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MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2024 / RABEE'A AL THANI 25, 1446 AH

emergency number 112

NO. 18734

16 PAGES

150 FILS

Kuwait preps for dazzling 2025 festivities

Blaze ravages Mubarakiya army warehouse

– Details Page 2 –



Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Emergency services respond to a major fire engulfing a warehouse at the Mubarakiya camps on Sunday, which stores furniture and stationery for the Local Supply Department of the Kuwaiti Army.

'Pride and Glory'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27, (KUNA): The Permanent Committee for Celebrating National Holidays and Occasions, led by Minister of Information, Culture, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, convened on Sunday to discuss preparations for the year 2025.

During the meeting at Seif Palace, Minister Al-Mutairi emphasized the committee's commitment to coordinating and planning high-quality celebrations that showcase Kuwait's civilized image. He highlighted the need for thorough safety measures and collaboration among all relevant parties to ensure seamless event execution.

The Minister commended the contributions of Sheikhha Amthal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Chairperson of the Volunteer Work Center, and the committee members from various government agencies for their role in the success of past national celebrations. He noted that this year, there would be a focus on involving the private sector in the festivities, with a series of coordination meetings already underway to enhance cooperation.

The meeting also addressed the role of the Ministry of Information's digital platform, which will market and promote Kuwait's events and celebrations effectively. Plans for the national celebrations, set to commence with the flag-raising ceremony in February and extend until the end of March 2025, were discussed, including presentations of activities, event locations, and logistical arrangements.

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Kuwait resumes loan collection

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development announced on Sunday via its official X account that it will resume collecting loan installments starting in October, signaling the end of the installment postponement period.

Previously on March 19, the Cabinet had approved a six-month postponement to assist SME owners funded by the National Fund. This extension was intended to help business owners maintain financial stability and adapt to ongoing economic challenges.

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IMF-WBG meetings chance to highlight strength of Kuwait banking system: KBA chief

Kuwait improving business climate through human capital

WASHINGTON, Oct 27, (KUNA): Minister of Finance, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment and Acting Minister of Oil Noura Al-Fassam said the State of Kuwait capitalizes on its human resources while working to improve business environment and diversify its economy.

Kuwait is also working to expand the scope of financing, encourage long-term partnerships and build a regulatory framework suitable for investors as part of economic diversification, she said at the 2024 Annual Meetings Plenary of the World Bank Group and governors of the Arab central banks on Saturday.

Kuwait's strategy for economic diversification focuses on expanding the priority sectors, seizing the market opportunities, strengthening the infrastructure and building a resilient and sustainable economy prosperous enough to address future challenges, she stated.

The State of Kuwait and other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council witness a big economic transformation that required gradual diversification of the sources of income and less reliance of oil revenues.

The process necessitated turning to strategic long-term investments based on innovations, hi-tech and sustainability, the minister explained.

Al-Fassam reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to building strategic partnerships on regional and international levels in order to advance sustainable development across the Arab world.

The Plenary, part of the two-day 2024 IMF-WBG annual meetings which came to a close today, was attended by WBG President Ajay Banga and heads of monetary institutions of the Arab countries.

Al-Fassam said the State of Kuwait was keen on enhancing the



KUNA photo

Minister of Finance, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment and Acting Minister of Oil Noura Al-Fassam during the meeting.

partnership with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group.

Speaking to KUNA on Saturday, the minister said she was participating in the 2024 IMF-WBG annual meetings under directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber

Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

"This signals the great importance Kuwait attaches to international cooperation in the framework of both global financial institutions," she pointed out.

Eng. Al-Fassam noted that she has had "constructive talks" with IMF leaders, notably IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, on the role of the Fund in enhancing international cooperation, experience sharing and successful examples of partnerships particularly in the Middle East region.

"The meeting with WBG representatives explored ways for Kuwait benefiting from the Group's experience in economic and financial reforms and promoting the partnership between both sides, she went on.

"The State of Kuwait takes pride in having national youth employed by both prestigious organizations and seeks to build their capacity and benefit from their experience," the minister added.

Also, Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) Chairman Sheikh Ahmad Duaij Al Sabah said the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group provided a valuable opportunity for the Kuwaiti banks to country's financial strength and the resilience of its banking sector.

The banking sector witnesses huge developments under the transformations of the financial technology and sustainable financing, he said in statements to KUNA on Saturday on the sidelines of a reception held by KBA in Washington.

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2 Major educational reforms, leadership scarcity targeted

8 Gulf Bank strengthens cybersecurity with AI focus and employee training



10 NBK concludes its participation in annual meetings of IMF and World Bank Group

10 BPG focuses on talent, culture, and agile solutions for 2025



12 Kuwait welcomed at Egypt's 7th edition of El Gouna Film Festival

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Sheikha Bibi to lead initiative

Kuwait forms team for women's housing affairs

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27, (KUNA): Minister of State for Housing Affairs and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari announced on Sunday the formation of a special team dedicated to women's housing issues, led by Sheikhha Bibi Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.



Al-Mishari

In a press statement, Minister Al-Mishari appointed Bader Al-Subaie, Deputy Director General for Distribution and Documentation Affairs, as the team's

deputy head, along with six additional members.

The team will inventory and inspect properties allocated for women, including the Sabah Al-Salem residential complex and the Taima and Sulaibiya areas, to identify the best development strategies.

Minister Al-Mishari emphasized that the team will have the authority to study the disposal of allocated areas, propose amendments, inspect buildings, and develop solutions, submitting recommendations for project enhancement. A four-month timeframe has been established for the team to complete its tasks from the date of the decision's issuance.

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Sunday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Al-Seif Palace.

His Highness the Crown Prince also received the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah. (KUNA)

RIYADH: The exchange of knowledge is fundamental in keeping the threats posed by climate change at bay, the chief of the Gulf Cooperation Council said on Sunday, citing the process as a prelude to proper decisions on the matter.

GCC member states "possess the capabilities" needed to fight climate change and ensure a prosperous future in terms of "sustainable" energy, Jassem Al-Bedaiwi told a Saudi-hosted international forum on carbon neutrality efforts, saying the matter was among the six-nation bloc's core concerns. (KUNA)

RIYADH: The activities of "Powering the Future Toward Net Zero" international forum to enhance energy transition efforts kicked off on Sunday in Saudi Arabia.

During the opening ceremony, Governor of the Eastern Province, Prince Saud bin Nayef bin Abdulaziz expressed his happiness in launching the forum in the eastern province.

He stressed that zero neutrality is a primary goal, which requires joint work to develop the electricity system in all countries, introduce modern technologies, and promote investments in renewable energy sources. (KUNA)

Kuwait committed to combat deadly threat of smoking, says Dr Al-Awadhi

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Health Minister Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi said tobacco is one of the most harmful health risks the world has ever encountered; citing statistics that over a billion people use tobacco worldwide and the smoking epidemic kills more than a million people every year.

In his speech at the opening of the International Conference on Tobacco Control with the theme, "Smoking Scourge and Conflict of Interest," Al-Awadhi pointed out that smoking raises the risk of developing severe illnesses like heart disease, stroke, lung damage and numerous types of cancer. He stated that tobacco contains harmful chemicals like nicotine and cyanide, which deteriorate the human body over time.

Kuwait Society for Combating Smoking and Cancer, in collaboration with the National Program for Combating Smoking at the Ministry of Health, organized the two-day conference that will end on Monday. The conference sheds light on one of the most dangerous social scourges that threaten the lives of millions worldwide: tobacco and smoking.

Al-Awadhi affirmed that Kuwait has a comprehensive strategy centered on the primary axes of control, prevention and treatment; through which it has been working tirelessly to combat the deadly scourge of smoking in collaboration with civil society institutions.

He added the World Health Organization (WHO) had earlier studied the economics of the tobacco industry and its detrimental effects, particularly in developing nations where the importation or production of tobacco products results in significant economic and health losses.



Photos by Samer Shiqer

Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi attends the opening of the International Conference on Tobacco Control, underscoring Kuwait's dedication to reducing tobacco use.

He underscored the need for nations to pass stringent laws that forbid smoking in government buildings, and for the media -- print, audio or visual -- to inform the public about the risks of this fatal habit and its detrimental effects on both society and public health.

He expressed his gratitude to Ku-

wait Society for Combating Smoking and Cancer for efficiently playing its role in defending public health policies against the influence of tobacco industry circles and opposing campaigns that promote this scourge.

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Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:37	Asr	14:42
Sunrise ..	05:57	Maghrib ..	17:07
Zohr	11:32	Isha	18:24

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Rather hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-40 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.
By Night: Mild to rather cold

Weather			
with light to moderate freshening at times over coastal areas northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 10-40 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	28	16	
Kuwait Airport	30	15	

Abdaly	29	15
Bubyan	26	13
Jahra	31	16
Failaka Island	27	12
Salmiyah	27	19
Ahmadi	26	08
Jal Aliyah	30	15
Nuwaisib	28	17

Other Voices

Safiya cover and the ‘water bottle’ covers

By Ahmad alsarraf

It is said that the Egyptian politician, Sa’ad Zaghloul, was on his deathbed, looked at his wife, and said to her: “Pull the blanket tight, Safiya,” or “Cover me, Safiya... it’s no use.” He was referring to the political situation in Egypt, which had reached the brink of collapse due to the tricks of politicians and parties, and his inability to reach an agreement with them.

The proverb is now said when things reach a dead end, and there is no solution or way out, so we say: ‘Cover me, Safiya... it’s no use’!

It is said that you can tell the quality of water in plastic or glass bottles by the color of their caps. Blue caps mean the contents are “spring water,” black caps mean the water is alkaline, green caps indicate flavored or sparkling water, and white caps mean treated water. What “treated” means is unknown!

Water bottles have become a part of many people’s lives, as it is important to drink water constantly to keep the body hydrated, especially in hot areas. Regardless of how thirsty we feel, as we age, our need for water increases, and the brain’s signals of thirst decrease, and we often do not notice our dehydration, and we are completely exhausted.

So some people see or believe that it is important to know the quality of the water that we drink in such large quantities from different sources.

The truth is that what is rumored about colors is just an illusion. Most of the major water bottling companies do not care about the above classification, the source of which is not known at all. There is no basis for saying that the black color cover is for alkaline water, the blue for fresh

water, the white for treated water, the green for fresh water, etc.

In the United States, two agencies regulate bottled water: the Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency. However, neither has any rules or regulations about what color-coded caps mean.

Some brands also use caps that comply with the so-called “rules,” such as the black caps on Essentia Alkaline Water. But many brands don’t care about the rules of the so-called coding system. Fiji Water exclusively uses a blue cap, and it comes from a spring, while Crystal Geyser also comes from a spring, but it uses white caps.

Furthermore, the so-called cap system does not take into account the caps, which have recently become popular in European countries, which have a folding feature, so that they remain attached to the end of their opening, making them difficult to detach and throw away.

