations and three international organizations presented oral statements (in the following order): Palestine, South Africa, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Russian Federation, France, The Gambia, Guyana, Hungary, China, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mauritius,

Namibia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Indonesia, Qatar, United Kingdom, Slovenia, Sudan, Switzerland, Syria, Tunisia, Türkiye, Zambia, League of Arab States, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, African Union, Spain, Fiji and the Maldives.

The Kuwaiti delegation comprising Ali Al-Thefeeri, Kuwait's ambassador to The Hague, permanent representative to the UN Tariq Al Bannai and Assistant Foreign minister for Legal Affairs, Tahani Al-Nasser made a fervent plea to end the occupation.

Ambassador Ali Al Thefeeri told the court that the current advisory proceedings were of extreme importance to the Palestinian people, Kuwait, the international legal order and the international community as a whole.

Ambassador Tariq Al Bannai pointed at the discriminatory practices that the Palestinians were subjected to, while Tahani Al-Nasser told the court that Kuwait was harnessing its strength and international diplomatic relations in support of the Palestinian cause and against the massacres currently taking place in Gaza.

Furthermore, on 1 March, Nicaragua filed an application instituting proceedings against Germany before the International Court of Justice for alleged violations by Germany (Germany is a key ally of Tel Aviv, and is one of its biggest arms providers alongside the United States, according to UN experts) of its obligations deriving from the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the 'Genocide Convention'), the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their additional protocols, "intransgressible principles of international humanitarian law" and other norms of general international law in relation to the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly the Gaza Strip.

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RIYADH, March 3, (KUNA): The 159th GCC ministerial meeting kicked off on Sunday with participation of the State of Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya.

The meeting, chaired by Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Thani, addresses a number of reports on implementing resolutions of the GCC Supreme Council, issued at the 44th Summit, held in Qatar in December 2023.

The conferees are also discussing memos and reports filed by the ministerial, technical committees and the GCC Secretariat General, issues related to dialogue and strategic relations with states and international coalitions, in addition to regional and international affairs.

On sidelines of the meeting, the GCC ministers will hold separate sessions with their peers representing Egypt, Jordan and Morocco.

Meanwhile, Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry stated Sunday that the situation in the Gaza Strip reveals the international community's failure to show a strong commitment to enforce an immediate ceasefire.

During the Egyptian-Gulf ministerial meeting, held on the sidelines of the 159th Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) ministerial meeting, Shoukry said that they gathered today amidst explosive crises, most notably the severe bloodshed in Israel's war on Palestinian people in Gaza.

He underscored the need for a prompt ceasefire in Gaza, facilitating humanitarian aid access, and ending the massacres, starvation, and imposed blockade on the region.

Wars and military solutions only bring more bloodshed, violence, and extremism to the region, Shoukry pointed out, asserting that security and peace will only be achieved through peaceful solutions and the existence of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, based on the June 4, 1967 borders.

'Kuwait's Sports Day' under PM patronage

KUWAIT CITY, March 3, (KUNA): Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs, Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Minister of State for Communication Dawood Marafi announced the official launch of Kuwait's Sports Day, held with the auspices and attendance of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

This community sporting event, organized by Kuwait Sports Federation, supervised by Public Authority for Sports and set to be held on March 9, is the first of its kind and is open to all groups and ages in Kuwait, said Marafi in a press conference held Sunday at the Public Sports Authority HQ.

The sporting initiative aims to create a healthy life, he added, calling on everyone to participate in it.

He thanked State institutes, public sector, Public Authority for Sports, Sports Federations, and the private sector institutes participating in this event.

In turn, Deputy Director General for Competitive Sports Affairs at the Public Authority for Sports Bashar Abdullah said that the event will be at Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Causeway and will include a 5 kilometer walking race and a 15 kilometer cycling race, in addition to sports activities, exhibitions and group competitions.

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KUNA photo
Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs, Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Minister of State for Communication Dawood Marafi speaks during the announcement of Kuwait's Sports Day.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:54 Asr 15:20
 Sunrise .. 06:12 Maghrib .. 17:48
 Zohr 12:00 Isha 19:05

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Warm and partly cloudy with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-35 km/h with a chance for scattered light rain.

Weather

By Night: Rather cold to cold with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 10-30 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	22	14

Kuwait Airport	24	09
Abdaly	25	06
Jahra	25	11
Salmiyah	21	16
Nuwaisib	23	10
Wafra	25	08

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

Protection, support eyed for victims

Justice Ministry inaugurates panel to combat human trafficking

KUWAIT CITY, March 3, (KUNA): Ministry of Justice announced on Sunday that it had inaugurated the National Committee on the Implementation of the Strategy to combat trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants and that it had created social media accounts on X, Instagram and Facebook.

In a press release, the ministry mentioned that the committee was created after the Cabinet's resolution on February 5, 2018, which was chaired by Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Faisal Al-Ghareeb.

On its social media accounts, the committee mentioned that its vision focuses on achieving a Kuwait that is free of and against trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, and a society aware of the dangers of this phenomenon in order to eliminate it.

It noted that its objectives are identifying the victims and those affected by the crimes of trafficking in persons and providing protection and support to them.

In addition, specialized training and qualification of personnel of the authorities concerned with combating trafficking in persons.

Moreover, spreading awareness among all groups of society and employers and employment derived from religious and moral values. Also, strengthening regional and international cooperation frameworks in the field of combating trafficking in persons.

The committee urged citizens and residents to report any trafficking crimes on the hotline: 25589696 or email: ATHMOI.GOV.KW.

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Turkish influence on rise: envoy

Cultural diplomacy role stressed

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait, HE Tuba Nur Sönmez, has expressed her delight at the increasing interest in Turkish language and culture within Kuwaiti society, reports Al-Qabas daily.



Sonmez

Sönmez highlighted the significance of the Yunus Emre Cultural Center in Kuwait, which was established to further promote Turkish language and culture. She emphasized the role of cultural diplomacy in fostering stronger ties and mutual understanding between nations.

The ambassador mentioned the positive reception of the "Turkish Village" in Kuwait, which has been a venue for various cultural and folklore events, as well as showcasing Turkish cuisine.

Human resources: The Ministry of Education in Kuwait has been actively working to strengthen its human resources, including teachers and administrators, in preparation for the upcoming academic year, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Over the past six years, the Ministry has entered into contracts with a significant number of teachers and administrators.

During this period, the Ministry has contracted with 38,433 male and female teachers, along with 7,375 administrators. The contracting efforts have seen substantial numbers in recent years, with thousands of teachers contracted annually.

Moreover, the Ministry has facilitated educational scholarships for 6,921 male and female employees and managed residency renewal transactions for 71,813 expatriate teachers and administrators.

Additionally, promotions were granted based on selection criteria, and transactions were processed for updating housing allowances.

In response to ongoing needs, the Ministry has initiated procedures for accepting applications from new male and female teachers in specific subject areas. Interested individuals who meet the necessary qualifications can apply for educational positions through the Ministry's website.

Despite these efforts, the Ministry faces challenges in certain educational specializations, particularly with the impending opening of several new schools across different areas. It is anticipated that more than 11 new schools will be operational at the start of the new academic year, aiming to meet the educational needs of residents in these areas.

Strict eye on charity in Ramadan

Teams to monitor illegal fund-raising

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Assistant Undersecretary for Social Development at the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi affirmed the readiness of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Social Development Sector for the month of Ramadan.

He explained that the ministry is sparing no effort in seeking to implement the laws regulating charity work in the State of Kuwait, which would protect charitable and humanitarian work from being tampered with and exploited by fraudsters and weak souls.

The Department of Charity Societies and Donor Foundations is intensifying efforts during the month of Ramadan by forming field inspection teams in coordination with the official authorities such as the Ministry of Interior, Kuwait Municipality, and the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to monitor violations related to illegal fundraising in places of worship and illegal clothing collection.

Dr. Al-Ajmi highlighted the intensification of monitoring of violations related to illegal fundraising via social media.

He indicated that a meeting will be held with charity organizations regarding the safety and quality of Iftar meals for fasting people.

Dr. Al-Ajmi called on the donor community to go to well-known charity societies and commit to donating through the modern means approved by the ministry in order to preserve their rights, achieve the purposes of the donations, and ensure the donated funds reach those who deserve them.

Juvenile stays in custody

Gulf traffic week launched; 'Driving sans a cell phone'

By Munif Naif/Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs at the Ministry of Interior Major General Yousef Al-Khadda announced the launch of the Unified Gulf Traffic Week under the slogan "Driving... without a phone". This slogan is focused on reducing traffic accidents that result in deaths and serious injuries.

In a speech during the launch of the activities yesterday morning at the Jaber Cultural Center under the patronage and in the presence of the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Lieutenant General Salem Al-Nawaf and senior leaders of the General Traffic Department, Major General Al-Khadda stressed the importance of the Unified Gulf Traffic Week.

He affirmed that this occasion aims for increased cooperation between the Gulf security institutions and the participating and supporting parties and the application of the principle of social responsibility, hoping that the desired goals will be achieved to make the week's activities a success.

Major General Yousef Al-Khadda thanked the Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister of Defense and Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, and the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Lieutenant General Salem Al-Nawaf for their continued support and interest in the traffic aspect.

The participating and supporting parties were honored at the start of Unified Gulf Traffic Week.

In the same context, the General Traffic Department held an awareness exhibition at the Avenues Mall that included several activities, including opening of "blocked" violations and releasing impounded vehicles after paying the value of the violations.

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Juvenile joining terror group: The detention renewal judge yesterday decided to extend to March 12 the detention of a Kuwaiti juvenile who is accused of joining the terrorist organization ISIS, pledging allegiance to the organization's commander in Iraq, publishing his ideas on social media, preparing videos of the organization's songs and broadcasting them, and communicating with the organization's explosives expert in Iraq for guidance on how to make explosive materials and how to use them.

During the investigation by the prosecution, when he was asked about explosives, the accused - a 15-year-old high school student in the tenth grade - denied that he had planned to blow up a Husseinia in Mubarak Al-Kabeer by attaching the explosive to a small drone and dropping it into the Husseinia hall.

He also denied having any explosives in his possession and of taking any practical steps to implement his plan, adding that he had not moved to the implementation stage.

When confronted with the messages between him and the organization in Iraq extracted from his device, the boy said, "I was fascinated by the ISIS chants and the way their performers delivered them, so I communicated with them via Telegram". It is worth mentioning here that Telegram is the application used by the majority of members of terrorist organizations and their sympathizers.

The boy added, "After long conversations and discussions with them, I joined the organization and pledged allegiance to the organization's leader, who is known as 'Abu Maryam'. I asked them to teach me how to manufacture explosives. I was referred to the explosives official, who communicated with me directly and explained how to manufacture explosives."

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Trial postponed: The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Fawzan Al-Anjari, has decided to postpone to May 5 the trial of a leader of the Ministry of Interior, the secretaries of a former parliamentarian, and a doctor accused in a case of money laundering and bribery, in order to summon the incident officer and prosecution witnesses.

The Public Prosecution had charged three former MPs' secretaries and expatriates with receiving bribes after discovering that they participated in obtaining a suspended visa.

Investigations indicated that each transaction was completed by the defendants in exchange of KD 2,000.

The prosecution began investigating the case in April after the General Department of Criminal Investigations discovered that sums of money were being given to some distinct people to obtain visas for expatriates through the Ministry of Interior.



HH the PM receives Dr. Moudhi Abdulaziz Al-Humoud.



HH the PM receives the Acting President of the State Audit Bureau.

PM receives AASU head, SAB official

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace Sunday Chairwoman of the Founding Board of Abdullah Al-Salem University (AASU)

Dr. Moudhi Abdulaziz Al-Humoud.

His Highness the Prime Minister also received at Seif Palace the Acting President of the State Audit Bureau (SAB) Yousef Ibrahim Al Mazrouei. (KUNA)



Head of the Radiological Nature Department at the Kuwait Center, Dr. Mishari Al-Naimi.

Training course organised

'Cooperating with IAEA shows progress in nuclear medicine'

KUWAIT CITY, March 3, (KUNA): Kuwait has been engaged in fruitful cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in technical projects and training courses, a ranking official has affirmed.

The affirmation was made by the Chairman of the Nuclear Medicine Departments and Head of the Nuclear Medicine Department at the Kuwait Cancer Control Center, Dr. Abdulreda Ismael.

Ismael said in his opening speech at a regional training course organized by the center on monitoring and ensuring the quality of nuclear tomography in cooperation with the IAEA that the hosting of this course comes from its selection as a regional training center for Arab countries in the Asian region.

He added that this step also comes to demonstrate the scientific and technical confidence possessed by Kuwaiti competencies and the distinguished position by the Kuwait Cancer Control Center, which will reflect positively on the medical services, as well as, aims to enhance capabilities in nuclear

medicine, treatment of radiation oncology, and the production of radiation for diagnosis and treatment of tumors and non-communicable diseases.

For her part, the representative of the IAEA Dr. Farida Al-Kandari said in her speech that the five days training course brings together about 35 participants from Arab countries in Asia and the Gulf countries, and five international experts presenting the lectures, including direct field training on cameras to make the most of the practical application in their work centers.

The head of the Radiation Nature Department at the Kuwait Center Dr. Mishari Al-Naimi said in his speech that the program includes a comprehensive curriculum for training medical physicists on the basic rules and advanced methods for monitoring and ensuring the quality, accuracy and efficiency of nuclear tomography devices through practical applications and training on Monte Carlo simulation programs which allows participants to analyze the performance of nuclear imaging devices through virtual reality.

Russia, Kuwait ties profound, robust, historic: ambassador

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Russian Ambassador to Kuwait, Vladimir Zhiltov, underscored the profound and enduring nature of Russian-Kuwaiti relations during a recent gathering. Zhiltov hailed these ties as both robust and steeped in history, tracing back to 1963 when Kuwait became Russia's inaugural ally in the Arabian Gulf region, reports Al-Rai daily.

Speaking on the sidelines of the embassy's commemoration of "Defenders of the Homeland" Day, Zhiltov emphasized the resilience of bilateral relations over the past six decades, crediting the sagacity of Kuwaiti leadership. He expressed Russia's pride in sustaining these ties, noting the presence of Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Army, Brigadier General Fawad Al-Harbi, and Brigadier General Fahd Al-Otaibi among other dignitaries.

Addressing queries on defense collaboration, Zhiltov asserted that Russia remains receptive to Kuwaiti proposals aimed at bolstering cooperation in this domain.

Turning to the significance of "De-

fenders of the Fatherland" Day, Zhiltov elucidated its historical roots dating back to 1918. He underscored its status as a revered national holiday in Russia, honoring the valor of the Russian military personnel across various fronts, including Ukraine.

Colonel Shmatov Alexei, the Russian military, air, and naval attaché at the Embassy, lauded the military and defense ties between both nations. He commended Kuwait's prudent stance concerning the Ukraine crisis, highlighting the pivotal role of robust and modern armed forces in safeguarding national security and sovereignty.

Reflecting on the occasion, Colonel Alexei extolled the day as a testament to the heroic legacy of Russian armed forces and naval personnel. He emphasized the unbreakable bond spanning generations of defenders and expressed gratitude to those who sacrificed in defense of their homeland and people.

Colonel Alexei also recalled Russia's decisive role in World War II, underscoring the immense sacrifices made to combat fascism, including the loss of over 27 million lives.



The cake-cutting ceremony.

'Opt for reconciliation as country cannot bear more political chaos'

"THE National Assembly is a democratic institution that has its own importance and role in the country, and we look forward to it fulfilling its role effectively and regularly, but the lack of wisdom and adherence to opinion, even if it is on the right side, has led to fluctuation in the work of this institution between session and dissolution, which has greatly affected the level of performance of this institution and the regularity of its work,"

columnist **Dr. Khaled Mohamad Boudai**, wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Deleting paragraphs considered to be a violation of constitutional principles in highlighting the due respect for the high office is a respect for the Constitution and a fulfillment of the oath, and this deletion should not have been the subject of a dispute."

"Since the Speaker, who is a prominent parliamentary figure, had requested the cancellation of the paragraph in question, his opinion should have been respected, as he knows what constitutes a violation of the constitution from speech during the session, and not to insist on not deleting and putting the matter to a vote."

"We wonder how the Council votes on an issue that may violate the Constitution. It would have been better to seek the opinion of constitutional experts before voting and adhere to the opinion of the experts."

"Attempting to prevail on opinion without considering the provisions of the Constitution puts the country in a dark tunnel and plunges the country into a state of chaos, and this is not in everyone's interest. What is surprising is that the majority of the Council agreed not to strike out without verifying whether what was said violated the Constitution or not."

"We do not want to conclude that the Council is responsible for the solution in all cases. There is no doubt that the executive authority was responsible for some of the actions that led to the solution in previous times, but this time the blame falls on the Council, which could have, with a little wisdom, overcome the dispute."

"The repetition of the solution and the subsequent ministerial restructuring is one of the main reasons for the faltering development in the country and our lag behind in many areas, and this is what global indicators attest. Kuwait, praise be to God, does not lack expertise or resources to achieve high levels of development, but achieving these levels has been hampered by political instability and the ongoing conflict between the legislative and executive authorities."

"This should not be understood as saying that the Council abandons its supervisory and legislative role in order to satisfy the executive authority. Rather, what is required is that this role be exercised effectively to combat corruption, hold those responsible for it accountable, and develop legislation to keep pace with the development the world is going through."

"A little dialogue and understanding between the legislative and executive authorities can help resolve differences and contribute to overcoming crises."

"The country is now going through a stage that cannot bear more political crises and unjustified conflict in many cases, and each party must make concessions to get on the same page and resolve the issues facing the country so that future generations will receive a sound and healthy country, not a country burdened with crises and stumbling blocks. Good luck!"

Also:

"The implementation of the Election Commission Law has been suspended due to the absence of a specified completion period, highlighting the challenges in issuing ministerial decisions and the fragmented nature of addressing issues," columnist **Muzaffar Abdullah** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"One such issue arose with the decision to subject teachers to fingerprint attendance in public schools, sparking protests and rumors about its cancellation. However, subsequent statistical information revealed a different aspect, indicating an accumulation of teachers in various specializations and schools, leading to reduced teaching loads."

"This issue transcends the educational process and delves into the complexities of the rentier economy, which imposes political obligations to employ citizens and accept foreign teachers."

"The Minister of Education faces challenges of non-compliance with teacher attendance due to their large numbers and uneven distribution among schools. Overcrowding in Kuwait's classrooms, compared to international

standards, further complicates the situation, with Kuwait having significantly lower teacher-to-student ratios."

"While fingerprint attendance may address immediate concerns, it fails to tackle the underlying complexities of the problem. A more comprehensive approach is needed to address the issues of teacher distribution, classroom overcrowding, and educational quality effectively."

"Litat" of the streets ... In the past, people used to scream about the appearance of holes on the streets and the flying pebbles, especially after the rain. The government or its competent authorities did not listen, did not respond and did not care until the problem worsened as the days passed by. The situation has reached the stage of utter destruction of all internal and external streets in the country, some of them even caused disasters and deaths," columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"This is the result of deliberate negligence. Now, they are looking for solutions. Every minister comes looking for a solution and then leaves, yet the streets remain as they are and the citizen pays the price. If they had only addressed the problem first, it would not have snowballed and solving it would not have become too difficult to even think about asking for the help of international companies. This move has not been feasible from the beginning. It continues to be referred from one committee to another. The search is still ongoing!"

"We say this to reach a matter no less important and dangerous than digging streets and the flying gravel -- the street lighting issue. The concerned officials have been ignoring and neglecting the issue until it became a negative phenomenon. You could hardly find a fully illuminated street in the country, especially in places far from the eyes of officials or those areas where an official rarely passes by, such as the external routes, except the Nuwaiseeb route because the chalets of the elites are located along this road! I do not know how the street lights are monitored or the bulbs that are burning. This seems to be a secret that is difficult to reveal."

"As for the difference in the color of the lighting, it is a major disaster that nobody has paid attention to. It could cause accidents like Jahra Road or Route 80 on the map. This road is illuminated in yellow, then suddenly the lighting turns to white and returns to yellow, which affects one's vision. So, what is the point? Whoever leaves a space in the middle of the road in white is also a secret that only those in charge of lighting know. For the white and yellow flag of lighting, some are not working and will never be repaired!"

"May the government be rewarded for its insistence to complete the road disaster with the 'road lighting' disaster, as if there is deep enmity between it and the people."

"Allah is the One who seeks help."

"Elections and change ... The signs of change in the political scene, which were established by the Supreme Speech in the swearing-in session, began with the resignation of the previous government and then the dissolution of the National Assembly," columnist **M. Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Perhaps, the biggest responsibility in this context is HH the Prime Minister's ability to take into account the issues and files included in the Supreme Speech in a progressive manner, up to the point of implementing all the contents of that speech."

"If the dissolved Assembly or most of its members did not understand that they were among those targeted by the expected winds of change, then the current Council of Ministers did not improve as required either, as it was formed according to the same rules and standards used in the formation of its predecessors. This happened despite its initiatives to take partial action in some areas and the files mentioned in the Supreme Speech."

"It seems the new election law approved by the current Council of Ministers has come as something new, in a way that would help the Kuwaiti voter to change the political scene in line with the directives of the political leadership. It came as a hybrid of the previous election law and the so-called 'Election Commission Law', albeit with the same flaws. It came without the new data needed to reorganize the electoral process in order to limit sectarianism, tribalism and paralysis, and to be consistent with the required winds of change. Therefore, the desire for change remains ineffective if it is not accompanied by boldness and decisiveness."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes

Two jobless suspects nabbed

Selling stolen campsite items online

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Two individuals have been apprehended by a team of law enforcement officers for their involvement in a series of camp robberies within Barr Amghara. The crackdown follows a surge in theft incidents reported across several areas including Bar Al-Salmi, Al-Mutlaa, Al-Sabiya, and Amghara, reports **Al-Anba**.

In response to the escalating theft cases, a specialized unit of investigators was assembled to tackle the issue and identify the culprits. After days of investigation, the suspects, aged 26 and 28 and currently unemployed, were pinpointed. Their base of operations was discovered to be a camp located in Barr Amghara, serving as a stash

for pilfered goods. Subsequently, a raid was conducted on the premises, albeit not without resistance from the suspects, who were eventually subdued.

A search of the camp uncovered a cache of stolen items. Further interrogation revealed that the duo had confessed to targeting over a dozen camps in various locations before stashing their loot in a designated room within their camp. The stolen goods were then peddled through online platforms on social media.

The swift action of the authorities has not only led to the apprehension of the perpetrators but has also disrupted their illicit operation, providing a measure of relief to the affected communities.

Domestic workers more than quarter of expat workforce in country: report

'Indians 44.7% of total, Philippines 24.5%'

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Al-Shall report shows domestic workers comprise over a quarter of Kuwait's total expatriate workforce, with their numbers reaching around 790,000 by the end of the third quarter of 2023. This marks an 11.0% increase from the previous year. Among these domestic workers, there are approximately 364,000 male and 426,000 female workers, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In terms of nationality, Indian domestic workers are the most numerous among males, totaling around 251,000, while Filipino domestic workers lead among females, with approximately 193,000.

