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KUWAIT AMIR, AL-SABAH FAMILY RECEIVE RAMADAN WELL-WISHERS



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Al-Sabah family received Monday citizens and residents on the occasion on the holy month of Ramadan. The reception reflected unity of the Kuwaiti people during these occasions. Amiri Diwan photos

'Obtain certification'

CPR training must for pediatric staff

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: The Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi, has issued a ministerial decree mandating pediatricians and nurses working in intensive care units for premature infants to obtain certification in the advanced life support training course (known as cardiopulmonary resuscitation or PALS) from accredited training centers such as the American Heart Association (AHA) and the American Safety and Health Institute (ASHI) prior to employment or promotion.



Al-Awadhi

The decision is part of efforts aimed at enhancing the efficiency of medical personnel and improving the quality of services offered to pediatric patients. It aligns with the government's action plan to raise the level of healthcare standards and facilitate citizens' access to top-quality services.

It is worth highlighting that this decision comes in conjunction with the ministerial resolution No. 63/2024, which mandates all doctors, dentists, pharmacists, and allied health workers in hospitals, specialized centers, and primary care centers affiliated with the ministry, and workers in the private medical sector to undergo training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation from accredited training centers affiliated with the American Heart Association (AHA) and the American Safety and Health Institute (ASHI) upon appointment and promotion.

Kuwait strips citizenship for 6 men, three women

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: The Council of Ministers has approved the revocation of Kuwaiti citizenship for nine individuals, comprising six men, three women, including one American woman, reports Al-Qabas daily.

These decisions were issued by the Supreme Committee for the Investigation of Kuwaiti Nationality, following a thorough review of relevant constitutional and legal provisions.

The Supreme Committee, in accordance with the Kuwaiti Nationality Law and its amendments, found that these individuals obtained citizenship through fraudulent means or were convicted by final court rulings, including some currently serving prison sentences.

The American woman allegedly acquired citizenship in 2006 and the Emirati woman obtained citizenship in 1967, along with seven others who acquired citizenship at various times.

In light of recent decisions, the total number of individuals who have had their Kuwaiti nationality revoked has surpassed 30 within a week, highlighting the government's commitment to upholding legal integrity and combating fraudulent practices related to citizenship acquisition.

A government source revealed ongoing efforts to identify and address cases of fraudulent citizenship acquisition, with further decisions pending submission by the committee. The source emphasized that the government remains steadfast in its resolve to pursue legal measures against perpetrators and maintain transparency throughout the process.

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Ramadan Timings

Iftar Wednesday 17:56
Imsak Thursday 04:37

Expatriate beggars in Kuwait face deportation, sponsor 'blocks'



The cannon at Naif Palace, Kuwait City, is fired, signaling to worshippers that it's time to break their fast. - See Page 2 Photo by Rezk Tawfik

'Nab outlaws'

By Munaif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: According to security sources, officers from all sectors of the Ministry of Interior, including Public Security, Traffic, Operations, and Criminal Investigations have been deployed to deal with traffic jams and arrest outlaws and beggars during the month of Ramadan, especially those present in markets, stores, and mosques.

They explained that any expatriate caught begging will be deported from the country and a block will be placed on the sponsor's file.

According to the instructions of the ministry leadership, strict

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a call on Tuesday from Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, in which the two exchanged greetings on occasion of the holy month of Ramadan.

President El-Sisi wished His Highness the Amir good health and the state of Kuwait further progress and prosperity under his wise guidance. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: An Amiri decree was issued on Tuesday appointing Esam Salem Al-Roumi Chief of the State Audit Bureau (SAB).

The first article of the decree 37 for the year 2024 stipulated that Esam Salem Al-Roumi be appointed President of the State Audit Bureau. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Tuesday expressed Kuwait's welcome of the recent meeting hosted by the Arab League, which aimed to support political resolution efforts in Libya, paving the path towards eagerly anticipated presidential and parliamentary elections.

In a statement released Tuesday, the ministry reiterated Kuwait's support for all Arab and international efforts aimed at strengthening the unity, sovereignty, security, and stability of Libyan territories, echoing the aspirations of its people for peace, development and prosperity. (KUNA)

TOKYO: China, Iran, and Russia have kicked off a joint naval drills in the Gulf of Oman to strengthen maritime cooperation and safeguard regional peace and stability, the Chinese National Defense Ministry announced Tuesday. (KUNA)

2 candidates withdraw from parliamentary race

Election tally rises to 219 as 17 more register

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: A total of 17 candidates registered for the upcoming parliamentary elections, including one woman, on Tuesday — the ninth day of the registration period for candidates.

This increases the total number of candidates to 219, including seven women. Two candidates have so far withdrawn from the race.

The candidates who registered on Tuesday are as follows:

Second Constituency: three men (Mohammad Al-Mutairi, Abdulwahab Al-Qattan and Bandar Mubarak Al-Mutairi)

Third Constituency: two men (Madhi Ibrahim Al-Khamees and Abdullah Al-Hendal)

Fourth Constituency: 11 men and one woman (Husain Al-Serafi, Hamad Al-Jadie, Saud Al-Herajji, Adel Al-Jemali, Abdullah Falah Al-Hajri, Askar Owaed Al-Anzi, Mubarak Haif Al-Hajraf, Mohammad Mahdi Al-Sulaimani, Mohammad Shenaifi Al-Majedi, Yousef Al-Bazzali, Ahmed Al-Sulaimani and Nawal Saleh Al-Khail)

Third Constituency candidate Madhi Al-Khamees stressed the need for the government to submit an integrated work program, which is feasible and has a timetable.

He said political instability led to deterioration in all fields; wondering how the country witnessed the formation of four governments in seven years, while the upcoming parliamentary election is the third in four years.

Former Deputy National Assembly Speaker Mohammad Al-Mutairi, who filed his candidacy in the Fourth Constituency, asserted that the corrupt should be bored, not the people. He hopes the people will not only vote

for pro-reform candidates, but continue supporting them to succeed in their legislative work as well.

Former MP Mubarak Al-Hajraf and Fourth Constituency candidate called on all eligible voters to participate in the election in order to decide about their future. He pointed out the time has come for a popular prime minister (not from Al-Sabah Family). He added this will minimize disputes whose source everyone is aware of.

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Kuwait's 49th relief plane heads to Jordan with 45 tons of aid for Gaza. KUNA photo

UN chief renews call for ceasefire

NEW YORK, March 12, (KUNA): The UN secretary general, Antonio Guterres called on Monday for a truce in the Israel-Gaza war and Sudan as the holy Muslim fasting month of Ramadan begins.

In a statement, Guterres also urged the release of hostages held by Hamas and the removal of 'all obstacles to ensure the delivery of lifesaving aid at the speed and massive scale required' to Gaza.

As Ramadan begins, Palestinian health ministry in Gaza issued new casualty figures, noting at least 31,112 Palestinians have been killed and 72,760 wounded since 7 October in Israel's military offensive on the Gaza Strip.

The UN chief also warned from the repercussions of threats to attack Rafah city, which would push Palestinians in Gaza to new depths of hell, stressing on the importance of ending the cycle of violence.

Reiterating his call to the warring parties to halt the war, Guterres highlighted the same compelling appeal from the families of victims who visited the UN in New York recently.

"As one of those family members said, 'we are not here for condolences. We are not here for apologies. We are here for immediate action,'" Guterres added.

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Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:43 Asr 15:22
 Sunrise .. 06:02 Maghrib .. 17:54
 Zohr 11:58 Isha 19:11

Local

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

70% attendance noted in ministries; police maintain order

Arab, Gulf, foreign envoys extend warm Ramadan wishes to Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: Ambassadors representing Arab, Gulf, and foreign nations have conveyed heartfelt congratulations to the leadership, government, and people of Kuwait on the occasion of the commencement of the holy month of Ramadan, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In their messages, they expressed hopes for continued stability and prosperity for Kuwait, emphasizing the significance of Ramadan as a time to foster human compassion and unity.

These ambassadors commended Kuwait for its exemplary role in promoting peace, reconciliation among nations, and rejecting hatred. The Omani Ambassador to Kuwait, Saleh Al Kharousi, and the Chinese Ambassador, Zhang Jianwei, extended their sincere well-wishes for the holy month.

French Ambassador Claire Le Flecher conveyed her heartfelt wishes of happiness, health, and brotherhood to the Kuwaiti people and Muslims worldwide. She emphasized the spiritual significance of Ramadan, highlighting its themes of contemplation, tolerance, and peace, as well as its role in fostering solidarity and compassion towards those in need.



Le Flecher



Dr. Al-Kharousi

a significant role in reducing congestion and facilitating transactions, with many services now accessible online. Ministers reiterated the need to maintain discipline and deter laziness or negligence, especially during Ramadan.

In courtrooms, a high attendance rate of over 80% was observed among employees, ensuring the seamless operation of judicial proceedings. Similarly, lawyers and defendants demonstrated a high level of commitment to attending sessions, recognizing the consequences of absenteeism.

In schools, student attendance varied, with some schools experiencing full attendance while others saw noticeable absences. Teachers maintained their commitment to attendance, often utilizing fingerprint systems for record-keeping. Additionally, some schools engaged in Ramadan-related activities, fostering a sense of community among staff.

At Kuwait University, both students and professors exhibited regular attendance, with only a small percentage of professors requesting absence from lectures. Some professors displayed leniency towards late arrivals, considering the morning traffic congestion.

Overall, the first day of Ramadan showcased a strong commitment to work discipline and attendance across various sectors, underscoring the importance of maintaining efficiency during this holy month.

Ramadan 'iftar cannon'

One of the most iconic rituals associated with the holy month of Ramadan in Kuwait is the "Iftar Cannon," a tradition steeped in history and cultural significance, reports Al-Qabas daily.

For approximately 117 years, the launch of the Iftar cannon has marked the end of fasting hours and the Maghreb call to prayer, bringing joy and anticipation to both children and adults alike.

The origins of the Iftar cannon trace back to historical happenstance, with its inception dating back to the year 865 AH in Mamluk Cairo. Sultan Khushkadam's desire to test a new cannon coincided with the sunset call to prayer, resulting in the cannon shots firing at the precise moment of breaking the fast.

Mistaking it for a deliberate tradition, people embraced it as a way to alert fasting individuals, thus cementing its status as a beloved ritual during both Iftar and Suhoor.

Another account attributes the introduction of the Iftar cannon to Fatima, the daughter of Khedive Ismail, who purportedly decreed its use to announce the breaking of the fast throughout Ramadan, leading to its designation as the "Hajja Fatima cannon" in Egypt.

This tradition eventually spread to various Arab and Islamic countries, including Kuwait. In 1907, during the reign of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah, Kuwait witnessed the introduction of the Iftar cannon, with Ali bin Aqab bin Ali Al-Khazraji being credited as its first launcher. Gifted by the British government, the cannon served as a means for Kuwaitis to discern the timing of both Suhoor and Iftar.

Initially launched from the Seif Palace, the Ramadan cannon found its permanent home in the Naif Palace in the early 1950s, where it has continued to signal the end of fasting hours ever since. Built in 1920 under the reign of Sheikh Salem Al-Mubarak, Naif Palace stands as a testament to Kuwait's enduring cultural traditions, with the Iftar cannon serving as a symbol of unity and anticipation during the holy month of Ramadan.

Ramadan first day

On the first day of Ramadan, Al-Qabas observed notable traffic congestion, particularly during the rush hours at the beginning and end of the workday, prompting a robust security and traffic presence to manage the flow and ensure order, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Despite this, employees demonstrated commendable commitment and punctuality, with attendance rates exceeding 70% across various sectors.

During a tour of ministries, Al-Qabas noted a diligent work atmosphere, with employees efficiently completing transactions amidst a modest number of visitors during the initial hours.

However, inspection teams identified absenteeism, ensuring accountability for those not adhering to work obligations. Ministers emphasized the importance of addressing absenteeism promptly, especially during Ramadan.

Despite the fasting period, many transactions were smoothly processed, with minimal disruption and some offices remaining open during iftar time. As the workday drew to a close, requests for permission to leave increased, with approximately 60% of employees seeking early departure, citing various reasons.

The implementation of electronic transaction systems in service agencies played

KOC fosters goodness, unity during Ramadan; 'Do good'

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: As the auspicious month of Ramadan graces us once again, the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) redoubles its efforts to stand in solidarity with all members of society. Recognizing Ramadan as a time of giving in all its forms, KOC is deeply committed to its social responsibility, organizing diverse events aimed at serving the community, reports Al-Rai daily.

Embracing the spirit of generosity, KOC has adopted the slogan "Goodness will come back to you," underscoring the reciprocal nature of giving and encouraging altruism among all. Throughout Ramadan, the company is set to host a myriad of activities and events, many of which have become cherished traditions synonymous with the month of compassion and brotherhood.

In a bid to remain connected with its employees, KOC's senior management, led by CEO Ahmad Jaber Al-Eidan, will personally visit various facilities and assembly centers to share in the joy of breaking fast together.

Additionally, the management will extend their outreach to patients, particularly children, at Al Ahmadi Hospital, spreading cheer and a sense of belonging.



Al-Eidan

Standing firmly by all segments of society, KOC will organize daily iftar gatherings at Mubarakiya market, ensuring that no one goes hungry during this blessed month. Furthermore, in collaboration with the Grand Mosque administration, the company will distribute suhoor meals to those attending nightly prayers, fostering a sense of community and spiritual connection.

In a groundbreaking partnership, KOC joins forces with several specialized entities to launch the "360 Challenge: Wellness Initiative in Ramadan" at 360 Mall. This initiative aims to promote healthy habits and physical activity, offering a range of health lectures, exercise sessions, and entertainment competitions throughout the month.

Not forgetting the children of its employees, KOC hosts the annual Ramadan competition, featuring daily quizzes and Quran memorization contests that showcase remarkable talent and dedication. Moreover, the company organizes a joyous Georgian ceremony, growing in popularity each year, to delight the hearts of its employees' children.

To enrich the spiritual experience of Ramadan, KOC will broadcast daily recordings from prominent imams and sheikhs, providing valuable insights and reflections to the community.

In its unwavering commitment to fostering goodness and unity, Kuwait Oil Company exemplifies the true essence of Ramadan, spreading warmth and compassion to all.

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Warm with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 08-32 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.
By Night: Rather cold with light

Weather

to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 12-32 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	24	16

Kuwait Airport	25	14
Abdaly	21	11
Jahra	27	14
Salmiyah	20	17
Nuwaisib	30	15
Wafra	30	13



Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) distributing food parcels on the first day of Ramadan, March 11, 2024. Photo by Samer Shaqair

Zakat House enforces innovative aid distribution plan in Ramadan

Focus on modern features, energy saving in schools

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: The Zakat House intensifies its endeavors to provide donations and alms to deserving individuals both within and outside Kuwait, leveraging the blessings and virtues of the holy month, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In this regard, the Director of Projects and Local Bodies Department at Zakat House, Radaan Al-Hajri, announced the launch of various initiatives aimed at ensuring efficient distribution of aid during this auspicious period.

This year, Zakat House has introduced a mobile iftar project within Kuwait, deploying twenty-five mobile units across strategic locations to distribute meals to the needy. With 6 sites in Al-Ahmadi Governorate, 5 in Farwaniya, 2 in Mubarak Al-Kabeer, 5 in Al-Jahra, 3 in the capital, and 4 in Hawalli, these points cater to areas with high worker concentrations, adjacent to mosques, facilitating the distribution of 6,635 meals daily.

Al-Hajri highlighted the implementation of a new mechanism for issuing magnetic cards in lieu of distributing food supplies, ensuring greater convenience and flexibility for beneficiaries.