These come in different colors than the standard caps, and we hope that their use will become widespread in Kuwait to help reduce plastic pollution.

Some bottled water companies also have their own color-coding systems to mark the differences in their products. San Benedetto, an Italian water company, uses a blue cap for its sparkling water and a red cap for its still water, and so on with other companies.

To maintain a clean environment, it is better not to buy water bottles, but to buy a bottle of mineral water, carry it with you in the car and office, and fill it from any clean source, instead of consuming water from plastic bottles and polluting the environment.

The bottle can be filled with filtered or purified water at home or from any clean source, outside, and it will most likely not be of lower quality than the water in plastic bottles, which are originally filled from taps... And cover me, Safiya!



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alsarraf

Major educational reforms, leadership scarcity targeted

Host of measures recommended at confab: KTS

Fire breaks out in ‘Mubarakiya’ Army warehouse

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: A huge fire broke out at the Mubarakiya military camps in Shuwaikh, directly opposite Riggae, causing thick smoke to cover the sky in both areas.

Military’s firefighting teams and firefighters from the Kuwait Fire

Force managed to contain the blaze successfully before it spread further.

The Army Headquarters Department reported that the fire broke out around 1:00 pm in a warehouse filled with furniture and stationery belonging to the Local Supplies Department at the Mubarakiya camps.

Fire fighters controlled the fire,

which occurred in a warehouse containing furniture and stationery belonging to the army’s Local Supply Department located in Mubarakiya camps, said Kuwait Fire Force (KFF).

KFF, in a press release, said that KFF Chief Maj. Gen. Talal Al-Roumi and Deputy Chief Brig. Ahmad Humoud were present at the fire site.



Kuwait University and NASA teams which took part in the meeting.

US team on Kuwait visit

KU-NASA meeting to enhance space-tech cooperation

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Kuwait University held a meeting with a delegation from the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) that is currently visiting Kuwait.

According to a press release by Kuwait University, the meeting was headed by the Minister Plenipotentiary and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for American Affairs Khaled Al-Zaabi, and was attended by representatives from Kuwait University, specifically the Faculty of Science, and representatives from relevant Kuwaiti entities.

The attendees from Kuwait University were
■ Acting Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, Research and Graduate Studies Professor Dr. Suzan Al-Bustan
■ Acting Head of the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences Professor Dr. Ferial Bou Rabie
■ Acting Head of the Department of Physics and Director of the National Project for the Kuwait Satellite KuwaitSat-1 Dr. Hala Khaled Al-Jassar

The NASA delegation included -
■ Deputy Associate Administrator for NASA Management Casey Wessel,
■ Public Relations Officer at NASA Katherine Hamilton,
■ Several employees of the US Embassy.

During the meeting, they discussed Kuwait’s interests in space and explored potential cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the United States in this field. The space policy of the United States was reviewed, along with the Kuwaiti authorities’ vision regarding space projects, as well as ways to develop Kuwait’s space policy.

Opportunities for collaboration between NASA and the relevant Kuwaiti authorities were also discussed. The Kuwait National Center for Space Research, established by a royal decree from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, was designated as the primary point of contact for cooperation between NASA and Kuwaiti entities.



A photo from the meeting

KU calls to boost Kuwait, China educational, cultural relations

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Planning Sector of Kuwait University received a Chinese delegation led by Deputy Head of the Standing Committee of the People’s Congress of Jiangsu Province Zhang Bao Jinan on Thursday, October 24 within the campus of Sabah Al-Salem University City.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait University, the meeting was attended by the Deputy Director of Kuwait University for Planning Prof. Asaad Al-Rashed, Assistant Vice President for Strategic Planning Prof. Walid Shukroun, and Assistant Vice President for Institutional Development Dr. Bibi Al-Ajmi.

The meeting focused on strengthening the bilateral relations between Kuwait University and esteemed international universities, student exchange programs, and the latest academic, cultural, and scientific developments.

Their discussions also highlighted the need to enhance cooperation and exchange between China and Kuwait in the field of education, as well as strengthen cultural and academic ties.

It began with Prof. Asaad Al-Rashed warmly welcoming the Chinese delegation. He emphasized Kuwait University’s commitment to expanding scientific and cultural cooperation with countries worldwide, and highlighted the importance of student exchange programs, and staying informed about the latest academic and research developments.

In response, Zhang Bao Jinan expressed her pleasure in visiting Kuwait, particularly Kuwait University, and said she is looking forward to enhancing academic and knowledge cooperation between the two countries.



KFF photo

Kuwait Fire Force uses a ladder to reach the fire at the Army warehouse in Mubarakiya camps.

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Head of the Kuwait Teachers Society (KTS) Hamad Al-Houli announced a series of important recommendations from the 45th Educational Conference, which was held under the esteemed patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The conference aims to reform the educational system in light of challenges such as leadership instability and the backlog of pending files that hinder educational progress.

At a press conference held at the society’s headquarters, Al-Houli explained that the 45th Educational Conference took place under the esteemed patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. This recognition reflects the pressing need to address the educational reality, which is experiencing significant developments amid leadership instability, a heavy legacy, and a large number of pending issues that obstruct educational reform.

The conference primarily focused on developing the educational system in Kuwait through a number of projects aimed at ensuring governance and improving quality of the educational system. It also shed light on several educational initiatives designed to reform the educational system and outline its future direction.

Al-Houli announced that these initiatives have resulted in a comprehensive list of recommendations, which include:

1. Issuing a decree for the Supreme Council for Education in line with New Kuwait 2035 vision, along with approving its rules and organizational structure, and appointing the National Authority for Quality and Educational Excellence, headed by the Prime Minister.
2. Expediting the completion of the functional structure project for the Ministry of Education.
3. Drafting national strategies for training, education, and scientific research, as well as general policies.
4. Establishing a national curriculum standards framework.

Qualification

5. Creating the National Center for Education Worker and Leader Training and Qualification.
6. Launching educational professional licenses, the teacher license project, and associated incentive programs.
7. Implementing academic accreditation for educational institutions.
8. Enhancing the quality, fairness, and independence of national exams, including university admissions tests.
9. Categorizing educational institutions and establishing a corresponding reward structure.
10. Integrating individuals with disabilities into the educational system.
11. Developing a digital education environment to improve the learning experience using cutting-edge digital and technological systems.
12. Activating community partnerships between civil society organizations and educational institutions.

Al-Houli highlighted several special recommendations (axes) from the conference that outline a roadmap for decision-makers to develop the educational process in line with the desired aspirations to improve Kuwait’s educational reality.

First Axis - Developing educational policies:

1. The policies of the Supreme Education Council will cover education curricula, teacher qualifications, evaluation and assessment, student discipline, school safety and security, the use of technology, digital education, and artificial intelligence in classrooms.
2. Emphasis will be placed on special education, inclusive education, and secondary education tracks, and ensuring justice and diversity in education, and language and cultural proficiency.
3. Policies will provide alternatives for the learning environment, with the goal of maintaining consistency in decision-making and procedures.
4. There is a pressing need to expedite the process of securing leadership stability within the Ministry of Education and filling leadership and supervisory positions.
5. There will be focus on supporting scientific research, particularly experimental studies, to inform educational policy development.
6. Teachers will be empowered to participate in shaping educational policies and ensure their visions are taken into consideration.
7. Efforts will be directed towards enabling educational leaders to effectively exercise leadership roles and encourage innovation through the National Center for Rehabilitation of Personnel.



The Kuwait Fund for Economic Development signs a loan agreement with Benin and a grant to Yemen.

KFAED inks loan, grant deals

Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed two loan accords with Benin and a grant agreement with the Yemeni Government on the fringes of the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

KFAED said in statement on Saturday that the fund would lend Benin KD 4.5 million for a water project. The accord was signed by Benin’s Minister of Economy and Finance Romuald Wadagni and KFAED’s Acting Director General Walid Al-Bahr. The fund is granting Yemen KD 300,000 for renovating a hospital. (KUNA)

News in Brief

Kuwait 6th in Saudi FDI: Kuwait ranked sixth in foreign direct investment (FDI) in Saudi Arabia by the end of 2023, with investments totaling 34.6 billion Saudi riyals (approximately 2.8 billion Kuwaiti dinars), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Leading the list, the United States invested 202.3 billion riyals, followed by the UAE with 110.9 billion riyals, the United Kingdom with 69.6 billion riyals, France with 61.9 billion riyals, and Jordan at fifth with 34.6 billion riyals.



Fighting money-laundering: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has invited participation in a series of awareness workshops organized by the National Committee for Combating Money Laundering and Financing Terrorism, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

These sessions will be conducted

via Zoom every Wednesday at 11:00 am, starting October 30.

The Ministry emphasized that this campaign aligns with its commitment to promote awareness and ensure compliance with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) standards for activities related to anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism measures.



Rent allowances see rise: A study conducted recently revealed that rent allowances have exceeded KD 1.16 billion in the last five years, reports Al-Shahed daily.

The increase in rent allowances is attributed to delays in the delivery of new houses and plots to beneficiaries by the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW). The average distribution rate of houses has decreased in the last five years from 0.58 percent to 0.67 percent, with an average of 5.3 percent.

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Amir congratulates Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on Nat'l Day

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulation on Sunday to the Governor-General of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Susan Dougan, on her country's national day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished Dougan good health and wellbeing, and more progress and prosperity for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and its people.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a

cable of congratulation on Sunday to the Governor-General of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Susan Dougan, on her country's national day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished Dougan good health and wellbeing.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulation on Sunday to the Governor-General of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Susan Dougan, on her country's national day.

Staff training nominations encouraged

Ministry of Health invites bids for medical warehouse maintenance

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Ministry of Health is inviting bids from specialized companies for the maintenance of rainwater drainage lines and emergency exit doors at the medical warehouse building, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The daily quoting health sources said, priority will be given to small and medium enterprises affiliated with the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development, underscoring the Ministry's commitment to supporting local businesses.

Meanwhile, the Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health, Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, has urged assistant undersecretaries, health region directors, and central department heads to nominate qualified national staff for training programs offered by the Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Kuwaiti Diplomatic Institute, part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The initiative

aims to enhance employee skills and capabilities.

In a circular, Al-Mutairi emphasized the importance of completing the Ministry's Training and Development Department nomination form and submitting it for follow-up.

He stressed that no employee should be nominated for more than one program, allowing a broader range of employees to benefit from these opportunities.

This effort aligns with the Ministry of Health's overarching policy of prioritizing training activities and programs, recognizing their vital role in qualifying national personnel.

Al-Mutairi highlighted the Training and Development Department's commitment to selecting high-quality training programs that directly enhance employee capabilities, ultimately improving performance to meet the Ministry's needs.