India is the dominant nationality among both male and female domestic workers, accounting for 44.7% of the total, followed by the Philippines at 24.5%.

The report highlights that four nationalities - India, the Philippines, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka - make up about 94.0% of the total domestic workers, with African countries representing a smaller fraction.

When considering all categories of expatriate workers, Indian workers alone reach around 880,000, comprising 30.4% of the total workforce and 35.9% of expatriate workers. Following India, Egyptian workers rank second with approximately 479,000, representing 16.5% of the total workforce. Kuwaiti workers come in third place with about 449,000, making up 15.5% of the total workforce.

The report underscores the significant contributions of various nationalities to Kuwait's expatriate workforce, with the Philippines, Bangladesh, and other countries also playing substantial roles in the employment landscape.



The exhibition held at Al-Khairan Mall.

Awareness exhibition by Mol in the Avenues

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Ministry of Interior announced that the number of violations for which the block was lifted reached 3,850 violations, and 46 vehicles and 18 bicycles were released from the impound garage, noting that this measure comes on the occasion of the unified Gulf Traffic Week which is held under the slogan "Driving without a Phone," during a Traffic Exhibition awareness campaign at Al-Khairan Mall, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

In addition, the Chairman of the Organizing Committee for the Unified Gulf Traffic Week Activities, Brigadier General Nawaf Al-Hayyan, said that an awareness exhibition will be held from Sunday until next Thursday, to accompany the Unified Gulf Traffic Week activities in the Avenues Mall from 10 am to 10 pm.



Firemen at work

Amghara fire under probe

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) said an investigation has been opened into the fire that broke out at the Amghara scrapyard which destroyed many vehicles, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The DGFD said in a statement that firefighting teams from Tahrir and Jahra Al-Harfi centers dealt with the fire that consumed a number of vehicles, stressing that the accident did not result in any significant injuries.

Hitch delays reports

Bonus before Ramadan

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Public Authority for Persons with Disabilities (PADA) is currently experiencing delays in completing its annual employee evaluations due to a technical hitch. Senior officials from the Authority recently met with representatives from the Civil Service Commission to address this issue and find a resolution before the end of the fiscal year, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

Efforts are underway to finalize the evaluations in order to facilitate the distribution of commendable work rewards to deserving employees before the conclusion of Ramadan. These evaluations are categorized based on percentage scores, ranging from "weak" to "excellent." The evaluations take into account five key factors, including individual and group performance, personal capabilities, and adherence to official duties. The Authority follows guidelines that allocate 70% weight to job performance and 30% to attendance records verified through fingerprint verification.

In addition to addressing internal matters, the Authority is also focused on expanding its services for persons with disabilities. Under the supervision of the Deputy Director of the Authority for Educational and Rehabilitation Services, the second branch of the Integrated Care Institution for People with Disabilities is set to open in Mahboula next Tuesday.

This institution, designed for individuals aged 6 to 45 with mental and dual mental disabilities, will offer various rehabilitation workshops and services. With its comprehensive offerings, it will be the largest facility of its kind in Kuwait. This initiative highlights the Authority's commitment to creating an inclusive society that treats persons with disabilities with dignity and equality.



The man feeding dogs near his workplace.



Feeding cats at home



Medicines for the cats, dogs

Animals well-fed, med care provided

Life dedicated for the love of cats and dogs by Arab expat

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Khaled Al-Desouki, an Arab expatriate, has dedicated two decades of his life to caring for animals, particularly cats and dogs. Despite not having children of his own, he lovingly refers to his furry companions as his "animal children," demonstrating a rare level of devotion and compassion, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

In his modest apartment, Al-Desouki tends to over 20 cats, ensuring they are fed, hydrated, and receiving necessary medical attention. His affection for these feline friends is evident, but it is his profound love for dogs that truly shines. Every day, before starting his work, he personally attends to a group of dogs in the Jahra Industrial Area, ensuring they are fed and cared for.

Despite the financial strain of supporting so many animals, Al-Desouki remains steadfast in his commitment, believing that his actions bring him blessings and good health. His bond with his animal companions runs deep, with him going above and beyond to ensure their well-being. From providing shelter to performing medical procedures, such as spaying weak cats to prevent pregnancies, he tirelessly looks after their needs.

Al-Desouki's routine revolves around his beloved animals, with his days filled with care and attention for them. He takes great joy in seeing them happy, even if it means making sacrifices like reducing his own meals or deducting from his salary to treat them to a special fish meal each month.

His devotion extends beyond his own pets, as he celebrates and supports the dogs in his community, offering them treats and advocating for their proper treatment. For Al-Desouki, the most rewarding moments come when he is greeted by wagging tails and excited barks from his furry friends.

In his world, each animal has a name and a personality. From the pregnant cat "Modi" to the quick-tempered "Father of Anger." These animals are not just pets to him; they are cherished companions who bring joy and purpose to his life.

Despite facing challenges such as limited resources and the absence of a vehicle, Al-Desouki remains undeterred in his mission to care for animals in need. With the help of supportive individuals and the belief that he is guided by a higher power, he continues to make a difference in the lives of countless furry creatures, one act of kindness at a time.

Expat wanted in 14-year jail held

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Director of Farwaniya Security Directorate Brigadier General Salah Al-Daas has ordered referral of an expatriate to the Central Prison to serve his 14-year prison term for trafficking drugs, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

A security source disclosed that the expatriate was arrested at a checkpoint in Sabah Al-Nasser as he was found to have violated the Residency Law. When the arresting officers checked his security records through the Min-

istry of Interior's database, they discovered that he is wanted by law for evading the 14 years imprisonment imposed on him as per the final court ruling on his drug trafficking case.

Meanwhile, Divine Providence saved the driver of a four-wheel-drive vehicle that hit a camel along Kabad Highway, reports **Al-Anba** daily. Traffic police and medical emergency workers rushed to the location immediately after the Operations Unit at the Interior Ministry received information about the accident.

25 فبراير
FEBRUARY
National Day
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الوطنية

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MUGHAL MAHAL

KNPC allowing more contractors to join bidding process

7 firms purchase tender docus for Mutlaa fuel depot project

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The MEED Magazine has revealed that seven companies purchased the tender documents for the Mutlaa fuel depot project, which is estimated to cost about \$850 million, reports Al-Anba daily. Sources from the oil industry said Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) released the invitation to bid for the project in November last year, indicating the seven companies include Sinopec of China, Miel of India, Hesco of Kuwait, Petrofac of Britain and Larsen & Toubro of India, while the remain-

ing two companies on the list have yet to be announced. In the meantime, KNPC is still allowing more contractors to join the bidding process, and more companies can purchase tender documents for the project before submitting bids. It previously announced the extension of the deadline for submitting bids until next April 30. The original deadline was on Feb 13. The scope of work for the project includes developing new pumping facilities at the two oil refining stations in the ports of Ahmadi and

Shuaiba, extending pipelines from the stations of the two ports, establishing a warehouse for the local market, installing safety systems, installing fire-fighting systems, and building storage tanks. MEED Magazine reported last month that internal discussions are still ongoing about the types of fuel which will be transported to the warehouse. The magazine noted that expected changes to fuel storage requirements suggest a belief that officials are preparing to announce changes to the scope of the project.

‘Power ministry provided 42 digital services in year 2023’

Repair work done on fresh waterline in Sabah Al-Ahmad

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: According to informed sources at the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, the ministry provided 42 digital services as of the end of last year. These services include ten for completed invoices from the Customer Services Sector, eight electricity services, six aviation services, eight meter services, two services for electric vehicle chargers, and four other single integrated services for electronic correspondence, inquiries, complaints, street lighting, and utility services. The sources revealed that these services come within the framework of its endeavor to implement the state’s plan for the digital transformation of all services, making it easier for customers to complete their transactions and completely dispense with paper

‘Info’ urges media to get ID for upcoming poll

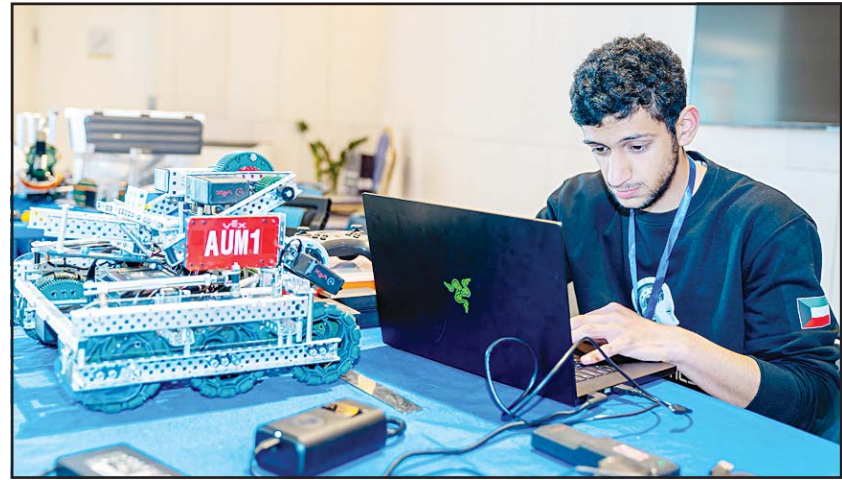
KUWAIT CITY, March 3, (KUNA): Ministry of information called on owners and heads of media outlets, as well as journalists who want to cover the upcoming National Assembly poll slated for April 4 to obtain the proper identity. Speaking to KUNA on Thursday, ministry undersecretary Lafi Al-Subaie said those could be applied for through <https://esice.media.gov.kw/election/electionid/electionidrequest.aspx?serv>, or the attached QR CODE. Journalists and media people must show their identities at constituencies and polling stations. transactions, especially since the ministry is one of the service agencies that customers visit on a daily basis. Meanwhile, the ministry announced the completion of repair work on the fresh waterline in the residential city of Sabah Al-Ahmad, after it experienced a sudden rupture on Wednesday, causing disruption of water supply in the area. In a statement, the ministry said it is monitoring the operational pressures of the area during the current period until the situation is restored to what it was before. It revealed that its teams rushed to repair it immediately after the breakage occurred

in the main fresh water line feeding the city, which is of diameter 1,200 mm and feeds the water towers. The ministry explained that the repair process will take place in different stages, as time is needed to repair it. Repair work began as soon as the site was ready on Thursday evening. Work continued during the morning period from the day before yesterday until the rupture was repaired and fresh water supply was restored. It is noteworthy that the ministry provided water to the people through water tanks, and announced the incident immediately after it occurred.

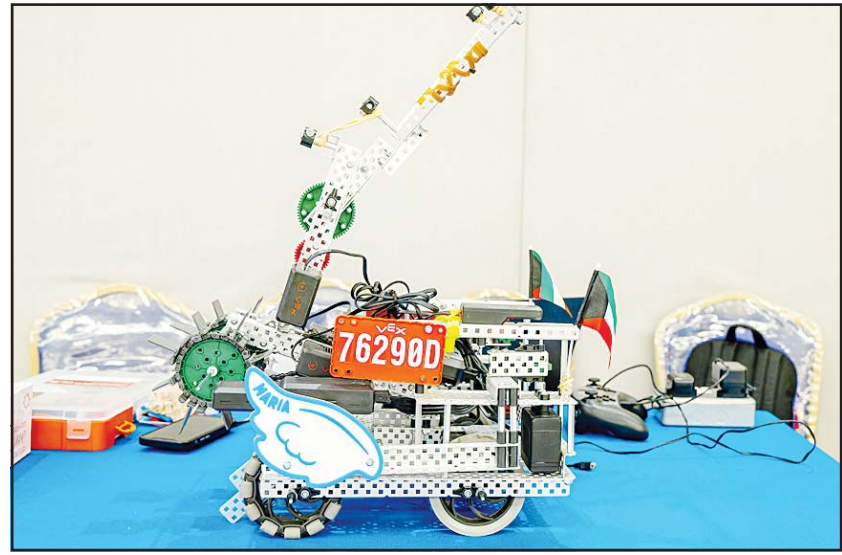
**National Day greetings sent
HH Amir congratulates Bulgaria**

KUWAIT CITY, March 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Bulgaria Rumen Radev on his country’s National Day. His Highness the Amir wished the Bulgarian president long-term health

and wellness, and further progress and prosperity to his country and people. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah has also sent a cable of congratulations to President Rumen Radev on his country’s National Day.



A student participating in the Kuwait National Robotics Competition at Sabah Al-Salem University City.



One of the projects in the National Robotics Competition at Sabah Al-Salem University City.

**Many MoE student groups participate
Kuwait National Robotics competition gets started**

KUWAIT CITY, March 3, (KUNA): The Kuwait National Robotics Competition kicked off on Sunday at Sabah Al-Salem University City -- organized by the department of Computer Science at Kuwait University (KU). Many student groups from the Ministry of Education participated, along with groups from KU and private universities. KU’s Vice President Dr. Meshari Al-Harbi, in the opening statement, expressed how glad he was that people were taking an interest in information technology, software and artificial intelligence, especially during the current time.

Dr. Al-Harbi reaffirmed that the KU aims to teach as many students as possible throughout the competition, since it is considered an accomplishment for the university. It also supports creativity and progress, according to him. He added that it is the perfect opportunity for students to practice the skills they learned academically, expressed how proud he was of them for participating in the competition. The Assistant Undersecretary for Public Education Hessa Al-Mutawa affirmed that this was the Ministry of Education’s second participation in such competition.

**Who is responsible for this negligence?
Citizens demand immediate action on ‘neglected’ public libraries in Kuwait**

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: At a time the country needs to raise public awareness on the importance of reading and encourage young people and all age groups to acquire books and read, some public libraries have been neglected, dilapidated and abandoned, reports Al-Qabas daily. Citizens have demanded an end to this negligence, considering the State spent a lot on these public libraries, some of which have turned into ruins. Professor at the College of Basic Education Latifa Hussein Al-Kandari said: “Public libraries occupy a great place in the renaissance of countries and the rise of civilizations -- ancient and modern. The library is the citadel of culture and the kingdom of knowledge for all segments of society. Its dynamic nature, is renewed in all its corridors, attracts readers, and brings books of all kinds. It provides society with meaningful sources of knowledge and balanced dialogue sessions full of patriotism. When we find a library that has been in trouble for several years simply because of maintenance and we do not know the date of its opening, we feel frustrated, upset and depressed. Whatever the pretexts and justifications, the doors of libraries in any residential area must not be closed. We must provide alternatives immediately.”

Is it reasonable for residential areas that are more than 40 years old and densely populated to have no cultural activities in their public libraries? Can universities and schools perform their pioneering role in enlightenment, education and care without the public library? Do we blame some young people if they are busy with trivial matters and the State does not provide an attractive environment? Do we blame children when they wander in the world of the Internet without control and use their time on things that harm them when we have not provided an alternative? Do we blame young people when they submit their school reports stolen from the Internet? Can young people do their research and school and university reports without a valid and reliable research environment in the public library? **Closed** How are Kuwait’s intellectual publications, including books, magazines and innovations, introduced, marketed and benefited from through public libraries that have been closed and neglected under the pretext of maintenance or due to an engineering or administrative defect? In developed countries, we find libraries open all year round, attracting all segments of society. They organize cultural activities for children, the elderly and young people. They operate throughout the week.” She stated that public libraries provide community services and help teachers, parents and students in performing their role to the fullest. “The public library completes the process of the school, the mission of the mosque, the role of the family, and achieves the goals of the State and its development vision. Have we really achieved this noble goal? We need neutral cultural bodies that monitor public libraries, support their successful activities, enhance their successes, and courageously look into the realistic failures that prevent the advancement of cultural life in public libraries throughout the country,” she concluded.

Financial She added: “The lack of financial resources or mismanagement and lack of coordination are among the reasons that make some public libraries close their doors or reduce their activities for several years, which means the entire residential area is deprived of beneficial cultural activities. This, in itself, is a waste of the giving role of this cultural institution. It is sad to see public libraries undergoing maintenance work for many years. Questions our minds: Who is responsible for this negligence? Why this delay? Where are the governmental and public bodies and neutral oversight institutions in the process of measuring and evaluating the status of existing or faltering libraries in residential areas?”



A photo from the conference. Photo by Mahmoud Jadeed

Minister opens ‘Clinical Advances in Biochemistry’ confab

Medical laboratory services constitute backbone of health system: Al-Awadhi

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

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi says medical laboratory services constitute the backbone of the health system in Kuwait, and contribute significantly to accurate diagnosis and effective treatment of patients. Therefore, supporting and developing this sector is one of the ministry’s main priorities. In a speech delivered during the opening of the third conference for medical laboratories titled, “Clinical Advances in Biochemistry”, Dr. Al-Awadhi highlighted the prominent role of biochemistry laboratories in the success of the health system. He stressed that it is the main source of the necessary information that contributes to early diagnosis of diseases, providing appropriate treatment solutions, and monitoring the patient’s health condition. Dr. Al-Awadhi affirmed the ministry’s constant keenness to support medical laboratories with the latest laboratory equipment, tools and advanced technological techniques, and to strive to improve their work protocols, develop and train medical and technical personnel, and enhance scientific research in this vital field.

The minister explained that the ministry has provided modern technologies that keep pace with global development and allow specialized analyzes to be performed and serve an important segment of patients, most notably mass spectrometry devices, which are used with multiple technologies in some hospitals such as the Amir Hospital, the Addiction Center, and the Yacoub Behbehani Center. About 15 specialists from inside and outside Kuwait participated in the conference, highlighting the latest discoveries and developments in the field of medical laboratories by reviewing the latest technologies in the field of advanced devices and the latest applications of artificial intelligence and their role in improving analytical quality and effective management of medical laboratories. Meanwhile, the Chairman of the Council of Medical Laboratory Departments and the President of the conference Dr. Ibtisam Al-Jumaa said, “Biochemistry laboratories bear a great responsibility in providing vital data that represents the basis of diagnosis and treatment, and represents the basic foundation that helps us accurately understand the condition of patients and determine the necessary steps for effective medical intervention. Biochemistry laboratories are considered the third eye that sees what cannot be seen with the naked eye. They receive samples of blood, urine, and bodily fluids for analysis with extreme accuracy. Not only that, but these laboratories also provide comprehensive analysis of organ function indicators and hormone tests. Under the umbrella of laboratories are specialized clinics that are considered a turning point in the world of health care, providing unique services and receiving all patients from health facilities. As a clinic for diagnosing and treating high blood fats at the Sabah Al-Ahmad Heart Cent-

er, it has contributed significantly to reducing heart attacks, atherosclerosis, and strokes.” She praised the pivotal and major role played by the laboratories of the Ghanima Al-Ghanim Center for Genetic Diseases and Al-Sabah Hospital, which work hand in hand with effort and dedication to provide care and early diagnosis of newborns, and offer the initial screening service for all newborns, and confirmatory analysis to examine newborns suspected of having a genetic disease. **Efficiency** Dr. Al-Jumaa praised the laboratories of Mubarak Specialized Hospital, which work diligently to serve all hospitals in the country, as they conduct and analyze with high efficiency and provide specialized hormonal analysis, which the Sabah Hospital partners with in providing them accurately and professionally to diagnose and follow up on health conditions effectively. She indicated that there are other laboratory stations that are unique in providing exceptional services, such as Ibn Sina Specialized Hospital laboratories for examining special proteins in the blood, blood analysis that serves cancer patients, and cerebrospinal fluid examination for diagnosing cases of multiple sclerosis, as well as the laboratory of the Yacoub Behbehani Center and others. Dr. Al-Jumaa said the conference discussed a number of topics, such as the effective management of medical laboratories and consumption policies in medical analyses, ensuring the quality of analyzes through continuous auditing and monitoring of the performance of devices, and reviewing modern trends in clinical biochemistry analyzes and modern technologies such as mechanization and the use of artificial intelligence, which contributes significantly to improving the quality of work and medical services.

Development He highlighted to the recent development of several services, the most important of which is the electronic linking system for patient results with the Sahel app, which allows immediate access of test results to the patient, and facilitates the follow-up of his health condition with the treating physician, and the completion of the electronic linking service for requests for laboratory materials between hospitals and warehouses. It also facilitates the process of ordering consumables quickly and effectively and tracking the amount of need and demand.

KU dedicated to guide students toward needs of labor market's specializations

10th admission campaign for high school students starts March 5

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Acting Dean of Admissions and Registration at Kuwait University Dr. Fadel Aziz, has announced the launch of the tenth annual university admission campaign for high school students. Themed 'Your Future Begins Here', the campaign will kick-start at the Avenues Mall on March

5 and continue up to March 9, from 10 am to 10 pm each day, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The primary objective of the campaign is to provide prospective students with information about admission requirements and address any inquiries they may have. By hosting the event at a popular mall, the uni-

versity aims to reach a wide audience and engage with students who are considering their higher education options.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Kuwait University has invited over 85 public secondary schools and several private educational institutions students to

visit the university booth at the mall, where specialized staff will be available to assist them and answer their questions.

Additionally, representatives from various university colleges will be present to provide detailed information about specific academic programs.

The campaign underscores Kuwait University's dedication to guiding students toward specializations that align with the needs of the labor market. This alignment is informed by comprehensive studies conducted by the Civil Service Commission and the university's planning sector, which analyze the

demands of both the public and private sectors.

Through initiatives like the annual admission campaign, the Kuwait University continues to play a vital role in shaping the future of Kuwait's workforce by empowering students to make decisions about their higher education and career paths.

Sheikh Fahad

Continued from Page 1

Qatar has a population of 2.9 million people, but the rate of Qataris among them is 14 percent. There is no demographic problem, because the correct understanding is that these people come to work, and they are the ones who advance the country.

On the other hand, we in Kuwait have been living on slogans and being a laughing stock in this matter for ten years. In fact, one of the stupid decisions in a bid to amend the demography was the one that prevents a person over the age of 60 years from renewing his residency. Through that foolish decision, Kuwait lost a significant number of experiences.

Therefore, in order to complete the plan to open the country, this decision must be abolished, along with the sponsorship system (Kafala). This would allow the violators and other residents to deal directly with the state, instead of turning to a human trafficker who inflicts torture on them and increases the security and social burdens.

The country suffers from paralysis due to the absence of a peaceful economic vision, which was confirmed by the decline in the quality of the Kuwaiti economy over the past decade by 21 places. About 25 percent of the GDP comes from rents, and the rest from oil. We are living in a bubble at all levels, and it is time for us to get out of it.

For this reason, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef's words represented a window of hope that was opened to eliminate the traces of uncalculated adventures that have controlled the country for the past two decades. He deserves appreciation and gratitude for his efforts.

Regardless of all that, we still say - This is not enough, as more is required for Kuwait to rise from its decline.

Nonetheless, irrespective of the case, when the approach is realistic, and the person in charge knows where the flaw lies, he will go directly to the right solution. Accordingly the proverb applies to Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef: "A horse is known through its rider." People's qualities are only known through experience.