These cards, allocated to individuals registered with the Social Service Department at Zakat House, enable the purchase of essential food supplies from designated locations, including Lulu Hyper, Farwaniya Cooperative Society, Oncost, and others.

Furthermore, the Zakat House is prepared to execute the in-kind Zakat al-Fitr project, designating 14 revenue centers across all governorates to receive Zakat al-Fitr contributions, particularly in the form of rice.

Al-Hajri reaffirmed Zakat House's commitment to serving donors, charities, and the needy, emphasizing its readiness to deliver aid swiftly and efficiently. With a vision focused on modernizing aid distribution methods, Zakat House continues to uphold its leadership in zakat and humanitarian endeavors, both locally and globally.

Modern features: Muhammad Al-Khalidi, Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Facilities and Planning at the Ministry of Education, underscored the Ministry's commitment to sustainability and energy-saving initiatives in newly constructed schools, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Speaking at the official opening of a girls' middle school building in the Sabah Al-Nasser area, Al-Khalidi highlighted the modern features of the facility, including its advanced systems and focus on energy efficiency.

The newly inaugurated school is equipped with solar energy systems aimed at reducing electricity consumption, along with 50 smart boards, state-of-the-art laboratories adhering to international safety standards, sports facilities, spacious courtyards, and student restrooms. Additionally, the school is furnished with surveillance cameras and instructional screens to enhance security and learning environments.

Al-Khalidi noted that the project, initiated in 2022, was completed within a remarkably short timeframe, reflecting the Ministry's dedication to timely infrastructure development. Spanning an area of 16 thousand square meters across three floors, the school comprises 30 classrooms, laboratories, a library, and a mosque. He emphasized the sector's efforts in utilizing weather-resistant external facades for the school building.

On the same lines, Eng. Muhammad Fahad, Director of Project Management, confirmed the completion of another project related to the establishment of two schools in the Sabah Al-Nasser area. A boys' middle school in plot (7) has been successfully completed, with a girls' middle school in plot (1) currently undergoing final checks. Fahad highlighted the innovative architectural design of the new schools, which are set to commence operations soon, further enriching educational opportunities in the region.



Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi talks to the medical team after their return from Gaza. KUNA photo

'First initiative in Gulf'

Kuwaiti team's efforts in Gaza hailed

KUWAIT CITY, March 12, (KUNA): The Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi praised the efforts of the volunteer medical team of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, which performed delicate surgical operations on the critically injured in the Gaza Strip.

Minister Al-Awadhi told KUNA after the medical team's return that this initiative is the first in the Gulf and the culmination of coordination between public benefit associations in Kuwait and with humanitarian associations and organizations in Egypt and Palestine.

The minister affirmed that the medical team performed its work with full dedication and sincerity, expressing his pride in its

efforts in treating the wounded and injured. He also praised Kuwait's firm position in supporting the Palestinian people by providing medical, food aid, and urgent shelter for those affected in the Gaza Strip.

For his part, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, Dr. Hilal Al-Sayer, said that the Society is keen to provide aid to the Gaza Strip, including providing medical personnel to provide the necessary treatment, adding that the team's presence is "a national pride worthy of praise."

The team performed about 23 surgical operations on sick and wounded Palestinians in (Kuwait Specialist) and (Gaza European) hospitals.

'Modernization efforts'

Call to set up applied university

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: A group of academics from higher education institutions in Kuwait have voiced unanimous support for the establishment of an applied university.

In an interview with Al-Jarida, they emphasized the necessity of such an institution to complement existing governmental universities and support the objectives of the General Authority for Applied Education and Training.

Dr. Khaled Al-Saifi, President of the Faculty Association of Applied Sciences, highlighted that the concept of an applied university is not new but rather the culmination of extensive studies and governmental decisions.

He cited specific directives from the Ministry of Education, including decisions to separate five applied colleges to serve as the foundation for the university. Al-Saifi underscored that the establishment of an applied university aligns with educational and developmental needs and represents a

natural progression in Kuwait's modernization efforts.

Dr. Saleh Al-Jalal, a faculty member at the College of Basic Education, emphasized the urgency of transforming the five teaching colleges into an applied university to meet the growing demands of the labor market. He noted the colleges' track record of providing skilled Kuwaiti graduates across various sectors and emphasized the importance of enhancing academic standards through international accreditation.

Dr. Salah Al-Hammadi, a faculty member at the Arab Open University, echoed the sentiment that an applied university is a critical necessity to address the evolving needs of the labor market.

He stressed the role of such an institution in facilitating the completion of university studies for members of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training.



KUNA photo
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the honorable Al-Sabah family receiving a large number of well-wishers on the occasion of the Holy Month of Ramadan.

MPW prepares for tender of special education school complex in Egaila

Municipality extends 3 billboard site contracts in 3 governorates

By Mohammed Ghanem and Muhammad Al-Musleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: Informed sources at the Ministry of Public Works revealed the readiness of the construction projects to float a tender on the special education school complex project in Egaila through the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT).

They explained that the establishment of the project in Egaila comes within the framework of the construction of three similar buildings in Jahra and Hawally, which will be proposed and implemented successively.

The ministry is awaiting the formation of the board of directors of CAPT, and will then resume the agency's work progress in order for the project to be presented to the companies classified by CAPT.

The project is one of the major development projects implemented by the ministry for the benefit of the Ministry of Education.

The design of the project has been completed,

and it will be implemented in three areas, namely Hawally, Egaila, and Jahra.

According to the project implementation schedule, two complexes for schools for people with special needs will be established, the first in Egaila and the second in Jahra. After the completion of construction and operation of the two complexes in Egaila and Jahra, the private schools in Hawally will be demolished and a new complex will be built on their land.

Components

The components of the project are in the three buildings, which are specialized buildings for teaching cases of deafness, mutism, movement disabilities, cases of Down syndrome, autism, and speech difficulties.

The complex contains physical therapy buildings with swimming pools, as well as a gym, a multi-purpose hall, and another for education and treatment of speech difficulties. It also contains craft workshops, student housing, and the administration building, as well as libraries, workshops, and theaters equipped with the modern technological means required to meet the needs and requirements of people with special groups with the maximum capacity.

Meanwhile, according to an informed source, Kuwait Municipality has extended three additional contracts for the use of billboard sites in a number of companies in Farwaniya, Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Ahmadi governorates. The extension

period will be six months, with a total revenue of up to KD 1.665 million.

They stressed that the extension of the auction contract in Farwaniya Governorate received the approval of the Ministry of Finance and the State Audit Bureau, with a total revenue of KD 739,000 for a period of six months from April until end of October.

Regarding the extension of the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate auction contract, the sources affirmed that the municipality had obtained regulatory approvals, with a total revenue of KD 301 thousand for a period of six months from February 6 to August 5.

They explained that the regulatory agencies agreed to extend the same contract in Al-Ahmadi Governorate with a company for revenues amounting to KD 625,000 for a period of six months from April 25 to October 24.

The supervisory bodies stressed to the municipality the necessity of completing the tendering, awarding and contracting procedures for new bids before the end of the extension period.

The difference in advertising revenues varies from one governorate to another. Farwaniya Governorate is considered the largest in terms of value, and is therefore regarded as the most important advertising market in Kuwait due to its distinguished geographical location and its demographic and commercial diversity.

PM sends greetings

HH the Amir congratulates Mauritius on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, March 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a cable of congratulations to the President of Mauritius Prithvirajsing Roopun on his country's National Day.

His Highness the Amir wished the

president long-term health and well-being, and further progress and prosperity to his country and people.

Also, Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem sent a cable of congratulations to President Prithvirajsing Roopun on his country's National Day.



KUNA photo
Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Sheikh Firas with UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammad.

'Range of initiatives being implemented'

Kuwait contributes to UN's effort to empower women: Sheikh Firas

NEW YORK, March 12, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Sheikh Firas Saud Al-Malik Al-Sabah reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to working with the United Nations to improve the status of women.

"The Kuwaiti government is implementing a range of initiatives to empower women and improve their status in the framework of Kuwait Vision 2035," he said on Monday.

Sheikh Firas, who leads Kuwait's delegation to the 68th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, made the comments during his meeting with UN Deputy Secretary-General

Amina Mohammad on the fringes of the session.

Out of belief in the crucial role of women in development, Kuwait made headway in implementing the fifth gender equality goal of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the UN member states in 2015, he pointed out.

On her part, Amina Mohammad praised the relentless efforts of Kuwait to empower women, recalling her last visit to the country in early March.

She expressed hope for more cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the State of Kuwait in this regard.

'Platform designed to be family-friendly'

Info's '51' digital platform to enhance Kuwait's media, advertising landscape

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: Assistant Undersecretary for Media Services Sector and New Media at the Ministry of Information and Chairman of the Coordination Committee for Digital Platform Saad Al-Azmi has announced the technical details of the '51' integrated digital platform that will be launched on May 12, 2024 as per the digital transformation strategy of the ministry for the years 2021 to 2026, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press conference held recently at the ministry's headquarters with a number of its officials in attendance, Al-Azmi revealed the goals of launching the platform include keeping pace with modern technologies in the field of media; developing media, advertising and marketing methods and tools; developing and maximizing the State's financial resources; and supporting and encouraging creative competencies in partnership with the private sector and civil society.

He pointed out the platform is considered one of the most important aspects of maximizing the State's financial resources through a partnership with the private sector; as it will achieve a financial return of KD5.050 million within five years, in addition to 10 percent of net advertising profits and 10 percent of subscriptions. According to the contract concluded with the operating company, the ministry will maintain its own archive, and own the trademark and everything that is displayed through the platform, he added.

Al-Azmi explained: "We are witnessing the details of an integrated digital platform in cooperation with the Kuwaiti operating company,

'Fast Communications'. The launching of the platform coincides with the anniversary of Kuwaiti Radio on May 12, 1951. The specialized team will provide some materials, including some programs for the holy month of Ramadan, through the Kuwait TV digital platform until the complete switch to the new '51' platform."

He revealed the platform is a portal that opens new horizons for digital content that goes beyond traditional methods and allows the user to access television and radio content with ease. It also allows viewing of immortal archival works and live broadcast of all Kuwaiti television channels and radio stations, he added.

He stated that the platform was designed to be family-friendly, operating within the controls and policies of the ministry, and reflecting the values of authentic

Kuwaiti culture and the creativity of its people in the fields of media, art, awareness, sports and drama, including the history of media and authentic Kuwaiti art.

On the other hand, Fast Communications Company representative Nouf Al-Mashaan confirmed that cooperation between the private and government sectors affirms the joint commitment to develop services by strengthening coordination through the unique technical expertise and distinguished infrastructure of the company.

Al-Mashaan said: "Our project opens new doors to the value and richness of the Kuwaiti archive of visual and audio content, making it available for viewing in all countries. It is not only a display of the ancient history and culture of Kuwait, but also a platform for promoting the Arabic language and creating a safe environment with family-friendly content."

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LOCAL



Sheikh Jarrah Jaber chairing the meeting.

KUNA photo

Deputy FM chairs diplomatic, consular body meet

Kuwait's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired the meeting of the Diplomatic and Consular Council on Tuesday, with the participation of assistant minis-

ters who are members of the council. During the meeting held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' headquarters, they discussed the issues of the meeting agenda. (KUNA)



Al-Otaibi and Al-Awadhi during the signing of the agreement.

Al-Jarida photo

'Teams vital to activate deals effectively'

KISR enhances collaboration with AIU

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: Dr. Mishaan Al-Otaibi, Acting Director General of the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, underscored the vital role of scientific research and studies in advancing services and elevating quality standards, reports Al-Jarida daily.

His remarks were made during the signing of a joint cooperation agreement with the American International University, attended by Dr. Nael Al-Awadhi, a member of the university's Board of Trustees.

Al-Otaibi expressed satisfaction with such agreements, emphasizing the shared commitment to scientific research evident in both public and private universities. The agreement facilitates bilateral cooperation in scientific research across various fields, allowing researchers from the American International University to leverage the insti-

tute's laboratories, research facilities, and expertise.

Highlighting the importance of active collaboration beyond mere agreement signings, Al-Otaibi stressed the need to form teams to activate these agreements effectively.

Dr. Al-Awadhi praised the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research as a cornerstone of scientific research in the region, noting the potential for students to benefit from the institute's expertise to enhance their capabilities.

Muhammad Al-Qattan, Vice President of the American International University for Research, emphasized the university's commitment to contributing to Kuwait's vision 2020-2035 through scientific research. He outlined plans to allocate specific budgets for research, aiming to address the country's challenges and support its development goals.

Expat beggars

Continued from Page 1

measures must be taken regarding this phenomenon, which increases during the month of Ramadan.

In this context, the ministry's Security Media Department announced that the Criminal Security Sector has designated a hotline to receive reports related to beggars after which necessary steps will be taken immediately. Security efforts are being exerted to confront this phenomenon, which represents a crime against society and harms the civilized appearance.

The department called on everyone to cooperate with the General Department of Criminal Investigations by immediately reporting any observed case of begging, using the following two numbers - 25589655 and 25589644 - or the emergency hotline No. 112, which receives their reports round the clock.

The department said every person must be "a guardian of his country and keen about the public good".

Kuwait strips

Continued from Page 1

Furthermore, the Council of Ministers discussed the appointment of boards of directors in government bodies during its recent meeting, underscoring the importance of expediting work and project completion. Ministers were directed to disclose any discovered instances of corruption, even if investigations are ongoing, in order to uphold transparency and keep the public informed.

Upcoming announcements will include details regarding forged certificates issued since 2000, as these documents are currently under scrutiny, demonstrating the government's commitment to addressing fraudulent practices and ensuring accountability in administrative matters.

Election tally

Continued from Page 1

He affirmed his commitment to continue protecting public funds, as well as the citizens' rights and interests.

Asked about his opinion regarding the speaker's seat, Al-Hajraf stated: "First, we have to know who will win. The voters' mood is changing."

Former MP and Fourth Constituency candidate Askar Al-Anzi urged HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah to approve the bills on increasing the cost of living allowance and zero interest loans for retirees.

He claimed the 2022 election results were inaccurate. He called on the citizens

to be aware of the spreading rumors and verify them.

Commenting on the 2023 Parliament, Al-Anzi said it did not do much for the people.

Fourth Constituency candidate Nawal Saleh Aba Al-Khail revealed that she decided to run for the election due to patriotism and her feelings toward the suffering of citizens. She intends to represent the hard labor class, asserting she is not part of the middle class.

She added some citizens suffer from depression due to their financial problems.

UN chief

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen warned that possibility of escalation in the Middle East is real, and called on member states to redouble efforts so that the people of Gaza "can get not only humanitarian relief, but also a ray of hope, towards a two-state solution."

These remarks were made when von der Leyen was addressing the European Council at inaugural session in Strasbourg.

The top European official held Iran responsible for tensions heightening in the region, and on possibility of Iran providing Russia with ballistic missiles; she asserted that they are prepared to implement further sanctions.

While she called for guaranteeing the protection of civilians, and reinstating the flow of aid, von der Leyen pointed out that humanitarian assistance alone is not enough as the situation requires immediate and sustainable ceasefire.

In that regard, von der Leyen, hailed the unprecedented international cooperation between the Commission, Cyprus, UAE, the United States and the United Kingdom, that resulted in a maritime corridor to deliver aid to Gaza.

"When fully operational, this maritime corridor could guarantee a sustained, regulated and robust flow of aid to Gaza. This is the first time that a ship is authorized to deliver aid to Gaza since 2005. Finally, it is an additional lifeline for the people of Gaza," she stated.

Elsewhere, Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman met on Tuesday with US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Barbara Leaf to discuss the situation in Gaza.