MEW secures green light to sell KD7.1 mn of unused equipment

SAB grants conditional approval for four auctions

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy recently obtained conditional approval from the State Audit Bureau to contract for four auctions to sell materials that are no longer needed by the ministry, at a cost of KD 7.139 million out of a total of KD 12.2 million.

This action was taken against the backdrop of a report published by Al-Seyassah newspaper on October 15, titled "Electricity Sold Materials and Equipment."

According to informed sources, the State Audit Bureau is still reviewing the fifth auction, which involves the sale of transformers of various sizes at a cost of KD 5.061 million, some containing 13,643 tons of oil.

The bureau informed the ministry that it has no objections to contracting with companies, provided that the contracts include a clause that stipulate obtaining approval from the Environment Public Authority to sell the materials in accordance with environmental law No. 42/2014. The materials will not be delivered until this approval is obtained.

The bureau instructed the ministry to adhere to clause 2 of article 14 of the general provisions outlined in financial circular No. 4/2017 concerning the disposal of materials that are no longer in use. Also, clause 8 of circular No. 6/2018 has set a maximum approval validity period of 90 days. The sources explained that the first auction, valued at KD 5.017 million, involves copper cables and their accessories, including aerial copper cables and various copper types weighing 4,857 tons.

The second auction involves ductile pipes of different sizes and their accessories, weighing 11,819 tons, valued at KD 840,000. The third auction is for 2,580 aerial aluminum cables, costing KD 626,940, and the fourth auction includes used oil drums, empty iron drums, jerry cans, blue plastic drums, and 250-gallon tanks, valued at KD 673,020.



KUNA photo
Director General of the Municipality and his Deputy for Projects Sector Affairs.

Project set to open by November 26

Kuwait Municipality prepares for Al-Qasr Al-Ahmar Village opening

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27, (KUNA): Kuwait Municipality announced on Sunday that preparations for the Al-Qasr Al-Ahmar (Red Fort) Village project opening would continue until November 26.

In a press release, the Municipality stated that the projects development sector reviewed the project details with prospective investors in the presence of the Director General of Kuwait Municipality Saud Al-Dabbous and Deputy Director General for Projects Sector Affairs, Engineer Maysa Boushehri.

The project would be located north of Jahra on the historic farm adjacent to Al-Qasr Al-

Ahmar, it covers 470,000 square meters, divided into northern and southern sections, and it would include cultural spaces, parking facilities, green areas, and innovative outdoor cooling systems.

The project is set to include a park and a traditional market that reflects Kuwait's history, inspired by the Souq Al-Mubarakiya.

During the meeting, officials addressed investors' inquiries about the technical aspects of the project, as well as details on purchasing the project brochure and the required documents for the preparation phase, which ends on November 26.

Al-Fajjam opens weekly sessions for public inquiries and feedback

By Abdulrahman Al-Shimmari
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training has announced that its Director-General, Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam, will be available to meet with visitors every Tuesday morning at the Authority's headquarters in Shuwaikh.

These weekly sessions are open to employees, students, and community members, offering an opportunity to submit queries, share suggestions and discuss concerns directly with the Director.

Welfare home school inaugurated

MoSA initiates evening shift program

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 26: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi confirmed that the ministry was among the first to request for the implementation of evening shift, reports Al-Anba daily.

"In line with the circular of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), we are currently making arrangements for this initiative; particularly for departments like the Women and Childhood Department, which oversees several clubs. Our aim is to achieve an initial implementation rate of 20 to 30 percent as per the conditions of the CSC," Al-Ajmi revealed.

Regarding the development plan for welfare homes, Al-Ajmi stated during the opening of the children's home school in the Social Care Sector in collaboration with the Ministry of Education that "we are embarking on a comprehensive five-year development strategy. This plan aims to restructure shelter departments within the social care homes, necessitating cooperation with various State agencies. With significant support from the National Committee for Cooperative Projects, we aspire to transform these facilities into genuine humanitarian sanctuaries."

He pointed out that the opening of the school is a manifestation of the significant governmental partnership, showcasing the collaborative efforts of both ministries to better serve wards in the welfare home for children.

He affirmed that this initiative is in line with the ministry's commitment to support children in compliance with Constitution and international agreements on children's rights. This achievement is the



Dr. Al-Ajmi

result of systematic efforts led by Assistant Undersecretary for Social Care Affairs Dr. Jassim Al-Kandari and Director of the Nursery Department Dr. Saad Al-Shabo, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, he added.

Al-Kandari reiterated that the establishment of the school reflects the Social Affairs Ministry's dedication to implement standards on children's rights, particularly the right to education. He said the school enables the children to acquire knowledge, develop social skills and hone their talents.

He said this initiative underscores the Ministry of Social Affairs' commitment to not only provide social and psychological care, but educational opportunities as well in order to guarantee a brighter future for the children.

He disclosed the school is for the primary stage students, indicating 12 students are currently enrolled in the school. He said these students lack personal identification documents; thereby, facilitating their education while legal procedures are underway.

On the other hand, Al-Shabo asserted "the opening of Dar Al-Atfal School reflects our firm belief that education is a fundamental right for every child, regardless of their circumstances. This institution aims to empower children through the acquisition of knowledge and skills development. It is the best investment for their future."

Assistant Undersecretary for the Educational Activities Sector at the Ministry of Education Maryam Al-Enezi expressed her gratitude for being part of this project, highlighting Dr. Al-Kandari's efforts to advocate for this vulnerable group. She revealed that the Ministry of Education's mission is to guarantee every child's right to education as per the Constitution. She considers the establishment of the school as a pivotal step toward achieving educational success for the children."

Awqaf Ministry hosts Book and Pen Forum

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Family Development Department at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, in cooperation with the National Library of Kuwait, recently organized the Book and Pen Forum with the theme, "Reading is food for the mind, elevates thought and builds civilizations," reports Al-Anba daily.

The two-day forum was held in the theater of the library; along with a cultural exhibition in which libraries, publishing houses and cultural centers participated.

The first day of the forum included a dialogue session with author Afaf Al-Jassem, who was interviewed by Sarah Al-Ajmi about the book, "How Do We Understand Different Personalities?"

Participants in the exhibition were honored after this session, followed by the workshop conducted by Talal Al-Amer Al-Najdi entitled, "How Do I Choose the Book I read?"

The second day included a dialogue session with author Taiba Al-Hazim who discussed the book, "Your Only Refuge," with Dana Al-Hajri as interviewer; while Badriya Al-Anzi conducted a workshop entitled, "Therapy by Reading."

PAAET to create faculty promotions committee

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Director General of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam has issued a decision to form a faculty promotions committee for the 2024/2025 academic year. The committee will be chaired by a faculty member at the College of Basic Education Dr. Salwa Jawhar, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The decision revealed that the committee's membership will include a professor at the Faculty of Health Sciences Dr. Saadoun Al-Azmi, a professor at the College of Business Studies Dr. Adnan Al-Ali, a professor at the College of Technological Studies Dr. Talal Al-Zanki and a professor at the College of Basic Education Dr. Ahmed Al-Saedi.

According to the decision specifies, the committee, led by its chair Dr. Salwa Jawhar, will undertake tasks related to the promotion system for faculty members within PAAET's colleges, starting from the second semester of 2024/2025 academic year. Meetings will be held during official working hours.



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Three-week camp prepares young Kuwaiti talent for cybersecurity competition

NCSC launches cyber training camp for Kuwait Hackathon 2024

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27, (KUNA): The National Cybersecurity Center (NCSC) announced on Sunday the launch of an intensive training camp for the Kuwait Hackathon 2024 competition, which will be held on November 30 at Kuwait University (Shadadiyah). The event is organized by the center in cooperation with Coded Company.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), the center noted that the camp will include 56 young men and women who have met the specified requirements, aiming to prepare them for participation in advanced cybersecurity fields.

The center added that the camp will run for three consecutive weeks, during which participants will receive comprehensive training in cybersecurity fundamentals, as well as offensive and defensive security

techniques, to help them build a strong foundation in this vital field.

It highlighted that the training camp is supervised by an elite group of experts and specialists in cybersecurity, providing participants with both practical training and theoretical lectures designed to hone their skills and enhance their abilities to address modern digital challenges.

The center explained that this training camp serves as a stage in the competition to support and develop digital innovation and cybersecurity through specialized programs. These initiatives aim to enhance Kuwaiti youth's capacity for developing and implementing technical solutions to future cyber threats, thereby strengthening the stability and security of Kuwait's cyberspace.

Bidding war heats up as 8 companies compete

CAPT preps for Kuwait City revitalization



Part of the development project of Al-Ghoss Street. Al-Anba photo

Completion extended by 818 days

Al-Ghoss Road development receives KD8.9 million boost

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Ministry of Public Works has obtained approval from the concerned authorities to issue a third change order for Al-Ghoss Road development project -- an additional allocation of KD8.9 million or 18 percent of the original contract value to extend the completion period by 818 days, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources told the daily that the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) is implementing the project, which is a vital part of the country's infrastructure development initiative. Sources said it is located in Ahmadi Governorate, stretching from the Seventh Ring Road to Fahaheel-Ahmadi Road, and parallel to Fahaheel and King Fahad expressways.

"The primary objective of the project is to improve traffic flow by eliminating all traffic lights along the route and constructing three overpasses, complemented by roundabouts below. The existing bus stops will be improved and a new lane will

be created to accommodate potential road expansions. These enhancements are expected to reduce traffic congestion and guarantee road safety," sources added.

Sources revealed Al-Ghoss Road spans 30 kilometers and serves as a vital traffic corridor for nearby residential areas; as it connects the Fifth Ring Road and intersecting with the Sixth and Seventh ring roads, leading to Fahaheel Expressway.

Sources affirmed that the project will not only facilitate traffic movement, but also increase the road's capacity to accommodate the growing number of residents and vehicles in the area. Sources said this project is part of a broader strategy to develop the country's road network and address traffic problems.

Sources added it is expected that these developments will significantly reduce travel times between residential and commercial areas near Fahaheel and Ahmadi roads, while providing safer and more efficient routes for motorists.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Central Agency for Public Tenders is on the brink of an exciting development for Kuwait City, as it prepares to unveil offers for the highly anticipated Kuwait City Development and Beautification Project, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Responding to a request from the Kuwait Municipality, the CAPT had called upon companies eager to submit their consulting studies to attend a crucial meeting.

With more than eight companies vying for the opportunity, the atmosphere is charged with anticipation as the financial envelopes will be opened during the meeting.

This vital step will reveal the proposals that could shape the future of the Capital Governorate, specifically within the boundaries of Kuwait City, which extends from the First Ring Road.

The project studies aims to focus on enhancing city services, establishing a design guide and crafting a strategic plan for the beautification of Kuwait City.

The plans include creating executive designs that cover a range of urban elements, from pedestrian paths and urban squares to public parks and facilities.

These designs will be carefully considered in coordination with relevant authorities, ensuring compliance with existing laws and regulations.