ICJ not

Continued from Page 1

As Germany decided that it would officially intervene with Israel in the lawsuit and USA is only in solidarity with Israel, but will not officially intervene in the lawsuit, Nicaragua filed the application instituting proceedings against Germany.

The applicant states that each and every Contracting Party to the Genocide Convention has a duty under the Convention "to do everything possible to prevent the commission of genocide" and that, since October 2023, there has been "a recognised risk of genocide against the Palestinian people, directed first of all against the population of the Gaza Strip".

Nicaragua argues that by providing political, financial and military support to Israel and by defunding the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), "Germany is facilitating the commission of genocide and, in any case has failed in its obligation to do everything possible to prevent the commission of genocide".

This is also a clear message to countries sending weapons to Israel that they are liable to be complicit to the crime of genocide.

Under the genocide agreement, countries agree not to commit genocide, meaning complicity in the act is a violation. The pact also enables member states to actively prevent and punish possible genocide.

As pressure mounts on Israel to stop the genocide and killings the ICJ seems helpless in its ability to enforce rulings due to the fractured mandate at the UN Security Council.

The world is watching helplessly as Israel is acting with full impunity in annihilating the Palestinian people and grabbing their land.

□ □ □

Tareq Yousef AlShumaimry, served as Chairman of the Finance Committee and Chairman of the General Budget Committee of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague (PCA) and an observer in the 124th Administrative Council of the Court and the Consular at the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in the Netherlands during this period from 2013 to 2020.

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Kuwait's visa

Continued from Page 1

Previously, there was speculation about the acceptance of visa applications from all nationalities, including those from restricted countries like Yemen, Syria, Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, and Pakistan. These applications undergo thorough security checks, and upon clearance, approval is granted for either a tourist or family visa.

Applicants are required to submit their applications personally, according to their residential address on their civil ID. The process follows the standard procedure for transactions of other nationalities.

The Ministry of Interior has announced the opening of applications for family, tourist, and commercial visits under new conditions, with prior appointments necessary through the Meta platform.

This announcement coincides with Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef's emphasis on revitalizing the economy. He expressed the desire to showcase Kuwait's beauty and culture, welcoming visitors during the

favorable weather conditions for the next four to five months. He reassured that individuals without security restrictions are welcome to enter Kuwait.

'Kuwait's Sports

Continued from Page 1

Abdullah explained the importance of holding this event, which will be held every year, noting that it helps increase sports awareness in society and thanked His Highness the Prime Minister and Minister Marafi for their support, as well as the sponsors of this event.

HH Amir

Continued from Page 1

Seif Palace on Sunday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

He also hosted Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Pre-Ramadan

Continued from Page 1

In response to these concerns, officials assure consumers that inspections by regulatory authorities are ongoing, and immediate action is taken upon receiving complaints. However, consumers remain skeptical and demand more decisive measures to address price hikes.

Former officials and experts emphasize the importance of government intervention to stabilize food prices, suggesting solutions such as expanding domestic agricultural production and exploring opportunities for cultivation abroad. They stress the need for long-term strategies to address agricultural challenges and ensure food security.

Consumer protection associations assure citizens that relief is on the way, with plans to import large quantities of onions to alleviate the current crisis. They encourage consumers to file complaints about price increases and assure them that regulatory authorities are actively working to control prices.

Overall, the rise in food prices ahead of Ramadan underscores the need for effective government intervention and consumer advocacy to ensure fair pricing and accessibility of essential goods for all citizens.

Election surveys

Continued from Page 1

Article 44 of the Constitution states that "individuals have the right to meet without need for permission or prior notification; no member of the Security Force shall be allowed to attend their private meetings. Public assemblies, processions and gatherings are permitted in accordance with the conditions and the stipulations defined by Law provided the objects and the means of the gathering are peaceful and in line with morals."

Former MP Hamad Al-Medlej addressed HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, stating the decision means that the government is asking him to implement the Constitution.

Former MP Falah Al-Hajri asserted that freedom of speech is the inherent right of the people, along with their deep rooted position towards the Palestinian cause and their commitment to religious fundamentals. He added the decision is akin to a confrontation with the people of Kuwait, and it is as if the country has no constitution.

Former MP Saud Al-Asfour said the decision violates the Constitution and contradicts the permanent position of Kuwait on supporting Palestine. He stressed that holding meetings and gatherings is the absolute right of the people as per the Constitution. He urged HH the Prime Minister to stop any constitutional violations.

Former MP Mehmalh Al-Mudhaf accused Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah of preventing citizens from exercising their right to gather and meet, which is guaranteed by the Constitution. He called for suspension of the decision.

Former MP Khalid Al-Otaibi indicated that while the people are eagerly waiting for the issuance of decisions to improve their standard of living, the Ministry of Interior took a decision which put Kuwait in an embarrassing situation as the decision targeted a gathering for supporting the Palestinian cause. He added that such a decision unveils the real attitude of the government. He asked HH the Prime Minister to protect the Constitution and the citizens' rights.

On the other hand, Assistant Undersecretary for Press, Publishing and Printing Affairs at the Ministry of Information Lafi Al-Subaie has clarified that licensed media platforms are not allowed to conduct surveys on the parliamentary election, unless they obtain a permit for this purpose.

In a press statement on Sunday, Al-Subaie pointed out that such surveys must be conducted in accordance with the regulations; while ensuring professionalism and refraining from using illegal material. He added the permit can be obtained by scanning a QR code.

He disclosed that special teams from the ministry will follow up the surveys; and require media platforms to provide details like the date and method of conducting the surveys, as well as the number of participants.

He also advised the media outlets to avoid publishing election results prior to the official announcement of the election committees, warning that legal action will be taken against whoever violated this directive

CSC starts 86th registration period for job seekers in govt institutions

'Register through CSC website portal csc.gov.kw'

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Civil Service Commission (CSC) Director Dr Issam Al-Rubaian has confirmed the start of the 86th period for the registration of Kuwaitis applying for jobs in government institutions as per the Civil Service Law, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to Al-Rubaian, registration is done through the CSC website portal csc.gov.kw by following the following steps:

1. Choose employment in government agencies,
2. Choose to register job seekers,
3. Follow the registration steps.

The automated system for this registration opened at 12:00 midnight on March 1, 2024 and it will continue 24 hours a day, seven days a week, until 12:00 midnight on March 15, 2024.

Registration conditions

(A) General conditions:

1. The applicant must be of Kuwaiti nationality.
2. The applicant must be 18 years old and above.
3. The applicant must not be registered in the Public Institution for Social Security (currently working or insured as an employer or retired).
4. The applicant must not be restricted to study in any of the Ministry of Education schools, institutes and colleges of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) or Kuwait University.

5. For those who have obtained a high school diploma or less without training, it is required that at the end of the registration period, that is, on March 15, 2024, a full year has passed since he left the last job he held in the government (ministries, departments, institutions, public bodies, State-owned companies or companies in which the government contributes not less than 51 percent and the military sector (Interior, Defense, and National Guard). This condition will be implemented automatically through the automated system for the government agencies included in this system linked to the CSC. Otherwise, it will be implemented upon submitting confirmed documents for one year after leaving the government service and upon completion of the necessary procedures the CSC.

6. Every person registered in the central employment system is obligated to update his data by visiting the Manpower Registration Department at the CSC, that is, if he obtained a higher qualification and was registered with a lower qualification.

(B) Specialists who hold university qualifications, diplomas and training courses from PAAET will be registered directly without papers, if they are fresh graduates. If they are not fresh graduates, a date will be set to complete the application without the need to visit the CSC headquarters.

(C) Cases that can be registered among those who have graduated from high school or below without training are as follows:

1. Those who are over 25 years old at the end of the registration period on March 15
2. Or married, divorced or widowed

Documents required for registration

1. Registration without documents for fresh graduates from Kuwait University and PAAET
2. Qualification certificate
3. Experience certificate for those who wish to register it
4. Copy of the civil ID

KUWAIT CITY, March 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah said Thursday that the Kuwait Creativity Award demonstrates the government's "unwavering commitment to supporting youth, and encouraging their outstanding creativity in all fields".

In a statement posted by the Center for Government Communication on its "X" account, His Highness the Prime Minister said the award shows that "we believe that Kuwaiti youth with their creativity, determination and passion are the real driving force for brighter future to our country".

Youth creates leadership, and are the source of inspiration, he said, adding that with their achievements and commitment "we can achieve Kuwait's Vision 2035, the Prime Minister noted.

"Our ultimate goal is to support you (the youth) to fulfill the ambitions and dreams that advance our nation and contribute to the renaissance of our dear Kuwait," he said.

The award includes eight varied fields important for community development and sustainability that are entrepreneurship, environment, science and technology, culture and literature, voluntary work, Sharia

Award targets young people

Kuwait Creativity Award shows govt's firm commitment to supporting youth

sciences, arts and media.

Meanwhile, Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs, Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Minister of State for Communication Dawood Marafi affirmed that K u w a i t Creativity Award aims to motivate and encourage youth to be more creative and work on investing their energy in



Marafi

the development of society.

Holding this major competition with its large financial prizes and its distinctive moral impact on the youth participating in it comes under the directives of the political leadership, said Marafi in a press statement on the General Youth Authority's inauguration of registration for the sixth edition of the award recently.

He appreciated the generous sponsorship that the award received this year from His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, noting that the Youth Authority is keen on developing youth through programs and activities held in its youth centers

throughout the year.

The award has succeeded over its past five editions in attracting more than 1,000 young men and women and crowned 49 creative distinguished people in various fields, noted Marafi, calling on creative youth to apply for the award in this year's edition.

For his part, the Acting Director General of Youth Public Authority Mishal Al-Subaie indicated that the award includes eight different areas important for community development and sustainability.

Al-Subaie said that the award targets young people in the age group (from 18 to 35 years) and registration continues for one month, as the application will be through the authority's website www.youth.gov.kw.

The applicants' applications and work will be evaluated by special award committees with the participation of specialists from the Ministries of Information and Endowments, the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, Kuwait Center for the Advancement of Sciences, Environment Public Authority, the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development and Care, and the Voluntary Work Center.

Decree No. 28 officially issued

Kuwait and China sign MoU in bid to boost economic zones, free zones collaboration

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Decree No. 28 of 2024 has been issued, officially endorsing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority and the Ministry of Commerce in China. The primary objective of this MoU is to enhance collaboration in the domain of free zones and economic zones, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The memorandum emphasizes the mutual desire to strengthen the bonds of friendship and economic cooperation between Kuwait and China. It acknowledges the crucial role of facilitating the flow of goods and promoting reciprocal investments between the two countries.

This strategic partnership underscores the commitment of both parties to foster economic growth, create opportunities for investment, and promote sustainable development in their respective regions. By leveraging the strengths and resources of each nation, the MoU aims to create a conducive environment for business activities and enhance bilateral

trade relations.

Acknowledging the significance of cultivating a conducive investment climate for collaboration, both parties have agreed upon the following provisions:

Article (1): The goal of this memorandum is to establish a long-term bilateral relationship of cooperation in the field of free zones, economic zones and related open platforms between the two parties, through holding regular consultations and engaging in bilateral activities.

Article (2): The two parties shall cooperate in the economic fields and organize mutual visits between the two countries with the aim of encouraging investment development.

Article (3): The two parties agreed to cooperate in the field of free zones, economic zones, and related open platforms on the basis of reciprocity and common interests, which include, but are not limited to:

- Exchanging expertise for development, sharing experiences and building patterns and models to attract investments and technologies with the aim

holding university qualifications or diplomas registered in previous employment periods and then in the current period according to the following criteria for males and females:

- The one with the highest rating for the qualification is given priority - if two are equal, the oldest person to obtain the qualification is given priority - if two are equal, the eldest is given priority - if two are equal, the married person is given priority before the single person.
- (A) Priority in nomination shall be given to specialists
- (B) Priority in nomination

of intensifying development in free zones, economic zones and related open platforms.

- Organizing training programs, conferences, and mutual visits to companies and expert delegations to discover additional opportunities for cooperation.

- The two parties will work to exchange experiences and mechanisms and provide information on the latest rules, regulations and proposals related to or related to the design, establishment, construction, management and operation of free zones, economic zones and related open platforms.

- Conducting joint studies to improve and develop the work mechanism in free zones, economic zones and related open platforms.

- Encouraging investors to invest in projects through special incentives and advantages in free zones, economic zones and related open platforms. In the meantime, the two parties have agreed to establish joint working teams headed by the directors of free zones, economic zones and related open platforms in both countries.

shall be given to non-specialists (those with a high school diploma or less, without training) registered in previous employment periods and then in the current period in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1. For males, the oldest married, then divorced, widowed, single
- 2. For females, the divorced and the widow come first, then the married and the single woman - if two are equal, the oldest in obtaining the qualification takes precedence.

World News Roundup

Europe

Drone strike toll up

Norway's king gets a temporary pacemaker

HELSINKI, March 3, (AP) — An airplane carrying Norway's King Harald V departed Malaysia on Sunday, a day after he was implanted with a pacemaker.

Europe's oldest reigning monarch was hospitalized for an infection during a private vacation on the northern resort island of Langkawi, the royal house said Tuesday.

He underwent surgery at the Sultanah Maliha Hospital on Saturday to implant a temporary pacemaker due to a low heart rate, according to the royal house.

Norwegian media outlets said Harald traveled to Malaysia with his wife, Queen Sonja, to celebrate his 87th birthday. A Scandinavian Airlines medical evacuation plane, which took off from Oslo on Thursday, arrived in Langkawi on Friday. The Boeing 737-700 aircraft has previously been used as a flying ambulance.

According to Flightradar24, the same plane departed from Langkawi on Sunday headed for Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, from where it is scheduled to travel onward to Norway.

The Norwegian royal house confirmed Sunday that the monarch has left Malaysia and the plane is expected to arrive in Oslo early Monday.

"Upon arrival in Norway, His Majesty will be admitted to the (Oslo) hospital Rikshospitalet," the royal palace said, adding that Harald would remain on sick leave for the next two weeks, during which Crown Prince Haakon will assume the monarch's duties.



Harald

Transport

According to Norwegian news agency NTB, which cited information from Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre, the king's transport back to Norway will cost an estimated 2 million Norwegian kroner (\$190,000), which will be taken from the defense budget.

The aging Norwegian monarch has suffered from frail health over the past few years, and has been admitted to a hospital for treatment on numerous occasions. Harald, who has been seen using crutches, had an operation to replace a heart valve in October 2020 after being hospitalized with breathing difficulties.

Harald has repeatedly said he has no plans to abdicate, unlike his second cousin Queen Margrethe II of Denmark, who stepped down earlier this year.

Harald's duties as Norway's head of state are ceremonial and he holds no political power. He ascended to the throne following the death of his father, King Olav, in 1991. The country's first native-born king since the 14th century, he married a commoner as a prince and won hearts in his egalitarian country by leading the mourning in 2011 for the victims of mass killer Anders Behring Breivik.

Also:

KYIV, Ukraine: The death toll rose to 10 on Sunday from a Russian drone strike that destroyed an apartment block in Ukraine's southern port city of Odesa the previous day when a local official reported that the body of a third child was pulled from the rubble.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called on Western allies to boost Ukraine's air defenses in the wake of the deadly attack.

Oleh Kiper, the governor of the Odesa region, said on Telegram that rescue workers on Sunday morning retrieved the remains of a woman and her baby, who appeared "not even a year old."

On Saturday, Ukrainian authorities reported that a months-old baby was among those killed after falling debris from an Iranian-made drone hit the apartment building - one of eight Russian drones reported by officials. Later that day, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that a second child had also died, and called on Kyiv's Western partners to send more air defense systems.

Tymofiy was 4 months old. **Mark** was about to turn 3 years old. My condolences to all of their close ones," Zelenskyy wrote in English on X, formerly known as Twitter. He added that a 3-year-old girl and seven other people were injured in the attack.

"Delays in the delivery of weapons to Ukraine, as well as air defense to protect our people, unfortunately result in such losses. ... Ukraine has never requested anything more than what is necessary to protect lives," Zelenskyy wrote. Four more people may be trapped in the rubble in Odesa, the local branch of Ukraine's main emergency service said in a Facebook update Sunday. Kiper, the local governor, said that rescue workers continue to comb through the site.

Russia's defense ministry reported that 38 Ukrainian drones were intercepted overnight on Sunday over the Crimean peninsula, which Moscow illegally annexed from Kyiv in 2014. A bridge that connects Crimea to Russian territory was closed to traffic for about two hours in the early hours.

In Moscow, China's special envoy on Ukraine held talks on Saturday evening with senior Russian diplomats in the first leg of a European trip that will also take him to Brussels, Poland, Germany and France, Chinese and Russian state media reported.

BELGRADE, Serbia: A key vote for control of Serbia's capital, Belgrade - a focal point of widespread fraud reports after last December elections - is to be rerun later this year, officials said Sunday.

The announcement follows months of soaring political tensions over claims that the ruling populists of President Aleksandar Vucic orchestrated a fraud in the vote for Belgrade's city assembly.

The right-wing Serbian Progressive Party was declared the winner of the Dec. 17 election. But the main opposition alliance, Serbia Against Violence, have insisted they were robbed of a victory in Belgrade and that the parliamentary vote that took place at the same time was also marred by widespread irregularities. The dispute has led to large street protests.

It was not immediately clear when the new vote would be held. Sunday marked the formal deadline to form the Belgrade city authorities following the vote in December. The outgoing assembly will remain in place until the new election.

Vucic and his party have denied any wrongdoing, dismissing fraud claims as fabrications aimed at destabilizing Serbia. International election observers, however, said earlier this week that the December election was held in "unjust conditions," in part because of the president's involvement and systemic advantages for the ruling party.

The report by an office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe also said the ballot was "marred by harsh rhetoric, bias in the media, pressure on public sector employees and misuse of public resources." It listed a set of recommendations for Serbia to fulfill before its next vote.



Republican presidential candidate former US president Donald Trump arrives at a campaign rally on March 2, 2024, in Richmond, Va. Trump continued his march toward the GOP nomination on Saturday, winning caucuses in Idaho and Missouri and sweeping the delegate haul at a party convention in Michigan. (AP)

Politics

Ex-president endorses Robinson for N. Carolina gov

Trump wins caucuses in Missouri, Idaho

COLUMBIA, Mo., March 3, (AP) — Former US president Donald Trump continued his march toward the GOP nomination on Saturday, winning caucuses in Idaho and Missouri and sweeping the delegate haul at a party convention in Michigan.

Trump earned every delegate at stake on Saturday, bringing his count to 244 compared to 24 for former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley. A candidate needs to secure 1,215 delegates to clinch the Republican nomination.

The next event on the Republican calendar is Sunday in the District of Columbia. Two days later is Super Tuesday, when 16 states will hold primaries on what will be the largest day of voting of the year outside of the November election. Trump is on track to lock up the nomination days later.

The steep odds facing Haley were on display in Columbia, Missouri, where Republicans gathered at a church to caucus.

Seth Christensen stood on stage and called on them to vote for Haley. He wasn't well received.

Another caucusgoer shouted out from the audience: "Are you a Republican?"

An organizer quieted the crowd and Christensen finished his speech. Haley went on to win just 37 of the 263 Republicans in attendance in Boone County.

Allocated

Michigan Republicans at their convention in Grand Rapids began allocating 39 of the state's 55 GOP presidential delegates. Trump won all 39 delegates allocated.

But a significant portion of the party's grassroots force was skipping the gathering because of the lingering effects of a months-long dispute over the party's leadership.

Trump handily won Michigan's primary this past Tuesday with 68% of the vote compared with Haley's 27%.

Michigan Republicans were forced to split their delegate allocation into two parts after Democrats, who control the state government, moved Michigan into the early primary states, violating

the national Republican Party's rules. Voters lined up outside a church in Columbia, home to the University of Missouri, before the doors opened for the caucuses. Once they got inside, they heard appeals from supporters of the candidates.

"Every 100 days, we're spending \$1 trillion, with money going all over the world. Illegals are running across the border," Tom Mendenall, an elector for Trump in 2016 and 2020, said to the crowd. He later added: "You know where Donald Trump stands on a lot of these issues."

Christensen, a 31-year-old from Columbia who came to the caucus with his wife and three children age 7, 5, and 2, then urged Republicans to go in a new direction.

"I don't need to hear about Mr. Trump's dalliances with people of unsavory character, nor do my children," Christensen said to the room. "And if we put that man in the office, that's what we're going to hear about all the time. And I'm through with it."

Moved

Supporters quickly moved to one side of the room or the other, depending on whether they favored Trump or Haley. There was little discussion between caucusgoers after they chose a side.

This year was the first test of the new system, which is almost entirely run by volunteers on the Republican side.

Former US president Donald Trump endorsed North Carolina Lt. Gov Mark Robinson for governor on Saturday, several months after the former president pledged to do so.

At a rally at the Greensboro Coliseum Complex, the former president also compared Robinson, who is Black, to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the famed civil rights leader. He referred to Robinson as "Martin Luther King on steroids."

Trump said Robinson wasn't sure how to respond when Trump compared him to the legendary civil rights leader, telling him: "I think you're better than Martin Luther King. I think you are

Martin Luther King times two."

"You should like it," Trump said.

Trump listed Robinson among several candidates that people should vote for in Tuesday's North Carolina Republican primaries, saying "they have my complete and total endorsement." Trump is also on the primary ballot as he seeks to all but eliminate his last remaining rival, former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley, from mathematical contention for the GOP nomination.

Popularity

Despite the lack of a formal endorsement, the ex-president's support combined with strong fundraising and popularity among the GOP's base have helped make Robinson the GOP's front-runner for the gubernatorial nomination.

Former US president Donald Trump on Saturday further escalated his immigration rhetoric and baselessly accused President Joe Biden of waging a "conspiracy to overthrow the United States of America" as he campaigned ahead of Super Tuesday's primaries.

Trump has a long history of trying to turn attack lines back on his rivals in an attempt to diminish their impact. Biden has cast Trump as a threat to democracy, pointing to the former president's efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election. Those efforts culminated in the attack on the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, as his supporters tried to halt the peaceful transition of power.

Trump, who has responded by calling Biden "the real threat to democracy" and alleged without proof that Biden is responsible for the indictments he faces, turned to Biden's border policies on Saturday, charging that "every day Joe Biden is giving aid and comfort to foreign enemies of the United States."

"Biden's conduct on our border is by any definition a conspiracy to overthrow the United States of America," he went on to say in Greensboro, North Carolina. "Biden and his accomplices want to collapse the American system, nullify the will of the actual American voters and establish a new base of power that gives them control for generations."



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak addresses the media at Downing Street in London, Friday, March 1, 2023. (AP)



Cunningham



O'Neill

America

Body parts found in park: Police on New York's Long Island were trying to identify human remains found in a popular suburban park that appear to be from a man and a woman.

A girl walking to school Thursday morning found a severed arm on the side of the road at Southards Pond Park, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) east of New York City. Police searchers later discovered another arm and a leg nearby. The body parts appear to have belonged to a male, according to the Suffolk County Police Department.