This came in a press release by the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs, saying that the meeting took place in the Prime Minister's office in Doha.

During the meeting, both sides discussed bilateral ties, latest developments in Gaza and occupied Palestinian lands, ways to increase efforts to ensure ceasefire in Gaza and allow humanitarian aid to enter the strip.

MEW's request for transformer station site in Fahahheel gets nod

'Approval of ministries of services needs to be obtained'

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: The Kuwait Municipality approved the request of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to allocate a main transformer station site with a total area of 3,000 square meters and with dimensions of 50 m x 60 m in Fahahheel Block 4.

According to the technical opinion approved by the Director General of Kuwait Municipality Saud Al-Dabbous, the approval of the ministries of services must be obtained and their requirements must be adhered to before starting implementation. This is in addition to authorizing the concerned department to move and modify the dimensions and area of the transfer station to no more than the areas specified for the site, in the event that it conflicts with any existing infrastructure services or for regulatory reasons prior to installation.

On a related level, the municipality has started working on the ministerial amendments regarding the organization of construction works and the schedules attached to it after their publication in the official gazette, which was recently issued by a ministerial decision from the Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan.

The decision stipulates adding the library activity to clause No. 18 (the requirements for commercial uses permitted in investment properties outside and inside Kuwait City) contained in table No. 2 regarding the requirements and specifications for investment residential buildings outside and inside Kuwait City, provided that the library area is not less than 750 square meters.

'Integrated approach to public events vital'

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: The Kuwait Environmental Protection Society commended Kuwait's efforts in organizing carnival events, noting their creativity and special significance within Kuwaiti society, reports Al-Jarida daily.

However, the recent Kuwait Sports Marathon, attended by Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Al-Sabah and 13,000 participants, drew attention to the issue of plastic bottle waste.

Following the event, environmentally conscious citizens documented a significant amount of plastic bottle waste, which was later removed by Kuwait Municipality from the Sheikh Jaber Bridge Road. The society emphasized that such waste represents a depletion of natural resources and called for better management of public events to mitigate environmental impact.

The society suggested adopting an integrated approach to event management, including environmental considerations. This involves collaboration with governmental and community environmental agencies, as well as the environmental police, and mobilizing volunteer teams for environmental supervision, monitoring, and awareness.

Furthermore, the society recommended learning from successful initiatives, such as those implemented by the Ministry of Interior during national holiday celebrations, which prioritized water conservation and reduced plastic pollution. By incorporating environmental awareness into event planning, Kuwait can ensure sustainable and eco-friendly festivities in the future.



A group photo from the beach cleaning drive.

ABK joins forces with Action Group Holding for beach cleanup initiative

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) reaffirmed its commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) by participating in a beach cleanup organized by Action Group Holding. The event took place at the Free Zone where volunteers from the Bank and Action Group



Albenali

Holding rolled up their sleeves to make a positive impact on the environment. Sager Albenali, Acting Chief Communications Officer at ABK, expressed, "We are immensely proud of the enthusiasm and dedication shown by our volunteers in this joint effort to promote the well-being of our environment. This initiative aligns with our values and emphasizes our ongoing support for sustainable causes."

Through its participation, ABK has presented itself as a responsible corporate organization that understands the importance of contributing to environmental sustainability. This beach cleanup reflects their dedication to preserving the natural beauty of Kuwait.

Albenali added, "Engaging in such initiatives not only strengthens our commitment to CSR but also fosters a sense of community and collective responsibility among employees."

The beach cleanup was part of a wider initiative to promote environmental awareness and preservation. The collaboration between ABK and Action Group Holding underscores the significance of corporate partnerships in driving positive change in society.

The strength of this initiative lies in its demonstration of the tangible impact that corporate entities can have in



Volunteers in action.

fostering environmental sustainability. By actively participating in the cleanup, ABK has exemplified a proactive approach to CSR, setting a strong example in the market.

Albenali concluded, "This noteworthy cause serves as a reminder of the importance of environmental stewardship and the need for collective action in preserving natural habitats. It also highlights the potential for collaboration between corporate entities and community organizations to effect positive change in society."

Since its establishment in 1967, ABK has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the region that offers a wide array of personal, corporate, and private banking products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK Capital.

Across the region, the Bank offers individuals and corporates the convenience of comprehensive banking and financial services in the Egyptian mar-

ket through ABK-Egypt's network of 48 branches.

This is in addition to ABK's three branches located in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) in the United Arab Emirates, servicing both Kuwaiti and Emirati individual and corporate clients.

ABK is a strong supporter of Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Banking Association's 'Let's Be Aware' awareness campaign. Through its various initiatives, the Bank aims to promote financial inclusion by educating Kuwaiti society about customer rights, responsibilities, and the different types of banking and special needs services. Additionally, ABK consistently provides strategic information on how to avoid banking and financial fraud, loan application requirements, digital services, and more.

For more information about ABK, please follow the Bank's Instagram account @abk_kuwait, visit eahli.com, contact Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 or visit one of the Bank's branches across Kuwait.

JOINT OPERATIONS
WAFRA

SAUDI ARABIAN CHEVRON INC. (SAC) - KUWAIT GULF OIL COMPANY

Joint Operations (Saudi Arabian Chevron Inc. / Kuwait Gulf Oil Company), announces the under-mentioned Public Tenders for procurement of materials.

Kuwaiti and Saudi Merchants, registered with either Company wishing to participate in any of the under-mentioned Tenders are invited to collect the Tender documents from Purchasing Section, Purchasing & Logistic Division, Administration Building, Ground Floor, Joint Operations, Wafra, during the official working hours from 13 MAR 2024 up to 31 MAR 2024 for a non-refundable fee mentioned against each tender. Tender Fees to be deposited in the National bank of Kuwait (NBK) Account No. 1001132057 and tender # 9 is without fees Saudi Suppliers can collect the tender documents from Saudi Arabian Chevron office in Al-Khobar Telephone No.: (013) 8645104 - Fax No.: (013) 8985436

The closing date for the following Tenders will be on **Monday, 8 APR 2024 @ 10:00 AM.**

S.NO.	TENDER NO.	MATERIALS	FEES (KD)
1	012238- R1	FLOWMETERS ROTAMETER (KHRONE - YOKOGAWA - BROOKS) OR EQUIVALENT	15
2	014845	BARE PIPES	5
3	014846	S/F PACIFIC PUMPS	5
4	014848	INSERT SLEEVE COATED	25
5	014868	S/F LEYDEN HARMONIC FILTER BANKS	25
6	014870	BALL AND GATE VALVES	15
7	015035	LUBRICANTS AND GREASE	5
8	015099	LIQUID CHROMATOGRAPH, AGILENT TECHNOLOGIES OR EQUIVALENT	5
9	BPT # 252/24	BLANKET PURCHASE TENDER FOR REFILLING OF GAS CYLINDERS (CONTRACT PERIOD 3 YEARS)	free

Notes: Gate Passes are required for Suppliers entering JO-Wafra Administrative Offices to collect the tender documents and gate pass processing time is 48 hours. Please fill request for gate pass along with legible copies of Authorization letter, Civil ID, Car Registration, Supplier Registration (KGOC or SAC) to e-mail HBJH@chevron.com and CBMS@chevron.com at least 48 hours prior to arrival.

For additional information, you may contact: Tel No.: **23983639** - Ext. : **2502 - 3477**

Africa

Corruption burning issue

SAfrica's ANC fields election candidates

CAPE TOWN, South Africa, March 12, (AP): South Africa's ruling African National Congress said Monday that six officials facing accusations of corruption have been included on its list of candidates for this year's election, bringing more scrutiny on a party that already has had its reputation badly damaged by graft.

ANC Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula told reporters that four of the six were included provisionally and were still to be cleared by the party's internal integrity committee having been implicated in a national commission of inquiry into corruption that exposed massive government graft during the administration of former president **Jacob Zuma**.

Another 14 officials implicated by the corruption inquiry were either disqualified from standing or were not nominated as candidates, Mbalula said, without disclosing their names.

The ANC has finalized a list of 284 candidates who are in the running to become lawmakers, and some of them cabinet ministers, following the May 29 national and provincial elections. President Cyril Ramaphosa also is on the list as he seeks a second and final term.

How many of the ANC candidates are installed as lawmakers will depend on how many votes the party receives in an election that analysts predict will be its toughest since coming to power at the end of apartheid in 1994.

Depending

South Africans vote for parties and not candidates in national elections and parties receive seats in Parliament depending on their share of the vote. Lawmakers then elect the president.

Corruption is a burning issue in South Africa and is one of the factors responsible for the ANC's decline in support.

The ANC's list was closely watched for signs of whether the party would take a strict stance with regards to the allegations after Ramaphosa made fighting corruption one of his priorities when he was elected to succeed Zuma in 2019.

Ramaphosa has had his own reputation tarnished by a separate scandal involving more than \$500,000 in cash that was stashed in a couch at his ranch and stolen in 2020. The theft only came to light in 2022.

The four ANC candidates provisionally included on the list pending the finalization of integrity investigations include current Sports and Culture Minister Zizi Kodwa, former Finance Minister Malusi Gigaba and former State Security Minister David Mahlobo, the three who have come under the most scrutiny.

Inquiry

Current Energy Minister Gwede Mantashe, who is also the chairperson of the ANC, was cleared to stand after the judge-led national inquiry into corruption recommended he be investigated for allegedly receiving security upgrades at his home from a company at the center of multiple scandals.

Mbalula said there were "no adverse findings" against Mantashe from the ANC's integrity committee.

Although the national inquiry into corruption, which lasted from 2018-2022, implicated numerous senior ANC and government figures and recommended they be investigated, hardly any have faced criminal charges. Mantashe, Kodwa, Gigaba and Mahlobo have not been charged with any corruption.

Mbalula said every one of the approved candidates for the election, from Ramaphosa down, were the subjects of "rigorous" eligibility investigations, were interviewed by an ANC integrity commission and agreed to lifestyle audits as the ANC attempts to restore its credibility following the corruption-tainted era of Zuma.

Zuma led South Africa from 2009-2018 and is alleged to have overseen a period of widespread government graft that is estimated to have cost the country over \$20 billion.

He is currently on trial for corruption, although that case relates to him allegedly receiving bribes before he was president. The trial started in 2021 but Zuma has launched a series of legal actions that have delayed the case and no testimony has yet been heard.

Also:

DAKAR, Senegal: Gueva Ba tried to reach Europe by boat 11 times from Morocco, failing each attempt. Then, in 2023, the former welder heard about a new route to the United States by flying to Nicaragua and making the rest of the journey illegally by land to Mexico's northern border.

"In Senegal, it's all over the streets - everyone's talking about Nicaragua, Nicaragua, Nicaragua," said Ba, who paid about 6 million CFA francs (\$10,000) to get to Nicaragua in July with stops in Morocco, Spain and El Salvador. "It's not something hidden."

Ba, 40, was deported from the US with 131 compatriots in September after two months in detention, but thousands of other Senegalese have gained a foothold in America. Many turn to savvy travel agents who know the route - touted on social media by those who've successfully settled in the US.

They are part of a surge in migration to the United States that is extraordinary for its size and scope, with more people from far-flung countries accounting for crossings at the border. And as with this route used by the Senegalese, more are figuring out plans, making payments, and seeking help via social networks, and apps like WhatsApp and TikTok.

Arrests for illegal crossings on the US border with Mexico reached record highs in December. January saw a drop for the month, but arrests have topped 6.4 million since January 2021. And Mexicans account for only about 1 of 4 arrests, with the others coming from more than 100 countries.

US authorities arrested Senegalese migrants 20,231 times for crossing the border illegally from July to December. That's a 10-fold increase from 2,049 arrests during the same period of 2022, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Many cross in remote deserts of western Arizona, like Ba, and California.

Word of the Nicaragua route began spreading early last year in Dakar and took hold in May, said **Abdoulaye Doucouré**, who owns a travel agency that sold about 1,200 tickets from Dakar to Nicaragua in the last three months of 2023, for the equivalent of several thousand dollars each.

"People didn't know about this route, but with social networks and the first migrants who took this route, the information quickly circulated among migrants," he said.



Zuma



Muslims walk in Putra Mosque for prayer during sunset ahead of the holy fasting month of Ramadan in Putrajaya, Malaysia on March 11. (AP)

Ramadan kicks off in much of Asia, a day after most of Middle East

The Muslim holy month of Ramadan, when the faithful fast from dawn to dusk, began at sunrise Tuesday in much of Asia, a day after many Muslims in the Middle East began their fasts.

In the Muslim lunar calendar, months begin only when the new moon is sighted, which can lead to variations of a day or two.

Middle Eastern nations including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates

declared the month would begin early Monday, but in the Asia-Pacific countries including Australia, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore began Ramadan on Tuesday after failing to see the crescent moon the previous night. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh also began Ramadan on Tuesday, as did Iran and Jordan. During Ramadan, Muslims refrain from eating, drinking and smoking from sunrise until sunset. Even a tiny sip of water or a puff

of smoke is enough to invalidate the fast. At night, family and friends gather and feast in a festive atmosphere.

The fasting is aimed at bringing the faithful closer to God and reminding them of the suffering of the poor. Muslims are expected to strictly observe daily prayers and engage in heightened religious contemplation. They are also urged to refrain from gossip, fighting or cursing during the holy month. (AP)



Indonesian Immigration officers escort Yusuke Yamazaki, (left), a Japanese fugitive who is wanted for fraud in his home country, prior to his deportation in Batam, Indonesia, March 12. Yamazaki, 43, was arrested off Bulan island in Kepulauan Riau province on Jan 31, while attempting to cross into Malaysia in a small wooden boat, said Nyoman Gede Surya Mataram, who heads the provincial office of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. (AP)



Jokat



Albanese

Asia

2 skiers killed in avalanche: Two backcountry skiers have died in a mountain avalanche on Japan's northernmost main island of Hokkaido, according to news reports.

The dead in Monday's avalanche on the 1,898 meter (6,227 feet) Mount Yotei were from New Zealand, according to the New Zealand Herald.

The snow slammed into three people in a group of six, according to Japan's Kyodo News. The man who survived was injured in his shoulder. (AP)

'People bounced off the roof': As officials investigate what caused a "strong shake" before a sudden plunge on a plane traveling between Australia and New Zealand, a passenger on Tuesday described a wild ride, with people without seatbelts thrown from their seats and some crashing into the plane's ceiling.

At least 50 people were injured Monday by what LATAM Airlines described as a "strong movement" on the Chilean plane traveling from Sydney to Auckland, New Zealand.

The Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner later landed at Auckland Airport as scheduled and was due to continue on to Santiago, Chile.

"The plane, unannounced, just dropped. I mean it dropped unlike anything I've ever experienced on any kind of minor turbulence, and people were thrown out of their seats, hit the top of the roof of the plane, thrown down the aisles," passenger Brian Jokat told ABC news in Australia on Tuesday. Prime Minister of Australia is **Anthony Albanese**.

"Some of the roof panels were broken from people being thrown up and knocking through the plastic roof panels in the aisle ways. And there was blood coming from several people's heads."

LATAM Airlines said in a statement that there was "a technical event during the flight which caused a strong movement."

Lat/Am

Blinken and Caribbean leaders meet in Jamaica

Haiti's prime minister bows to pressure

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, March 12, (Agencies): Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry announced early Tuesday that he would resign once a transitional presidential council is created, bowing to international pressure to save the country overwhelmed by violent gangs that some experts say have unleashed a low-scale civil war.

Henry made the announcement hours after officials including Caribbean leaders and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met in Jamaica to urgently discuss a solution to halt Haiti's spiraling crisis and agreed to a joint proposal to establish a transitional council.