The beautification initiative aspires to cultivate an urban environment that reflects the cultural and entertainment aspects of Kuwait.

The key components will involve revitalizing the city's elements, including updating sidewalk tiles, planting trees, installing bus stops, and improving street lighting.

Spanning an impressive area of 11 million square meters, the successful execution of this project promises to showcase the capital's civilized identity and enhance the quality of life for its residents.

As the meeting approaches, all eyes will be on CAPT to see which firm will rise to the occasion and lead this transformative venture for Kuwait City.

national programs to combat smoking. He added such programs can be expanded, while the networks of communication can be established with the appropriate authorities to encourage the creation and implementation of policies on the tobacco economy.

Kuwait resumes

Continued from Page 1

In this regard, economic expert Mohamed Ramadan said in a press statement that the resumption of loan installments was long overdue, as he wondered how long the postponements could continue.

He said, "The main mistake was the failure to adequately support small and medium enterprises during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Fund attempted to assist the enterprises by postponing the due installments indefinitely, but this measure did not yield the desired benefits, as many companies closed during that period."

Ramadan affirmed that while the postponement may have benefited some companies that did not actually need assistance, it is unreasonable to halt installments indefinitely.

He asked, "Is there data indicating that resuming payments will jeopardize the majority of enterprises or promising ventures? I don't think so. This step is both good and necessary."

It is worth noting that the postponement of installment collections from SME owners financed by the National Fund began in October 2020 for six months, ending in March 2021, due to the repercussions of the COVID-19 crisis. A second decision extended the postponement for another six months, concluding at the end of September 2022. The third postponement lasted for a year and ended in late September 2023. This was followed by a fourth postponement for about six months, and then a fifth postponement for another six months that concluded in October 2024.

The Fund's capital amounts to KD 2 billion, through which it finances approximately 80 percent of the capital for small and medium enterprises owned by Kuwaiti citizens.



Part of the launch of the intensive training camp for the Kuwait Hackathon 2024 competition. KUNA photo

Ministry opens for internal transfers, supervisory roles

Local hires and special needs prioritized

By Mohammed Al-Musleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Ministry of Communications is actively accepting applications for vacant supervisory positions based on its organizational structure.

According to informed sources from the Ministry of Communications, the distribution of supervisory job grades will be divided into two categories:

■ The first category pertains to the financial grade, which will account for 20 percent of the total grades.

■ The second category will allocate 80 percent of the supervisory job grades to personal attributes, including general appearance, familiarity with information and regulations governing ministry operations, practical skills in the field of specialization, leadership capabilities, and the ability to address administrative and technical challenges.

Candidates will also be expected to present innovative ideas and solutions to the committee.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Com-

munications has announced the launch of internal transfers for its members in various sectors and departments, in accordance with the current organizational structure.

In a statement issued yesterday, the ministry reported that the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Communications has issued an administrative decision permitting the submission of internal transfer requests for employees seeking to move between organizational units.

It explained that requests to waive job titles for the purpose of transferring to another department will be accepted until November 7 for individuals with special needs and residents of the Sabah Al-Ahmad, Wafra, and Khairan residential areas. For all other employees, the submission period will be from November 17 to December 19.

The decision allows all employees wishing to transfer internally to submit a request, in accordance with the guidelines and conditions outlined in the decision, which will regulate the transfer process between the ministry's sectors and departments.

Certain categories are given priority for transfer, including individuals with special needs. The ministry recognizes the importance of this group in society and aims to provide an appropriate work environment that meets their needs, supports their capabilities, and facilitates access to nearby workplaces.

The decision also grants priority for transfers to residents of the Wafra, Khairan, and Sabah Al-Ahmad residential areas. This approach aims to support new areas with qualified job candidates, promote balanced development, and ease commuting for these employees.

All applications should be submitted to the General Registry Control at the Communications Complex headquarters in Liberation Tower, in compliance with the terms of the decision, following the completion of the necessary steps and the approval of the relevant authorities.

Youth education initiatives recognized

Head of national development project 'Atamana' commended

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Advisor at the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Faisal Al-Hamoud honored Head of the national development project "Atamana" (I Wish) Sheikh Hessa Al-Salem Al-Sabah and the project team members, in recognition of the success of the third Gulf edition of the project that is aimed at enhancing education, reports Al-Rai daily.

Sheikh Faisal Al-Hamoud affirmed the political leadership's commitment to care for youth and children, and enable them to create a strong national identity.

He highlighted that this aligns with the goals of the "Atamana" project, which seeks to support sustainable development and realize Kuwait's new national vision. The project focuses on innovative initiatives to improve education, invest in the potential of young people, develop their skills through lectures, training courses, and work to promote their qualifications, competencies, and technical and administrative expertise.

Sheikh Faisal Al-Hamoud said the

project has been able to present a successful and exemplary model in this edition, as well as in previous ones.

He expressed appreciation for the efforts exerted by those involved in their project, through which they aim to provide valuable offerings that benefit the country and its citizens.

In response, Sheikh Hessa Al-Salem thanked Sheikh Faisal Al-Hamoud for his ongoing support and dedication to the project since its inception, which has been crucial in achieving its goals with distinction and excellence, earning widespread approval.

It is worth adding that Sheikh Faisal Al-Hamoud met with a young Kuwaiti citizen Mohammed Nasser Al-Munir at a youth meeting during which they discussed various youth-related topics.

He stated, "Our doors are open to everyone, and we are always pleased to meet our talented and creative youth who have achieved success at all levels."

'Solar activity a natural phenomenon'

Kuwait Muon Observatory unveils insights on space weather impact

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Amid increasing media reports about the effects of space weather on our daily lives, the Kuwait Muon Observatory team in the Physics Department of the Faculty of Science at Kuwait University says these phenomena are a natural part of the solar system.

In a press release issued by Kuwait University, the team provided a simplified scientific explanation of space weather and highlighted the role of the Kuwaiti observatory in monitoring these phenomena and predicting their effects.

Just as Earth's weather exhibits seasonal variations, space weather refers to changes occurring in the outer space surrounding Earth due to solar activity. The sun follows an approximately 11-year cycle of solar activity, reaching its peak magnetic activity during this time. At the peak, sunspots, solar flares, and solar storms become more frequent, increasing the likelihood of high-speed charged particles being emitted from the sun. When these particles reach Earth, they can disrupt the magnetosphere that protects the planet, causing temporary disturbances in the Earth's magnetic field.

These solar storms can impact technological systems on Earth, including satellites, communication systems, power plants, and GPS devices. While such effects are rare, they can lead to temporary disruptions. This has



Observatory utilizes state-of-the-art technology.

prompted scientists to prioritize predicting these storms and implementing necessary precautions to safeguard technology. For instance, the Kuwaiti satellite team, KuwaitSat 1, continuously monitors space weather and takes necessary measures to protect satellite systems in the event of solar storms.

To enhance space weather monitoring, the Kuwait Muon Observatory was established in 2006 under the Department of Physics at Kuwait University. It is part of the Global Muon Detector Network (GMDN), funded by Shinshu University in Japan, which includes similar observatories in Japan, Australia, and Brazil to cover a large part of the globe.

The Kuwait Muon Observatory is the largest in the Global Muon Network. It monitors muons, which are particles formed from fragments created by cosmic ray collisions with the Earth's atmosphere.

During a solar storm, the intensity of cosmic rays is affected, which in turn affects the number of muons that reach the Earth's surface. When the Kuwait Muon Observatory detects such changes, the data is analyzed within the global network, allowing for warnings about major solar storms to be issued several hours before they reach Earth. This advance notice provides governments and companies with enough time to take necessary precautions, as changes in muon levels precede the arrival of solar storms.

The Muon Observatory team understands that some media reports may exaggerate the effects of space weather, especially as the Sun is entering its peak solar activity. However, they stress that space weather is not a threat to humans; rather, it is a natural phenomenon that occurs regularly. The Sun last reached its peak activity in 2014.

The team emphasized the importance of understanding space weather as a recurring natural event, and highlighted that scientific efforts and international cooperation are vital for accurate monitoring and prediction of these phenomena.

Kuwait improving

Continued from Page 1

The celebration, sponsored by Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait Basel Al-Haroon, gathered Minister of Finance, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment and Acting Minister of Oil Noura Al-Fassam and Kuwait Ambassador to the United States Sheikh Al-Zain Al-Sabah, as well as prominent economists, chief bankers from friendly countries and representatives of international financial institutions.

Sheikh Ahmad attributed Kuwait's eminent credit ratings and soundness of financial indicators, enjoyed by the Kuwaiti banking sector, to the governance and controls pursued with finesse by the Central Bank in keeping with the best regulatory standards.

GCC grid

Continued from Page 1

The total economic savings from the electrical connection amounted to USD 20 billion. There were 2,700 support cases, and the total length of the electricity transmission lines reached 1,050 kilometers. There are nine high-voltage transmission stations spanning 400 kilometers, while underwater electricity transmission lines measure 100 kilometers. With the commencement of the Wafra project in Kuwait, the total length of the lines now stands at 1,372 kilometers.

Looking ahead, the next phase of the interconnection aims to supply approximately five megawatts of energy to south Iraq. Future plans include extending connections to Jordan and Egypt, ultimately reaching Europe.

Kuwait preps

Continued from Page 1

Visual presentations highlighted key aspects of event organization, including identity, security, crowd management, and quality control. The committee reaffirmed the slogan for the national celebrations, "Pride and Glory," along with its official blue color, which will be used for the coming years.



West Virginia Gov Jim Justice checks out the stage with his dog ‘Babydog’ before the Republican National Convention on July 16 in Milwaukee. (AP)

Justice declares self Senate winner

More than a month before the Nov. 5 election, Jim Justice declared victory in his Senate race in deeply Republican West Virginia, a chest thump at the same time the two-term governor was in a behind-the-scenes fight to keep some of his family businesses in good standing.

In a state where Donald Trump won every county in the past two presidential elections, Justice crowned himself as the runaway successor to retiring Sen. Joe Manchin, whose seat had been one of the last lines of defense for Democrats trying to preserve their slim majority.

“I say over and over, judge me by my deeds,” Justice told reporters on Sept. 19.

That challenge could have had another meaning, serving as a reminder about the banks, creditors, federal agencies and others who have hounded Justice for years to pay his debts, including loan defaults, late payments, court fines. He’s faced threats of foreclosure. Early in his administration, the governor was sued for not living in the governor’s mansion in Charleston as required by law, and when he was there, his list of accomplishments wasn’t particularly long or noteworthy. (AP)

Musk speaks at a town hall in Pennsylvania

Arab Americans rally with Trump on peace pledge



Former US president Donald Trump greets local Muslim leaders onstage at a campaign rally in Novi, Michigan, on Oct 26. (AP)

ing arms shipments to the country.