Police said Friday night that a search dog also discovered the head, an arm and parts of two legs that are believed to be from a woman. Kevin Beyer, commanding officer of the Suffolk County Police Department's Homicide Unit, said the remains did not appear to have been outside very long.

"Based on the condition, preliminarily, it appears it is a matter of a small amount of days if not hours that they were out here," Beyer told Newsday.

He said investigators were trying to identify the male based on arm tattoos.

Police said the search of the park was complete. (AP)

'Texas girl precious, kind': An 11-year-old Texas girl who was allegedly killed by a family friend with a history of violence was remembered Saturday during a service at St. Joseph Catholic Church.

Audrii Cunningham was a "precious, gentle, kind, loving, smiling, animal lover," said Rev Paul Kahan during the service.

Kahan said he has no answers for what happened to the child, and exhorted the more than 100 mourners to remember her.

"Keep her memory alive by making sure that no family will ever go through what we are going through now," Kahan said. "The safety and the well-being of our children is our highest priority." Prosecutors have said the girl was killed by family friend Don McDougal, who was supposed to take her to a school bus stop when she disappeared Feb 15. Her body was found Feb 20 in a river near Houston.

McDougal has been charged with capital murder. His attorney did not return a phone call for comment on Saturday.

Audrii's family and others in the community say they want answers about how McDougal was allowed to remain free despite a long criminal history of violence. (AP)

Trains involved in collision: Authorities say three trains were involved in a collision and derailment in eastern Pennsylvania on Saturday morning that caused no reported injuries or evacuations but left some railroad cars scattered along a riverbank and at least one partially in the river.

Officials in Northampton County said the

derailment was reported at about 7:15 am in Lower Saucon Township along the Lehigh River. The township's police chief, Thomas Barndt, said arriving emergency personnel found "multiple trains derailed" but no reported injuries. No hazardous materials were involved



Danish Queen Mary colors a zebra, together with children who all suffer from rare diagnoses during Rarity Day 2024 at Industriens Hus in Copenhagen on Feb 29. The Rarity Day is an international awareness day for rare diseases and disabilities. In Denmark, it is celebrated with a large event every 4 years. (AP)

and no evacuations were ordered, he said.

The National Transportation Safety Board said preliminary information indicates an eastbound Norfolk Southern train struck another Norfolk Southern train that had stopped on the same track. Wreckage from the striking train spilled onto an adjacent track and was struck by a westbound Norfolk Southern train, the NTSB said in an email to The Associated Press.

Authorities said the collision led to the derailment of an unknown number of cars, but there were no reported injuries or release of hazardous materials. (AP)

Driver pulled to safety: The driver of a semi-truck was pulled to safety Friday by firefighters following a crash that left the vehicle dangling over a bridge across the Ohio River.

The three-vehicle crash on the George Rogers Clark Memorial Bridge connecting Louisville, Kentucky to southern Indiana was reported around noon, Louisville Fire Chief Brian O'Neill said during a press conference. One other person involved in the crash was immediately taken to the hospital and crews set up to rescue the truck driver from the cab.

It took about 40 minutes to set up a rope system and get someone ready to rappel down to the cab and hook the driver up to a safety harness and bring her out safely, O'Neill said. She was taken to the hospital as a precaution. (AP)

Subcontinent

Winter rains kill 29

Sharif elected prime minister of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, March 3, (AP) — Lawmakers in Pakistan's National Assembly elected Sunday **Shehbaz Sharif** as the country's new prime minister for the second time as allies of imprisoned former premier Imran Khan in parliament shouted in protest against his appointment, alleging rigging in last month's election.

Speaker Ayaz Sadiq said Sharif secured 201 votes, defeating Omar Ayub of the Sunni Ittehad Council who got 92 votes. The winner only needs 169 votes to get a majority.

Ayub enjoyed the backing of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, or PTI, whose candidates could not get enough seats to form a government on their own. The PTI refused to hold talks with its rivals to form a coalition.

Following days of negotiations, Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League party and his supporters formed an alliance after the Feb. 8 election, which was overshadowed by militant violence, a nationwide mobile phone shutdown, Khan's exclusion from the vote, and an unusual delay in announcing the result.

Authorities said the cutting of communications was necessary to avoid attacks on candidates and security forces.

However, the delay drew criticism from Khan's party, which insists the vote was rigged to stop it from getting a majority. The party claims it has evidence that its victory "was stolen during the vote count," a charge the Election Commission denies.

Sharif, in his acceptance speech in parliament Sunday, said: "We were subjected to political victimization in the past but never took any revenge." Without naming Khan, he said the previous ruler jailed many political rivals, including himself and his ally Asif Ali Zardari.

Attacking

He also accused Khan's supporters of attacking military installations after his ouster in 2022, adding that now parliament and the courts will decide whether those involved in attacking the military installations deserved a pardon.

Holding portraits of Khan, lawmakers stood in front of Sharif when he began his speech, shouting "vote thief" and "shame." Sharif denounced their actions, saying they were causing chaos in parliament. He also said they should present their evidence of vote rigging to the relevant authorities.

Sharif then addressed the opposition saying, "I am offering you reconciliation. Let us sit together to work for the betterment of Pakistan." But he was greeted with more protests and shouts.

The premier also spoke of repairing ties with the United States. Relations between the two countries have been strained after Khan accused the US, Sharif and the Pakistani military of conspiring to keep him out of office, following his ouster.

Sharif also said his biggest challenge was the economic situation. Pakistan has been relying on foreign loans to run the economy. His government is also facing multiple issues, including how to respond to a surge in militant attacks, improve relations with the neighboring, Taliban-run Afghanistan, repair crumbling infrastructure, and resolve year-round power outages. It must also maintain political stability as Khan's party has vowed to continue protests against the alleged vote-rigging.

Khan, who is currently serving prison terms in multiple cases and has been barred from seeking or holding office, wrote last week a letter to the International Monetary Fund, urging it to link any talks with Islamabad to an audit of February's election. Khan's move comes days before the IMF releases a key installment of a bailout loan to Pakistan.

Also:

PESHAWAR, Pakistan: Heavy rains that swept across Pakistan have left at least 29 people dead and 50 others injured, collapsed houses and triggered landslides that blocked roads, particularly in the northwest, authorities said Sunday.

About 23 rain-related deaths were reported in **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa** province bordering Afghanistan since Thursday night, the provincial disaster management authority said.

Five people died in southwestern **Baluchistan** province after floods swamped the coastal town of **Gwadar**, forcing authorities to use boats to evacuate people.

Casualties and damage were also reported in Pakistan-administered **Kashmir**, the National Disaster Management Authority said.

Authorities were sending emergency relief and heavy machinery to remove debris blocking highways, the agency added.

The country's Karakoram Highway, which links Pakistan with **China**, was still blocked in some places due to landslides triggered by rain and snow, according to the spokesman for the northern **Gilgit Baltistan** region, **Faizullah Faraq**. He said the snowfall was unusually heavy for this time of year.

Authorities advised tourists against traveling to the scenic north due to weather conditions. Last week, several visitors were stranded there because of heavy rains.

Pakistan this year has witnessed a delay in winter rains, which started in February instead of November. Monsoon and winter rains cause damage in Pakistan every year.

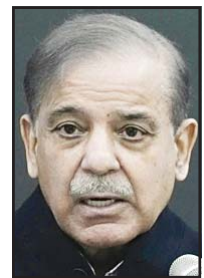
In neighboring Afghanistan, authorities said Sunday that harsh winter weather had killed more than 5,000 livestock and destroyed 403 homes in different parts of the country in the past three days. The Taliban-run administration said it allocated 50 million afghanis (\$681,000) in assistance.

KATHMANDU, Nepal: The only surviving member of the mountaineering expedition that first conquered Mount Everest said Saturday that the world's highest peak is too crowded and dirty, and the mountain is a god that needs to be respected.

Kanchha Sherpa, 91, was among the 35 members in the team that put New Zealander **Edmund Hillary** and his Sherpa guide **Tenzing Norgay** atop the 8,849-meter (29,032-foot) peak on May 29, 1953.

"It would be better for the mountain to reduce the number of climbers," Kanchha said in an interview in Kathmandu on Saturday. "Right now there is always a big crowd of people at the summit."

Since the first conquest, the peak has been climbed thousands of times, and it gets more crowded every year. During the spring climbing season in 2023, 667 climbers scaled the peak, but that brought in thousands of support staff to the base camp between the months of March and May.



Sharif



A woman writes well messages on the message board during the tenth annual remembrance event at a shopping mall, in Subang Jaya, on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on March 3. Inset: Family members and relatives of passengers on board of the missing Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 light candles on Sunday. (AP)

Malaysia may renew hunt for missing flight MH370

Malaysia's government said Sunday it may renew the hunt for missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 after a US technology firm proposed a fresh search in the southern Indian Ocean where the plane is believed to have crashed a decade ago.

Transport Minister Anthony Loke said Texas-based Ocean Infinity has proposed another "no find, no fee" basis to scour the seabeds, expanding from the site where it first searched in 2018. He said he has invited the company to meet him to evaluate new scientific

evidence it has to find the plane's final resting place. If the evidence is credible, he said, he will seek Cabinet's approval to sign a new contract with Ocean Infinity to resume the search.

"The government is steadfast in our resolve to locate MH370," Loke told a remembrance event to mark the 10th anniversary of the disappearance of the jet. "We really hope the search can find the plane and provide truth to the next-of-kin." The Boeing 777 plane carrying 239 people,

mostly Chinese nationals, from the Malaysian capital, Kuala Lumpur, to Beijing, vanished from radar shortly after taking off on March 8, 2014. Satellite data showed the plane deviated from its flight path and was believed to have crashed in the southern Indian Ocean.

But an expensive multinational government search failed to turn up any clues, although several pieces of debris washed ashore on the east African coast and Indian Ocean islands. (AP)



Opposition activist Job Sikhala addresses the media at the burial of Moreblessing Ali, on the outskirts of Harare, on March 2. A Zimbabwean activist slain two years ago was finally laid to rest Saturday at a low key but tension filled event where tensions among party members betrayed the state of the country once promising opposition, which appears collapsing under the weight of infighting and allied state repression. (AP)



Arteta



Obrador

Lat/Am

Migrant brawl destroys shelter: A disturbance among migrants and eventually with Panamanian border police resulted in the destruction of various vehicles and at least 10 modules of a migrant camp in the country's Darien region, authorities said Saturday.

At least 44 migrants were arrested in the aftermath of a temporary migrant reception center in San Vicente, where migrants emerging from the treacherous Darien jungle that covers the Colombia-Panama border register with Panamanian authorities.

More than 500,000 migrants crossed the Darien last year as they migrated north toward the United States, more than doubling the previous year's record.

Friday night's melee began as a fight between two women over a tent and devolved from there, ultimately involving some 250 migrants, Panama's Security Ministry said in a statement. Authorities did not report any injuries.

"These violent acts carried the consequence of serious impacts on this shelter," the statement said.

From San Vicente migrants board buses that carry them across Panama to the border with Costa Rica.

The flow of some 2,000 migrants daily through the Darien was cut off earlier this week after police in Panama arrested some of the boat captains who ferry migrants to the point where they begin hiking.

Colombian prosecutors said the captains worked for tourism companies that were a front for transporting migrants at exorbitant prices. (AP)

Attacks on candidates up fears: As Mexico prepares for the largest elections in its history, organized crime is once again

Africa

South African soldier kills colleague, self

Violence threatens S.Sudan stability: UN

JUBA, South Sudan, March 3, (AP) — Mass violence and gross human rights violations in South Sudan continue unabated ahead of landmark elections due to take place in December, a report by the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan has warned.

Patterns of violence, violations and entrenched impunity continue to blight the lives of an extremely vulnerable population, the report said, warning that the already dire humanitarian situation in the country will deteriorate further.

The elections, the first since independence from Sudan in 2011, should signify a milestone in efforts to secure a lasting peace since the end of the civil war which raged in South Sudan from 2013, killing some 400,000 people. A peace deal was agreed in 2018 but implementation has been sluggish and violence persists in parts of the country.

The report presented to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva Friday said the elections face severe political and logistical challenges, and the post-election legal framework remains uncertain.

Agreement

Crucial steps in the 2018 peace agreement, including the adoption of a permanent constitution, the unification of armed forces, and the establishment of transitional justice institutions, "remain outstanding or incomplete," the report said.

"Time is running out for South Sudan's leaders to implement key commitments, which are the building blocks for peace, for holding the country together, and advancing human rights beyond the elections," said Commissioner Barney Afako.

The elections were supposed to take place in early 2023 but were postponed for 18 months, following earlier delays.

Nation and state-building efforts have faltered, while predation and repression have been entrenched, according to the

report, adding that even as insurgency persists, violence is being instigated by political and military elites.

Women and girls have been particularly targeted, the report said, while abductions have become a "troubling exploitative enterprise."

South Sudanese children are routinely denied access to health and education entitlements, going hungry, with adverse impacts on the country's future, the report revealed.

The Commission also found that the armed forces were still using child soldiers. In 2019, the year after the peace agreement, the U.N. found there were still more than 19,000 child soldiers in South Sudan, one of the highest rates in the world.

"The drivers of violence and repression are well known, and while commitments have been made to address them, we continue to see a lack of political will to implement the measures necessary to improve millions of lives," said Yasmin Sooka, chair of the commission.

South Sudan's immediate and long-term future hinges on political leaders finally making good on their commitments to bring peace, and reverse cyclical human rights violations, Sooka said.

Also:

JOHANNESBURG: A South African soldier deployed in Congo has shot dead a colleague and then turned the gun on himself, authorities said Saturday.

The South African National Defense Force, which oversees the country's armed forces, said the soldier used his official service weapon.

It said it had convened a board of inquiry to work with the peacekeeping force in Congo to investigate the incident, adding that the remains of the two soldiers would be repatriated to South Africa in due course.

South Africa has soldiers in Congo

as part of the Southern African Development Community's mission to fight against armed rebel groups in the east.

South Africa announced in February that it would be deploying an additional 2,900 soldiers to the mission.

Two weeks ago, two South African soldiers were killed and three injured when a mortar landed in their base in eastern Congo amid increased unrest in the region.

HARARE, Zimbabwe: A Zimbabwean opposition activist slain nearly two years ago was finally buried Saturday at an event marked by a low turnout and clashes between members of the main opposition party, highlighting its decline.

Moreblessing Ali, 46, a member of the opposition Citizens Coalition for Change, or CCC, was abducted in May 2022 outside a bar in Nyatsime, a neighborhood of Chitungwiza town on the outskirts of the capital, Harare.

Her body, cut into pieces, was found in a well in the area more than two weeks later, sparking anger. A man was later jailed for 30 years for the murder.

Ali's remains had remained in a government morgue ever since. Her family refused to bury her until the release of a top official and family lawyer who was arrested after he said she had been murdered by ruling Zanu-PF supporters.

The official, **Job Sikhala**, spent close to two years in pre-trial detention and was released in January this year after a magistrate handed him a suspended prison sentence, paving the way for Ali's burial on Saturday.

"We are relieved that she has finally rested," said Wellington Ali, a brother to the slain activist. "But we are heartbroken because it is not a joke going two years without burying our relative. We have been through a lot."

preying on local candidates across swaths of the country where cartels dominate, raising concerns among experts that these could be Mexico's bloodiest elections ever.

Julián López, coordinator for the Citi-

zen Movement Party in the southern state of Guerrero, experienced it first hand when rifle-toting gunmen abducted him and two colleagues while they were driving on Feb. 7. The 43-year-old López was beaten,



A police investigator collects evidence where an officer was shot dead in Celaya, Mexico on Feb. 28. As Mexico prepares for the largest elections in its history, organized crime is once again preying on local candidates across swaths of the country where cartels dominate, raising concerns among experts that these could be Mexico's bloodiest elections ever. (AP)

stripped of his possessions, made to kneel near a remote garbage dump and ultimately abandoned in the middle of the night.

Two mayoral hopefuls in the town of Maravatio in neighboring Michoacan state were not so fortunate. They were killed by gunmen within hours of each other Monday. One was from the governing Morena party of President **Andrés Manuel López Obrador**, the other from the conservative National Action Party. A third mayoral hopeful from that town was abducted and found dead in November.

On Feb. 10, a man running for Congress for the Morena party in the sprawling Mexico City suburb of Ecatepec was fatally shot in the street alongside his brother. He had allegedly received threats from a local union.

A month earlier, on Jan. 5, the local leader of the Institutional Revolutionary Party and candidate for mayor of Suchiate, Chiapas, was killed. The same day, in the northwestern state of Colima, a mayoral candidate of the Citizen Movement party in Armeria was shot by gunmen while in his vehicle.

The group Data Civica had tallied 30 attacks on political hopefuls and party officials from September - when most started pre-campaign activities - through Feb. 10. Its spokesperson, **Itxaro Arteta**, said they were "worried" after recording eight attacks on pre-candidates in January, more than double what they had seen before in that month since 2018. (AP)

EGYPT	EGX 30	Change	Closing pts	SAUDI	Tadawul	Change	Closing pts
↑		+93.92	29,058.33	↓		-75.66	12,555.20

Business

Eurozone and Japanese inflation figures diverge from expectations

Mixed global inflation and PMI prints amid souring US consumer

By National Bank of Kuwait

United States

CB Consumer Confidence Report Shows Souring Sentiment

A recent survey by The Conference Board revealed a shift in Americans' sentiment towards the economy, with optimism declining after a period of improvement. This decline is reflected in the survey's index, which fell in February compared to January, coming in at 106.7 from 110.9 previously and significantly below the expected 114.8 figure. While concerns about rising food and gas prices eased slightly, worries surrounding the job market increased. This negative outlook was widespread, impacting most income groups and age demographics, except for those with very low or very high incomes and those between 35 and 54 years old. Additionally, the survey suggests a potential economic downturn in the near future, with expectations for income and business conditions dropping below a concerning level. Interestingly, inflation expectations continued to decrease, falling significantly from their peak in mid-2022. This stands in contrast to the rising job market anxieties. It's worth noting that another survey conducted by the University of Michigan painted a slightly different picture, showing stable consumer sentiment in February. However, concerns regarding the upcoming elections and the political climate were also mentioned by respondents in The Conference Board's survey, suggesting these factors may be contributing to the overall economic uncertainty. While the job market remains robust, it has cooled down compared to last year, and the approaching election season may further influence economic perceptions.

Fourth Quarter GDP Revised Downward

Gross domestic product (GDP) in the US increased at an annual rate of 3.2% in the fourth quarter of 2023, lower than the previous estimate of 3.3% for the quarter, and marginally lower than the previous quarter growth of 4.9%. The slight decrease in growth is mainly attributed to a downturn in private inventory investment, a slowdown in federal government spending, as well as a decrease in residential fixed investment and consumer spending. Despite the downgrade revision for the 4th quarter GDP figure, it is considered the sixth consecutive quarterly growth for the US economy, defying fears of an economic recession as monetary policy remains tight.

PCE Inflation Comes in As Expected

Monthly inflation ticked up in January, meeting analysts' expectations and remaining above the Federal Reserve's target. The core PCE price index, excluding food and energy (a key Fed gauge), rose 0.4% monthly and 2.8% year-over-year. This was higher than December's figures of a 0.1% monthly gain. Headline PCE increased 0.3% on the month and 2.4% annually, higher than December's monthly gain of 0.1%. Surprisingly, personal income jumped 1%, surpassing forecasts of a 0.3% rise, while spending dipped slightly. Services prices rose faster than goods prices, both monthly and annually. Food prices also climbed slightly, but energy prices continued their decline. While core PCE reading reached the lowest level since February 2021, it remains well above the Fed's target, and the recent monthly gains suggest inflation remains volatile and sticky as the Fed deliberates on the best time to start cutting interest rates.

Manufacturing Activity Contracts More than Forecasted

A survey by the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) showed the manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) dropping to 47.8 in February, down from 49.1 in January. This marks the 16th consecutive month the index has been below 50, signifying a contraction in the sector. The survey also indicates a slowdown in new orders (49.2 from 52.5 previously) and production (48.4 from 50.4 in January). Additionally, supply chain constraints seem to affect manufacturers, as supply deliveries rose to 50.1 from 49.1 previously. Readings above 50 indicate slower deliveries. Furthermore, factory employment continued to decrease, falling to 45.9, the lowest level since July 2023. On a more positive note, inflationary pressures declined slightly, with prices paid slipping to 52.5 from 52.9 in January. The greenback ended the week at 103.86.

Europe

Eurozone Manufacturing PMI Declines Again

Eurozone manufacturing activity further contracted in February, with the PMI falling slightly to 46.5 from 46.6 in January. This decline continues a trend of over a year. While the overall picture remains gloomy, some bright spots emerged. Greece, Ireland, and Spain all saw significant rises in their manufacturing PMI, with Greece reaching a 24-month high, Ireland a 20-month high, and Spain entering expansion territory for the first time in 20 months. In contrast, major economies like Germany and France continued to struggle. Germany's manufacturing PMI hit a 4-month low, while France saw a slight improvement but remained in contraction territory. This highlights the uneven nature of the Eurozone's economic recovery, with some countries performing better than others. Despite the ongoing challenges, the slowing decline in new orders suggests a potential glimmer of hope for the future. This could indicate stabilizing demand and pave the way for a gradual recovery in the Eurozone's manufacturing sector.

Eurozone CPI Declines but Comes Above Expectations

Eurozone inflation eased slightly in February, reaching 2.6% year-on-year. This is down from 2.8% in January but still above the European Central Bank's (ECB) target of 2%, and slightly higher than analysts' estimates of 2.5%. The slowdown is primarily driven by easing prices in services, food, and non-energy industrial goods. Energy prices, however, slow down their decline compared to January. Despite the overall slowdown, core inflation, excluding volatile items, remains above expectations at 3.1%, however it is the lowest level since March 2022. Looking at individual countries, inflation dipped in France, Spain, and Germany, but not quite as much as predicted. Italy's inflation remained unchanged. These figures come at a time when the European Central Bank (ECB) is expected to meet and set interest rates next week. While inflation is showing signs of slowing, it remains above the ECB's target, suggesting the central bank may need to continue its efforts to bring prices under control. Markets are pricing in the deposit rate to hold steady at 4%. On a weekly basis EUR/USD gained slightly, last trading at 1.0837.

Asia-Pacific

Japan CPI Higher than Anticipated

Inflation in Japan came in higher than expected, with core CPI at 2% versus expectations of a 1.8% print. Headline CPI was at 2.2% while it was expected

Rates - March 3rd, 2024

Currencies	Previous Week Levels			This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.0824	1.0794	1.0865	1.0837	1.0700	1.0882
GBP	1.2662	1.2597	1.2699	1.2650	1.2500	1.2661
JPY	150.47	149.19	150.84	150.11	148.00	151.00
CHF	0.8805	0.8777	0.8892	0.8833	0.8700	0.8900

to come in at 1.9%. Despite the higher-than-expected figures, the readings mark the slowest pace of inflation increase in 22 months. The higher than forecasted readings however will likely add fuel to speculators that are betting on a pivot to tighter policy from the Bank of Japan.