Installation

"The government that I'm running cannot remain insensitive in front of this situation. There is no sacrifice that is too big for our country," Henry said in a videotaped statement. "The government I'm running will remove itself immediately after the installation of the council."

Earlier on Monday, Blinken announced an additional \$100 million to finance the deployment of a multinational force to Haiti. Blinken also announced another \$33 million in humanitarian aid and the creation of a joint proposal agreed on by Caribbean leaders and "all of the Haitian stakeholders to expedite a political transition" and create a "presidential college."

Henry has been unable to enter Haiti because the violence closed its main international airports. He had arrived in Puerto Rico a week ago, after being barred from landing in the Dominican Republic, where officials said that he lacked a required flight plan. Dominican officials also closed the airspace to flights to and from Haiti.

It wasn't immediately clear who would be chosen to lead Haiti out of the crisis in which heavily armed gangs have burned police stations, attacked the main airport and raided two of the country's biggest prisons. The raids resulted in the release of more than 4,000 inmates.

In a later statement, the airline said that the plane "experienced a strong shake during flight, the cause of which is currently under investigation."

The airline said it was working with officials to support an investigation into what happened.

Passengers were met by paramedics and more than 10 emergency vehicles when the flight touched down in Auckland.

About 50 people were treated at the scene for mostly mild injuries, while 13 were hospitalized, an ambulance spokesperson said. LATAM said that of the 13, the major-

ity were discharged soon after, and only one passenger and one cabin crew member needed additional attention, "but without any life-threatening risks."

Passengers said a number of people weren't wearing seatbelts when flight LA800 suddenly dropped.

He said that he woke up suddenly during the drop and found the passenger who'd been next to him "on the roof of the plane." (AP)



South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, (centre left), is greeted by African National Congress supporters as he arrives at the Mose Mabhidia stadium in Durban, South Africa on Feb 24 for the ANC national manifesto launch in anticipation of the 2024 general elections. (AP)

Indonesia to deport Japanese man: A Japanese man accused of helping to run a \$90 million investment scam will be sent home after four years on the run, Indonesian authorities said Tuesday.

Yusuke Yamazaki, 43, was arrested off Bulan island in Kepulauan Riau province on Jan. 31, while attempting to cross into Malaysia in a small wooden boat, said Nyoman Gede Surya Mataram, who heads the provincial office of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. He's expected to be deported by the end of the day.

The boat also carried four undocumented Indonesian migrant workers and two crew, Mataram said. The others were detained by police for further investigation while Yamazaki was handed over to the Immigration Office in Batam on Feb. 2.

Yamazaki initially gave a false name and detained on suspicion of visa violations, Mataram said, but police later identified him as an international fugitive. (AP)

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
SAUDI	-	Tadawul	+58.22	12,613.94	
UAE	-	DFM	+4.67	4,252.77	
PHILIPPINES	-	PSEi	+7.35	6,879.59	
JAPAN	-	Nikkei 225	-22.98	38,797.51	
PAKISTAN	-	KSE 100	-863.73	64,881.47	

Business



National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) hosted a series of knowledge sharing sessions with managers from Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) and Kuwait Aviation Fuelling Company (KAFCO).

Bank seeks to share valuable experience regarding leadership techniques and strategies

NBK hosts series of knowledge sharing sessions with managers from KNPC and KAFCO

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) hosted a series of knowledge sharing sessions with managers from Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) and Kuwait Aviation Fuelling Company (KAFCO). The aim of these sessions is to share insights and experiences regarding leadership techniques and strategies, in coordination with the Training and Development Department at KNPC.

The sessions held during January and February brought together NBK's executive leadership and their counterparts from KNPC and KAFCO. The participants engaged in open discussions on a range of topics, including effective communication and motivation strategies, building high-performance teams, empowering employees, stimulating innovation, adaptability to change, and overcoming challenges.

The sessions were joined by 22 managerial participants from KNPC and KAFCO, and included lectures by NBK's executive leaders: Mr. Moham-

med Al-Othman, CEO-Consumer and Digital Banking, Mr. Mohammed Al Kharafi, COO – Head of Group Operations and Information Technology, and Mr. Emad Al-Ablani, GM - Group Human Resources.

Speaking on this, Mr. Emad Al-Ablani, GM –head of Group Human Resources, Group Human Resources at National Bank of Kuwait said, "NBK maintains solid ties with the oil sector, being the 'bank of choice' for Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiaries, in addition to its effective role in developing the human capital in state-owned entities as the strategic banking partner for the government sector."

"NBK's strategic partnership with oil sector companies in training and development extends over long decades, and is continuously increasing, in line with our unwavering commitment towards the oil sector and ambition to provide ongoing support to this strategic industry" he added.

"In this context, NBK has launched the NBK-KPC Visa Infinite Credit

Card exclusively for the employees of KPC and its subsidiaries, in an effort to enhance their banking experience and promote the cooperation and partnership between the two organizations over several decades," he mentioned.

"NBK is keen on developing the human capital, especially in state-owned entities, in line with its social and development responsibilities, complementing its year-round initiatives that underline its profound belief in the powerful impact of these programs in serving society and individuals, and echoing its leading role in this field for long decades," he emphasized.

NBK always seeks to strengthen its leading position as the most socially responsible private sector institution through a wide range of initiatives including training national talent in different government entities, especially the oil sector, which contributes to developing human capital and supporting the Kuwaiti economy.

Kuwait elevates closed joint stock company by 45% in '23

Public joint stock company establishment stagnates

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: The Ministry of Trade and Industry's efforts to streamline joint stock company transactions have yielded positive results, with closed joint stock companies experiencing a significant increase of 45% in 2023 compared to the same period in 2022. The establishment of closed joint stock companies rose from 20 in 2022 to 29 in 2023. In contrast, no public joint stock company was established during this period.

In May, the Ministry approved development measures, simplifying the transaction clearance cycle for joint-stock companies. The 17-step establishment cycle, previously taking 60 days, was streamlined, with 4 steps now completed within 24 hours through the Ministry's automated system, eliminating the need for physical visits.

Commercial Licensing Department data revealed 119 new licenses issued to natural persons and addressed changes for 162 licenses of natural persons and 2 for legal persons in December 2023. Additionally, modifications were made to 27 activities for natural persons and 2 for legal persons, while 73 licenses for natural persons and 2 for legal persons were canceled. Furthermore, 12 licenses were issued to replace lost ones for legal persons.

KIPIC extends bidding deadline for Al-Zour Refinery project

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: The Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) has extended the bidding deadline for a contract to deliver alternative feeding systems for the hydrogen production unit at Al-Zour Refinery, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The new deadline, set by KIPIC has been postponed to April 14 from the initial date of March 12. The project, with a budget of \$150 million and an estimated completion time of 36 months, has seen multiple deadline extensions since its inception last year, with the most recent extension moving the deadline from March 12 to April 14.

The project's scope encompasses engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) work, as well as pre-commissioning, start-up, and quality testing phases.

MEED reported that several contractors have expressed interest in the project, including Hyundai Engineering & Construction, Larsen & Toubro Hydrocar-

bon Energy, Petrofac, Samsung Engineering, and SK Engineering and Contracting.

The EPC scope involves constructing Unit 38, Compression Facilities, steam generating units, and associated facilities, among other tasks.

In a separate development, Kuwait Oil Company has reopened applications for the design consultant contract for the heavy oil development program in the Lower Pars region. Interested companies are encouraged to apply online, with the deadline set for June 2, 2024.

The heavy oil project's first phase, awarded to a consortium led by Petrofac and Consolidated Contractors Company, was completed in 2019, with subsequent phases yet to commence. The project includes construction of central processing facilities, infrastructure, and pipeline packages, with phases two and three estimated at \$2 billion each.

Fourth consecutive month of positive result

Bursa Kuwait leads Gulf markets with strong February performance

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: Despite a decline in liquidity rates, the Kuwait Stock Exchange demonstrated positive performance in February for the fourth consecutive month, resulting in favorable returns for investment funds, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The Premier Market index surged by approximately 2.5%, while the main market index saw a rise of about 1.9%; the general market index also experienced growth of around 2.4%, with the Main Market 50 index increasing by approximately 0.6%. However, stock market liquidity decreased by 20.9% compared to January, reaching 1.16 billion dinars.

In December 2023, 1,481 licenses were issued for main companies, showing a 20% decrease from November 2023. Branch companies also saw a 25% decrease with 286 licenses issued. License renewal transactions for main companies decreased by 31%, and renewals for branch companies decreased by 18%.

Trade name change transactions saw a 20% decrease for main companies (183 transactions) and a 20% decrease for branches of private companies (53 transactions) compared to the previous month. Dissolution and liquidation of companies, along with license cancellations, amounted to 71 transactions for main companies (13% increase) and 103 transactions for branch companies (27% decrease).

Investment funds, particularly traditional Kuwaiti funds focusing on local stocks, continued to register significant returns ranging between 5.6% and 9.8% since the beginning of the year. Similarly, Kuwaiti Islamic funds achieved returns ranging from 5.2% to 8.4% during the same period.

The monthly gains in February further bolstered the overall positive performance of the Kuwait Stock Exchange since the start of 2024. This positioned the exchange as the top-performing Gulf stock market for the month, with the first market index showing notable growth of over 9.1% from the beginning of the year until the end of trading on Monday.

The number of licensed companies per person in December 2023 was 1,046, reflecting a 21% decrease from November 2023. Additionally, 701 companies were licensed (22% decrease), and 14 licenses were issued to joint-venture companies, indicating a 56% increase. Limited partnership companies received 11 licenses, marking a 267% increase.

The new incorporation model focuses on immediate approval of founders' criminal status after application submission, direct printing of the supervisory authority's book on activity, providing electronic copies of draft articles of association for closed companies, and preparing to link with the Ministry of Justice for electronic contract authentication.

Geopolitical risks drive oil prices up in Feb

Oil futures 'surge' to November highs amid positive economic developments

By National Bank of Kuwait

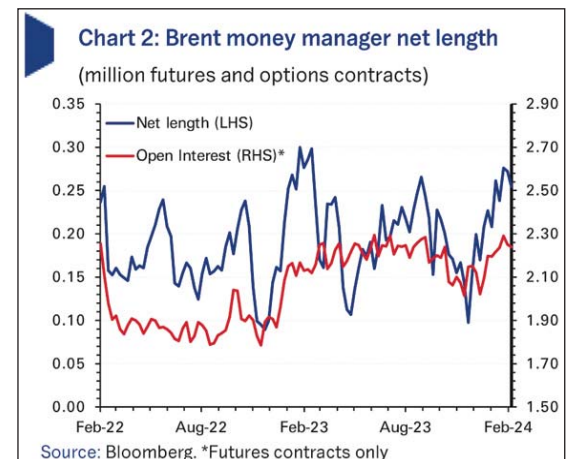
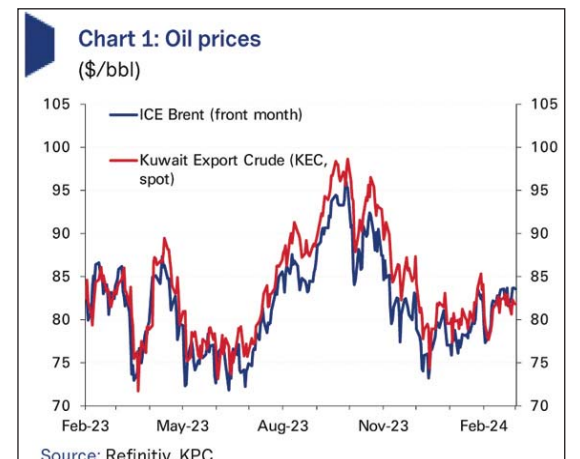
Brent futures rallied for a second consecutive month in February, rising by more than 2% to \$83.6/bbl (+8.5% ytd) on the back of positive macroeconomic signals and continuing geopolitical tensions surrounding events in Gaza and the Red Sea. (Chart 1.) Stimulus measures undertaken by the Chinese government and expectations of an extension of OPEC+ supply cuts into Q2, which were announced on 3 March, also factored in oil's move to its highest level since November. Brent's backwardated price structure, where prices for prompt delivery are higher than prices for delivery in the future, widened to more than \$2.4/bbl (M1-M3) by February's close, a four-month high, signaling increasing supply tightness. Local marker Kuwait Export Crude (KEC), meanwhile, closed the month at \$81.8/bbl (-2.7% m/m; +2.9% ytd).

In the futures markets, bullish speculator positioning increased substantially in February, with net length (the difference between the number of bullish "long" and bearish "short" contracts) reaching the highest in nearly a year at 276k contracts, before pulling back towards the end of the month. (Chart 2.) The ratio of longs to shorts was back up over 5 in mid-February, the most since last October. Furthermore, as a sign of renewed appetite for oil trades, Brent open interest (the total number of outstanding derivative contracts) rose in February to its highest level since last July.

Oil demand growth forecasts for 2024 remained relatively unchanged in February, though all the reporting agencies noted the likelihood of a softer pace of expansion this year compared to last. The International Energy Agency (IEA) reduced its projection by 20 kb/d to 1.2 mb/d, still a huge 1 mb/d below OPEC's estimate of 2.2 mb/d, which is by far the most bullish among forecasters. Non-OECD economies including China, India and Brazil are expected to drive the increase this year, accounting for 78% of total oil demand gains in 2024. OECD members, on the other hand, will likely post much slower growth amid a lackluster economic environment. For 2025, OPEC sees oil demand rising by a still strong 1.85 mb/d to 106.2 mb/d.

On the supply side, combined data from OPEC secondary sources and S&P Global show aggregate OPEC+ production (quota-bound members) falling 234 kb/d m/m to 34.4 mb/d in January. Among OPEC members, the steepest declines came from Kuwait (-109 kb/d) and Iraq (-98 kb/d) as both countries began implementing their voluntary cuts. Increased production in the UAE (+31 kb/d), in accordance with its new higher baseline, and in Saudi Arabia (+25 kb/d), slightly offset the losses. Of the 8 OPEC+ members taking part in the latest round of supply cuts, which on paper total 2.1 mb/d but which in practice will see only about 500 kb/d of fresh production cuts (the remainder is a combination of Saudi's 1 mb/d output cut rollover from mid-2023, Russia's 300 kb/d export cut rollover from 2023 and an additional Russian 200 kb/d refined product exports cut, while the UAE's 163 kb/d cut is offset by a 200 kb/d increase to its baseline) only Saudi Arabia was in perfect compliance in January, with Kazakhstan yet to move at all with its 82 kb/d cut. Meanwhile, quota-exempt Libya saw its output fall 135 kb/d to 1.0 mb/d in February following protests at Al-Sharara field earlier in the month and Iran recorded its first monthly production decline in a year (-5 kb/d to 3.16 mb/d). As was widely expected, OPEC+ announced on 3 March that these producers will extend their cuts through Q2, with Russia also signing up, but with a mix of production and export cuts totaling 471 kb/d rather than an outright 500 kb/d export cut as was the case in Q1. Russia intends to gradually deepen its production cut from 350 kb/d in April to 471 kb/d in June while simultaneously reducing its export cuts from the initial 121 kb/d in April.

Outside of the OPEC+ group, the IEA reckons that output gains from the US, Canada, Brazil and Guyana will drive aggregate non-OPEC supply growth of 1.5



mb/d in 2024, which, while down on 2023's breakneck pace of 2.5 mb/d, will, nonetheless, outpace expected demand growth this year, leading to a surplus of supply over demand and potentially around 0.2 mb/d of oil inventory gains on average. The US Energy Information Administration (EIA) and OPEC do not share that view, with the former pegging non-OPEC supply growth in 2024 at around half the IEA's rate and OPEC at around 1.3 mb/d. We think non-OPEC supply growth could come in lower at about 1.1 mb/d, which, with OPEC+'s supply cut extension into Q2, could almost certainly leave the market short of barrels and facing an inventory drawdown in Q1-Q3 and for the year as a whole (-0.4 mb/d). Were OPEC+ to extend their voluntary cuts beyond Q2 then the oil market balance/stock change would tip further into a supply deficit/drawdown.