Meanwhile, tech mogul Elon Musk, speaking at a town hall Saturday night in Pennsylvania to support Republican Donald Trump, played down the Jan 6 attack on the US Capitol and exhorted supporters to cast votes early in the presidential swing state while describing mail ballots as a “recipe for fraud.”

The freewheeling session inside a ballroom at a hotel in downtown Lancaster touched on a dizzying range of topics, from space exploration and the Tesla cybertruck to immigration and the efficacy of psychiatric drugs. The

town hall was part of Musk’s efforts through his super PAC to help boost Trump in swing states ahead of the Nov. 5 presidential election against Democrat Kamala Harris.

Musk, whom Trump has vowed to give a role in his administration if he wins next month, spent nearly two hours taking questions from town hall participants. While most were laudatory and covered a variety of topics, one was particularly pointed: A man wanted to know what Musk would say to concerns from voters that Trump’s election could lead to democracy back-

sliding in the U.S. considering his role in the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection.

While calling it a fair question, Musk also said that the Jan. 6 attack by Trump’s supporters has been called “some sort of violent insurrection, which is simply not the case” - a response that drew applause from the crowd. More than 100 law enforcement personnel were injured in the attack, some beaten with their own weapons, when a mob of Trump supporters who believed his lies that the 2020 election was stolen from him stormed the Capitol to stop the certification of votes.

Musk also claimed that people “who say Trump is a threat to democracy are themselves a threat to democracy,” a comment that was also cheered by the crowd of several hundred people packed tightly into the ballroom. Many more watched the event on X, the social media platform Musk purchased two years ago.

Trump, he said, “did actually tell people to not be violent.” While Trump did tell the crowd on Jan. 6 to protest “peacefully and patriotically,” he also encouraged them to “fight like hell” to stop Democrat Joe Biden from becoming the president.

Musk, the world’s richest man, has committed more than \$70 million to boost Trump in the election and, at events on behalf of his super PAC, has encouraged supporters to embrace voting early.



Demonstrators participate in a march for peace against all wars, in Milan, Italy on Oct 26. (AP)

Demonstrators march across Italy call for end to war

Tens of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets in seven Italian cities on Saturday calling for an immediate cease-fire in the Middle East, Ukraine and all global conflicts. Peaceful rallies were held in Rome, Turin, Milan, Florence, Bari, Palermo and Cagliari, with the support of hundreds of associations committed to peace, disarmament and human rights.

The marches came in response to escalating violence in the Middle East and growing conflicts worldwide and denounced the diminished role of the United Nations on the global scene. In Rome, a few thousand demonstrators marched waving a giant rainbow flag in front of the Colosseum and a banner with the slogan:

“Let’s stop wars. The time for peace is now!”

“The war in Ukraine has been going on for years now and what was the result? Nothing. ... There are only a lot of Ukrainian and Russian people who died, many soldiers and many children,” said Daniela Ferraci, a demonstrator in the Italian capital. “The same is happening in Gaza, in Israel, in Lebanon.”

Giulio Marcon, one of the organizers of the Rome rally, said “wars are never resolving problems.”

“War brings more war, weapons bring more weapons. We must choose the path of negotiation, cease-fire and diplomacy. This is the message from this square,” he said. (AP)

‘Take our lives seriously,’ Obama pleads as she rallies for Harris in Michigan



Democratic presidential nominee US Vice President Kamala Harris, (left), and former first lady Michelle Obama arrive to speak at a campaign rally at the Wings Event Center, on Oct. 26, 2024, in Kalamazoo, Mich. (AP)

KALAMAZOO, Mich., Oct. 27, (AP): Michelle Obama challenged men to support Kamala Harris’ bid to be America’s first female president, warning at a rally in Michigan on Saturday that women’s lives would be at risk if Donald Trump returned to the White House.

The former first lady described the assault on abortion rights as the harbinger of dangerous limitations on health-care for women. Some men may be tempted to vote for Trump because of their anger at the slow pace of progress, Obama said, but “your rage does not exist in a vacuum.”

“If we don’t get this election right, your wife, your daughter, your mother, we as women will become collateral damage to your rage,” Obama said. “So are you as men prepared to look into the eyes of the women and children you love and tell them you supported this assault on our safety?”

The rally in Kalamazoo was Obama’s first appearance on the campaign trail since she spoke at the Democratic National Convention over the summer, and her remarks were searing and passionate in their support of Harris.

“By every measure, she has demonstrated that she’s ready,” the former first lady said. “The real question is, as a country, are we ready for this moment?”

Obama added, “Do not buy into the lies that we do not know who Kamala is or what she stands for. This is somebody who understands you, all of you.”

Although Obama has been a reluctant campaigner over the years, she showed no hesitation on Saturday as her speech stretched from the political to the personal. Obama said she fears for the country and struggles to understand why the presidential race remains close.

“I lay awake at night wondering, ‘What in the world is going on?’” she said.

Her voice vibrating with emotion, Obama talked about the struggle for women to understand and care for their own

bodies, whether it’s their menstrual cycles or menopause. And she spoke about the dangers of childbirth, when a split-second decision can mean the difference between life and death for a mother and her baby.

“I am asking y’all from the core of my being to take our lives seriously,” Obama pleaded.

Harris took the stage after Obama and promised the crowd that she would keep their interests in mind - unlike Trump, who she accused of only being interested in himself.

“There is a yearning in our country for a president who sees the people, not just looking in the mirror all the time, but sees the people, who gets you and who will fight for you,” she said.

After the rally, Harris went to Trak Houz Bar & Grill with Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, where they drank a beverage.

“I want to have whatever she’s having,” Harris said.

The politicians chatted and took photos with people at the bar. When they approached a table of young women, one of them burst into tears.

Before arriving in Kalamazoo, Harris visited a local doctor’s office in Portage to talk with health care providers and medical students about the impact of abortion restrictions. One of them said they have patients visiting from other parts of the country where there are strict limitations on abortion, and another said she’s worried that people won’t want to practice in important areas of medicine because of fears about government intrusion.

“We are looking at a health care crisis in America that is affecting people of every background and gender,” Harris told reporters before visiting the doctor’s office.

Harris appeared with Beyoncé on Friday in Houston, and she campaigned with former President Barack Obama and Bruce Springsteen on Thursday in Atlanta.



In this photo released by Russian Emergency Ministry Press Service on Oct 26, debris of an ambulance helicopter that made a hard landing are seen in a forest near the Beleenki village in the Kirov region of Russia. (AP)

Helicopter crash kills 4 in Russia

MOSCOW, Oct 27, (AP): A Mi-2 helicopter crashed in Russia’s central Kirov region on Saturday, killing all four people on board, emergency officials reported.

The helicopter, operated by one pilot and carrying a doctor and two paramedics, crashed in a forest near the village of Beleenki, about 700 kilometers (435 miles) east of Moscow, according to an online statement from Russia’s Emergency Ministry.

Rescuers initially only found three bodies at the site of the crash, but later located the fourth, the ministry said.

The authorities didn’t immediately say what may have caused the crash.

The Mi-2 is a small, Soviet-designed helicopter used for a variety of purposes.

Bulgarians vote with little hope of breaking a political deadlock

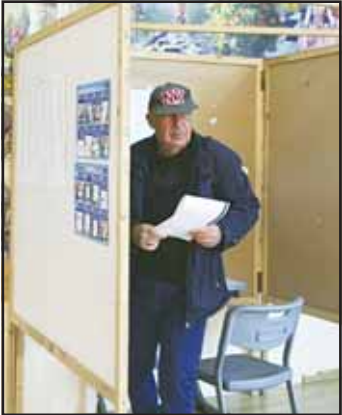
SOFIA, Bulgaria, Oct 27, (AP): Bulgarians were voting Sunday in a seventh general election in just over three years with little hope that a stable government will be formed to stop the country’s further slide into political instability.

Voter fatigue and disillusionment with politicians have created an environment where radical political voices, aided by Moscow’s widespread disinformation, are successfully undermining public support for the democratic process and boosting the popularity of pro-Russian and far-right groups.

The never-ending election spiral has a serious impact on Bulgaria’s economy and its foreign policy. The country risks losing billions of euros in EU recovery funds due to lack of reforms. Full integration into the open-border Schengen area and joining the eurozone are likely to be delayed further.

Polling stations opened at 7 am local time (0500 GMT) on Sunday. Initial exit poll results will be announced after polls close at 8 p.m. (1800 GMT) and preliminary results are expected on Monday.

According to latest opinion polls, Bulgarians’ lack of confidence in elections will result in a record low voter turnout. Gallup World Poll data show only 10% of Bulgarians trust



A man prepares to cast his ballot at a polling station during the general elections in Sofia on Oct 27. (AP)

the integrity of their elections - the lowest proportion in the EU, where the average is 62%.

Some observers have labelled the past few years as a period of “revolving-door governments,” which has additionally fueled voters’ apathy.

There was no clear winner in the latest vote, held in June, and the seven groups elected to the fragmented legislature were unable to put together a viable coalition. Observers suggest that Sunday’s vote will produce more of the same.

America

Woman guilty of murder: A woman accused of leaving her boyfriend to die after he was zipped into a suitcase in their home was found guilty of second-degree murder by a jury in central Florida.

Four years after Sarah Boone was arrested in the death of Jorge Torres, jurors handed down the verdict against her on Friday evening after deliberating for about 90 minutes. Boone had pleaded not guilty.

Boone initially told detectives with the Orange County Sheriff’s Office that she and Torres had been playing hide-and-seek on Feb. 23, 2020, in their Winter Park, Florida, residence when they thought it would be funny for Torres to get into the suitcase. (AP)

□ □ □

Detained man dies in fire: A man died in a fire at a police department where he was being detained in a southwest Alaska community, authorities said.

Alaska State Troopers said they were notified early Friday of a fire at the Mountain Village Police Department, the Anchorage Daily News reported.

Two men were being detained there at the time by village police officers on what are sometimes referred to as mental health holds, troopers said.

One of the men was evacuated safely, while the other, a 39-year-old, was found dead, troopers said.

A village police officer was treated for minor injuries. (AP)



Nika Gvaramia, leader of the Coalition for Changes, (center), speaks to the media as Elene Khoshtaria, chair of United National Movement, (left), and Nana Malashkhia, who leads the Coalition for Change parliament list, (right), stand near at coalition's headquarters after the parliamentary election in Tbilisi, Georgia, on Oct 27. (AP)

Georgia’s pro-Western opp’n disputes poll result that could decide EU path

TBILISI, Georgia, Oct 27, (AP): Georgia’s pro-Western opposition disputed the results of the parliamentary election after officials declared Sunday the ruling party led the crucial vote that could decide whether the country remains on the path to joining the European Union or comes under Russian sway.

The Central Election Commission said Georgian Dream won 54.8% of Saturday’s vote with almost 100% of ballots counted. Following a divisive pre-election campaign, initial figures suggested turnout is the highest since the ruling party

was first elected in 2012.