The USD/JPY currency pair is down on the week, closing at 150.11.

Australia's Inflation Holds Steady

Inflation in Australia remained steady in the month of January, despite market expectations of an increase from the prior month. Consumer price index grew at an annual rate of 3.4%, matching that of December and lower than market expectations of a 3.6% increase. Meanwhile core CPI, which excludes food and energy, rose 4.1% in January, slightly lower than December's 4.2% figure. While inflation is lower than the levels seen in early 2023, it remains higher than the RBA's target, flashing warning signs that inflation might remain sticky for a prolonged period. The Central bank currently expects CPI to fall within the target by mid-2025. The Australian dollar is down, with AUD/USD declining to 0.6523.

China Manufacturing PMI Print Disappoints

Despite Beijing's attempts to revitalize the economy, China's manufacturing sector declined for the fifth straight month with the official PMI reading coming in at 49.1 from 49.2 previously. New orders remain unchanged, however new export orders fell to 46.3 from 47.2 a month earlier. Composite PMI was unchanged at 50.9 after a slight improvement in the services and construction sectors. On the other hand, the Caixin manufacturing PMI print edged up to 50.9 from 50.8 previously, although it covers significantly less businesses than the official PMI survey. Recent data coming out of China is mixed, with travel showing strong signs of recovery while housing remains weak. Chinese authorities initiated a series of measures to tackle the struggling economy, including cutting key rates, lowering the threshold for downpayments for real estate, and reducing the reserve requirement ratio for banks to boost lending. These measures have yet to convince markets that they are enough to resolve the multitude of issues that the Chinese economy faces.

The USD/CNY ended the week at 7.196.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30745.

Kuwait's current account surplus to shrink in 2024

Gov't spending and rising oil prices impact economy

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Fitch Solutions has revised its forecast for Kuwait's current account surplus in 2024, anticipating a reduction compared to previous estimates. This adjustment is attributed to several factors, including a contraction in trade in goods and a widening trade deficit in services, driven by rising costs, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The agency now predicts Kuwait's current account surplus to contract from 26.4% of GDP in 2023 to 24.9% in 2024, down from the previ-

ous estimate of 28.8% in 2023. This revision is primarily influenced by changes in Kuwait's GDP data.

Fitch Solutions attributes the projected decrease in the current account surplus to increased government spending on public sector salaries and subsidies, supported by rising global oil prices. The anticipated growth in budget spending is expected to boost local demand for consumer goods, leading to a rise in imports of goods.

Furthermore, the agency foresees a moderate expansion in the services account deficit, driven by increased imports, particularly in the travel sector. Kuwaitis' higher wages are expected to enhance their purchasing power, resulting in greater spending on travel abroad.

Despite the projected increase in

imports, Fitch Solutions anticipates a slight improvement in services exports, with communications continuing to dominate this category.

Regarding the primary income surplus, Fitch Solutions expects a moderate expansion, citing positive performance in global stocks and bonds. However, it predicts a marginal increase in the deficit in financial transfers abroad.

Fitch Solutions also highlights potential risks to Kuwait's external balance, including regional conflicts impacting global oil prices and economic growth slowdowns affecting current account surpluses. Nevertheless, Kuwait's robust financial reserves, currency peg, and substantial assets are seen as providing stability amidst global economic uncertainties.

S&P GCC composite index up by 4.3% in Feb

Kuwait market sustains positive momentum driven by robust corporate earnings: Markaz

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" released its Monthly Market Review report for the month of February 2024. Kuwait market ended positive during the month as the pickup in the pace of legislative reforms, continued expansion of non-oil activity and robust corporate earnings of major blue-chip stocks supported investor sentiment. Kuwait All Share index rose 2.4% in February, supported by the gains in the banking sector. The Banking index rose 3.1% during the month with Burgan Bank and KFH being the top gainers, rising by 7.8% and 4.9% respectively on the back of positive earnings results for FY 2023.

Burgan Bank's announcement to offer private banking and wealth management services to its high-net-worth individuals drove the stock prices up during the month. KFH recorded net profit of KD 584.5 million for the year ended 2023, an increase of 63.4% y/y. Among Premier Market stocks, Kuwait Projects Company Holding gained the most at 15.6% as the acceptance of a joint bid made by its subsidiary Jordan Kuwait Bank (and Basata Holding) to acquire a 30% stake in Madfotcom, a leading bill processing and payment provider in Jordan was received well by the company's shareholders.

Kuwait's inflation (CPI) rose by 3.3% y/y in January, compared to 3.4% in the previous month. The inflation was primarily driven by the food and beverages prices, which rose 4.8% y/y during the month. Domestic credit growth eased to 1.7% in 2023, down from 7.7% in 2022. However, business and household credit growth are expected to pick up in 2024 following an uptick in project awards in 2023 and expected interest rate cuts in the second half of 2024. Kuwait's real estate sales gathered pace in January, rising 38% m/m to KD262 million. However, it has continued to decline, albeit at a softer pace of 5.4% on a y/y basis. Residential sales jumped 46% m/m, while investment sales fell 10% m/m despite an increase in transactions volumes.

GCC equity indices, except Abu Dhabi, Oman and Bahrain, were positive as strong corporate earnings lent support to the markets' performance. The S&P GCC composite index witnessed an increase of 4.3% for the month. However, escalating regional geopolitical tensions and dampened hopes of early rate cuts by the U.S. Fed weighed down on the investor sentiment. Saudi Arabia and Dubai equity indices gained 7.1% and 3.4% respectively during the month. IMF



estimates a 5.5% growth rate for Saudi Arabia in 2025, marking an increase from 4.5% rate projected in October 2023 on the back of the economy's robustness. Saudi National Bank (SNB) share prices increased by 4.3% during the month following the upbeat 2023 earnings. SNB recorded a net profit of SAR 20.01 billion in 2023, rising 7.7% y/y and higher than average analyst estimates of SAR 19.5 billion. Alinma Bank's share prices rose by 6.0% during the month driven by strong 2023 earnings and acquisition of Arabian Shield Cooperative Insurance Company's shares. Alinma Bank purchased 4.58 million shares in Arabian Shield Cooperative Insurance Company from Tokio Marine and Nichido Fire Insurance (TMNF) at a value of SAR 81.02 million. Dubai equity index gains were driven by the strong performance of the real estate sector stocks following their earnings announcements for FY 2023. Emaar Development and Emaar Properties recorded returns of 13.6% and 9.3% respectively during the month. Emaar Development reported a 74% y/y increase in net profit to AED 6.6 billion in 2023 amid strong property sales in Dubai. Emaar Properties reported a 70% y/y surge in net profit to AED 11.6 billion for the year 2023. The Abu Dhabi equity index declined 2.7% driven by the fall in the performance of major blue-chip stocks. First Abu Dhabi Bank's stock price fell by 6.8% despite 2023 earnings beating market estimates.

The IMF, in its January 2024 regional outlook, has downgraded the projected economic growth in the GCC region for 2024 to 2.7% y/y from 3.7% y/y previously projected in October 2023. The revision reflects voluntary production cuts and the adverse implications of rising geopolitical risks. Inflation in the GCC region is expected to moderate below 3% in 2024.

Global and U.S. markets ended positive despite sticky inflation and indications from the U.S. Fed Chair Jerome Powell that interest rate cut in March is unlikely. The MSCI World index and S&P 500 indices rose 4.1% and 5.2% respectively in February. U.S. inflation increased 3.1% y/y and 0.3% m/m in January owing to higher costs of shelter and healthcare. Technology stocks continued to drive global eq-

uity markets during the month as Q4 2023 earnings from Amazon, Meta Platforms, and Apple surprised on the upside. NVIDIA continued to rally as its earnings beat market expectations, with a 769% y/y surge in net profits during the quarter ending December 2023. The MSCI EM index rose by 4.6% for the month, reversing the losses recorded in January. Chinese equities index gained 8.1% on policy support measures, regulatory curb on short selling and quant trading, and state investors' plans to expand their stock buying.

The yield on the 10-year U.S. Treasury note surged during the month and closed at 4.25%. Yields rose as comments from the U.S. Fed Chair that the central bank is not ready to cut rates yet and sticky U.S. inflation data caused investors to lower their expectations for potential rate cuts considerably. However, the lower borrowing needs from the U.S. Treasury department placed a cap on the yields and prevented it from rising any further.

Oil price settled at USD 83.62 per barrel, recording a monthly gain of 2.3%. The rise in European diesel demand, tighter oil supply due to ongoing geopolitical conflicts in the Middle East, and OPEC+ decision to keep the production levels unchanged supported oil prices. A slump in U.S. refining activity and disruptions to global trade have tightened diesel supplies in Europe causing the surge in oil prices. However, oil price gains were stunted by the expectations of delayed rate cuts by the U.S. Fed and concerns over global oil demand. IEA revised downwards its forecast for oil demand growth in 2024 to 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd), about half of the 2.3 million bpd registered in 2023. The agency has attributed this to muted economic growth in major economies, energy efficiency improvements, growing electric vehicle fleet and fading impact of post pandemic recovery as it nears its closure. Gold prices recorded a marginal gain of 0.3% closing at USD 2,043.2/oz. Natural gas prices plunged by 11.4% during the month owing to warmer U.S. weather lowering the demand for heating fuel.

The indication from the U.S. Fed during its scheduled meeting in March regarding the timing of pivot is expected to drive investor sentiment during the month. Additionally, oil price movement and any further escalation in geopolitical tensions is likely to shape GCC markets performance in the next month.

Low-sulfur fuel oil exports reach unprecedented levels

Historic surge in Kuwait's fuel oil exports driven by Al-Zour refinery

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: In February, Kuwait experienced a historic surge in fuel oil exports, driven by the Al-Zour refinery reaching full processing capacity, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Data compiled by "MEED" from the trading platform "Kpler" and the London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG) indicates that Kuwait's refined product exports, particularly low-sulfur fuel oil (VLSFO) crucial for shipping, reached unprecedented levels. Kuwait's oil exports in February totaled 720,000

metric tons, equivalent to 158,000 barrels per day.

Approximately 60% of these exports consisted of low-sulfur fuel oil, with high-sulfur fuel oil (HSFO) making up the remaining 40%. This surge in low-sulfur fuel oil exports follows a slowdown in the previous quarter when supplies were redirected to domestic power generation.

Since the Al-Zour refinery began operations, over 50% of Kuwait's low-sulfur fuel oil exports have been directed to Singapore, the world's leading bunkering port.

RIYADH, March 3: Zain Group announces its operation in Saudi Arabia (Zain KSA) recording all-time high financial results for the year 2023, reporting an annual revenue of SAR 9.9 billion, an impressive annual 9% growth.



Al-Kharafi

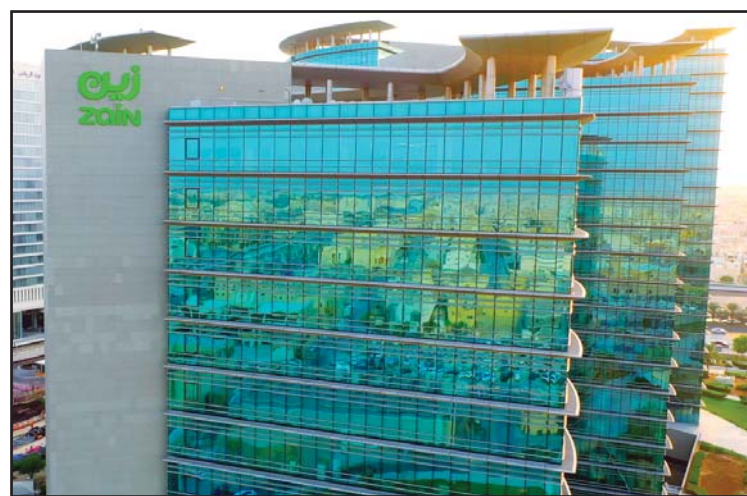
For the second consecutive year,

the Company also announced the Board of Directors' recommendation to distribute cash dividends to shareholders for the year 2023 at a rate of 5% of the nominal share value.

This record net profit for the year was driven by the total net gain from the sale and leaseback transaction of all 8,069 towers which was fully recognized during 2023, for a total of USD 303 million.

Zain KSA's positive financial results resonate with its sustainability focused strong operational and financial performance, driven by its emphasis on 5G services and solutions, robust enterprise (B2B) and wholesale sector revenues, and a notable boost in demand for appealing individual digital services, most notably, the Yaqoot digital operator service and Taman, the company's microfinance arm.

Commenting on the financial results, Zain Vice Chairman & Zain Group CEO, and Zain KSA Vice-Chairman, Bader Al-Kharafi, said, "These record results reflect the



Zain KSA HQ

Zain Group and Zain KSA teams' joint efforts in implementing the operator's profitable operational and efficiency optimization strategy, driven by innovation and growth of digital services. Moreover, the Zain KSA Board's decision to distribute dividends for the second consecutive year reflects the improved financial solvency of the company and its focus on sustainable growth powered by its robust 5G network empowering the community and lucrative enterprise sector."

Al-Kharafi added, "Together, Zain Group and Zain KSA share a unified mission in playing our key supporting role in the Kingdom's Vision 2023 and maximizing value for our shareholders in unison with a corporate sustainability agenda that focuses on providing meaningful connectivity leading to equitable systemic change."

Through its 2023 corporate sustainability strategy that focuses on, 1.

Safeguarding the planet; 2. Addressing societal challenges through the core business; 3. Enabling an inclusive digital society; and 4. Build the youth of the future, Zain KSA seamlessly integrated environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) principles into operational, financial, and administrative processes, driving innovation and responsible achievements.

The operator's focus on green technology saw it launch the world's first zero-emission 5G network, designed and implemented in the Red Sea. Zain KSA's framework agreement with Shareek, the Private Sector Partnership Program, paved the way for the development of several hyper-scale data centers to attract global companies and empower modern technological investments across the Kingdom.

These efforts are a few examples that resulted in Zain KSA's upgraded A classification within the MSCI ESG Index.

As part of the award-winning Qadha program

KFH celebrates its distinguished employees for 2023



Abdul Wahab Al-Rashoud and Ziad Al-Omar honoring Yasmine Al-Mukaimi.



Abdul Wahab Al-Rashoud and Jamal Al-Humairi honoring Bashayer Al-Otaibi.



Abdul Wahab Al-Rashoud and Dirar Al-Rasheed in honor of Muhammad Al-Mansour.



Abdul Wahab Al-Rashoud, Fawaz Al-Anazi and Muhammad Al-Ansari honoring Talaat Al-Banna.



Abdul Wahab Al-Rashoud, Alexander Liddell and Hisham Al-Manea in honor of Fahad Al-Ghanim.



Abdul Wahab Al-Rashoud and Fawaz Al-Anzi in honor of Abdulaziz Al-Othman.



Abdul Wahab Al-Rashoud, Haitham Al-Tarkait, and Abdullah Abu Al-Haus in honoring Rashid Al-Alban.

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) celebrated its distinguished employees for the year 2023 under Qadha program in an honoring ceremony at Arraya Ballroom. The ceremony was attended by members of the Executive Management represented by the Acting Group CEO, Abdulwahab Issa Al Rushood, and KFH Kuwait CEO, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan.

Qadha program is the first of its kind in the banking sector in Kuwait. Its selection process is based on precise criteria and global studies of performance evaluation, in addition to world-class professional aspects. The program covers all departments and is designed to reward employees for their distinctive hard work on monthly, quarterly, or annual bases.

Launched in 2021 as the umbrella of all other recognition initiatives, Qadha has recently received Brandon Hall's Gold Medal in the "Best Advance in Employee Recognition Program" in the world.

In his speech, KFH Acting Group CEO, Abdulwahab Issa Al Rushood lauded the dedication and continuous improvement of KFH talents throughout the year, which reflected positively on the performance and the exceptional results of KFH.

"Thanks to your commitment and outstanding efforts, KFH achieved exceptional financial results in 2023. KFH reported a record net profit of KD 584.5 million, an increase of 63.4% which is the highest-ever recorded in its journey and the history of the Kuwaiti banking sector," Al Rushood added. He said: "Undoubtedly, the solid financial achievement increases our obligation to maintain this success and leadership."

He noted that the distinguished efforts of KFH employees contributed primarily to enabling the Bank to maintain its course of success.

He added: "KFH is currently going through a transformational phase that is interpreted through various elements. These include your talents, growing financial indicators, increased market share and competitive capabilities. The merger with the AUB also adds a significant and positive outlook to the current phase, putting us all face to face with a historic opportunity to develop, grow and lead the Islamic finance industry in Kuwait and the world. I have full confidence that you truly deserve this recognition".

KFH Kuwait Chief Executive Officer – Khaled Yousef AlShamlan

In the ceremony, KFH Kuwait Chief Executive Officer, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan, addressed Qadha honorees saying: "I deeply appreciate your remarkable dedication and ongoing contributions, which have played a pivotal role in our success. Your efforts have significantly boosted demand for our products and services, elevating our position, competitiveness, and leadership both in local and global markets."

"I am delighted to congratulate you on KFH's historic 2023 financial results, which came with extraordinary increases in all key indicators, reflecting solid and balanced operational performance, integration of our departments, innovation and teamwork that distinguish our business and the performance of our employees," said AlShamlan.

He added: "Following the KFH-AUB Kuwait merger and the commencement of a new phase aimed at maintaining growth, enhancing business operations, and improving operational efficiency, we anticipate your usual dedication in the coming period. As you have consistently been integral to the successes of KFH, we trust you will continue to embody the spirit of devotion and loyalty to this prestigious institution we all proudly belong to."

In this respect, AlShamlan added, "As we honor our dedicated colleagues under Qadha program, I stress the importance of attending to our customers as a chief priority and the most important element of our strategy."

I also encourage you to focus on service quality and cooperation to boost our growth and continue offering financing solutions to all segments and in various fields, ensuring that KFH maintains its position as the world's leading Islamic financial institution."

In his closing speech, AlShamlan invited employees to maintain their productivity, pursue self-improvement, uphold professionalism, and achieve work-life balance. He also encouraged them to consider their success as a steppingstone to further achievements.



A section of the crowd during the annual honoring ceremony.

Al Rushood:
The distinction of KFH's employees influenced our historic financial results

AlShamlan:
We are committed to maintaining productivity and loyalty towards KFH

WTO ends meet in UAE after failing to reach major deals

Dev the latest sign of turmoil within the global body

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, March 3, (AP): Negotiators taking part in a World Trade Organization meeting in the United Arab Emirates ended their summit early Saturday after failing to reach agreements on several major initiatives, the latest sign of turmoil within the global body.

The WTO delayed its closing ceremony in Abu Dhabi by over a day as the 166-nation bloc struggled to reach consensus on fishing, agriculture and other issues.

The only agreement of note came on extending a pause on taxes on digital media such as movies and video games. On that issue, the WTO decided to extend the pause until their next biennial meeting.

Summit
WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala noted that the summit took place "against an international backdrop marked by greater uncertainty than at any time I can remember."

Like in the summit's opening on Monday, she made no direct mention of Israel's war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip. However, she had noted previously the ongoing disruptions to shipping caused by Yemen's Houthi rebels in the Red Sea over the conflict.

"The beauty of the WTO is that each member has an equal voice, but that also comes at a cost," Okonjo-Iweala said. "Nevertheless, we are a unique organization, and I think the cost is worth it. Let's keep going so we can make our voices heard."

Elections across nearly half the world's population could bring new challenges for the WTO. None are perhaps more critical for the WTO than the United States presidential election on Nov. 5.

Running again is former President Donald Trump, who threatened to withdraw the U.S. from the WTO and repeatedly levied tariffs - taxes on imported goods - on perceived friends and foes alike. A Trump win could again roil global trade.

But even if President Joe Biden is reelected, the United States has deep reservations over the WTO. The U.S. under the past three administrations has blocked appointments to its appeals court, and it's no longer operating. Washington says the WTO judges have overstepped their authority too often in ruling on cases.

The U.S. also has criticized China for still describing itself as a developing country, as it did when it joined the WTO in 2001.

stc introduces the 'next-generation' Multi-Tenant SIEM Service for small, medium & large enterprises

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced the launch of a state-of-the-art cybersecurity service to accelerate enterprises of all sizes on their journey to secure digitalization. The service falls in line with stc's strategic approach to enabling digital transformation and providing innovative services to the B2B market.

The new stc MTT SIEM Service, powered by the FortiSIEM solution from Fortinet, is a state of the art, managed, cost-effective solution designed to empower customers and give them peace of mind by ensuring their infrastructure is monitored and secure. FortiSIEM also provides rapid scalability and true multitenancy, making it a unique proposition for MSSPs looking to offer a differentiated customized service. The solution aims to differentiate stc, positioning the Company as a true telco SOC provider and Secure Service Provider in Kuwait, offering cost-effective speed, connectivity, and revolutionary security services.

Engineer Fahad Abdulrahman Al Ali, Chief Technology Officer of stc, said, "The launch of our state-of-the-art Security Operations Center signifies a pivotal moment in our ongoing efforts to enhance cybersecurity in Kuwait. With Fortinet's cutting-edge SIEM solution, we are well-equipped to stay ahead of cyber threats, providing our customers with a secure and resilient digital environment. Our commitment to providing innovative solutions and services that protect our customers' private data is essential to our strategic approach towards enabling digital transformation."

Al Ali added, "This strategic initiative not only enhances our cybersecurity offerings but also aligns perfectly with our mission to drive digital innovation and security across all sectors. By integrating Fortinet's sophisticated SIEM technology, we are setting new industry standards for cybersecurity, ensuring that our clients are equipped with the most advanced protection available. Our dedication to investing in and adopting cutting-edge technologies reflects our broader commitment to securing the digital landscape of Kuwait, thereby supporting the nation's vision for a digitally empowered future."

Alain Penel, Vice President, Middle East, Turkey & CIS at Fortinet, said: "We are proud to partner with stc in the



Issa Al-Suwait, General Manager of Cybersecurity at stc, and Joe Sarno, Executive Vice President of International Sales from Fortinet.

Geneva oil trader reaches \$661 million settlement with US & Swiss authorities

GENEVA, March 3, (AP): Geneva-based commodities trading firm Gunvor said Friday that it has reached a \$661 million settlement with U.S. and Swiss prosecutors after convictions for bribery of foreign officials in connection with the petroleum industry in Ecuador.

The Swiss attorney general's office says the company didn't take "reasonable and necessary organizational measures" to prevent bribery by its employees in the South American country over four years starting in February 2013.

A statement from U.S. Federal Court in Brooklyn said Judge Vitaliano sentenced Gunvor to pay a criminal penalty of over \$374 million and forfeit more than \$287 million in "ill-gotten gains."

"Gunvor has accepted responsibility for the actions of certain of its former agents and employees - all of whom Gunvor stopped working with years ago and before it learned of the U.S. investigation - and pled guilty in federal court in New York" on Friday, the company said in a statement.