In the US, crude oil production returned in February to the record 13.3 mb/d level following January's winter storms when 1 mb/d of output was shut in. It is partly as a result of this and partly on expectations of lower drilling during the rest of the year that the EIA has reduced its crude oil output growth projections this year from 290 kb/d to just 170 kb/d, a sizeable drop from 2023's growth of 1.0 mb/d. The EIA expects output to generally flatline around 13.1 mb/d on average for 2024. For 2025, however, the agency expects production to rise to 13.5 mb/d (+400 kb/d) despite no significant change in the expectations of oil prices over the period. Meanwhile, active oil rigs increased to 506 (+1.2% ytd) by February's close, the highest level since September.

OPEC's policy path will likely be the focal point for markets this year. Having announced an extension to their Q1 supply cuts, the producer bloc will be watching carefully how oil demand fares through the months ahead and the trajectory of non-OPEC supply. Of comfort to OPEC+ will be that prices appear to have firmed with a price floor established at around the \$80/bbl level. We think that level will be a reasonable base case for 2024, though with a stronger upside risk developing than before.

Presented to underprivileged families through 'Social Affairs', KRCS, and 'Food Bank'

Zain kicks off Ramadan campaign with food supplies initiative

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: Zain kicked off its annual Ramadan social campaign, Zain Alshuhoor, with the food supplies (Machla) initiative. The supplies were presented to underprivileged communities through three of Zain's strategic partners: the Social Care Centers of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), and the Kuwait Food Bank - all official, recognized organizations.

The food supplies were prepared and distributed to those in need before the start of the Holy Month of Ramadan. In attendance were Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Abdulaziz Sari Al Mutairi, Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Managing Director Abdulrahman Al Oun, Zain Kuwait Corporate Relations Department Manager Hamad Al Musaibeh, officials from the Kuwait Food Bank, and members of the Zain Alshuhoor volunteer team.

In a step that showed the Zain family's commitment to bring about positive social impact in the community, members of the Zain Alshuhoor volunteer team - that consists of Zain employees from across



Abdulrahman Al Oun with Zain and KRCS volunteers.

the company's divisions and departments - gathered at Zain's headquarters in Shuwaikh to prepare the food supplies. Foodstuffs were categorized and dis-

tributed into boxes ahead of their delivery to the three organizations.

The food supplies were delivered to the Social Care

Centers of the Ministry of Social Affairs, where they were presented to residents of the centers, including foster care children, elderly individuals, and people with special needs. The supply boxes were also delivered to the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) and the Kuwait Food Bank to be presented to underprivileged families and individuals across the nation.

This year, six of Zain's strategic community partners from both the public and private sectors join its annual Ramadan social campaign, Zain Alshuhoor. The campaign features a wide range of humanitarian, charitable, social, religious, health, and sports programs that continue throughout the Holy Month of Ramadan.

Zain Alshuhoor is one of Kuwait's biggest and most successful community programs during the Holy Month. Every year, the company introduces a bigger, renewed version of the campaign that expands upon the previous year in its initiatives and programs. The campaign strives to share the blessings of this much-cherished month with the entire Kuwaiti people.



Abdulaziz Al Mutairi and Hamad Al Musaibeh with Zain and 'Social Affairs' officials.



Zain volunteers and Kuwait Food Bank officials at the Bank's stores.



Members of the Zain Alshuhoor volunteer team pack the food supplies.

Step towards strategic excellence in banking sector

Gulf Bank celebrates 'graduation' of its senior leaders from The Harvard Business School executive program

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: As part of its continuous efforts to develop human capital, Gulf Bank announced the graduation of its senior leaders from the Harvard Business School executive program - a custom executive development program for banking and finance executives that are part of the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies. The program is designed to support and develop leaders in the banking and financial sector, under the theme "Strategic Leadership in a Changing World".

This program is part of the "Kafaa" initiative launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait, in cooperation with Kuwaiti banks to help develop and qualify national talents, and is managed by the Institute of Banking Studies, in cooperation with Harvard Business School.

The Bank celebrated the leaders for completing the program and receiving the Harvard Business School certifications, namely: Deputy General Manager - Mr. Basel Asad from Branch Banking, Assistant General Manager of Card Products - Mr. Mohammad Taqi, Assistant General Manager of Enterprise Core Services - Mr. Rami Al Zaid

The program focuses on two primary themes: Financial markets strategy and leadership, equipping participants with concepts and tools for successful leadership in a rapidly changing financial landscape, and ways to impact the performance, innovation, and culture of their organization.

On this occasion, Gulf Bank's General Manager of Human Resources, Mrs. Salma Al-Hajjaj, said: "At Gulf Bank, we believe that our employees are the foundation of our success and the drivers of our excellence. Therefore, we are continuously working on training and developing them, which contributes towards consolidating Gulf Bank's leading position in the banking sector."

Al-Hajjaj mentioned that the major transformations recently witnessed by Gulf Bank as part of its 2025 strategy, especially when



Graduates of the Harvard Program are executive leaders at Gulf Bank after receiving their graduation certificates.

it comes to digital transformation, makes the Bank's employees' participation in such specialized programs a top priority. Noting that digital transformation requires strategic leaders capable of facing market fluctuations, and to make the most of the opportunities they generate; ensuring the best results are achieved with the fast-changing financial technologies.

She pointed that the program provides an opportunity for participants to anticipate and respond quickly, and effectively, to strategic opportunities and threats in financial markets, such as: Understanding risks and appropriate responses to cyber threats, managing, and leading digital innovation, and ways to understand and manage investor concerns around ESG and sustainability.

Al-Hajjaj also expressed her pride in Gulf Bank for being one of Kuwait's leading banks that generously invests in human capital in order to enhance the competencies of its employees - as they are the key for achieving its strategic objectives. This is accomplished through providing employees with the latest expertise

and skills necessary to keep pace with the major banking developments that the banking industry is undergoing locally and internationally.

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

Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining robust developments in sustainability at environmental, social and governance levels through diverse sustainability initiatives, strategically selected to benefit the Bank both internally and externally. Gulf Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various parties to achieve it.

Empowering next generation of journalists

ESF Oracle to organize groundbreaking journalism conference for HS students

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: The English School Fahaheel Newspaper Club, The ESF Oracle is organizing the journalism conference for high school students in Kuwait and the Middle East on April 27. The aim is to provide students with an opportunity to learn about the field of journalism, develop essential skills, and network with professionals in the industry.

The conference will consist of various workshops, panel discussions, and interactive activities that cater to the interests and needs of high school students in the region.

The conference is scheduled to commence with an opening ceremony featuring a keynote address by a prominent journalist or media professional in the Middle East.

This address will set the tone for the day and provide students with an overview of the importance of journalism and the role it plays in society.

Students will attend a workshop led by an experienced journalist, where they will learn the basics of news reporting and writing, including the inverted pyramid style, headline writing, and ethical considerations in journalism.

During the Social Media and Digital Journalism workshop, students will learn about the role of social media in modern journalism, best practices for using social media platforms, and how to create engaging content for digital audiences.

This will be followed by the Panel Discussion -- Women Breaking Barriers and Changing Narratives in Journalism and

Other Fields in Kuwait - focusing on the remarkable achievements of women who have broken barriers and reshaped narratives in journalism and various other fields.

This workshop aims to inspire and empower young journalists by showcasing the stories of successful women who have made significant contributions to their respective industries in Kuwait.

Investigative Journalism and Ethics workshop will focus on the importance of investigative journalism, its impact on society, and the ethical considerations that journalists must take into account when reporting on sensitive issues.

The conference will conclude with a closing ceremony, during which awards will be presented to students who have demonstrated excellence in journalism at their schools. The ceremony will also include a reflection on the day's events and the importance of journalism in the Middle East.

According to the school sources, the idea for organizing this conference arose when students of the ESF newspaper club realized that they could not participate in the high school journalism conference held in the USA due to some agenda items conflicting with Islamic standards.

Consequently, they opted to establish their own conference that aligns with the principles of the Islamic faith.

The primary objective of this year's conference launch is to extend invitations to delegates from schools across Kuwait as the ESF plans to include schools from other countries in the GCC region.

Week-long journey into Kuwait's history

AUK hosts 'Voices from the Occupation' exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: In conjunction with Kuwait National and Liberation days, the American University of Kuwait (AUK) Library celebrated the opening of "Voices from the Occupation," an exhibition by the Oral History and Documentation Project (OHDP), supported by Kuwait Projects Company (KIPCO) and in collaboration with the Contemporary Art platform (CAP).

After its successful showcase at CAP, the exhibition was extended to AUK. This provided students with an invaluable opportunity to delve deeper into the project and engage with firsthand accounts of individuals who witnessed the Iraqi occupation and subsequent liberation of Kuwait in 1991.

The exhibition consisted of several stations with posters and audio segments

selected from the original interviews. The audio parts focused on narrators' experiences during the occupation from different standpoints depending on their field. This format allowed visitors to gain a multifaceted understanding of the occupation through the diverse narratives presented.

AUK president, Dr. Rawda Awwad, attended the opening ceremony alongside Mr. Samer Khanachet, AUK board of trustees member and Deputy KIPCO Group Chief Executive Officer; and Ms. Eman Al Awadhi, KIPCO Group Senior Vice President - Corporate Communications & Investor Relations.

The exhibition was scheduled to be on display for an entire week. To listen to the oral history interviews, visit the website <https://oralhistory.auk.edu.kw>



AUK and KIPCO members.



AUK faculty and students.



General photo of the exhibition.

Data decodes travel preferences

Wego reveals top destinations for Kuwaiti travelers in Q1 '24

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: Wego, the largest online travel marketplace in MENA (Middle East and North Africa), has unveiled the latest insights into the travel trends of Kuwaiti travelers for the first quarter of 2024. The data reveals intriguing patterns in destination searches and preferences among Kuwaiti jetsetters, shedding light on their wanderlust and travel intent.

Wego data showed that the top 10 countries that Kuwaiti globetrotters are searching for the most during this period include Egypt, India, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Turkey, Jordan, Pakistan, Qatar, the United Kingdom, and the Philippines.

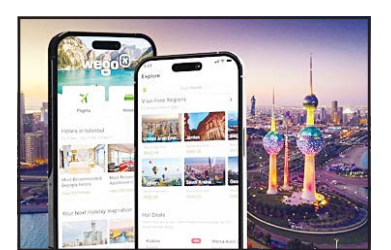
Travel interest to Egypt itself makes up about half of all trip searches originating from Kuwait. In a further breakdown of the data, Wego also found that Cairo, Sohag, Assiut, Alexandria, and Luxor rank highly as cities Kuwait travelers are searching for in Q1 this year.

According to the travel experts at Wego, the popularity of Egyptian destinations among travelers flying from Kuwait can be attributed to several factors.

The significant Egyptian expat community in Kuwait may plan to return to Egypt for Ramadan or part of it. The searches may also include plans to celebrate Eid al Fitr at home.

Moreover, the favorable exchange rate between the Kuwaiti Dinar and the Egyptian Pound encourages Egyptians living abroad to return home for significant occasions like Ramadan. This economic advantage also presents Egypt as an affordable travel destination for Kuwaiti tourists.

While Egyptian cities steal the spotlight, other cities elsewhere also feature on most-searched destinations from



Wego flyers

Kuwait this quarter. Istanbul, for one, is a perennial favorite for its charm, affordability, and visa-free entry perk afforded to Kuwaiti passport holders.

The same no-visa-required arrangement similarly draws them to London, one of the most sought-after European destinations from Kuwait. Wego also spotted accessible emerging destinations like Baku and Tbilisi down the list - both cities can be reached by flights within a 3-hour duration - hinting at a growing interest in unique cultural experiences among Kuwaiti travelers.

James Patterson looks back through history in new 'Time Travel Twins' series

NEW YORK, March 12, (AP) — James Patterson never seems to run out of ideas.

The ultraproficient author is launching a new middle grade series, "The Time Travel Twins," about a boy and girl who witness key moments in U.S. history, starting with the era of the Revolutionary War.

Released by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, and co-written with Tad Safran, the series begins Sept. 9.

"I've always said that the hardest job with kids is to get them in the habit of reading. Like all of my children's books, the goal of 'The Time Travel Twins' is for a kid to finish it and say, 'Please, give me another book,'" Patterson said in a statement Monday.

Patterson's hundreds of books include children's stories, his "Maximum Ride" and "Alex Cross" thrill-

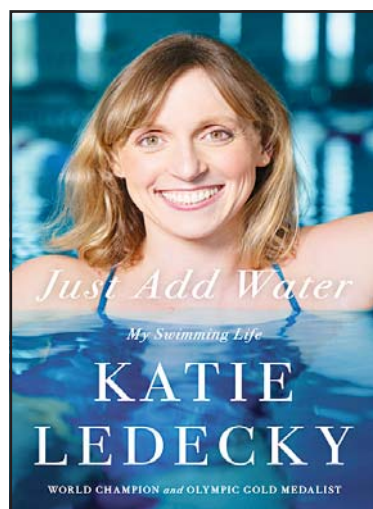
ers, political thrillers co-written with former President Bill Clinton and a novel written with Dolly Parton about the Nashville music scene.

Also:

NEW YORK: Olympic gold medalist Katie Ledecky has written a memoir, reflecting on a life she can hardly believe is her own.

Simon & Schuster announced Thursday that the celebrated swimmer's "Just Add Water" will be published June 11. Ledecky, a two-time winner of The Associated Press Female Athlete of the Year award, is a seven-time gold medal winner who has won more individual Olympic races than any female swimmer in history.

Her memoir will cover everything from childhood games of sharks and minnows while growing up in Bethes-



This cover image released by Simon & Schuster shows "Just Add Water" by Katie Ledecky. (AP)

da, Maryland, to her reign as one of the world's greatest athletes.

"I never imagined I would make it to the Olympics, or be at this level, or write a book about this unlikely career that I've had," Ledecky, who turns 27 next week, said in a statement.

"I first started keeping a journal when I was 14 years old, to document my training in the lead-up to the 2012 London Olympics. Paging through them last year, I realized these journals included elements of my wider story in swimming. I also wanted to be able to show that I wouldn't be where I am without the love, support, and encouragement of people who have influenced me."

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Books

Variety



Sally Field, from left, Jennifer Lawrence, Michelle Yeoh, Charlize Theron, and Jessica Lange present the award for best performance by an actress in a leading role during the Oscars on Sunday, March 10, 2024, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP)

Film

Other winners revel at Vanity Fair's Oscar after-party

'Oppenheimer' crew keeps it low key

BEVERLY HILLS, California, March 12, (AP) — Christopher Nolan stood as staid and nonchalant as ever as crowds surrounded him and music pulsed.

His celebration was limited to casually holding a best directing Oscar, his first, and one of seven on the night for his film.

The "Oppenheimer" crowd were hardly the hardest partiers at the Vanity Fair post-Oscars party on Sunday night, but they hardly needed to be, their hardware did all the preening for them.

Nolan's wife, "Oppenheimer" producer Emma Thomas, held her own statuette, for best picture, and did most of the talking as waves of well-wishers descended on the couple.

They found a couch near the dance floor with their two children and were immediately met by a woman bearing a tray of In-N-Out burgers, the signature food at the signature Oscars after-party where end-of-award-season decadence is the norm.