Georgian electoral observers, who stationed thousands across the country to monitor the vote, reported multiple violations and said the results “do not correspond to the will of the Georgian people.” Georgian Dream has become increasingly authoritarian, adopting laws similar to those used by Russia to crack down on freedom of speech. Brussels suspended Georgia’s EU membership process indefinitely because of a “Russian law,” passed in June.

‘Public’s criticisms against slush funds scandal has intensified’

Japan’s ruling party LDP braces for blow in parliamentary elections

TOKYO, Oct 27, (AP): Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba’s conservative ruling party braced for a blow to its comfortable majority in the lower house of parliament in Sunday’s elections as a result of public rage over financial scandals and discontent over a stagnant economy.

According to exit polls by the NHK public television, Ishiba’s Liberal Democratic Party is certain to lose the majority in the 465-seat house, the more powerful of Japan’s two-chamber parliament. It’s still unclear if his ruling coalition with the junior partner Komeito can retain a majority.

The results could weaken Ishiba’s grip on power and if he can’t get his party’s policies through parliament, he may need to find a third partner.

Ishiba took office on Oct. 1, replacing Fumio Kishida, who resigned after failing to pacify the public over widespread slush fund practices among Liberal Democratic Party lawmakers. Ishiba immediately ordered a snap election in hopes of shoring up support by using his outspoken, reformist image.

A total of 1,344 candidates, including a record 314 women, are running for office. Early results are expected within hours.

Ishiba has set a goal of retaining a majority of 233 seats for the ruling coalition between the LDP and its Buddhist-backed Komeito. NHK exit polls indicated that the LDP alone was expected to win 153 to 219 seats, down sharply from 247, a comfortable single majority it held previously. Komeito was expected to win 21 to 35 seats.

Ishiba, in his final speeches Saturday in Tokyo, apologized over his party’s mishandling of funds and pledged “to restart as an equal, fair, humble and honest party.” He said only the LDP’s ruling coalition can responsibly run Japan with its experience and dependable policies.

Once a popular politician known for criticism of even his own party’s policies, Ishiba has also seen support for his weeks-old Cabinet plunge.

The biggest opposition party, the



A voter prepares to cast his ballot at a polling station for Japan’s lower house election in Tokyo on Oct 27. (AP)

Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, is led by centrist leader Yoshihiko Noda who briefly served as prime minister during the LDP’s 2009-2012

descent from power.

Noda’s party is expected to make significant gains, with exit polls suggesting a huge increase to as many as

191 seats from 98. Noda says Sunday’s election is a rare chance for a change of government, which will be the most effective political reform, though his party has trouble finding other opposition groups with which to cooperate.

At a downtown Tokyo polling station early Sunday, a number of voters said they considered the corruption scandal and economic measures. But analysts say Ishiba’s LDP was expected to remain the top party in Japan’s parliament as voters are skeptical about the opposition’s ability and inexperience.

“The public’s criticisms against the slush funds scandal has intensified, and it won’t go away easily,” said Izuru Makihara, a University of Tokyo professor of politics and public policy. “There is a growing sense of fairness and people are rejecting privileges for politicians.” Makihara suggested Ishiba needs bold political reform measures to regain public trust.

Ishiba pledged to revitalize the rural economy, address Japan’s falling birth rate and bolster defense. But his

Cabinet has old faces, only two women and was seen as alienating members of the scandal-tainted faction led by late premier Shinzo Abe. Ishiba quickly retreated from earlier support for a dual surname option for married couples and legalizing same-sex marriage, an apparent compromise to the party’s influential ultra-conservatives.

His popularity fell because of “the gap in what the public expected him to be as prime minister versus the reality of what he brought as prime minister,” said Rintaro Nishimura, a political analyst at The Asia Group.

The LDP is also being tested Sunday for its ability to break from the legacy of Abe, whose policies focused on security, trade and industry but largely ignored equality and diversity, and its nearly eight-year long rule led to the corruption, experts say.

There could be regrouping attempts among opposition parties to decide whether to cooperate among themselves or join the ruling coalition, political watchers say.



A military honor guard attends National Day celebrations in front of the President Building in Taipei, Taiwan on Oct 10. (AP)

China criticizes move

US approves \$2 billion in arms sales to Taiwan

TAIPEI, Taiwan, Oct 27, (Agencies): The United States has approved \$2 billion in arms sales to Taiwan, including the first-time delivery to the self-ruled island of an advanced surface-to-air missile defense system, in a move that has drawn China’s criticism.

Taiwan’s presidential office on Saturday thanked Washington for greenlighting the potential arms sales. Under the island’s new president, Lai Ching-te, Taiwan has been stepping up defense measures as China increased its military threats against the territory it claims as its own. Beijing last week held war games encircling Taiwan for the second time since Lai took office in May.

The US is Taiwan’s strongest unofficial ally and its laws bound it to provide Taiwan with the means to defend itself. “Strengthening Taiwan’s self-defense capabilities is the foundation for maintaining regional stability,” Taiwan’s presidential spokesperson Karen Kuo said.

China criticized the move, saying it

undermined its sovereignty and security interests, was harming US-China relations and threatened peace across the Taiwan Strait, which separates China from Taiwan.

“China strongly condemns and firmly opposes this and has lodged serious protests with the U.S.,” read a statement by a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson. “We will take resolute countermeasures and take all measures necessary to firmly defend national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity.”

The potential sales package includes three National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile Systems (NASAMS) and related equipment valued at up to \$1.16 billion, according to the US State Department’s Bureau of Political-Military Affairs.

It also includes radar systems worth an estimated \$828 million. The NASAMS system has been battle-tested in Ukraine and will help to strengthen the Taiwanese army’s air defense capabilities,

Taiwan’s Defense Ministry said.

China’s war games last week were aimed at practicing the “sealing off of key ports and key areas” around Taiwan, according to Chinese officials. Taiwan counted a record one-day total of 153 aircraft, 14 navy vessels and 12 Chinese government ships.

China urges the United States to immediately stop arming Taiwan and stop its dangerous moves that undermine peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said on Saturday.

The US arms sales to China’s Taiwan region severely violate the one-China principle and the three China-US Joint Communiques, especially the August 17 Communique of 1982. The sales seriously infringe upon China’s sovereignty and security interests, harm China-US relations and peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, and send a gravely wrong message to “Taiwan independence” separatist forces, the spokesperson said.

‘Third time in a week’

Indonesia drives out China ship in disputed sea

JAKARTA, Indonesia, Oct 27, (AP): Indonesian patrol ships drove a Chinese coast guard vessel away from a survey vessel in a disputed area of the South China Sea for the third time in a week, according to a statement from Indonesia’s Maritime Security Agency on Saturday.

A video distributed by the agency showed the Indonesian ship following the Chinese one on Friday afternoon.

China’s coast guard said it was patrolling within its own jurisdiction.

However, Indonesia’s coast guard and navy insisted that the Indonesian Continental Shelf in the area has received international recognition and that Indonesia has sovereign rights to exploit and explore natural resources in that area without being disturbed by any country.

Indonesian authorities said the Chinese ship was first detected near MV Geo Coral on Monday. An Indonesian patrol ship contacted the ship, whose crew insisted that the area was under China’s jurisdiction, before Indonesian coast guard and



In this photo released by Indonesian Maritime Security Agency (BAKAMLA), a Maritime Security Agency official uses a binocular to monitor the movement of a Chinese coast guard vessel in the waters of North Natuna Sea in the disputed area of the South China Sea, Indonesia on Oct 23. (AP)

navy ships drove the Chinese ship away.

The second attempt happened on Wednesday morning when the Chinese ship again approached the site of the seismic survey and was driven away, according to the Maritime Security Agency.

“Indonesia’s Maritime Security Agency will continue to show its commitment to maintaining security and enforcing the law in Indonesian waters and Indonesian jurisdictional areas,” said the statement from the agency.

China’s “nine-dash line,” which it uses to roughly demarcate its claim to most of the South China Sea, overlaps with a section of Indonesia’s exclusive economic zone that extends from the Natuna Islands.

Indonesia does not have a formal territorial dispute with China over the South China Sea but has become increasingly protective of its rights in the region, while Chinese ships have regularly entered the area Indonesia calls the North Natuna Sea, fueling tensions between the countries.



US Army soldiers from the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team stand by their M1A2 Abrams tanks as they prepare to attend a live firing drill at Rodriguez Live Fire Complex in Pocheon, South Korea on Aug 14. (AP)

DPRK slams US for military drill with allies

The Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) on Saturday condemned the United States for the latest military drill conducted with its allies, along with other provocations, saying these actions exacerbated the already heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

In a press statement released by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), the DPRK condemned

Washington for staging a large-scale joint air drill, code-named “Freedom Flag,” with South Korea and Australia, which the United States openly stated was directed at the DPRK. Stressing the drill “shows the offensive and aggressive nature more vividly in its scale, content and character,” the statement called the drill “a very dangerous military provocation aimed at preemptive and surprise strike on the DPRK.” (Xinhua)

UN calls for more attention to Sudan’s ‘forgotten’ war amid fresh atrocities

CAIRO, Oct 27, (AP): A senior United Nations official on Friday called for more international attention to “the forgotten crisis” in Sudan, where more than a year and a half of war pushed the African country to the brink of famine.

The appeal by Ted Chaiban, deputy head of the U.N. children’s agency UNICEF, came as the notorious paramilitary Rapid Support Forces rampaged through villages and towns in east-central Gezira province, looting and vandalizing public and private properties, according to a doctors’ union and a youth group. Dozens of people were reported killed.

Chaiban said the war, which erupted in April 2023 between the military and the RSF, created “one of the most acute crises in living memory” with more than 14 million people forced to flee their homes, making Sudan the world’s largest displacement crisis.

“We’ve never in a generation seen these types of numbers,” he told The Associated Press in an interview, referring to the displaced people, as well as the 8.5 million people who are facing emergency levels of food insecurity, and 775,000 others who are facing famine-like conditions.

“The whole country has been dislocated,” he said. “And yet, despite that, the country and the crisis is forgotten.”

The war came four years after a pro-democracy uprising forced the military’s ouster of the country’s long-time dictator Omar al-Bashir that was followed by a short-lived transition to democracy. It has killed more than 24,000 people so far, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event



A man walks by a house hit in recent fighting in Khartoum, Sudan, an area torn by fighting between the military and the notorious paramilitary Rapid Support Forces on April 25, 2023. (AP)

Data, a group monitoring the conflict since it started.

Chaiban spoke to the AP after he and Raouf Mazou, assistant high commissioner for operations at the U.N. refugee agency, UNHCR, visited eastern Sudan earlier this week. They met with local authorities and visited displaced people in a sprawling camp hosting over 4,000 people in the eastern province of Kassala. They called for unimpeded access to people in need across the country, and advocated for more global attention to what Chaiban described as “one of the critical generational crises we’re facing.”