The Swiss prosecutors said the case involved payouts to that led the state petroleum company Petroecuador to award two oil-

related contracts to Gunvor. U.S. authorities said the Geneva commodities trader earned more than \$384 million in profits "from the business it corruptly obtained" related to the Ecuadorian oil company.

U.S. authorities said they had previously won convictions in New York of four people who pleaded guilty to money laundering-related charges, including former Gunvor consultants Antonio Pere Ycaza and Enrique Pere Ycaza; former Gunvor employee and agent Raymond Kohut; and Nilsen Arias Sandoval, a former senior Petroecuador official.

"Gunvor's years long bribery scheme involving high-level Ecuadorian officials was both detrimental to the business environment and eroded the public's trust and confidence in their government," said FBI Special Agent-in-Charge Jeffrey Veltri in a statement.

He credited "significant cooperation" from authorities in the Cayman Islands, Colombia, Curacao, Ecuador, Panama, Portugal, Singapore, and Switzerland.

Gunvor was founded decades ago by oil traders Gennady Timchenko of Russia and Torbjörn Törnqvist of Sweden,

creation of its state-of-the-art Security Operations Center. This collaboration reflects our shared dedication to empowering organizations with the tools and insights needed to proactively

defend against evolving cyber threats. By leveraging Fortinet's advanced multi-tenant SIEM solution, stc demonstrates a strong commitment to cybersecurity excellence."



Some of the participants.



A section of the audience.

Key leadership insights shared by accomplished leaders

ABK hosts informative panel discussion on transitioning to supervisory roles

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Stemming from its strategy to encourage development and the sharing of knowledge, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently collaborated with IDRAK, a leading organization focused on developing employees, acquiring talent, and fostering a strong organizational culture aligned with business goals.

As part of this collaboration, ABK hosted a dynamic panel discussion titled 'Stepping into Supervisory Roles' at its headquarters, engaging 21 high-performing employees from Kuwait Petroleum Company (KPC). This event, which brought together ABK's leadership and aspiring young talents, served as a crucial component of the leadership program facilitated by IDRAK.

The esteemed panel included Yasmine Salamah, GM of Multinational Corporates and Structured Finance at ABK & Chairperson of ABK Capital; Omar Alabduljader, AGM - Human Resources Division; Khalil AlQattan, AGM - Digital Channels Division.

The panel was facilitated by Professor Youssef Jammal, an executive consultant with over 20 years of extensive experience in leadership, management, communication, teamwork, human resource management, and more.

The panel provided insights from these accomplished leaders, diving into their diverse experiences thus creating a dynamic and insightful session for the audience. This included covering key aspects, such as adapting to leadership, managing teams, and setting clear expectations - addressing real-world challenges faced when moving into a position of leadership within a workplace dynamic.

The session also explored various aspects of management, encompassing both self-management, the art of managing others, and meeting the organizations' needs while keeping a healthy work-life balance. ABK has



Afrah AlArbush – GM of Human Resources at ABK



Yasmine Salamah – GM of Multinational Corporates and Structured Finance

demonstrated a steadfast commitment to employee development over the past three years, actively furnishing tools to

enhance skills in self-management and team coordination.

Stressing the importance of such initiatives, Afrah AlArbush, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK, said, "We believe in the necessity of building bridges as a platform for aspiring team leaders to access and benefit from the experiences of accomplished professionals for guidance through challenges."

Providing her perspective as a panelist, Salamah added, "The insightful discussions offered invaluable guidance and diverse perspectives on the challenges and opportunities associated with transitioning to supervisory roles. We were pleased to have had the opportunity to foster professional development and equip participants with the knowledge essential to ensure a successful transition within their roles."

The event included an interactive Q&A session, allowing attendees to directly engage with the panelists thus facilitating knowledge exchange. A post-event networking session also encouraged further conversation, promoting deeper interactions among participants.

AlArbush concluded, "We believe this initiative has provided insights to equip the team leaders with the knowledge and confidence needed to transition into supervisory roles. The lively discussions reinforced our belief in the power of shared knowledge and mentorship."

This panel exemplifies ABK's dedication to empowering the upcoming generation of leaders, providing a platform for learning, connection, and growth. Such events underscore the bank's commitment to nurturing talent and fostering professional development, reinforcing its dedication to promoting leadership and excellence within the organization.



Photos during the panel discussion hosted by Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait.



Event brings together pet lovers, plant enthusiasts, and families for a weekend of fun.

LuLu's Paws and Tails Carnival celebrates woofs, meows and green thumbs

LuLu Hypermarket's Qurain outlet recently hosted an awesome event for pet lovers and plant enthusiasts alike. The 'Paws and Tails Carnival', held from 28 February to 5 March, offered amazing discounts on pet food, accessories, and more.

The excitement began on 2 March with an inauguration ceremony officiated by LuLu's top management. The event featured a variety of furry friends, with over 100 cats and dogs participating in a special costume fashion show, captivating the audience with their adorable charm. The winners were presented with prizes and gift vouchers in their respective categories.

But the fun did not stop there. The carnival also hosted an exhibition showcasing a diverse range of animals, including flying parrots, small birds, reptiles, llamas, munchkin goats, snakes, ostriches, turtles, bunnies, meerkats, hedgehogs, and owls. This unique menagerie delighted both young and old visitors alike. Pet food suppliers set up stalls, offering a bounty of samples for pet lovers.

Additionally, the event highlighted a 'Go Green Campaign', promoting eco-friendly plant life and garden accessories. Popular nurseries participated in the event, showcasing a variety of their plants and flowers. To further tingle green thumbs, LuLu conducted two exciting contests,

'Best Garden 2024' and 'Best Balcony Garden 2024'. The winners from both these contests received valuable gifts, gift vouchers, and hampers from LuLu Hypermarket.

LuLu's top management personally presented the prizes to the winners of the various contests, ensuring a memorable experience for all participants. Besides the winners, all contestants were presented with consolation prizes, making sure everyone went home with a smile, a woof and a meow.

The 'Paws and Tails Carnival' proved to be a resounding success, bringing together pet lovers, plant enthusiasts, and families for a weekend of fun, furry friends, blooming gardens, and the joy of responsible pet ownership.



Photos during the 'Paws and Tails Carnival' hosted by LuLu Hypermarket's Qurain outlet.

Account currently offers biggest number of million-worth prizes

NBK launches Al Jawhara Account with its new benefits and increases total prizes to KD 5 mln

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) always seems to offer customers a top-notch banking experience integrating top-notch products and services and exclusive, unmatched benefits and rewards. In this context, the bank has increased the total worth of Al Jawhara Account prizes to KD 5 million.

NBK is launching Al Jawhara Junior Draws for customers below the age of 21 with 7 winners with existing monthly draw (KD1,000 for 3 winners and KD500 for 4 winners) in addition to 1 winner of KD10,000 prize with each grand prize draw, making the total worth of Al Jawhara annual draws KD 5 million. Al Jawhara customers below 21 will have the benefit of entering both Al Jawhara Junior Draws and all Al Jawhara current draws.

On the other side, NBK is introducing the exclusive new Al Jawhara Saver Account, offering customers a bonus interest rate up to 1.5% for the first year, in addition to the chance to enter the monthly and grand draws if savings reach KD5,000 and



NBK's Al Jawhara Account flyer.

above. The bank is also offering customers who have been banking with it for more than 2 years double chances in case they were not eligible to earn the existing double chances.

Commenting on this, Mr. Mohammed Al-Othman Chief Executive Officer of Consumer & Digital Banking, at National Bank of Kuwait said: "NBK always seeks to offer customers an

array of top-notch products and services, complemented by exceptional rewards and benefits. Al Jawhara Account is an instrumental part of our customer rewarding strategy while serving as a key tool to promote a savings culture and financial inclusion."

"As we are always keen to boost the benefits and rewards provided to Al Jawhara Customers, we are introducing various enhancements including Al Jawhara Junior Draws offering special prizes for the youth customers, making Al Jawhara total earnings KD 5 million annually. We are also providing the new Al Jawhara Saver Account offering the combined benefits of interest and chances to enter Al Jawhara draws to encourage savings," he mentioned.

"NBK is committed to providing customers with an impeccable banking experience packed with exceptional rewards all year round. This comprises all segments according to their various expectations, which the bank is keen to learn about by being always in touch with them through multiple digital and other channels," he noted.

NBK has already increased Al Jawhara prizes by more than the double in early 2023, making it the biggest in Kuwait, with KD 20,000 prize weekly, KD 125,000 monthly, and grand prizes worth KD 1,000,000 each, three times a year.

Deposit by March 31 to qualify for KD 1mn prize

Gulf Bank announces 10 monthly winners of AlDanah account draw

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: As part of its ongoing commitment to reward its customers, Gulf Bank has announced the 10 monthly winners of the AlDanah account draw for February 2024. The lucky winners who will be taking home a prize of KD 1,000 each, are:

- Raees Khan Wazer Khan
- Khaleel Ibrahim Mohammad Al-Kharji
- Abdulrahman Mutar Mohammad Al-Enezi
- Mohsen AbdelHakim Sabet Abozeid
- Fatma Jsem Mohamed Bohamed
- Bibi Khaled Hussain Al- AbdulMohsen
- Haidar Khaled Haidar Bo -Shehri
- Ahmad Shehab Audah Al-Fadli
- Ali Mohamed Ali Abdelfattah Oudah
- Abdullah Mohammed Ali Poulattan

The deadline for depositing and participating in the semiannual AlDanah Millionaire's draw is March 31st 2024. The draw is scheduled for July 18, 2024, with representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and Ernst & Young in attendance.

Renowned as one of the top savings accounts in Kuwait, the AlDanah account offers numerous benefits, including periodic draws with substantial prizes. Gulf Bank's AlDanah account offers monthly opportunities to win KD



AlDanah account poster.

1,000 to ten lucky winners, in addition to two quarterly draws with KD 100,000 prizes each, a semi-annual draw prize of KD 1 million and a grand draw prize of KD 2 million.

Gulf Bank's AlDanah account is the only account in Kuwait, that rewards customers for their loyalty by providing loyalty chances, and transfers your chances of winning from the previous year to the next year, as part of a program that rewards customers for their loyalty to Gulf Bank.

In order to increase one's chances of winning, customers must maintain a minimum of KD 200 in their accounts, or deposit continuously to increase their chances of winning. AlDanah account holders are eligible to win Gulf Bank's upcoming monthly, quarterly, and annual Al Danah draws.

Haruki Murakami unveils new short story at Tokyo literary event

TOKYO, March 3, (AP) - Only 1,100 lucky audience members were there to hear the yet-to-be published short story "Kaho," read aloud by bestselling Japanese author Haruki Murakami himself.

The reading took place at a Friday night book event called "The Owl Reads in Spring" - a fundraiser for the Waseda International House of Literature library at Murakami's alma mater in Tokyo, also featuring award-winning author Mieko Kawakami.

"It's freshly made, only about 10 days ago," Murakami told the audience, adding that he wrote it for the event. The last Murakami short released was "First Person Singular," more than three years ago. His prolific literary work also includes essays, non-fiction and translation.

Murakami, relaxed and casually dressed in sneakers, jeans and a dark jacket, said writing a story for recitation was not easy.

"It's actually quite hard to write a new story for reciting," Murakami said. "Its content and style have to fit recitation, and it has to be relatively short." The story still came out too long, he said, and read it in two parts during the event at Waseda University.

Journalists at the event were allowed to report story names, but not their content.

Now 75 and one of the world's most popular and acclaimed novelists, Murakami debuted with "Hear the Wind Sing" in 1979, four years after he began writing while running a jazz bar in Tokyo. His 1987 romantic novel "Norwegian Wood" was his first bestseller, establishing him as a young literary star. His latest bestselling full-length novel, "The City and its Uncertain Walls," was released in 2023 in Japan and is awaiting an English release.

The Owl event is a second for him and Kawakami, who said she is a longtime Murakami fan from years before she became a novelist. The two took turns reading aloud at a 2019 event where Murakami unveiled an earlier short story, "Confessions of a Shinagawa Monkey," later published as part of the short story collection "First Person Singular."

Kawakami, now an acclaimed author known for her bestseller "Breasts and Eggs," translated to English in 2020, recited her new short story titled "Watashitachi no Doa (Our Doors)" at Friday's event.

She debuted as poet and her first novella, "My Ego, My Teeth and the World," in 2007, and her novel "Heaven" was shortlisted for the 2022 International Booker Prize.

Also:

NEW YORK: Sally Rooney will have a new novel out this fall, "Intermezzo," a story of love, family and grief centered around two brothers.

Farrar, Straus and Giroux announced Thursday that the novel, the Irish author's fourth, will be published Sept. 24.

"Since I began work on this novel several years ago, its characters and their relationships have become an important part of my life," Rooney said in a statement. "I hope that I've done them some justice in writing the book, and that they might find a place in the lives of readers too."

Rooney, 33, has been a published novelist for less than a decade, but is now one of the world's most popular, celebrated and talked about literary authors. Her novels have sold millions of copies and two of them, "Conversations with Friends" and "Normal People," were adapted into

television miniseries. Rooney's most recent book, "Beautiful World, Where Are You," came out in 2021.

According to the publisher, "Intermezzo" tells of brothers Peter and Ivan Koubek and how they cope with the death of their father. Peter is a successful Dublin lawyer, in his 30s, who is "medicating himself to sleep and struggling to manage his relationships with two very different women - his enduring first love Sylvia, and Naomi, a college student for whom life is one long joke." Ivan, 22, has begun seeing an older woman with a "turbulent" past.

"For two grieving brothers and the people they love, this is a new interlude - a period of desire, despair and possibility - a chance to find out how much one life might hold inside itself without breaking," the publisher's announcement reads in part.

Mitzi Angel, the president of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, has worked with Rooney on all of her novels, starting when Angel was publisher of the British house Faber & Faber. She remembers first reading Rooney in a London hotel, and thinking "This is sharp, this is funny, this is distinct," qualities the author retains, she says. Asked if she knows how Rooney came up with the idea for "Intermezzo" (the author's parents are still living), Angel said they never discussed it.

"We were just very focused on the text, and that's always been case," Angel said. "What is wonderful to me is the conversations we have. She's an intellectual, certainly, but she also approaches her books in a way that is quite striking. She's really guided by her characters. She becomes familiar with them. She's bereft when she finishes a novel."

Books

Variety



President of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Janet Yang, left, and CEO of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Bill Kramer pose for a portrait during the 96th Academy Awards Oscar nominees luncheon on Feb. 12, 2024, at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif. (AP)

Film

How Film Academy regained prominence

Oscars find their footing again

LOS ANGELES, March 3, (AP) - For a few years, the Oscars looked to be hanging on by a thread. Viewership was plummeting. The pandemic didn't help. And the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the organization behind Hollywood's biggest night, kept finding itself on the wrong side of the conversation, whether it be #OscarsSoWhite, envelope-gate, the blip that was the popular Oscar, the untelevised awards or the slap.

Then a funny thing happened: Interest started increasing both in and outside the academy. It seemed people were excited about the movies and, they hope, the Oscars again. "It's been an amazing year for film in general," film academy CEO Bill Kramer said in a recent interview with The Associated Press. "Our art form has never been more relevant."

The scope, and wide public embrace, of the 10 films nominated for the best picture prize this year are proof. There is big studio fare, small intimate indies, two international films and two bilingual ones. And whether or not you think "Barbie" was snubbed in a few other categories, it still has people talking and debating what will happen at the 96th Oscars on March 10.

"There's a lot of great energy around the movies of 2023 and the show this year. So we're extremely hopeful and excited," Kramer said. "The show is shaping up to be remarkable." Academy President Janet Yang chimed in that the "Barbie"-themed Jimmel Kimmel promo spot has over 35 million views, and the telecast is riding several years of ratings increases.

After some rough patches, the Oscars may have finally met the moment. But that comes as no surprise to the academy's leaders, who have been working behind the scenes to foster this kind of evolution as they approach their 100th year. Both Kramer and Yang, who assumed their positions in 2022, are looking at the organization as a global entity. They're not on the defensive anymore, instead pushing toward the future.

"We're very unique in the sense that we represent all the disciplines of the industry. No other organization can say that," said Yang. "We feel like we are in a potentially strong leadership position to unify. ... We hear from members all the time 'How can we have more inter-branch meetings?'"

They just want to gather, and we can bring this."

Nearly a century ago, unification wasn't part of the plan. In fact, Louis B. Mayer got the idea to start the academy in part to counteract unionization efforts, under the pretense that it would help set standards. In reality, he envisioned the studio heads setting these standards with only their own interests in mind. Mayer's dream evaporated quickly, however, and by the 1930s, writers, actors and directors were all forming unions.

As proof of how far they've come, last year during the strikes, the academy took the initiative to host two member conversations about pressing topics: one about artificial intelligence and another about how the strikes were impacting members from traditionally marginalized communities.

Responsibility

"We felt that it was our responsibility," Kramer said. "And we are in a position to actually do this, to create a space for our members to have honest, safe conversations around these topics."

"It gave us a lot of food for thought," he added. "And eventually these conversations will inform perhaps policies and procedures at the academy or inspire others in the industry to think differently."

The academy as a catalyst for change is not new: They have longstanding programs for helping emerging artists (Academy Gold, the Nicholl Fellowship in screenwriting and the Student Academy Awards among them). And its aggressive move to diversify its membership was in place before Yang and Kramer started, in response to #OscarsSoWhite and public exposes about its own ranks being largely older white men.

They've also taken more proactive steps in recent years to impact the industry they give awards to, including implementing the best picture inclusion standards that went into effect this year.

Now there are more than 10,500 members in the academy, representing more than 75 countries and territories. While parity is still a work in progress, 20% of members are from outside the U.S., 34% of members identify as women and 18% are from underrepresented ethnic and racial communities.

"We represent executives, editors, visual effects artists, technologists, and artisans and professionals across disciplines. ... Not everybody is singing the same notes and not everybody feels the same way. But we can bring everybody together," Kramer said. "Given the past couple of years with the pandemic, and the strikes, and to all of the topics associated with the strikes, the academy needs to remain a neutral ground for these conversations." There has also been substantial focus on engaging the public through social media, often drawing on the academy's vast archival material - whether that be vintage acceptance speeches or just memorable moments from Oscars past.

Their Instagram account is close to 4 million followers and their YouTube channel is a treasure trove of fun clips: Leonardo DiCaprio's best actor win (54 million views), Hugh Jackman's 2009 opening number (23 million views), Chris Rock's opening monologue (16 million views), Jack Black and Will Ferrell singing "Get Off the Stage" (15 million views), and Fred Astaire dancing at the 1970 Oscars (13 million views).

The interest in movie history has also driven enthusiasm around the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in Los Angeles, which houses more than 23 million items of memorabilia, and has hosted exhibitions on everything from Hayao Miyazaki and the history of Black Cinema to "The Godfather" and the films of John Waters. Kramer noted that about half of the ticket buyers are under the age of 40.

But it's not just about relics: Short videos they've made spotlighting below-the-line categories in the lead-up to the Oscars have also taken off. One about visual effects from last year has over 4 million views. They're rolling out similar shorts for this year's nominees soon too.

All of this plays into a different way of looking at the Oscars and the academy's place in the culture.

"It's important that we think about: How do we change our metric of success? We want millions and millions of people around the world to watch the show the night of, but we also want people watching it for many days after the initial run and on social in perpetuity," Kramer said. "This is evergreen programming. And people overseas, outside of the U.S., engage with the show in a lot of different ways."

Features

ARABIC TIMES

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024

SANTA FE, N.M.: A movie director who was shot by Alec Baldwin during a movie rehearsal - and survived - testified Friday at trial that he was approaching the cinematographer when he heard a loud bang and felt the bullet's impact.

"It felt like someone had taken a baseball bat to my shoulder," said Joel Souza, who was wounded by the same bullet that killed cinematographer Halyna Hutchins on the New Mexico set for the upcoming Western movie "Rust" on Oct. 21, 2021.

Souza never filed a complaint but was called to testify as prosecutors pursue charges of involuntary manslaughter and tampering with evidence against movie weapons supervisor Hannah Gutierrez-Reed, who maintains her innocence. Baldwin, the lead actor and co-producer on "Rust," was separately indicted by a grand jury last month. He has pleaded not guilty, and a trial is scheduled for July.

Prosecutors are reconstructing a complex chain of events that culminated in gunfire on a film set where live ammunition is expressly prohibited.

Souza said his workday began before dawn with the realization that six camera-crew members had walked off set. Hutchins put out urgent calls for replacements, and filming was back underway by late-morning in an outdoor scene involving horses and wagons.

Work after lunch started with positioning a camera in preparation for an extreme close-up take of Baldwin drawing a gun from a holster inside a makeshift church. Souza said he moved in behind Hutchins for a closer look at the camera angle but never saw the gun that shot him.

"I got up behind her just to try to see on the monitor, and there was an incredibly loud bang," Souza said. "This was deafening."

Baldwin and his handling of firearms on set are coming under special scrutiny in questioning by prosecutor and defense attorneys.

On Thursday, prosecutors played video footage of Baldwin pressuring the movie armorer to hurry up as she reloads guns between scenes.

"One more, let's reload right away," Baldwin says at the close

of a scene. "Here we go, come on. We should have had two guns and both were reloading."

Gutierrez-Reed can be seen quickly loading a revolver.

Expert witness Bryan Carpenter, a Mississippi-based specialist in firearms safety on film sets, said Baldwin's commands infringed on basic industry safety protocols and responsibilities of the armorer.



Baldwin



Souza

"He's basically instructing the armorer on how to do their job ... 'Hurry up, give it to me fast,'" Carpenter said. "Rushing with firearms and telling someone to rush with firearms is not - not normal or accepted."

On Friday, defense attorney Jason Bowles pressed Souza to remember whether the script explicitly called for Baldwin to point

the gun toward the camera, where he and Hutchins were standing. "And do you know whether, from the script, whether that firearm was supposed to be pointed towards the camera?" Bowles inquired.

"It's not a matter of the script, really. For that specific shot, it was literally supposed to be the gun being pulled out sideways,"

Souza said. Prosecutors say Gutierrez-Reed is to blame for unwittingly bringing live ammunition on set and that she flouted basic safety protocols for weapons - partly by leaving the church rehearsal while a gun still was in use. Defense attorneys say it wasn't Gutierrez-Reed's decision to leave. (AP)

People & Places



Hermes



Hermes

PARIS: On a rain-soaked Saturday at Paris Fashion Week, the luxury world saw a spectacle of contrasts, where the audacious spirit of punk melded with quiet luxury and historical elegance. Displays blurred the lines between rebellion and refinement, presenting collections that navigated through time - evoking medieval serfs with a modern twist and embracing minimalist aesthetics reminiscent of the 1990s.

Here are some highlights of Saturday's fall-winter 2024 shows: Explorations of "quiet luxury" - a phrase intimately tied to **Nadège Vanhee-Cybulski's** tenure at **Hermès** - were once again at the forefront of the Parisian runway on Saturday, as the French designer unveiled her latest interpretation of leather's endless possibilities.