Nolan did have the relax-it's-all-over vibe down pat. Billie Eilish soon strode by with two friends, her best original song Oscar slung in one arm. It was the lone Oscar won by the film that has stood opposite Oppenheimer since their simultaneous release in July, but it's already the second for Eilish at age 22.

The Nolan clan left early, as the party was just getting started.

The annual affair is hosted by Vanity Fair editor Radhika Jones and held at a space built between Beverly Hills City Hall and the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts.

It's one of several Oscar parties held across the city after the show. The first stop of the night for most winners, including Nolan and Thomas on Sunday night, is the Governor's Ball, the official after-party just a few escalators away from the Dolby where they get their statuette engraved on the spot.

Greta Gerwig was headed there after the show but first had to find her parents. She stood in the lobby of the Dolby trying to look up to the different balconies. Finally she just decided to call "dad, dad, are you up or are you down?"

A few minutes later she ran into one of her Kens (Kingsley Ben-Adir) and had to recap the "Im Just

Ken" performance once more, while inside the party Noah Baumbach and his son searched for some food.

Over by the engraving station, best actress winner Emma Stone got to share a moment with some of the "Poor Things" crafts winners, like costume designer Holly Waddington. They posed joyously with their statuettes and Stone laughed again about her dress.

"Anatomy of a Fall" director Justine Triet went straight from getting her original screenplay Oscar engraved to the nearby caviar and filet station. Soon most stars and winners were on the way out to check out the Vanity Fair party.

Across town, Universal Chairman Donna Langley also celebrated their company's triumphant night for "Oppenheimer" and "The Holdovers" (a Focus release) at the Soho House, a private, members-only club with panoramic views of the clear Los Angeles night. Even Steven Spielberg made a lengthy appearance to give congratulations (he'd earlier on the broadcast handed the best director Oscar to Nolan).

Memorable

Emily Blunt, John Krasinski and best actor winner Cillian Murphy huddled together in a corner to enjoy the evening, while the Oppenheimies like Jack Quaid, Josh Hartnett and David Krumholtz mingled. Also around was supporting actress winner Da'Vine Joy Randolph, still in her stunning Louis Vuitton gown, and who everyone wanted to talk to about her memorable speech, and her co-star Dominic Sessa who had changed into a sequin black jacket.

Such sequins abounded at the Vanity Fair party, where the dress code might be called "loosened black tie." Many still wear their tuxes and gowns from the ceremony. Some come in more casual, but no less ornate, outfits.

Usher wore a white, sequined jacket over a bare chest. Barry Keoghan sported a similarly spangled jacket over a mesh tank top, looking not too different than his "Saltburn" character did when he ingratiated himself with the nobility.

The party's guest list always extends well beyond Hollywood into music, fashion, literature and sports. Serena Williams and LeBron James, who both have

had a hand in producing in recent years, each hung out on the party's patio.

The 6-foot-9 James was a star among stars as he towered over the crowd in a white tuxedo jacket and sunglasses while holding a glass of champagne. He became an instant magnet for photos.

At the entrance, where many walk their final awards season red carpet, Anya Taylor-Joy greeted Matteo Bocelli, who sang during the in memoriam segment with his father, the Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli.

"Were you nervous to sing? You did such a beautiful job," she said.

"Grazie," he answered.

Along with the ubiquitous In-N-Out burgers, servers circulated with fried, cheese-stuffed squash blossoms and quattro formaggio pizza. Ke Huy Quan, last year's best supporting actor winner for "Everything Everywhere All at Once" and one of the men who presented it to Robert Downey Jr. for "Oppenheimer" this year, grabbed a slice of the pie after walking the carpet and scarfed it down like he hadn't eaten all day.

As Earth, Wind and Fire's "September" blasted, Jon Hamm stood sipping a cocktail at the nearest bar, half-dancing along as he hugged Brett Goldstein of "Ted Lasso" and chatted with "Schitt's Creek" star Catherine O'Hara. Hamm later talked and laughed at length with John Mulaney, a presenter during the show. The two exchanged cheek kisses as they parted ways.

Nearby, Jeffrey Wright, best actor nominee for "American Fiction," talked intently to director John Waters.

Near them, "Anyone but You" and "Euphoria" star Sydney Sweeney stood in a white gown with fiancé Jonathan Davino at her side.

At least one "Oppenheimer" winner got a little rowdy. As midnight approached, Ludwig Göransson, who won his own second musical Oscar for writing the film's score, tore up the dance floor, shimmying and moonwalking with his statuette in one hand.

His wasn't the only Oscar on the floor. Other lesser-known faces danced alongside him, celebrating the instant invitation a win gets you, regardless of the category or your fame, to the absurdly star-studded party where the tiny statues are the real celebrities.

LOS ANGELES: Al Pacino says he was following the instructions of the Oscars producers when he omitted the names of the best picture nominees while announcing the winner of the show's biggest category.

The Oscar-winning actor was Sunday night's final presenter and announced "Oppenheimer" as the best picture winner without naming the full slate of nominees.

"I just want to be clear it was not my intention to omit them, rather a choice by the producers not to have them said again since they were highlighted individually throughout the ceremony. I was honored to be a part of the evening and chose to follow the way they wished for this award to be presented," Pacino said in a statement Monday afternoon.

"I realize being nominated is a huge milestone in one's life and to not be fully recognized is offensive and hurtful. I say this as someone who profoundly relates with filmmakers, actors and producers so I deeply empathize with those who have been slighted by this oversight and it's why I felt it necessary to make this statement."

Pacino, 83, is a nine-time acting nominee, who won best actor for 1992's "Scent of a Woman."

The Oscars started late and ended in a respectable time - under last year's runtime - in part because Pacino skipped reading all the nominees for best picture.

The nominated films - "American Fiction," "Anatomy of a Fall," "Barbie," "The Holdovers," "Killers of the Flower Moon," "Maestro," "Oppenheimer," "Past Lives," "Poor Things" and "The Zone of Interest" - all were featured with montages during the show.

But Pacino's abrupt presentation - saying "And the Oscar goes to ..." before eventually announcing "my eyes see 'Oppenheimer,'" left many viewers confused.

It wasn't the only category to omit a reading of the nominees. The nominated original songs were all performed on

the show, and the announcement that "What Was I Made For?" from "Barbie" had won was made without listing them again.

Oscars producer Molly McNearney told the trade outlet Variety that skipping the reading of the nominees was intentional.



Pacino



McNearney

"It was a creative decision we made because we were very worried that the show was going to be long," she said. "By the time you get to the end of the show, you've seen all ten best picture clip packages. People just want to hear who wins, and they're pretty ready for the show to be over. At least that's what

we anticipated."

She added: "I apologize if our decision to not have to read through all those nominations put him in a tough spot."

The day after the Oscars, Penguin Press announced that Pacino has a memoir coming out this fall.

The publisher is called the

book "an astonishingly revelatory account of a creative life in full," including his account of such classics as "The Godfather," "Serpico" and "Dog Day Afternoon."

Pacino said in a statement that he wanted "to express what I've seen and been through in my life." (AP)



Ryan Gosling performs the song "I'm Just Ken" from the movie "Barbie" during the Oscars on Sunday, March 10, 2024, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP)

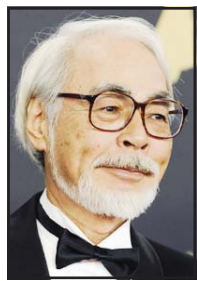
Animation

Legacy continues

Oscar-winning Miyazaki defies retirement plans

TOKYO, March 12, (AP): Ghibli, the Japanese studio that just won its second Oscar for feature animation for "The Boy and The Heron," hasn't said yet what it plans next.

But founder **Hayao Miyazaki**, who at 83 was the oldest director ever nominated in that category, won't rule out making another film, even if his next project is a short instead of a full-length feature.



Miyazaki

Miyazaki, according to a longtime confidante, is a bit embarrassed about having pronounced a decade ago that he would no longer make movies, citing his age.

"He regrets having announced to the world he won't make another film," producer Toshio Suzuki, the co-founder of Studio Ghibli, said after the latest win.

When the Oscar was announced early Monday in Japan, a cheer went up in the tiny, humble building that houses the studio on the fringes of sprawling Tokyo where dozens of invited media had crammed in to watch the ceremony on a big screen.

It was a big day for Japanese filmmaking, with "Godzilla Minus One" winning the award for best visual effects, marking Japan's first win in that category.

Japanese media heaped praise on both the Ghibli and Godzilla films, noting that a double win at the Oscars hadn't happened for the country since 2009. An editorial Tuesday in the mass-circulation Yomiuri newspaper heralded "a new page in the history of Japanese filmmaking."

Backdrop

Japan is also very much in the backdrop of "Oppenheimer," which won seven Oscars, including best picture. The biopic centers on an American scientist working on the atomic bomb. The film has yet to be released in Japan.

"Perfect Days," Wim Wenders' touching film about a sanitation worker, was nominated in the international feature film category but did not win. Japanese actor Koji Yakusho, who portrays a gentle and lonely man who takes photos and cares for plants, won best actor for his performance at Cannes in May last year.

"War is Over," which won for short animation, was inspired by Yoko Ono and John Lennon's music. Their son Sean, who co-wrote the film, gave a shout-out to his mother, who is Japanese, at the Academy Awards.

Miyazaki celebrated his Oscar win in private at his atelier and did not attend the studio event, Suzuki said. When asked why Miyazaki had shaved off his trademark beard, Suzuki said: "He doesn't want to look important."

Suzuki said he spent time analyzing why Ghibli's latest film was chosen, wondering if it was because of the Old Testament references in the storyline, which centers on a young boy dealing with his mother's illness and death, and the relationship he develops with a talking bird. Suzuki said Ghibli's hand-drawn illustrations were more effective than computer graphics in portraying the bird's metamorphosis.

Ghibli didn't do much publicity for the film, choosing instead a low-key approach for a work that was 10 years in the making and released after Miyazaki was supposedly retired.

"We thought it was OK to make something we really wanted to make," said Suzuki.



Finneas O'Connell, left, and Billie Eilish pose in the press room with the award for best original song for "What Was I Made For?" from "Barbie" at the Oscars on Sunday, March 10, 2024, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP)



Stone



Gladstone

Variety

LOS ANGELES: The Academy Awards were full of sure-things, long-awaited anointments and easy predictions. The "Oppenheimer" romp. **Ryan Gosling's** Ken stealing the show. That put even more focus on the category that was hardest to call: best actress.

When **Emma Stone** was announced as the winner, a ceremony light on surprise got a genuine shock, perfectly illustrated by Stone's stunned expression. Stone's win, for her sensational performance in "Poor Things," was hard not to cast as a defeat for **Lily Gladstone**. The "Killers of the Flower Moon" actress had been picked by most prognosticators and - as everyone knew - history hung in the balance. Her win would have been the first for a Native American in the nearly century-long history of the Oscars.

It was a difficult to define result. It wasn't quite an upset - Stone's performance, equally favored, was too good to call it that. But it still stung, particularly for Native Americans watching across the country - a community that has watched Hollywood for most of its existence overlook its stories and performers. One thing you couldn't call it, though, was a loss for Gladstone.

"Lily Gladstone has undeniably left an indelible mark, breaking barriers and inspiring countless individuals with her remarkable presence and commitment to storytelling," cheered Blackfoot Confederacy, a Tribal Council for the Blackfoot Confederacy Nations of Kainai-Blood Tribe, Siksika, Peigan-Pikani and Aam-skapik Pikuni.

"Her representation is a source of pride for the Blackfoot Confederacy, The Osage Nation, and all indigenous communities, resonating far beyond the confines of a single ceremony."

Throughout awards season, Gladstone has been a figure of rare grace, speaking eloquently on behalf of her tribe, the Osage, Native American representation and Hollywood history. More than any

Oscars

'Barbie' and 'Oppenheimer' bring audience bump

Oscars ratings aren't quite blockbuster

LOS ANGELES, March 12, (AP): "Barbenheimer" brought a bump not a boom to Oscars ratings.

An estimated 19.5 million people watched Sunday night's 96th Academy Awards ceremony on ABC. That's the biggest number drawn by the telecast in four years.

But that upward trend comes from an all-time low during the pandemic, and is up just 4% from last year's estimated audience of 18.7 million, according to numbers released Monday by ABC.

The Academy experimented with scheduling this year's show an hour earlier, and for the first time in years had many nominations for huge hit movies that viewers had actually seen - "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer."

The viewership peaked in the final half hour, when the audience saw Ryan Gosling perform "I'm Just Ken" from "Barbie," saw Cillian Murphy win best actor, Christopher Nolan win best director for "Oppenheimer" and Al Pacino give the film the best picture Oscar in an odd presentation.

A major star, Emma Stone, also won best actress in the final stretch in the night's most competitive race over Lily Gladstone, and near-

ly 22 million people saw her do it.

The show actually started a little less than an hour early. With Gaza protests happening outside slowing down entrances at the Dolby Theatre, host Jimmy Kimmel kicked things off about six minutes late, but it's not clear if that affected viewership.

Last year's big Oscar winner, "Everything, Everywhere All at Once," was hardly a slouch at the box office, bringing in \$143 million globally. But that's nothing like the "Barbenheimer" juggernaut, with "Oppenheimer" approaching a billion global dollars and "Barbie" surpassing it.

Ballooning

But they didn't yield the same ballooning numbers for the show that the Academy and ABC might have hoped for.

The Oscars did top the viewership of the most recent versions of other top awards shows, which have gone through similar slumps. Its 19.5 million outdrew the 16.9 million people who watched the Grammys in February, and the Golden Globes and Emmy Awards in January each had far fewer viewers.

For many years, the Academy

Awards were often the second most-watched television program of the year behind the Super Bowl. Until 2018, the Oscar telecast had never slipped below 30 million viewers, according to Nielsen records. The high-water mark was the 55 million people who watched "Titanic" clean up in 1998.

From the 43.7 million who watched in 2014, viewership declined steadily to 26.5 million in 2018, then went back up to 29.6 million in 2019, and 23.6 million in 2020. The bottom fell out with the pandemic-diminished show in 2021, seen by 9.85 million. It began rebounding in 2022 - the year of the Slap - with 16.6 million.

The movies and their makers aren't entirely to blame. The generational shift to streaming and other video forms has gutted broadcast television viewership, and few live events other than the Super Bowl draw the sort of audiences they once did.

The Oscars led into the sitcom "Abbott Elementary," which had a series high in viewers with a 6.9 million. The episode had an Oscar tie-in, with Bradley Cooper, playing himself, getting roasted in a classroom after a long season of heavy Oscar campaigning.

other nominated performer on Sunday night, she carried the hopes and dreams of a people.

"This is for every little rez kid," Gladstone said accepting her Golden Globe award in January. "Every little urban kid, every little Native kid out there who has a dream, who is seeing themselves represented and our stories told by ourselves in our own words, with tremendous allies and tremendous trust with and from each other."

Gladstone, born in Montana and raised

in the Blackfeet Nation, was the first Indigenous performer to win that award, for best actress in a drama - just one of the many "firsts" that she achieved leading up to the Oscars. She likewise made history at the Screen Actors Guild Awards, where she won best female actor in a leading role. Those wins - along with the devastating empathy and poise of her performance in "Killers of the Flower Moon" - were more than enough to leave many cheering Gladstone's milestone accomplishments.



Dave Mullins, center, and Brad Booker, winners of the award for best animated short for "War Is Over! Inspired by the Music of John & Yoko," pose in the press room at the Oscars on Sunday, March 10, 2024, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. Anya Taylor-Joy, left, looks on. (AP)

"Lily Gladstone, you already won," **Peggy Flanagan, Minnesota's** Lieutenant Governor and a member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe, wrote on X. "You bring all of us into every room you enter. We see ourselves in you every day - thank you for taking us along on this journey with you. We can dream bigger than we ever thought because of you."