Global attention has been shifted to the Middle East since the militant group Hamas launched its attack on southern Israel in October last year,

triggering a war that has killed about 42,000 people in Gaza. The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza does not differentiate between militants and civilians but say more than half of the dead were women and children. Hamas’ attack killed about 1,200 people in Israel, mostly civilians. Now, international efforts are focusing on the Israel-Hezbollah war in Lebanon amid mounting concerns about a regional war between Israel and Iran.

“We have done everything to respond to the war in Gaza and the war in Lebanon. ... Sudan also needs this level of attention,” he said.

The Sudanese military has been pursuing a major offensive since September to retake RSF-controlled areas in and around the capital, Khartoum.

Lat/Am

Mexico accident kills 24: Twenty-four people were killed and five others injured after a passenger bus collided with a tractor-trailer early Saturday in the central Mexican state of Zacatecas, local authorities reported.

National Guard coordinator Juan Manriquez said the crash occurred when the trailer detached from the truck transporting corn, causing the bus to tip onto its right side.

Rodrigo Reyes, secretary general of the Zacatecas government, said in a video statement that the bus was traveling from Tepic in the western state of Nayarit to Ciudad Juarez in the northern state of Chihuahua. He advised travelers to avoid the highway which remained closed after the accident.

The injured are receiving treatment at the Mexican Social Security Institute, Reyes added. (Xinhua)

Gang violence in Haiti: A gang coalition on Saturday reinforced its attacks on one of the few communities in the Haitian capital not under the control of criminal groups, seeking to take it over.

After a week of clashes with the police in the Solino neighborhood in Port-au-Prince, members of the gang coalition, Viv Ansanm, attacked once again, setting fire to several homes, as the national police union warned that the area was almost under total control of the gunmen.

As morning broke on Saturday, images from social media showed the neighborhood engulfed in smoke and flames. (AP)



A heart-shaped balloon promoting Frente Amplio or the Broad Front coalition, is displayed on a street a day ahead of the general election, in Montevideo, Uruguay, on Oct 26. (AP)

Uruguay votes for new president

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay, Oct 27, (AP): Polls opened in the small South American nation of Uruguay on Sunday in an election race between moderates that defies regional trends of bitter division and democratic erosion.

Some 2.7 million registered voters in Uruguay are set to pick a new president in the race pitting an incumbent conservative coalition against a center-left alliance.

Voters will also pick 30 senators and 99 deputies and decide whether to overhaul the country’s social security system in a contentious constitutional referendum that would expand the fiscal deficit in one of Latin America’s wealthiest countries.

No one expects the outcome of the presidential vote to herald drastic change in this nation of 3.4 million people, long heralded as a model democracy and island of stability in the region.

With the main parties in broad agreement on many issues, the campaign is being fought over voter concerns like child poverty and security. Rising homicides and robberies represent the biggest concern for Uruguayans, polls show, even though the country is one of the region’s safest.

“In a way, Uruguay has been boring, but boring in this sense is very good,” said Juan Cruz Diaz, a political analyst who runs the Cefeidas consultancy group in Buenos Aires. “We’ve seen so many dramatic changes in Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia and suddenly we face elections in Uruguay in which there is a general consensus, there’s stability.”

While in neighboring Brazil and Argentina, voters recently vented their rage at the status quo, Uruguay’s electorate remains largely satisfied with the government’s business-friendly policies and the economy’s steady growth.

		Change	Closing pts	Change	Closing pts
SAUDI	- Tadawul	+182.91	12,068.97		
EGYPT	- EGX 30	+259.41	30,812.23		

Business

KOC & KPC partner to achieve 2040 production goals

Kuwait Oil Company aims to boost gas production to 950 mln cubic feet daily

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) is targeting a substantial increase in its non-associated gas production capacity from 520 million to 950 million cubic feet per day during the 2024/2025 period, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting oil sources.

This ambitious goal will be pursued through enhancements to gas production operations at current Jurassic production facilities, optimal investments in Jurassic drilling operations and improvements in well repair and maintenance procedures.

To overcome existing challenges and meet the goals outlined in the 2040 production strategy, KOC is collaborating with the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) to identify and implement radical solutions.

The company aims to execute various projects de-

signed to increase oil production capacity in alignment with strategic objectives, emphasizing the enhancement of operational capabilities to meet global energy demand.

Moreover, the source highlighted KOC's commitment to developing its heavy oil production capabilities, which have become increasingly vital for diversifying its raw materials.

The company aims to reach a production capacity of 85,000 barrels per day of heavy oil in the near term, having already achieved a production level of approximately 60,000 barrels per day.

Looking ahead, KOC targets an output of around 115,000 barrels per day by 2030, with an ultimate goal of producing 430,000 barrels per day of heavy oil by 2040, in line with the overall oil sector strategy.



Large attendance at the seminar



Bank enhances data protection amid rising threats

Gulf Bank strengthens cybersecurity with AI focus and employee training

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: In recognition of Cybersecurity Awareness Month and in support of the "Diraya" campaign, Gulf Bank organized its Annual Cyber Awareness conference for its employees titled "You Are the Target," with the participation of cybersecurity experts from several well-known global companies, including Ernst & Young, SecurEyes, and CrowdStrike.

The seminar covered several critical topics related to cybersecurity, including the Cyber Threat Landscape, impact of artificial intelligence on corporate cybersecurity strategies, the use of AI in detecting and combating cyber-attacks, and its role in enhancing incident response capabilities.

It also addressed the legal and ethical challenges associated with AI applications in cybersecurity, alongside empowering employees to implement smart solutions to strengthen cybersecurity and identify potential vulnerabilities within systems and applications.

Gulf Bank remains committed to staying abreast of rapid developments in the field of cybersecurity, whether related to prevalent threats or available defense measures. This is achieved through continuous training and adherence to the latest and best policies and protection programs, reaffirming the Bank's dedication to providing a secure and resilient work environment across all banking transactions.

The Bank maintains the highest levels of security and protection, parallel to its significant investments in comprehensive technological solutions and skilled staff as

part of its digital transformation journey – a cornerstone of its five-year strategy.

Gulf Bank places a strong emphasis on tackling cybersecurity risks and ensuring the safety of customer data and transactions, through significant investments in human resources and continuous development of systems and technologies in the field of information security.

Furthermore, Gulf Bank plays a key role in supporting the "Diraya" campaign, overseen by the Central Bank of Kuwait in collaboration with the Kuwait Banking Association. The Bank has made tangible contributions toward achieving the campaign's goals by promoting financial literacy within the community and increasing awareness of the banking sector's role, as well as how customers can best utilize the diverse services provided by banks.

Gulf Bank contributes to the success of the "Diraya" campaign by distributing educational content across a range of platforms, from social media to traditional outlets such as newspapers, radio, and television, aiming to reach a broad audience.

The Bank is actively involved in the campaign's initiatives, with a focus on educating customers about their rights when dealing with banks, following the Central Bank of Kuwait's guidelines. It also highlights the importance of securing personal data and bank accounts, and promotes safe practices for using banking cards, especially as financial services rapidly evolve and fraud attempts increase.

Kuwait faces financial havoc due to oil price fluctuations

Report calls for urgent financial strategies in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: A recent weekly economic report examined the severe impact of fluctuating oil prices on Kuwait's financial stability, emphasizing that sound financial planning demands consistent budget revenue stability, reports Al-Seyasah daily.

In Kuwait, where oil accounts for approximately 90 percent of government revenues, the country has little control over the volatility in oil income within a single fiscal year or over the assurance of sustainability in the near future.

The report, issued by Al-Shall, highlighted that in 2024, Kuwait's oil prices ranged between a peak of \$91.4 per barrel on April 5 and a low of \$70.9 on October 1.

This \$20.5 swing shifted the budget outlook from a potential surplus of KWD 462.3 million to a possible deficit of KWD 5.4 billion.

By October 23, the average price of Kuwaiti oil settled at \$82.3 per barrel. Kuwait also faced a reduction of

around 135,000 barrels per day due to OPEC+ production quotas, further impacting revenue.

The report noted that, aside from a brief period in April, Kuwaiti oil prices consistently fell below the \$89.8 breakeven point needed to balance the national budget.

This dependency on oil revenue, along with decreased production, has positioned Kuwait as the only Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) economy expected to post negative growth of -2.7 percent for 2024.

This heavy reliance on oil revenues and Kuwait's vulnerability to price shocks, the report argued, leaves the nation in need of a "financial magician."

Without such intervention, Kuwait faces two undesirable choices: depleting its savings or falling into global debt as it did in 2017. The report further underscored that while infrastructure concerns such as roads and agriculture are significant, Kuwait's primary challenge is its lack of a sustainable vision for stability.

It suggested abandoning the slogan "Kuwait 2035" or "New Kuwait," noting that these goals have become more elusive than when they were first proposed.

Premier market leads gains with 1.79% increase

Boursa Kuwait general index climbs 1.52%

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait concluded Sunday's trading session with its general index up by 106.19 points, a 1.52% gain, closing at 7,087.72 points. A total of 456.7 million shares were traded in 19,657 transactions, with a turnover of 92.3 million Kuwaiti dinars (about \$281.5 million).

The Main Market Index rose 22.21 points, or 0.34%, to 6,468.38 points, with 258.19 million shares changing hands across 12,312 transactions, valued at

36.5 million dinars (about \$111.3 million).

The Premier Market Index saw a stronger increase, adding 133.60 points, or 1.79%, to close at 7,594.10 points, with 198.5 million shares traded in 7,345 transactions, totaling 55.8 million dinars (around \$170.19 million).

Similarly, the Main 50 Index rose by 37.47 points, or 0.59%, closing at 6,401.27 points, with 204.3 million shares traded in 8,879 transactions, valued at 30.6 million dinars (approximately \$93.3 million).

Hermes Travel plans to acquire 45% stake in Al Mana

Gulf Cables seeks approval for acquisition of shares

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Competition Protection Authority has announced that Gulf Cables and Electrical Industries Group Company has formally requested approval to proceed with the acquisition of 100 percent of the shares of the Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Systems Company, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This company is known for its contracting and services related to electromechanical works.

In addition, Hermes Travel Retail Asia, a private company based in Singapore specializing in luxury product sales, has submitted a request for approval to acquire 45 percent of the shares of Al Mana Retail Company in Kuwait.

Under Law No. 72 of 2020 regarding the protection of competition, and in accordance with Article 83 of its executive regulations as outlined in Board of Directors

Resolution No. 14 of 2021, any interested party has the right to submit a reasoned objection to the Competition Protection Authority concerning the economic concentration requests.

This objection must be submitted within 15 days from the date of notification or publication of the requests.