This season, however, the narrative took a darker, more introspective turn, with brooding black leathers that evoked the deep, reflective tones of the late French painter **Soulages**.

These pieces, gleaming against the backdrop of a black starry night, sometimes adopted a fierce demeanor, reminiscent of studded, armor-like vests. Yet, this undercurrent of fierceness was masterfully balanced with the inherent softness of the collection's cuts and the meticulous precision of its detailing.

Nipped buckles and gentle ribbing on skin-tight pants demonstrated **Vanhee-Cybulski's** adeptness at blending **Hermès's** storied craftsmanship with innovative design. Amidst this darker palette, muted flashes emerged, weaving poetically through the collection. This emphasis on restrained elegance is quintessential to **Vanhee-Cybulski's** vision, where the opulence of materials and craftsmanship triumphs without need for ostentation.

Braving the persistent Parisian drizzle, K-pop star **Sandara Park** led the pack at **Andreas Kronthaler** for **Vivienne Westwood**, captivating the audience in a punk-tinged corset adorned with pearls and brandishing a "Noblesse" sign to the flurry of camera flashes. The show started with an eccentric performance in the brightly lit atrium, where musicians conjured natural sounds amid tree stumps, setting a whimsical tone that mirrored the collection's historical and rebellious spirit.

The opening ensembles transported the audience back in time amid contemporary fusions, channeling the essence of a serf, the medieval agricultural laborer. The designs cleverly incorporated leggings, jockstraps resembling codpieces, mystical talismanic pendants, and tear-shaped cutouts on thick knit sweaters that conjured up tales of yore.

Both male and female models strutted with a swagger, embodying the iconic **Westwood 80s** punk ethos through standout pieces like a large blue conical bra corset and garments with assertively large shoulders. The runway was a canvas for eccentric,



Hermes



Loewe

eye-catching looks that melded contrasting historical references - like one silver top with a breastplate that evoked **King Arthur** and his knights with a disco sheen also reminiscent of Britain's **Glam Rock** heyday.

This collection, a blend of audacious punk spirit and a nod history, reaffirmed the brand's mastery in fusing

Style

Hermes



Loewe

diverse influences, crafting rebellion throughout. Elegant sophistication, minimalism, and a hint of nonchalance continued

to define **Carven**. The storied house, originally founded by **Marie Louise Carven** in 1945, evolved under the guidance of various male creative

PARIS



Hermes



Hermes

Fashion



Westwood



Westwood



Hermes

A striking dress featured a trompe l'oeil effect, cleverly designed to appear two-dimensional. An oversized gray jacket, casually draped over bare skin, was a prime example of the collection's subtle allure, revealing skin in a way that did not compromise on sophistication.

A green labyrinthine art gallery surrounded **Loewe's** luminaries on Friday where they breathed crisp air from enveloping woodland on Paris' eastern edge, among the ancient stones of **Chateau de Vincennes**.

The gallery-decor walls were lined with the framed, wooded landscapes of artistic outsider and American painter **Albert York**, a clear statement of commonality from the brand's one-time outsider fashion designer, **Jonathan Anderson**. The Northern Irish master can always be counted on twisting, bending, and reinventing the wheel in his own fashion.

Little wonder **Loewe** is among the hottest tickets for Paris Fashion Week. Inverting the notions of class and money, in a show replete with contradictions **Anderson** turned high to low and vice versa with aplomb. Tropes of British Isles working-class styles were inventively reimagined for the luxury runway - a humble woolen sweater vest was made of rough-textured balled reams of black wool, above baggy pants, intentionally faded evoking wornness, with dynamic, gathered swooshes in the fabric. A lowly brown rough, A-line tunic had a feel for historic garb and was elevated to high fashion by its minimalism.

Yet among all this, the most interesting part of this veritable mine of ideas was **Anderson's** fusion of couture and tailoring; the highest forms of dress for women and men were intentionally muddled up, fused and confused. (AP)

directors since its reboot 2009 and 2018. Stepping into this lineage as the first female leader since its reboot, **Louise Trotter** presented her second collection Saturday, skillfully weaving together the brand's 1950s origins with a minimalist aesthetic reminiscent of the 1990s.

The show opened with a statement piece: a brown round-shouldered coat that was both loose and indicative of the new direction **Trotter** is steering **Carven** towards.

This piece set the stage for a collection with dimensions and perceptions.

The Conversation

Wildfires, melting sea ice signal shifts

Arctic Report Card 2023 chronicles summer impacts across the Arctic

By Rick Thoman, University of Alaska Fairbanks,
Matthew L. Druckenmiller, University of Colorado Boulder
and Twila A. Moon, University of Colorado Boulder

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

The year 2023 shattered the record for the warmest summer in the Arctic, and people and ecosystems across the region felt the impact.

Wildfires forced evacuations across Canada. Greenland was so warm that a research station at the ice sheet summit recorded melting in late June, only its fifth melting event on record. Sea surface temperatures in the Barents, Kara, Laptev and Beaufort seas were 9 to 12 degrees Fahrenheit (5 to 7 degrees Celsius) above normal in August.

While reliable instrument measurements go back only to around 1900, it's almost certain this was the Arctic's hottest summer in centuries.

The year started out unusually wet, and snow accumulation during the winter of 2022-23 was above average across much of the Arctic. But by May, high spring temperatures had left the North American snowpack at a record low, exposing ground that quickly warmed and dried, fueling lightning-sparked fires across Canada.

In the 2023 Arctic Report Card, released Dec. 12, we brought together 82 Arctic scientists from around the world to assess the Arctic's vital signs, the changes underway and their effects on lives across the region and around the world.

In an area as large as the Arctic, setting a new temperature record for a season by two-tenths of a degree Fahrenheit (0.1 degrees Celsius) of warming would be significant. Summer 2023 - July, August and September - shattered the previous record, set in 2016, by four times that. Temperatures almost everywhere in the Arctic were above normal.

A closer look at events in Canada's Northwest Territories shows how rising air temperature, sea ice decline and warming water temperature feed off one another in a warming climate.

The winter snow cover melted early across large parts of northern Canada, providing an extra month for the Sun to heat up the exposed ground. The heat and lack of moisture dried out organic matter on and just below the surface; by November, 70,000 square miles (180,000 square kilometers) had burned across Canada, about a fifth of it in the Northwest Territories.

The very warm weather in May and June 2023 in the Northwest Territories also heated up the mighty Mackenzie River, which sent massive amounts of warm water into the Beaufort Sea to the north. The warm water melted the sea ice early, and currents also carried it west toward Alaska, where Mackenzie River water contributed to early sea ice loss along most of Northeast Alaska and to increased tundra vegetation growth.

Similar warmth in western Siberia also contributed to quickly melting sea ice and to high sea surface temperatures in the Kara and Laptev seas north of Russia.

The Arctic's declining sea ice has been a big contributor to the tremendous increase in average fall temperatures across the region. Dark open water absorbs the sun's rays during the summer and, in the autumn, acts as a heating pad, releasing heat back into the atmosphere. Even thin sea ice can greatly limit this heat transfer and allow dramatic cooling of air just above the surface, but the past 17 years have seen the lowest sea ice extents on record.

The report includes 12 essays exploring the effects of climate and ecosystem changes across the Arctic and how communities are adapting. One is a wake-up call about the risks in subsea permafrost, a potentially dangerous case of "out of sight, out of mind."

Subsea permafrost is frozen soil in the ocean floor that is rich in organic matter. It has been gradually thawing since it was submerged after Northern Hemisphere ice sheets retreated thousands of years ago. Today, warmer ocean temperatures are likely accelerating the thawing of this hidden permafrost.

Just as with permafrost on land, when subsea permafrost thaws, the organic matter it contains decays and releases methane and carbon dioxide - greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming and worsen ocean acidification.

Scientists estimate that nearly 1 million square miles (2.5 million square kilometers) of subsea permafrost remains, but with little research outside the Beaufort Sea and Kara Sea, no one knows how soon it may release its greenhouse gases or how intense the warming effects will be.

For many people living in the Arctic, climate change is already disrupting lives and livelihoods.

Indigenous observers describe changes in the sea ice that many people rely on for both subsistence hunting and coastal protection from storms. They have noted shifts in wind patterns and increasingly intense ocean storms. On land, rising temperatures are making river ice less reliable for travel, and thawing permafrost is sinking roads and destabilizing homes.

Obvious and dramatic changes are happening within human lifetimes, and they cut to the core of Indigenous cultures to the point that people are having to change how they put food on the table.

Western Alaska communities that rely on Chinook salmon saw another year of extreme low numbers of returning adult salmon in 2023, scarcity that disrupts both cultural practices and food security.

Yukon River Chinook have decreased in size by about 6% since the 1970s, and they're producing fewer offspring. Then, in 2019, the year when many of this year's returning Chinook salmon were born, exceptionally warm river water killed many of the young.

The returning Chinook salmon population has been so small during the past two years that fisheries have been closed even for subsistence harvest, which is the highest priority, in hopes that the salmon population recovers. (AP)



Thoman

CAN launches 'Your Health First' campaign

Kuwait gears up to tackle colon cancer's burden

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

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Cancer Aware Nation (CAN) launched the "Your Health First" campaign to raise awareness about colon cancer.

According to the Chairman of the CAN's Board of Directors Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh, colon cancer ranks first among men in the State of Kuwait.

Awareness about the risk factors related to colon cancer represents a road map to achieving good health and being free of chronic diseases, especially cancer.

Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh stressed the need to adopt a lifestyle that includes a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables, and physical activity, especially with the approaching month of Ramadan.

He highlighted the need to avoid it in all its forms and types, as it reduces the body's immunity and makes it susceptible to diseases, including tumors.

Dr. Al-Saleh explained that awareness is the cornerstone of prevention and early detection of cancerous diseases. CAN has worked for more than a decade to change the misconception about cancer in society as a fatal disease from 83 percent before the start of its activities to 52 percent.

It also raised the rate of people who believe in the importance of early detection from 50 percent to 70 percent after its launch. This is an indicator of success of the awareness campaigns it carries out for many cancerous diseases throughout the year, including the "Your Health First" campaign in March, which is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

Progress has been witnessed in the past two decades in the ranking of types of cancer in terms of prevalence in Kuwait and the Gulf countries.

There is a consensus among specialists on the need to intensify awareness about colon and rectal tumors, as well as pay attention to investigation and early detection programs to detect signs of tumor infection at an early stage, avoid complications of treatment in the late stages, and train doctors on the latest developments in screening and early detection methods in this field, for speedy diagnosis and referral to specialists.

Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh confirmed that there is a great development in medications and treatments for colon tumors.

Meanwhile, Director of the Department of Prevention and Response to Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases at the Ministry of Health Dr. Hamoud Al-Zuabi explained that chronic non-communicable diseases are at the forefront of health challenges in all countries of the world due to their numerous health, economic and social burdens on the individual, family and society.



Photos during the campaign, 'your health first.'

Photos by Mohammad Morsi

It causes more than two-thirds of the deaths in the world, including cancer, which ranks second after cardiovascular diseases. This requires working through a comprehensive national strategic plan and effective community partnerships to combat these diseases.

He stated that colon cancer is not just statistics and numbers, but rather a reality that can be changed through awareness and early detection.

Dr. Al-Zuabi affirmed that it is part of the national strategy for preventing and responding to chronic non-

communicable diseases, which aims to reduce the premature death rate resulting from chronic non-communicable diseases by 30 percent by 2030, in line with the third goal of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

He indicated that the Ministry of Health is working on implementing the national program for colorectal cancer detection and cancer screening in primary health care centers.

Dr. Al-Zuabi said, "To reduce the effects that these diseases may have on individuals and society, a comprehensive approach must be developed that requires the participation of all sectors (governmental and non-governmental) to work together to reduce the risks associated with these diseases and enhance interventions aimed at preventing and controlling them."

Community partnership is considered the backbone of any successful efforts in the field of health, as it unites the efforts of institutions, enhances the spirit of cooperation, enhances collective contribution to community health care, and turns awareness into actual action."

El Niño fuels outbreak amid water crisis

Dengue epidemic in Peru surging

PIURA, Peru, March 3, (AP): Residents of Pedregal Grande, a poor neighborhood in the Peruvian city of Piura, receive water for only 30 minutes a day because of shortages, forcing them to collect it in plastic tanks that have become breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Scorching temperatures and a lack

of air conditioning force people out of their homes and they say the mosquitoes descend on them, fueling an alarming spread of dengue in this city and the South American country.

"You go out to get some air and the mosquitoes arrive suddenly and attack you," said Segundo Ramos, a Peruvian driver who got the disease several days ago.

"My neighbor has dengue, over there they also have dengue," said Ramos, sitting in his one-story house, shirtless, with shorts and sandals as he endures the 97 degree (36 degree Celsius) temperature. "There are three or four sick neighbors within 100 meters."

With 5,275 dengue cases, Piura was by Friday the second hardest-hit city in Peru. A few days ago, it was the hardest hit. In total, Peru has registered more than 34,000 cases of dengue in the first eight weeks of this year, twice as high as in the same period in 2023, according to the nation's health ministry.

Peru's government declared a health emergency in most of its provinces on Monday due to the rising number of cases, which come amid higher than normal temperatures caused by the El Niño weather pattern.

Authorities in Piura have begun setting up special areas in hospitals to

receive dengue patients.

A dengue epidemic last year put Peru's public health system under strain as thousands sought care in emergency rooms. But while last year's epidemic killed 21 people in Peru, dengue has claimed the lives of 44 Peruvians in the first two months of this year alone.

Santiago Valdez, a specialist in tropical diseases sent to Piura, said the water shortage and storage practices are fueling the disease, which is spread by Aedes Aegypti, a mosquito that reproduces in hot and humid conditions.

"People are forced to collect (water) and no matter how much one tries to have closed containers, there is always carelessness and the mosquitoes take the opportunity to lay their eggs and reproduce," he said.

Although most dengue cases present light symptoms, the disease can cause severe headaches, fevers and muscle pains.

In December, the World Health Organization said that Peru's 2023 dengue epidemic was linked to rains and hot temperatures that helped mosquito populations to grow, especially in the north of the country. Health Minister César Vásquez acknowledged on Thursday that dengue "is not under control" and the cases "will continue to grow."

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SPORTS

Verstappen wins season-opening Bahrain GP

Logano caught in a cheating violation

Nemechek bags Xfinity Series victory for Toyota at Las Vegas

LAS VEGAS, March 3, (AP) — John Hunter Nemechek ended Chevrolet's early dominance by winning the wind-swept Xfinity Series race at Las Vegas Motor Speedway on Saturday in a Toyota.

Chevrolet started the year with seven consecutive victories across NASCAR's three national series, including back-to-back Xfinity Series wins at Daytona and Atlanta by Austin Hill of Richard Childress Racing. But on a day in which teams battled 70 mph wind, Nemechek ended Chevrolet's streak.

Nemechek led five times for a race-high 99 laps to win for Joe Gibbs Racing, which is fielding an Xfinity Series car for Nemechek part-time this season. It was the 10th Xfinity Series win and first at Las Vegas for Nemechek, who now drives a Toyota in the Cup Series for Legacy Motor Club.

Cole Custer started from the pole and the reigning series champion finished second in a Ford for Stewart-Haas Racing. Chandler Smith in third after leading 74 of the 200 laps — making Saturday a total Toyota domination.

CAR RACING

Hill was fourth, the highest finish by a Chevrolet driver.

Josh Williams of Kaulig Racing tried to win the race with strategy and stayed out on track as long as possible to inherit the lead when the contenders pitted. The strategy might have worked had there been a late caution, but the yellow never came and Williams had to pit with 11 laps remaining.

That put Nemechek back in the lead with a nearly five-second cushion over Hill, who was running second at the time they cycled back to the front. Nemechek's margin of victory was 4.360 seconds over Custer.

The high wind forced Fox Sports to reduce the number of cameras it used for the race. It was unable to shoot from high vantages, including the speedway roof.

NASCAR on Saturday displayed a clearly altered glove that Joey Logano wore in qualifying at Atlanta Motor Speedway, where aerodynamic-deflecting alterations were so obvious it looked as if he was wearing part of an amphibious costume.

The black glove for Logano's left

hand had webbing made of an unspecified material in between every finger. The theory is that Logano, who qualified second at Atlanta last weekend, had the glove altered in order to place his hand out his window as an aerodynamic blocker during qualifying.

At Las Vegas Motor Speedway on Saturday, NASCAR would not speculate on the motivation of the two-time Cup champion or Team Penske, which did not appeal a penalty imposed on Logano. NASCAR said it discovered the glove during a random inspection — and not, as Denny Hamlin suggested, in a tipoff from a rival team — and that it did not know if Logano was wearing the glove when he won the pole for the season-opening Daytona 500.

Rival driver Corey Lajoie didn't flinch when asked Saturday if Logano was wearing the glove in Daytona 500 qualifying — “yes,” he said — and insisted Team Penske would have done computer simulation on the glove before using it on the track. Lajoie estimated the webbed glove was worth three counts of drag for Logano.

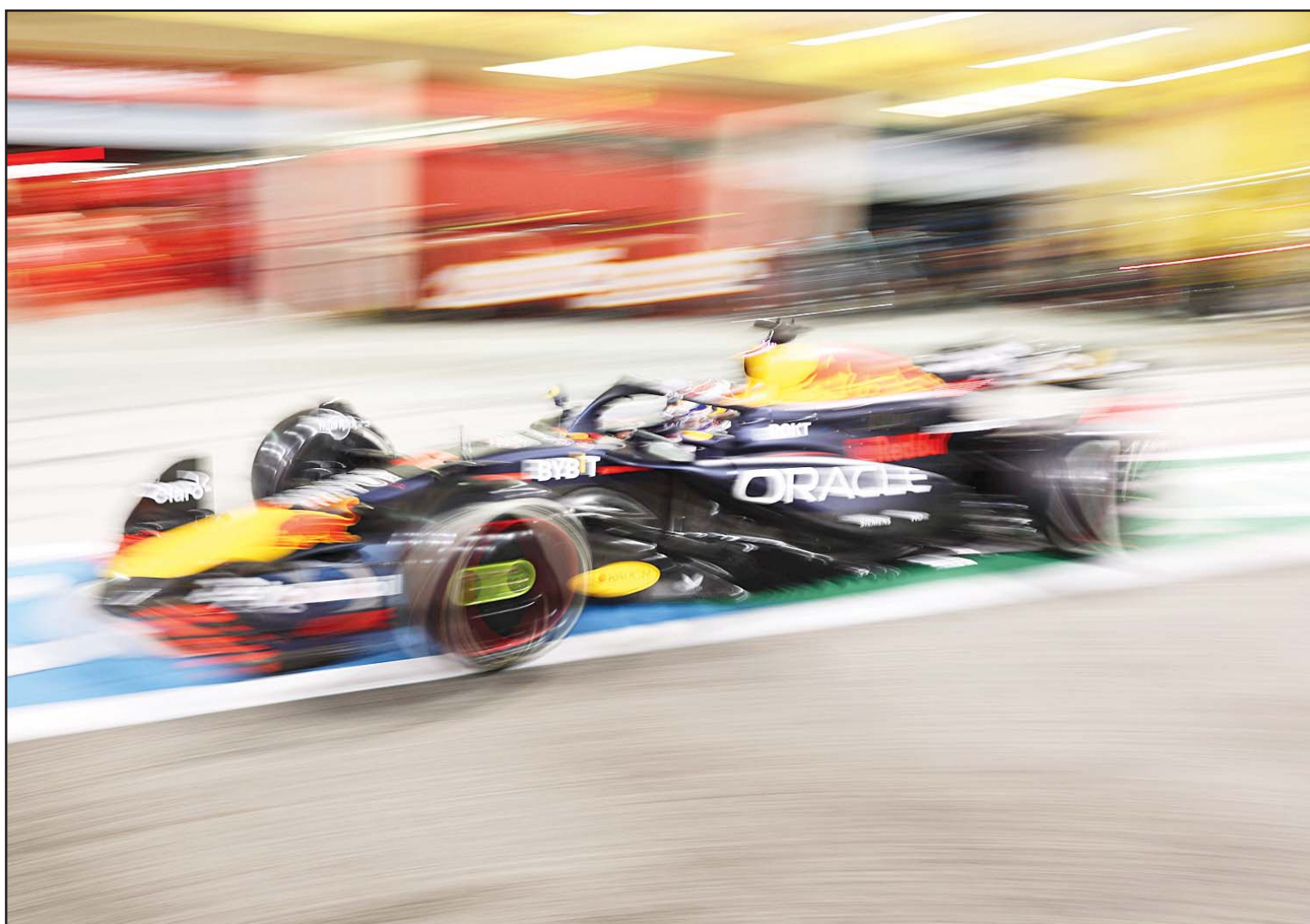
Brad Moran, NASCAR Cup Series managing director, said the No. 22 Ford was one of five cars randomly selected for post-qualifying inspection and the in-car camera immediately alerted officials that something was amiss.

“We spotted something that was honestly concerning,” Moran said ahead of Saturday activity at Las Vegas. “As you can see, the entire glove is webbed. The reason for that is you can obviously block more air, the drivers do put their hand up against the (window) opening, which we've never really had a rule against.”

“This obviously goes one step further, and that glove becomes not only a competition problem but it goes one step further because it becomes a safety violation.”

All equipment must be approved by The SFI Foundation Inc., which is a non-profit organization that has administered the standards for the quality assurance of specialty performance and racing equipment since 1978. NASCAR was unsure the material used to create the webbing effect was even fire retardant.

Logano was penalized last Sunday morning when he forfeited the second-place starting position and was dropped to the back of the field at Atlanta. He also had to serve a drive-through penalty on pit road once he took the green flag as the competition penalty.



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands steers his car during the Formula One Bahrain Grand Prix at the Bahrain International Circuit in Sakhir, Bahrain, Saturday, March 2, 2024. (AP)

Max brushes aside turmoil at Red Bull

lot of fun.”

He said he felt “one with the car.” Carlos Sainz Jr. was third for Ferrari after fighting hard with teammate Charles Leclerc.

At the start of the longest-ever F1 season at 24 races, Verstappen already shows signs of repeating his near-perfect record from 2023, when the Dutch driver won 19 of 22 races on his way to a third straight title.

Saturday was the eighth win in a row for Verstappen going back to September last year. He set an F1 record of 10 consecutive wins last season.

Horner arrived on race day hand in hand with his wife Geri Halliwell, also known as Ginger Spice of the pop group the Spice Girls. The race came after FIA President Mohammed Ben Sulayem said the turmoil around Horner was “damaging the sport,” in comments to the Financial Times.

MOTOR RACING

The F1 paddock's focus has firmly been on the Red Bull team principal this week, with Verstappen saying Saturday his boss was “probably a little bit distracted.”