Gladstone's SAG award was a big reason some expected her to win at the Oscars. It's the most predictive awards for acting prizes. All of the other SAG winners - **Cillian Murphy, Da'Vine Joy Randolph, Robert Downey Jr.** - won Sunday. In the two previous years, the SAG winners have exactly matched those at the Academy Awards. (AP)

But Stone also won at the BAFTAs and at the Globes, where "Poor Things" was slotted into the comedy or musical categories. At the Oscars, it was clear academy voters were more passionate about "Poor Things" than "Killers of the Flower Moon." "Poor Things" took home four awards, second most to "Oppenheimer," while "Killers of the Flower Moon" was shut out.

Martin Scorsese could be seen consoling Gladstone after the ceremony ended. The 81-year-old director knows something about Oscar disappointment. Scorsese, remarkably, has won only one Academy Awards (for directing "The Departed"), and he's sat through numerous ceremonies only to see his much-nominated films - including "Taxi Driver," "Gangs of New York," "The Wolf of Wall Street" and "The Irishman" - leave with nothing. His last two features have gone 0-for-20 at the Academy Awards, easily a record. (AP)

HEALTH/SCIENCE

Fasting guidelines during Ramadan

Navigating cardiovascular risks

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: In a recent interview with Dr. Rajesh Rajan, a senior cardiologist and esteemed figure in the field of cardiovascular health, we discussed the recommendations for patients with cardiovascular disease during Ramadan fasting.

During the interview, Dr. Rajan highlighted several important factors and therapies to consider for patients with cardiovascular conditions during Ramadan fasting. Patients are categorized into three risk levels: high risk, moderate risk, and low risk. High and moderate risk patients are advised against fasting, while low risk patients are permitted to fast.

1. Fasting-associated dehydration may lead to electrolyte abnormalities, which could be life-threatening in patients with unstable arrhythmias, inherited arrhythmia syndromes (e.g., long QT or Brugada syndrome), or those on certain medications.



Dr Rajan

2. Dehydration is a risk factor for the recurrence of orthostatic intolerance syndromes.

3. Cardiac medications can induce hypotension, potentially causing syncope, especially in elderly patients with impaired baroreflexes. This risk may be exacerbated by dehydration or changes in medication dosing to accommodate fasting.

4. Ramadan fasting has been shown to decrease blood pressure in individuals using diuretics for hypertension, without complications.

5. Sleep cycle and eating disturbances during Ramadan fasting may increase the incidence of atrial fibrillation.

6. Medication adjustments should be made cautiously, considering once-daily or long-acting formulations, and avoiding changes in established therapies if possible.

7. Patients with hypertension, coronary artery disease, or recent acute coronary syndrome should have their blood pressure, kidney function, and medications reviewed by healthcare providers before Ramadan fasting.

8. Patients with well-controlled blood pressure and who are compliant with medications are considered low-moderate risk for fasting.

9. Patients within a 6-week period of an acute coronary syndrome or cardiac surgery are advised not to fast.

10. Patients with severe heart failure (LVEF $\leq 35\%$) or advanced heart failure are considered high and very high risk for fasting, respectively.

11. Patients with pacemakers are considered low-moderate risk if their device parameters are stable and they have no electrolyte abnormalities.

12. Patients with cardiac resynchronization therapy or implantable cardioverter defibrillators are considered at least high risk for fasting.

13. Pregnant patients with cardiovascular conditions should consult their specialist team regarding Ramadan fasting.

14. Patients with heart failure with reduced ejection fraction (HFrEF) who closely monitored their condition during Ramadan fasting did not experience worsening symptoms. Non-compliance with fluid restrictions and medications increased the risk of worsening symptoms.

15. Patients with Type 2 Diabetes or heart failure on Sodium-glucose cotransporter 2 inhibitors (SGLT2i) should be initiated at a low dose, in the evening, and at least one month before Ramadan for patients observing fasting.

16. Patients with long QT syn-

drome should carefully avoid dehydration.

17. Patients with hypertrophic obstructive cardiomyopathy (HOCM) should remain well hydrated to reduce the occurrence of potentially life-threatening symptoms.

To ensure a safe fasting experience, the study recommends:

A. Medical evaluation before Ramadan.

B. Medication management and adjustment.

C. Nutritional guidance and maintaining a balanced diet.

D. Engaging in light to moderate physical activity.

E. Regular monitoring of blood pressure, blood sugar levels, and overall well-being.

Open communication between patients and healthcare providers is crucial for personalized advice and decision-making.

Dr. Rajan is a renowned Indian cardiologist at Al Amiri Hospital Kuwait and Chairman of the Indian Association of Clinical Cardiologists. Dr. Rajan also holds prestigious positions as the current President of the Association of MD Physicians and the Managing Editor of the esteemed Annals of Clinical Cardiology Journal by Wolters Kluwer. His contributions to the medical community are highly regarded, with notable achievements that include the invention of the RHF Risk Score calculator for heart failure patients and the development of Rajan's and Kotevski's modified Lipton's classification. Beyond his groundbreaking research, Dr. Rajan has garnered recognition through various Fellowships from esteemed institutions such as the Royal College of London, Edinburgh, Ireland, and Glasgow. Moreover, he has been honored as a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, the European Society of Cardiology, and the American Heart Association, further highlighting his expertise and commitment to cardiovascular health.



In this photo provided by NASA, Roscosmos cosmonaut Konstantin Borisov, from left, ESA (European Space Agency) astronaut Andreas Mogensen, NASA astronaut Jasmin Moghbeli and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) astronaut Satoshi Furukawa are seen inside the SpaceX Dragon Endeavour spacecraft onboard the SpaceX recovery ship MEGAN shortly after having landed in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Pensacola, Florida, Tuesday, March 12, 2024. The four astronauts caught a lift back to Earth with SpaceX on Tuesday to end a half-year mission at the International Space Station. (AP)

Four astronauts return to Earth after 6 months in orbit

Four astronauts from four countries caught a lift back to Earth with SpaceX on Tuesday to end a half-year mission at the International Space Station.

Their capsule streaked across the U.S. in the predawn darkness and splashed into the Gulf of Mexico near the Florida Panhandle.

NASA's Jasmin Moghbeli, a Marine helicopter pilot, led the returning crew of Denmark's Andreas Mogensen, Japan's Satoshi Furukawa and Russia's Konstantin Borisov.

They moved into the space station last August. Their replacements arrived last week in their own SpaceX capsule.

"We left you some peanut butter and tortillas," Moghbeli radioed after

departing the orbiting complex on Monday. Replied NASA's Loral O'Hara: "I miss you guys already and thanks for that very generous gift."

O'Hara has another few weeks at the space station before leaving aboard a Russian Soyuz capsule.

Before leaving the space station, Mogensen said via X, formerly known as Twitter, that he couldn't wait to hear "birds singing in the trees" and also craved crunchy food.

NASA prefers multiple travel options in case of rocket trouble. Boeing should start providing astronaut taxi service with a two-pilot test flight in early May. (AP)

Founder of Kuwaiti Obesity Association highlights health benefits of eating less

Ruling paves way for smoke-free tomorrow

Court upholds town bylaw to ban anyone born in 21st century from buying tobacco

BROOKLINE, Mass., March 12, (AP) — A Massachusetts town that adopted an unusual ordinance banning the sale of tobacco to anyone born in the 21st century is being looked at as a possible model for other cities and towns hoping to further clamp down on cigarettes and tobacco products.

The bylaw — the first of its kind in the country — was adopted by Brookline in 2020 and last week was upheld by the state's highest court, opening the door for other communities to adopt similar bans that will, decades from now, eventually bar all future generations from buying tobacco.

The rule, which bans the sale of tobacco to anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 2000, went into effect in 2021 in the town of about 60,000 next to Boston.

Under a Massachusetts law signed by former Republican Gov. Charlie Baker in 2018, anyone under the age of 21 is already barred from purchasing any tobacco product — including cigarettes, cigars and e-cigarettes — in the state.

Supporters of the Brookline measure point out that state law acknowledges the authority of local communities to enact their own measures to limit the sale of harmful products.

Critics of the Brookline law, including convenience store owners who rely on the sales of tobacco products for a significant portion of their income, disagreed however, arguing that the Brookline law conflicts with the 2018

state law which allows those over the age of 21 to purchase tobacco products — and would establish two sets of adults, one that could buy cigarettes and one that couldn't.

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court sided with Brookline, noting that cities and towns "have a lengthy history of regulating tobacco products to curb the well-known, adverse health effects of tobacco use."

"Importantly, state laws and local ordinances and bylaws can and often do exist side by side," the court added. "This is particularly true of local ordinances and bylaws regulating public health, the importance of which we have long acknowledged."

Peter Brennan, executive director of the New England Convenience Store and Energy Marketers Association, said the group is looking into possibly appealing the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court.

He noted that while the law targets tobacco, the rules for marijuana remain the same.

"It's a question of how else can we demonize this product," Brennan said. "It's about trying to be a trendsetter, trying to be first in the nation."

Jon Hurst, president of the Retailers of Massachusetts Association, also criticized the ruling, saying it could lead to a hodgepodge of rules.

"351 different rules doesn't make sense for interstate commerce. Local

gov should focus on schools, public safety, trash services, etc.," Hurst wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Brookline's approach only targets the next generation of would-be tobacco users, not current purchasers, according to Mark Gottlieb, executive director of the Public Health Advocacy Institute at Northeastern University's School of Law, which represented Brookline.



A man holds a lit cigarette while smoking, Dec. 2, 2020, in San Francisco. Brookline, Mass., has adopted an unusual smoking ban that bars tobacco sales to anyone born in the 21st century. (AP)

Study reveals key gene activation

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: Dr. Youssef Bouabbas, Endocrine and Hormone Consultant and founder of the Kuwaiti Obesity Association, highlighted findings from a recent study published in the renowned medical journal Nature, emphasizing that reducing food intake leads to better health outcomes, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to Bouabbas, the study revealed that moderate eating activates a gene, which in turn

protects brain cells from oxidation, thereby preventing mental decline and conditions like dementia and Alzheimer's, ultimately contributing to longevity.



Dr Bouabbas

Bouabbas has underscored that the fast food consumption is a major contributor to obesity and type 2 diabetes, particularly among children and adolescents due to its high calorie, sugar, salt and saturated fat content.

He warned that excessive consumption of fast food leads to the accumulation of body fat, manifested by increased waist circumference, a key indicator of obesity. Citing a significant medical study, Bouabbas noted that short-term consumption of fast food can alter brain nerve connections, potentially leading individuals to develop cravings for unhealthy foods.

In light of these findings, Bouabbas emphasized the imperative of avoiding fast food entirely due to its detrimental health effects, particularly on young individuals. He advocated for regular physical activity and sports, such as walking, as essential measures for disease prevention and promoting overall health, regardless of one's health status.

Bouabbas pointed out that Kuwait ranks highest in the Gulf region for obesity and diabetes prevalence and is among the top 10 countries globally for both conditions.

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Dr. Eldho George heads sports committee

IDAK inaugurates IDAK-KDD Sports Championship 2024-'25 with throwball and volleyball



Participants pose for a group photo before the inauguration of the sports championship.

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: The Indian Dentists Alliance in Kuwait (IDAK) kickstarted the highly anticipated IDAK - KDD Sports Championship 2024 - 25 by conducting the first sports event of 2024, the Women's Throwball & Men's Volleyball tournament on Friday, 8th March. The event commenced with the introduction of the Sports Committee, headed by Dr. Eldho George and fellow committee members Dr. Renjith, Dr. Abraham, Dr. Anjana, Dr. Varsha and Dr. Sharon. Adding a fun twist to the inauguration was an energetic and colorful flashmob performed by the members of the Executive committee and members of the participating Sports teams, which was coordinated by Dr. Parvathy. It got the crowd pumped up and looking forward to a great game.

All the teams lined up with their captains at the helm, namely Dr. Joe Daniel and Dr. Jyothy V Kuriakose of the Blue Phoenixes, Dr. Rupesh and Dr. Ranjitha R S of the Red Raptors and Dr. Ashwin Sudhesh and Dr. Remya Mathew of the Green Dragons. Mr. Shyam, who was the referee for the event, explained the rules and regulations to the players and wished them luck.

At the referee's whistle, the qualifying games commenced for the Women's Throwball category. The matches followed a Round Robin pattern and the results were as follows: Red Raptors vs Blue Phoenixes (6 - 21), Blue Phoenixes vs Green Dragons (20 - 9), Green Dragons vs Red Raptors (20 - 17). The Blue Phoenixes faced the Green Dragons in a final match in a Best of 3 fashion, where the Blue Phoenixes came out on top with a score of (15 - 7, 15 - 8), with the Green Dragons being the First Runner up.

The Men's Volleyball matches took place in a similar fashion as all teams geared up and competed with great enthusiasm. The results of the qualifying matches were as follows : Blue Phoenixes vs Red Raptors (25-18), Blue Phoenixes vs Green Dragons (25-14), Green Dragons vs Red Raptors

(25-14). Victory was conquered by the Green Dragons against Blue Phoenixes in a close finals finish (21 - 18, 21 - 15) with Blue Phoenixes being the First runner up.

Best player for Throwball was awarded to Dr. Jane of Blue Phoenixes and the best player for Volleyball was awarded to Dr. Christy of Green Dragons. The scoreboard was efficiently managed throughout by Dr. Aju, Dr. Vinod, Dr. Sudhin and Mr. Prajul. The children were also kept occupied with a Dartgame competition, ably managed and conducted with great enthusiasm by Dr. Anjana, Dr. Varsha and Dr. Sharon. The winners of the game were Shivam, Evelyn and Gonna.

The sports commentators for the day were Dr. Thomas, Dr. Pramod and Dr. Reebby who kept the audience and players thrilled and entertained from the start to the end of the event. Dr. Santhosh, Dr. Jijan, Dr. Shaheer and Dr. Gireesh were seen capturing all of the fun and exciting moments of the games.

A new and fun addition to the event was the introduction of The IDAK Cookie Company's food stalls which brought members together to showcase their culinary skills, serving a variety of lip-smacking food items and cuisines, which was a great hit and thoroughly relished by those present. The Food stalls were put up by Dr. Anju Samuel & team, Dr. Nikhila, Dr. Asheel, Dr. Anju Nair, Dr. Aseela, Dr. Aysha, Dr. Shaikhan, Dr. Sharon, Dr. Ashwin and Dr. Revathi.

The event concluded with the felicitation of the winners and runners-up of the games. KDD Assistant Manager Mr. Bilu Cherian was the Chief Guest and handed over the winners trophy. This was followed by an IDAK group photograph by Dr. Jijan.

IDAK extends its sincerest gratitude to KDD for sponsoring this event and their remittance partner, Al Mulla Exchange.

The Overall point tally at the end of this exciting day stood at Blue Phoenixes - 8 points, Green Dragons - 8 points and Red Raptors - 2 points.



A player goes for a spike as his teammates look on.



Captain of a winning team presented with a trophy.



Players in action during a volleyball game.

Massa says he's suing F1 and FIA

SAO PAULO, March 12, (AP) - Former driver Felipe Massa said he's filed a lawsuit in London against auto racing governing body the FIA, series owner Formula One Management and Bernie Ecclestone to try and claim the 2008 title.

Massa added on Monday he was also seeking a minimum of \$82 million in damages, a document obtained by The Associated Press showed. That amount included prize money he lost and other potential deals he would have obtained as a F1 champion.

Massa has claimed since last year he was the "rightful" 2008 champion due to the incident known as "Crashgate." The 42-year-old Brazilian, who never won the drivers' championship, was runner-up to Lewis Hamilton by one point.

Former Ferrari and Williams driver Massa said in a statement his case would be heard at the King's Bench Division of the High Court.

MOTOR RACING

His decision came after months of preparatory steps that included his lawyers asking auto racing bodies to reply to his public allegations of a breach of contract.

"I always said I was going to fight until the end," Massa said in the statement. "Since the FIA and FOM decided not to do anything, we will seek to right this historical injustice in court. The matter is now for our lawyers and they are fully authorized to do whatever is necessary so justice in sport is served."

His allegations relate to the 2008 Singapore Grand Prix, where Nelson Piquet Jr. crashed deliberately to help then-Renault teammate Fernando Alonso win the race.

The Renault team was eventually punished but the results stood in the 15th race of 18 that year. Massa never got closer to the title.

Last year, former F1 boss Ecclestone said in an interview with website F1 Insider that he learned through the course of 2008 that Piquet Jr. crashed deliberately. He added he chose not to investigate the incident until the season ended, when it was too late to change the standings.

Piquet Jr.'s crash came when Massa was in front in Singapore. A safety car was brought in, which squandered his lead and gave Alonso a clear advantage as he was the only driver who had already made a pit stop to refuel. Massa went on to finish out of the points in 13th place after a calamitous pit stop, while Hamilton finished third in that race.

Massa's filing said he wants "a declaration that the FIA acted in breach of its own regulations in failing to investigate the circumstances of the crash promptly in 2008" and "a declaration that if the FIA had not acted in breach of its own regulations, it would have canceled or adjusted the results of the Singapore Grand Prix with the consequence that Mr Massa would have won the drivers' championship in 2008."

Kuwait Club seek win to maintain top spot as Al-Arabi battle Al-Nasr



Kuwait Club player battles an opponent for the ball.

Al-Fahaheel have little to lose

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: The first round of the championship group "League of Six" in the Premier League is set to conclude this evening, Wednesday. The clash between Kuwait Club and Al-Fahaheel is scheduled at 10:00 pm at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, while simultaneously, Al-Arabi will face off against Al-Nasr at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium.

SOCCER

Following this round, the competition will take a break as our national team prepares to meet Qatar on March 21 and 26 for the third and fourth rounds of the first group competitions in the joint Asian qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup and the 2027 Asian Cup. The league competition is expected to wrap up by the end of March.

In the initial face-off, Kuwait Club, leading the standings with 43 points, aims to maintain its positive momentum and secure another victory to stay atop the pyramid. Despite a convincing 4-1 win against Al-Fahaheel in the first part of the tournament, Kuwait Club is mindful of the challenge posed by the same team, which forced a 1-1 draw in the second encounter.

On the other hand, Al-Fahaheel, currently in sixth place with 23 points, has little to lose, having already secured a spot in the Championship

Udinese stun Lazio for rare win

ROME, March 12, (AP) - Udinese took a big step away from the Serie A relegation zone when it beat Lazio 2-1 on the road.

Udinese's only previous win this year was at Juventus, surprisingly. That dismal run brought it just seven points from a possible 27 and left it in 17th place, one spot above the relegation zone.

This win lifted Udinese four places to 13th. Lazio remained ninth.

All three goals came in a five-minute burst early in the second half.

Udinese took the lead after 47 minutes when Lorenzo Lucca diverted a shot from Hassane Kamara past despairing goalkeeper Ivan Provedel.

Lazio equalized two minutes later when Lautaro Giannetti turned Mattia Zaccagni's cut back into his own net.

Oier Zarraga put Udinese ahead again in the 51st by placing a low shot into the corner of the net.

Nehuén Pérez was sent off for Udinese four minutes into stoppage time.

The misery continues for Almeria.

No team in Europe's top five leagues has got this far into the season without a victory and Almeria's 2-2 draw with Sevilla extended its winless streak to 28 games, a Spanish league record.

And, yet, it looked like this might finally be the night after captain Adrian Embarba gave the home side the lead seven minutes before halftime.

Instead, the crowd of 13,000 watched Almeria's lead vanish as Sevilla score twice in the last 10 minutes through Dodi Lukébakio and Lucas Ocampos.

A stoppage time equalizer from the head of Marco Milovanović was some consolation for the home fans but it still left Almeria four points adrift of Granada at the bottom of La Liga with only 10 games remaining.

Granada also has a game in hand. "It's a bittersweet experience," Embarba said. "We did everything in that match, especially in the first half. We did well with and without the ball and we had chances to kill the game. They twice caught us on the counterattack, which is what we didn't want."

"We were lucky to get a point but victory eludes us."

Group League. However, the team aspires to climb the ranks and make a lasting impression in the tournament.

In the second match, Al-Arabi, in second place with 42 points, is eager for a victory to potentially seize the lead if Kuwait Club faces a setback against Al-Fahaheel. This match holds special significance for both teams, as Al-Arabi dominated Al-

Nasr in the second leg with a 6-3 victory, while Al-Nasr secured a 3-1 win in the initial encounter, marking the only defeat for Al-Akhdar in the tournament.

Al-Nasr, currently fifth with 24 points, is hopeful of overcoming recent declines in results and making a positive impact in tonight's confrontation.



A woman makes an attempt during the throwball match.



A winning team receives a trophy from an official.



Lazio's Taty Castellanos goes for the header with Udinese's Joao Ferreira during a Serie A soccer match between Lazio and Udinese, at Rome's Olympic Stadium. Udinese won 2-1. (AP) - See Page 15

Sports

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Australia to play Palestinian men's soccer team in Perth in June

Youssef Nasser returns, Kuwait gear up for World Cup qualifiers against Qatar

KUWAIT CITY, March 12: Kuwait's head coach, Rui Pinto, has called up a squad of 24 players in preparation for the upcoming matches against the Qatar national team on March 21 and 26, marking the initial group fixtures in the joint Asian qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup and the 2027 Asian Cup.

Among the selected players is Youssef Nasser from Kuwait club, a striker who has recently showcased outstanding performance, earning him a return to the squad. The roster comprises Ibrahim Kamil, Sami Al-Sanea, Muhammad Dahham, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Reda Hani, Mishari Ghannam, Mohsen Falah, Faisal Zayed, Saud Al-Hawshan, Youssef Nasser, Mubarak Al-Fanani, Hassan Hamdan, Suleiman Abdul Ghafour, Muhammad Al-Huwaidi, Mahdi Dashti, Athbi Shehab, Hamad Harbi, Abdullah Al-Fahd, Salman Burmah, Abdul Rahman Al-Majdali, Khaled Ibrahim, Eid Al-Rashidi, Youssef Al-Haqan, and Bandar.

Team director Abdul Rahman Al-Mousa revealed that the delegation will embark on a training camp in Abu Dhabi, the Emirates, starting tomorrow, Thursday, and lasting until March 19. Following the camp, the team will head to Doha, Qatar, in preparation for their encounter with the Qatari team on March 21 as part of the initial group qualifiers. The team is



Youssef Nasser

set to return from Doha on March 22, organizing an internal camp for further preparation ahead of the March 26 clash against Qatar.

In Group A standings, the Qatar national team leads with six points, followed by Kuwait in second place with three points. The Indian national team holds third place, also with three points, while the Afghanistan national team remains at the bottom without any points.

Additionally, the Kuwait Olympic team, led by Portuguese coach Emilio Peixe, unveiled a list of 23 players participating in a training camp in Abu Dhabi from the 15th to the 26th of this month. The Olympic team is scheduled to face their Bahraini counterparts during the camp. The squad includes Talal Al-Qaisi, Fahd Al-Fadhli, Saleh

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Al-Mahtab, Montaser Suleiman, Salem Al-Khatlan, Jarrah Al-Hilaili, Muhammad Al-Rashed, Sultan Al-Faraj, Abdullah Al-Anazi, Khaled Al-Fadhli, Abdul-Rahman Al-Daihani, Yusef Al-Majed, Hussein Ashkanani, Abdul-Rahman Al-Sharhan, Hussein Shehab Kankuni, and Abdul Al-Rahman Al-Fadhli, Moaz Al-Anzi, Abdul Aziz Asaad, Talal Al-Hajraf, Abdul Rahman Al-Rashidi, Muhammad Al-Azmi, Abdul Rahman Al-Anzi, and Hamad Al-Taweel.

Meanwhile, soccer Australia said Tuesday that the Socceroos will play the Palestinian men's soccer team in Perth, Western Australia on June 11 in a 2026 World Cup qualifying match.

Australia has a 2-0 record in Group I in the second round of Asian qualifying while the Palestinian team has a draw and a loss.

The loss was 1-0 to Australia when the Palestinian side was forced to play a "home" game in Kuwait in November due to the ongoing conflict in Gaza. It was originally scheduled for the West Bank.

Players on the Australian team, before the start of the Kuwait match, donated a portion of their fees towards humanitarian causes in Gaza.

Nardi stuns Djokovic at Indian Wells as Coco Gauff 'reaches' round of 16



Luca Nardi, of Italy, returns a shot Novak Djokovic, of Serbia, at the BNP Paribas Open tennis tournament Monday, March 11, 2024, in Indian Wells, Calif. (AP)

Medvedev holds off Korda

INDIAN WELLS, March 12, (AP): Luca Nardi used a combination of poise and power to stun his boyhood hero and top-seeded Novak Djokovic with a 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 win on in the third round of the BNP Paribas Open.

Nardi, who's ranked No. 123, closed out his huge upset over the No. 1 player in the rankings with an ace. The 20-year-old from Italy dropped his racket and brought his hands to his face almost in disbelief

vic complaining to the official about a potential hindrance.

To think, Nardi was nearly on his way home. He got into the field as a "lucky loser," which is a player who stumbled on the final hurdle in qualifying but made it into the main draw as a replacement for an injured player who pulled out before the first round. In Nardi's case, he stepped in for No. 30 Tomas Martin Etcheverry and received a bye through the opening round.

He went on to become the lowest-ranked player to beat Djokovic in a Grand Slam or ATP Masters 1000 level event, surpassing No. 122 Kevin Anderson in 2008 in Miami.

Using a combination of aggressiveness and finesse, Nardi had Djokovic, the 24-time Grand Slam singles champion from Serbia he grew up watching, smiling and shaking his head at times in a mixture of surprise and shock.

Nardi was far from intimidated, ei-

ther, answering Djokovic's well-placed shots with well-placed returns of his own.

"Before this night, no one knew me," said Nardi, who will face American Tommy Paul in the round of 16. "I hope now the crowd enjoyed the game. I'm super happy with this one."

Djokovic certainly didn't know that much about Nardi, only what he gleaned watching him play. He knew Nardi had a strong baseline game, especially with the forehand, and moved well.

"He got in as a 'lucky loser' to (the) main draw, so he really didn't have anything to lose. So he played great," Djokovic said. "Deserved to win. I was more surprised with my level. My level was really, really bad."

No. 4 Daniil Medvedev's was just good enough, as he edged No. 29 Sebastian Korda 6-4, 5-7, 6-3 and will face No. 13 Grigor Dimitrov.

Earlier in the day, Coco Gauff gave herself an early birthday present by beating Lucia Bronzetti 6-2, 7-6 (5) in the third round. Gauff, who turns 20 on Wednesday, struggled early but found a way to hold her serve by saving 10 of 11 break points. She closed out the match with a serve into the body that Bronzetti couldn't return. It extended Gauff's winning streak in the United States to 18 matches, a run that includes winning the title at last year's U.S. Open.



A trainer works on Ronaldo as the coach gives out instructions during Al Nassr and Al Ain game.

Al Ain eliminate Ronaldo and Al Nasr to 'qualify' for semis

RIYADH, March 12: Al Ain from the United Arab Emirates secured a spot in the AFC Champions League semi-finals by triumphing over their hosts, Al Nasr of Saudi Arabia, in a penalty shootout. The teams had previously tied 4-4 on aggregate.

Having carried an advantage into the game with Sufyan Rahimi's goal in the first leg, Al Ain saw Rahimi shine once again, scoring in the 28th and 45th minutes. Although the hosts narrowed the gap with Abdul Rahman Gharib's goal, Al Nasr fought back in the second half. Khaled Issa's own goal error and a goal from Alex Telles leveled the aggregate

score, forcing the match into extra time.

In the first half of extra time, Al Nasr's Ayman Yahya received a red card, giving Al Ain an edge. Sultan Al-Shamsi capitalized on a critical mistake by Al Nasr's goalkeeper, Raghed Najjar, scoring the third goal for Al Ain.

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However, Ronaldo secured a penalty kick in the 118th minute, bringing the score to 4-3 and leading to a penalty shootout.

During the penalty kicks, Al Nasr's Marcelo Brozovic, Alex Telles, and Otavio missed three penalties, while Ronaldo successfully scored the fourth. Al Ain, on the other hand, secured their place in the semi-finals by converting kicks from Rahimi, Kaku, and Al-Shamsi.



Brozovic

Injured Ederson out of Brazil's friendlies against England and Spain

Palmer stars as, Chelsea edge Newcastle in 5-goal thriller

LONDON, March 12, (AP): Cole Palmer capped an impressive display with a goal and an assist as Chelsea beat Newcastle 3-2 in a pulsating English Premier League match on Monday.

In front of watching England manager Gareth Southgate, the 21-year-old Palmer pulled the strings in midfield for the London club.

His 11th goal this season made him the sixth Chelsea player to score in five consecutive league matches. Chelsea has not lost a league game at home in the month of March since 2001.

The result cut the four-point gap between Newcastle in 10th and Chelsea in 11th to one point.

Palmer's goal came 12 minutes into the second half. He found space just outside the Newcastle penalty area and fired home a low shot.

Nicolas Jackson gave the home side the lead after six minutes when he diverted a shot from Palmer past Newcastle goalkeeper Martin Dubravka.

Although it lost in-form winger Anthony Gordon to injury 10 minutes before halftime, Newcastle fought back and eight minutes later got an equalizer when Alexander Isak found the net with a perfectly placed shot from 18 yards out.

Substitute Mykhailo Mudryk made it 3-1 to Chelsea in the 76th just five minutes after replacing Raheem Sterling.

Jacob Murphy got a goal back for the visitor in the 90th but his rasping strike was not enough to stop Chelsea taking all three points and prevent Newcastle from recording its first

home-and-away double over the Blues since the 1986-87 season.

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Howe told the BBC Gordon's injury "looks like a knee problem and it



Newcastle's Dan Burn, (left), duels for the ball with Chelsea's Cole Palmer during the English Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and Newcastle at Stamford Bridge stadium in London. (AP)

doesn't look too good at the moment - it is unclear."

The injury to defender Dan Burn looked less serious, he added.

Also:

RIO DE JANEIRO: Goalkeeper Eder-son was withdrawn from Brazil's squad on Monday after he injured his right thigh while playing for Manchester City in its draw with Liverpool.

Ederson will miss Brazil's friendlies against England and Spain this month. He left the pitch on Sunday in the 56th minute of the English Premier League showdown at Anfield. Brazil coach Dorival Junior replaced him with Vasco da Gama's Léo Jardim.

Brazil will play England on March 23 at Wembley Stadium and Spain three days later at Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

Junior also announced two more players out injured: Paris Saint-Germain's Marquinhos and Arsenal's Gabriel Martinelli. They were replaced by Flamengo left back Fabricio Bruno and Porto striker Galeno, respectively.

Dorival Junior took over in January amid a run of dismal results. The situation worsened last month when Brazil failed to qualify for the Paris Olympics, sidelining the two-time reigning champion.