On Wednesday, the team's parent company dismissed a complaint of alleged misconduct by Horner toward a team employee. A day later during practice for the Bahrain Grand Prix, a file alleged to contain evidence against Horner was emailed to nearly 200 people in the F1 paddock, including Liberty Media, F1, the FIA, the other nine team principals and multiple media outlets.

The authenticity of the files has not been verified by The Associated Press; the file came from a generic email account.

Charles Leclerc was fourth and George Russell was fifth, with Lando Norris sixth for McLaren and seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton seventh after an uneventful race



First place, Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands and second place Red Bull driver Sergio Perez of Mexico step onto the podium during the Formula One Bahrain Grand Prix at the Bahrain International Circuit in Sakhir, Bahrain, Saturday, March 2, 2024. (AP)

in the second Mercedes. Oscar Piastri and two Aston Martins of Fernando Alonso and Lance Stroll.

'Very satisfied with our performance'

Messi, Suárez score twice as Miami routs Orlando 5-0

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., March 3, (AP) — The scoring artistry that Lionel Messi and Luis Suárez showcased often during their six years in Barcelona was on full display again Saturday. Inter Miami hopes it's a sign of repeated performances.

Messi and Suárez scored two goals each and Inter Miami routed Orlando City 5-0, the largest victory margin in team history.

Messi had consecutive goals during a quick span early in the second half. It was his first two-goal game in MLS action.

The 37-year-old Suárez became the latest ex-Barcelona teammate to join Messi at Inter Miami and made an immediate impact in his third MLS match. Suárez also had two assists. “He knows everything about me, and I think we will continue to do so,” Suárez said of excelling with Messi again. Former Barcelona stars and Messi teammates Sergio Busquets and Jordi Alba also are in their first full MLS season with Inter Miami after joining Messi last summer.

“Those guys aren't here to put their feet up,” Julian Gressel said. “We've seen it over the last few weeks. They're trying to do everything for the team to win. Tonight is a really good example of that.”

With a prolific career that has resulted in 381 club goals over 19 seasons, Suárez scored his first two in the MLS within a seven-minute sequence early in the first half.

“We know what Luis is capable of,” Messi told Apple TV after the match. Robert Taylor scored the fifth goal

and Gressel had two assists for Inter Miami (2-0-1, 7 points), which is unbeaten through three games for the first time in club history. Orlando City dropped to 0-1-1.

SOCCER

Inter Miami fans were barely settling in when Suárez struck four minutes into the match. Messi initiated the strike as his long pass found an open Gressel on the right wing. Gressel then centered to an open Suárez, who one-timed a shot inside the right post.

“The first goal, that changes the whole game, doesn't it?” Messi said.

The combination of Gressel and Suárez clicked again seven minutes later. From the left wing, Gressel sent another crossing pass to Suárez. Suárez beat defender Wilder Cartagena to the ball, dribbled into the large area and converted past goalkeeper Pedro Gallesse from 12 yards.

Suárez turned distributor for Taylor's goal in the 29th minute. Suárez's cross from the right wing found an open Taylor against an unsuccessful offside trap by the Orlando City backline. Taylor tapped in a 15-yard shot.

“I try my best every time I'm out on the pitch,” Suárez said. “Today we did a really good job and I hope the Miami fans are happy.”



Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi (10) comes under pressure from Orlando City midfielder Cesar Araujo (5), right, and defender Kyle Smith (24), back left, during the second half of an MLS soccer match, Saturday, March 2, 2024, in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (AP)

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Louay eyes Saudi league

Bahraini soccer prodigy Al-Khalifat making waves in Spain

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MANAMA, March 3: Hashem Louay Al-Khalifat, a promising talent from Bahrain, initiated his football career within the ranks of Al-Najma Club, steadily progressing to become a fixture in the starting lineup. With an ambitious dream to play in Europe, Al-Khalifat honed his skills and earned selection for the Bahraini national teams, eventually realizing his dream with a move to Spain.

SOCCER

The young Bahraini sensation caught the attention of the technical staff at Cordoba Club, earning a spot in the Spanish first team after excelling with Cordoba B. This transition marked a new chapter in the Spanish League for Al-Khalifat, laden with personal ambitions, familial pride, and the hopes of Bahraini football enthusiasts.

A product of the Al-Najma Club, Al-Khalifat emerged as one of the standout talents, representing Bahrain in youth and U-23 teams. His consistency and prowess led to a trial with the Spanish club Cordoba, where he made history by becoming the first Bahraini player to join a Spanish team.

Al-Khalifat showcased his skills on the field during his debut with Cordoba, contributing to a 4-1 victory against Montella. Beyond football, he pursued



Al-Khalifat with Cordoba Club officials.

his education by enrolling in a Spanish school, highlighting his commitment to both academic and athletic pursuits.

Expressing gratitude, Al-Khalifat acknowledged the significant support from His Highness Sheikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, crediting him for believing in his talent and facilitating his development in Bahrain and Spain. Al-Khalifat aspires to bring joy to Cordoba's fans while upholding Bahrain's honor, aligning with Sheikh Nasser's visionary approach.

Reflecting on his journey, Al-Khalifat credited his father, Louay Al-Khalifat, for unwavering support since his academy days. He emphasized the challenges faced during his international venture, including language barriers and cultural differences. Over-

coming obstacles, Al-Khalifat adapted swiftly, learning Spanish within five months and earning the respect of the technical staff.

Inspired by Cristiano Ronaldo, Al-Khalifat aims to emulate the work ethic, skill development, humility, and goal-scoring prowess of the football icon. Despite a short stint with Chelsea interrupted by COVID-19, he remains optimistic about future opportunities.

Looking ahead, Al-Khalifat contemplates the possibility of playing in the Saudi League, acknowledging its growing prominence on the international stage. Undeterred by challenges, he remains focused on his ambitions, fueled by the support of Bahraini coaches and mentors who played pivotal roles in shaping his career.

Al-Ahmadi District 'secures' semifinals spot in the Warba Bank Soccer League

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The team representing the Al-Ahmadi Educational District, led by former international player Walid Ali, secured their spot in the semi-finals of the Warba Bank Grass Football League for the secondary stage. This league is organized by the Kuwait School Sports and Higher Education Federation. They earned this qualification by achieving a convincing 4-1 victory over the Jahra District team. The upcoming match awaits them against the Farwaniya team.

Simultaneously, the Education Capital team, under the guidance of coach Nassar Walid Nassar, completed the golden square by triumphing over Mubarak Al-Kabeer with an impressive six-goal clean sheet. They are set to face the Hawalli team in the semi-finals.

Dr. Ali Al-Dhahi, the General Supervisor of the Warba Bank League for the Secondary Stage, affirmed that Farwaniya and Hawalli secured direct entry into the semi-finals by clinching the top spots in their respective groups. Teams finishing second and third battled it out in the quarterfinals.

The semi-final matchups are scheduled for tomorrow, featuring Hawalli against Al-Asimah and Al-Ahmadi against Farwaniya. The victorious teams will vie for the championship in the final match

next Thursday at Jaber Stadium at 5 o'clock.

Nassar Walid Nassar, coach of the capital team, commended the significant role played by the Kuwait School Sports and Higher Education Federation, led by Faisal Al-Maqseed, and the substantial support extended by Warba Bank, both financially and morally. He acknowledged the return of the schools league after a prolonged absence,

highlighting the league's role in nurturing talented individuals. Nassar praised the efforts of the technical

SOCCER

committee under the leadership of Dr. Ali Al-Dhahi, who meticulously organized the league from the preliminary qualifiers to the exclusive rounds.



Players in action during the Warba League.



Real Madrid's Jude Bellingham (right), tries to get a shot away during the La Liga soccer match between Valencia and Real Madrid at the Mestalla Stadium in Valencia, Spain. (AP)

Vinicius scores 2 to 'earn' Madrid draw

Bellingham gets red against Valencia

BARCELONA, Spain, March 3, (AP): Vinicius Junior scored twice to lift Real Madrid to 2-2 against Valencia in the Spanish league in his first return to Mestalla Stadium where he was racially abused last season.

Jude Bellingham was red-carded after the final whistle when he protested the referee's decision to waive off what would have been the winning goal. The referee said time expired just before Bellingham's last-gasp header.

Vinicius struck in the 50th and 76th minutes to wipe out first-half goals by Hugo Duro and Roman Yaremchuk.

Last May's racial attack was among the worst the Black player has had to repeatedly endure in Spain. It led to an upswell of support for the Brazil forward and forced soccer authorities to take action, even though the abuse toward him has continued.

While there were no immediate reports of more racial insults on Saturday, a large group of spectators did chant "Vinicius is stupid" and booed him loudly throughout.

After his first goal, Vinicius held up his fist toward the Valencia fans behind the goal. After his equalizer, he cupped his ears as if asking for more from the fans who jeered him.

While Valencia banned three fans for

life from its stadium after they were identified as having racially abused Vinicius last season, the club has likewise criticized the player and Madrid for what it considers the unfair categorization of its fanbase as predominantly racist.

In a short interview with Madrid's club television, Vinicius did not mention the fans and said only that it was "a very difficult game." But on his Instagram account he posted an image of himself raising his fist after his first goal with the short message "The fight continues."

SOCCER

"Vinicius played a very good game," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "He was decisive for us, even though he was more effective in the area than outside it. (Defender Dimitri) Foulquier played a great game defending him, so he had to find his spaces inside the area and he scored two very important goals for us."

Duro used his head to redirect in what looked like an errant shot by Fran Pérez in the 27th after Federico Valverde lost the ball with a risky pass.

Three minutes later, Yaremchuk intercepted Dani Carvajal's pass back toward his own area, where the Ukraine forward pounced, dribbled around goalkeeper Andriy Lunin and rolled the ball home.

Kuwait Club take on Al-Sulaibikhat

High-stakes clash as Kazma face Al-Qadisiya

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Tonight at 7:15 pm, Kazma will face Al-Qadisiya in a highly-anticipated match at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex hall, marking one of the most delayed fixtures in the Volleyball League. Simultaneously, Kuwait Club will take on Al-Sulaibikhat at 5:15 pm in the same venue.

In adherence to the tournament system, the top four teams will secure spots in the semi-finals. The global point calculation system is employed, awarding the winner of a 3-0 or 3-1 victory with three points, while the loser earns none. A 3-2 win grants two points to the victor and one point to the defeated team. Matches involving Kuwait, Al-Qadisiya, Kazma, and



Players vie for the ball.

Burgan were postponed due to their international commitments. Currently, Al-Qadisiya and Al-Kuwait have already secured their semi-final berths.

Kazma, positioned eighth in the Arab Championship after a specific

VOLLEYBALL

loss to Burgan in the seventh and eighth place playoff, enters the clash with 34 points from 15 matches, claiming the fifth spot. Meanwhile, Al-Qadisiya holds second place with 40 points, trailing behind the leader Kuwait with 42 points. Al-Arabi and Burgan occupy the third and fourth positions, both with 35 points each. The upcoming matches will prove pivotal for these three teams as they vie for qualification to the coveted golden square.

New Zealand's attempted fight back brought to a shuddering halt

Lyon masterclass leads Australia to 172-run win

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, March 3, (AP): Nathan Lyon took ten wickets for the match and brought New Zealand's attempted fight back in the first test to a shuddering halt as Australia completed a 172-run win on Sunday and took a 1-0 lead in the two-match series.

New Zealand resumed at 111-3 on the fourth day in its second innings and collapsed in the face of superb spin bowling from Lyon (6-64) to be all out for 196 a few minutes after the scheduled lunch break.

CRICKET

Lyon completed match figures of 10-108, his fifth 10 wicket bag, which went along with his 41 as nightwatchman in Australia's second innings.

The Black Caps were unable to sustain the stubborn fight back they had begun to produce on day three when Australia was bowled out for 164 in its second innings for an overall lead of 368.

Glenn Phillips took 5-43 to limit Australia as it tried to build on its first innings lead of 204. Rachin Ravindra's unbeaten 56 before stumps on day three fanned New

Zealand's faint hope that it might be able to head off defeat.

But Ravindra was out for 59 in only the seventh over of the morning and with his departure New Zealand's resistance appeared to falter, then break.

Ravindra was Lyon's first victim on the final day, tempted into the cut shot at a ball turning away from off stump. With the extra bounce he was unable to keep the shot down and was caught by Cameron Green.

Tom Blundell lasted three balls and was caught by Travis Head at short leg off Lyon, undone by the bounce as the ball hit the bat and thigh pad before looping to the fielder.

Phillips fell lbw to Lyon for 1 and the last sparks of resistance were blown out when Scott Kuggeleijn (26), Matt Henry (14) and Tim Southee (7) all fell before lunch. Daryl Mitchell was the last man out for 38.

"It was a really good game overall I think," Australia captain Pat Cummins said. "We never felt we were too far ahead on that wicket."

"The pitch was really bouncy and had a bit of pace in it but more bounce than I've seen in any wicket for a long time. Fortunately it spun which with Nathan Lyon in our side is a good thing."

Lyon completed his 24th five wicket bag in tests with Phillips' wicket, providing an odd symmetry as the Australian off-spinner dismissed his New Zealand counterpart who also had taken five wickets in the match.

With the pitch at the Basin Reserve still providing bounce for the spinner and with a steady breeze assisting his drift, Lyon was almost unplayable at times in the morning Sunday. He became most effective when he switched from the northern to the southern end and began to find the bounce which made him so difficult to handle.

His contribution to the match was enormous both with bat and ball and he played a major part in turning the match in Australia's favor. Australia now commands the series which continues with the second test in Christchurch from Friday.



Australia's Travis Head catches out New Zealand's Blundell on the fourth day of their cricket test match in Wellington, New Zealand. (AP)

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Burnley's Josh Cullen (left), and Bournemouth's Justin Kluivert battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Burnley and Bournemouth at Turf Moor, Burnley, England. (AP)

Sports

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Historic victory: Kuwait claim 3x3 Gulf Basketball Championship title

BY Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
MUSCAT, March 3: Kuwait women's youth basketball team clinched the 3x3 Gulf Basketball Championships with a decisive 21-5 victory over the Saudi team in the final match held in Muscat, Oman.

This historic win marks the first Gulf Championship title for our women's team.

BASKETBALL

Representing Kuwait in the tournament were standout players Jaida Al-Issa, Widad Al-Zayed, Lulwa Al-Rasheed, and Manar Al-Mutairi.

The Women's Basketball Club showcased exceptional performance throughout the competition, ultimately claiming the championship.

In a parallel event, the Al-Arabi men's basketball team emerged victorious in the men's 3x3 basketball championship.

They triumphed over Al-Nasr with a score of 21-13 in the final match, which took place at Al-Itihad Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex. The tournament, featuring the partici-



Kuwait 3x3 Gulf Basketball champions display the Kuwaiti flag as they celebrate their win.

ipation of nine clubs, witnessed Al-Qadisiya securing the third-place position by defeating Sulaibikhat with a score of 21-7 in the match preceding the final.

The Arab Club team, composed of Saqr Abdel-Rida, Fahd Malallah, Hassan Bormeh, and the American Thompson, showcased exceptional teamwork throughout

the competition.

The awards ceremony was presided over by Dhari Barjas, President of the Basketball Association, along with his deputy Mohsen Al-Sahmi and Awaid Al-Anazi, Assistant Secretary of the Federation and Chairman of the Trio Committee, who officially crowned the top three teams in the tournament.

Al-Mutawa equals goal-scoring record in Kuwait League

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: Al-Qadisiya luminary Badr Al-Mutawa has matched the goal-scoring record set by Syrian striker Firas Al-Khatib in Kuwaiti League matches. Al-Mutawa achieved this feat by netting the winning goal against Al-Salmiya in the seventeenth round of the Zain Premier League, bringing his tally to an impressive 162 goals.

SOCCER

Now, Al-Mutawa stands just one goal away from surpassing Al-Khatib's record. The anticipated moment is on the horizon as "Al-Yellow" gears up for a showdown against Al-Shabab in the eighteenth round this week. Additionally, Al-Qadisiya is set to compete in the Championship League (Big Six), engaging in 10 matches in a home-and-away format.

At 39 years old, Al-Mutawa has solidified his status as a football star over the past two decades, leaving an indelible mark on Kuwaiti football. Despite not starting in most recent seasons, his impact as a substitute has been profound. His contributions, exemplified in the recent match against Al-Salmiya, where he came on in the second half, creating multiple opportunities before sealing the victory with



Badr Al-Mutawa is congratulated by his team-mates after equaling the Kuwait League scoring record.

a confidently executed penalty kick in the fifth minute of stoppage time. With these three crucial points, Al-Qadisiya reenters the title race after an eight-season hiatus, closely trailing Al-Arabi and Kuwait Club in the standings.

Al-Mutawa has notched an impres-

sive 300 career goals with Al-Qadisiya across local, Gulf, Arab, and Asian tournaments since his debut in the 2002-2003 season. Achieving this milestone requires determination, persistence, and patience—qualities embodied by "Badr Al-Qadisiya."

Villa strengthen place in CL spots

Burnley closer to relegation after losing to Bournemouth

BURNLEY, England, March 3, (AP): Burnley's winless run was extended to 10 games in all competitions after a 2-0 home loss against Bournemouth in the Premier League on Sunday.

Vincent Kompany's team has not won a game in 2024 and will need a massive turnaround in form to have any chance of avoiding relegation.

Burnley is 11 points from safety and only above last-place Sheffield United on goal difference.

Justin Kluivert fired Bournemouth ahead in the 13th minute at Turf Moor, showing neat footwork in the box before flashing a shot past goalkeeper James Trafford.

Antoine Semenyo ended Burnley's hopes of a comeback with Bournemouth's second in the 88th.

Bournemouth fans mocked Kompany as the game drew to a close, chanting "sacked (fired) in the morning."

Burnley's last win came at Fulham on Dec. 23 and it has lost eight of its 10 games since then.

Bournemouth hadn't won in its last six games in all competitions and was knocked out of the FA Cup by second-tier Leicester on Tuesday.

This was a first league win since New Year's Eve for Andoni Iraola's team and leaves it 13th in the standings and 11 points clear of the relegation zone.

Ollie Watkins scored two first-

half goals and Lucas Digne grabbed an 89th-minute winner for Aston Villa in its 3-2 victory over Luton in , strengthening the team's place in the Champions League qualification spots.

Digne came off the bench to head home the clinching goal at Kenilworth Road, just when Luton looked like claiming a point from 2-0 down.

Watkins moved onto 16 league goals - behind only Manchester City's Erling Haaland (17) - with clinical finishes in the 24th and 38th minutes.

Luton, which is third from last and four points adrift of safety, responded with a strong second-half display and scored through Tahith Chong and Carlton Morris.

Digne and Moussa Diaby were among four substitutes to enter in the 79th minute in a bold move by Villa manager Unai Emery. It paid off as Diaby provided the cross for Digne's goal.

Villa stayed in fourth and five points ahead of fifth-placed Tottenham, which beat Crystal Palace 3-1 earlier Saturday. Spurs have a game in hand.

SOCCER

The top four are guaranteed to qualify for the Champions League and the fifth-place finisher could, too, depending on the performance of English clubs in European competitions this season.

Chelsea fans turned on Mauricio Pochettino as they watched their team labor to draw at west London rival Brentford 2-2.

The Blues were leading through Nicolas Jackson's 35th-minute header but were pegged back by Mads Roerslev's close-range strike in the 50th.

When Yoane Wissa put Brentford ahead with a spectacular overhead kick in the 69th, the away fans began singing the name of former manager Jose Mourinho as well as calling for Pochettino to go.

"I've been told - I didn't hear, to be honest. It's difficult for me to understand," the Argentine coach said.

"But it's normal, we were losing the game 2-1 and they expressed their frustration. I am one of the ones responsible, I'm the coach."

Chelsea rescued a point on Pochettino's 52nd birthday when Axel Disasi headed home Cole Palmer's cross.

The point left Chelsea languishing in 11th place in another dismal league campaign and the first season under Pochettino.

"I was asked before if I feel the love from the fans - no," Pochettino said. "I'm not worried - we need to accept this relationship. You win your relationship through winning games."

"I will continue to work and try to change this perception. We need to manage some reality. We are working really hard to try to win games, the team is fighting. If it doesn't work and the fans are disappointed, I need to respect their opinion."

Kuwait crowned champions of the ICC WC Challenge League playoff



Kuwaiti players pose for a group photo after winning the ICC World Cup Challenge League playoff.

A historic moment for Kuwait cricket

Sheikh Fahad Talal's suspension reduced to 8 matches

KUWAIT CITY, March 3: The Appeals Committee of the Kuwait Football Association has revised the penalty imposed on Sheikh Fahad Talal, Vice President of Al-

Qadisiya Club, reducing it to 8 matches. Initially suspended until the end of the current season by the Disciplinary Committee, Sheikh Fahad's suspension has now

been significantly shortened. In addition to the match reduction, a fine of 10,000 Kuwaiti dinars has been imposed on the Vice President. This decision follows the events of the Al-Qadisiya vs. Al-Arabi match in the Amir Cup semi-finals last February.

SOCCER

In response, Tanzania faced an uphill task and never looked like chasing or even coming close to the target as they kept losing wickets with only Mohamed



A Kuwaiti bats against Tanzania.

Omary making a significant contribution with 44 runs. The exceptional spin bowling by Yasin Patel, who took 4 wickets, and the team's skipper Aslam, who secured 3 wickets, played a crucial role in restricting Tanzania to 145 runs, leading to Kuwait's championship victory.

This win marks a historic moment for Kuwait cricket as they claim their first championship title in an ICC 50 overs tournament and that too of this magnitude as it has granted Kuwait List A status from the ICC and speaks volumes about Kuwait National Men's progress in the international arena.

Mohammad Amin's elegant performance rightfully earned him the Man of the Match award, highlighting his experience and significance to the team's success in this crucial match as well as throughout the tournament.

The Appeals Committee upheld the Disciplinary Committee's ruling to prohibit Muhammad Al-Awadhi, a General Assembly member of Al-Qadisiya Club, from entering stadiums for one calendar year.

Moreover, the appeal resulted in the cancellation of the suspension imposed on Saud Abu Al-Hassan, Chairman of the Marketing Committee in Al-Qadisiya, and Faisal Abu Al-Hassan, Director of Water Games. It's noteworthy that Al-Qadisiya Club had faced severe penalties in a previous incident during a match against Kuwait Club. However, these penalties were nullified by the Appeals Committee.



Ali Al-Kharafi on the podium with an opponent after the awarding ceremony.

Al-Kharafi stars

Kuwaiti equestrian Ali Al-Kharafi dominated the Longines Global Champions Tour Doha, clinching both the first and second positions in hurdles events. Astride Karaat, Al-Kharafi led the CSI 3* 1.40m Against the Clock, completing the course in an impressive 52.60 seconds. In another noteworthy Phase Special event, he secured the second spot riding Karawan Z, with a finishing time of 52.78 seconds. The equestrian championships, held at the splendid Al-Shaqab Equestrian Centre in Doha, Qatar, unfolded from Thursday, February 29, and concluded this Saturday.