The Competition Protection Law defines economic concentration as a permanent change in control within the relevant market, which can occur through mergers, acquisitions, or partnerships between individuals or entities engaged in independent economic activities on a permanent basis.

The Authority is encouraging all interested parties to voice their objections to the proposed economic concentrations within the specified 15-day period, highlighting the importance of maintaining competitive practices in the marketplace.

US manufacturing and services exceed expectations in October

International Monetary Fund lowers 2025 global growth forecast to 3.2%

By National Bank of Kuwait

World

IMF Global Growth Forecast

The IMF lowered its 2025 global growth forecast to 3.2%, a 0.1 percentage point drop from July's estimate, while keeping this year's projection at 3.2%. It warned of rising risks like conflicts and trade protectionism but commended central banks for managing inflation without triggering recessions. The US growth forecast for 2024 was raised to 2.8%, while the Euro Area's forecast dropped to 0.8%, with Germany expected to stall. Growth estimates were also reduced for China (4.8%) and Japan (0.3%), but the UK's forecast improved to 1.1%, and India's growth projection remained steady at 7%.

North America

United States Flash Manufacturing and Services PMIs

The latest data from S&P Global shows that the US manufacturing and services sectors performed better than anticipated in October. The preliminary Manufacturing PMI reached 47.8, slightly above the expected 47.5 and the previous month's 47.3. Meanwhile, the Services PMI rose to 55.3, exceeding the forecast of 55 and September's 55.2. Despite prior economic challenges due to tight monetary policy, these improved PMI readings suggest signs of recovery, closely watched by markets for potential impacts on the U.S. dollar. In the PMI system, readings above 50 indicate growth, while those below 50 signal contraction.

US Revised UoM Consumer Sentiment

The University of Michigan's US consumer sentiment index for October 2024 was revised up to 70.5, marking its highest level in six months and a third consecutive monthly increase. Improvements were seen in both economic conditions (64.9) and expectations (74.1), driven by better buying conditions for durable goods amid easing interest rates. Consumer sentiment was also influenced by the upcoming election. Year-ahead inflation expectations remained steady at 2.7%, while five-year expectations edged down to 3%, aligning with earlier estimates.

Bank of Canada Overnight Rate

The Bank of Canada made a significant interest rate cut of 0.5 percentage points, bringing the policy rate to 3.75%, as it shifts focus to supporting the Canadian economy. This marks the fourth consecutive rate cut since June and the largest reduction since the 2009 financial crisis, excluding cuts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Governor Tiff Macklem explained that the central bank's priority has shifted from reducing infla-

Highlights

- The IMF lowered its 2025 global growth forecast to 3.2%.
- The latest data from S&P Global shows that the US manufacturing and services sectors performed better than anticipated in October.
- The University of Michigan's US consumer sentiment index for October 2024 was revised up to 70.5%.
- The Bank of Canada made a significant interest rate cut of 0.5 percentage points, bringing the policy rate to 3.75%.
- European Central Bank (ECB) President Christine Lagarde emphasized that the status of a global reserve currency should not be "taken for granted".
- In October, the Flash Eurozone Composite PMI slightly improved to 49.7.
- In October 2024, the UK Services PMI declined to 51.8 from 52.4, meanwhile, the UK Manufacturing PMI dropped to 50.3 from 51.5.
- The People's Bank of China has decided to lower its benchmark lending rates.

tion to keeping it stable around the target of 2%, as inflation is now well under control.

The US Dollar Index closed the week at 104.257.

Europe

Words From ECB President Christine Lagarde

European Central Bank (ECB) President Christine Lagarde emphasized that the status of a global reserve currency should not be "taken for granted" during an Atlantic Council event alongside the International Monetary Fund-World Bank meetings. She discussed key challenges facing Europe, including the ECB's focus on price stability, and how Europe's weaker economic competitiveness impacts its inflation battle. Lagarde reviewed the ECB's monetary policy, noting inflation in the eurozone dropped from 10.6% in October 2022 to below 2%, though she expects it to rise above 2% again soon. Unlike the US Federal Reserve, which also targets growth, the ECB's mandate is strictly focused on price stability. Lagarde highlighted the importance of trade for innova-

tion, growth, and poverty reduction, warning that trade barriers could negatively affect both growth and inflation. She advised that the next US president consider the historical correlation between US economic leadership and periods of open trade, cautioning against restrictive trade policies.

Flash Manufacturing and Services PMIs

In October, the Flash Eurozone Composite PMI slightly improved to 49.7 from September's 49.6 but remained below expectations, indicating a minor increase in business activity. Services growth eased to 51.2, and the manufacturing downturn softened to 45.9, as companies scaled back output in response to declining demand. New orders fell for the fifth consecutive month, leading to the largest reduction in employment in nearly four years and an 11-month low in business confidence. Input costs rose at their slowest rate since November 2020, and output charge inflation eased. Weakness in Germany and France continued to drag down overall Eurozone activity.

Previous Week Levels					This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
Currencies	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.0860	1.0760	1.0872	1.0793	1.0670	1.0875	1.0840
GBP	1.3038	1.2904	1.3058	1.2959	1.2800	1.3040	1.2960
JPY	149.47	149.07	153.18	152.30	151.20	154.00	150.45
CHF	0.8645	0.8631	0.8686	0.8665	0.8610	0.8720	0.8580

The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.0793.

United Kingdom

Flash Manufacturing and Services PMIs

In October 2024, the UK Services PMI declined to 51.8 from 52.4, indicating the slowest sector growth since June and missing market expectations. New business remained in expansion, boosted by strong export sales, but firms continued to reduce backlogs to maintain output and cut jobs at the fastest rate in 13 months amid economic concerns and cost-cutting pressures. Rising costs from salaries and technology also led firms to increase output charges, while business confidence softened. Meanwhile, the UK Manufacturing PMI dropped to 50.3 from 51.5, signaling a slowdown in growth as new orders, especially from international clients, fell. The upcoming Autumn Budget on October 30 and concerns over domestic economic growth added uncertainty. Although input prices rose more slowly, firms raised output charges to protect margins, with manufacturers expressing their lowest confidence in nearly two years due to rising political and economic uncertainties.

The GBP/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.2959.

Asia Pacific

China's Benchmark Lending Rates

The People's Bank of China has decided to lower its benchmark lending rates, as anticipated by markets and following reductions to other policy rates last month as part of its stimulus measures to revive the economy. The one-year loan prime rate was lowered by 25 bps, reaching 3.10% down from 3.35%, while the five-year loan prime rate was also cut to 3.60%, down from 3.85% previously. The decision comes following cuts to the bank's reserve requirement ratio by 50 bps, and the seven-day repo rate by 20 bps in September, which was considered the most aggressive stimulus since the pandemic. Recent data show that China's economic growth saw a slight improvement in the third quarter, while property investment fell by about 10% in the first nine months of 2024, and retail sales and industrial production saw a slight pickup.

The USD/CNY currency pair closed the week at 7.1199.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30640.

ABK announces robust 9-month '24 financial results

Bank rakes in 19% increase in net profit to KD 38.83 mln

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) proudly announced its robust 9-month 2024 financial results, once again affirming its position as a leading financial institution.

Financial Performance

ABK reported a Net Profit of KD 38.83 million, representing a 19% increase and an increase in Earnings per Share (EPS) of 23% to 16 fils. Operating Income increased by 11% to KD 150.81 million while Operating Profit witnessed an increase of 13%, reaching KD 80.58million, reflecting the Bank's strong profitability and shareholder value creation.

Total Assets reached KD 7.08 billion while maintaining steady growth in Loans and Advances amounting to KD 4.56 billion, with Customer Deposits at KD 4.33 billion, affirming the Group's reputation as a trusted financial partner. Moreover, the Bank's Non-performing Loan (NPL) ratio stood at 1.30%, with NPL coverage at 467%, Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) at 17.01%, and Shareholders' Equity at KD 611.26million, further underscoring ABK's financial stability, healthy financial position, and robust balance sheet.

Continued Success

On this occasion, Talal Mohamed Reza Behbehani, Chairman of ABK, said, "Our 9-month financial results demonstrate the effectiveness of our strategic plans, which the Board of Directors and Executive Management are dedicated to implementing according to a well-defined timeline. These results affirm our capability to navigate economic challenges at local, regional, and global levels, as well as our commitment to deliver added value to all our stakeholders, including shareholders, clients, and partners."

He reported that ABK has continued to experience growth in most of its financial indicators since the beginning of 2024. The Group remains committed to adhering to regulatory requirements set forth by the Central Bank of Kuwait, the Capital Markets Authority, and other regulatory bodies, as well as Basel III standards. Furthermore, he emphasized ABK's dedication to strengthening its liquidity and enhancing its capacity to serve all sectors efficiently.

Behbehani stated, "The first nine months of this year have seen several noteworthy transactions. Among the most significant was the successful US\$300 million Additional Tier 1 (AT1) bond offering. This issuance experienced robust demand, being oversubscribed 4.5 times by local, regional, and global investors, reflecting the strong confidence the Group has garnered in financial circles." He affirmed the Group's strive to capitalize on the best opportunities to enhance its liquidity and achieve its goals.

Behbehani also highlighted that ABK signed an agreement this year to renew credit facilities worth US\$250 million for Daewoo Engineering and Construction. This underscores the Group's commitment to supporting and financing its clients, as well as its efforts to meet the needs of foreign companies operating in the Kuwaiti market through tailored financing solutions and facilitation of their logistical operations.

Credit Ratings and Awards

The Chairman noted that ABK has sustained its high ratings with a stable outlook from global credit rating



Mr. Talal Mohamed Reza Behbehani – ABK Chairman.



Mr. Abdulla Al Sumait - Acting Group Chief Executive Officer.



ABK logo

agencies, receiving an A rating from Fitch and an A2 from Moody's. He regarded these as a testament to the financial stability of the Group and its ability to instill trust as a reliable banking and financial partner both in the Kuwaiti market and the regional markets it operates in, such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Egypt. Additionally, these ratings signify the substantial confidence expressed by global institutions that specialize in performance evaluation.

Behbehani added that ABK successfully received several awards from reputable entities, such as Global Finance, MEED, and International Finance, among others. This recognition comes after the Bank met the requirement performance evaluation criteria in various areas, including Retail Banking, Corporate Banking, Human Resources, Digital Transformation and Innovation, and Investor Relations. These achievements reflect ABK employees' outstanding performance and dedication to continuous improvement and enhancing their capabilities and productivity.

A New Strategy

Behbehani announced that ABK continues to implement its five-year strategy which is aimed at enhancing its operational processes, with a strong emphasis on digital transformation. This commitment is reflected in the launch of the Bank's new website, designed to provide customers with a comprehensive banking experience. Additionally, ABK is focused on enhancing its mobile application to deliver added value, ensuring users re-

ceive services around the clock while maintaining the highest levels of security.

The Chairman conveyed his heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the Central Bank of Kuwait for its vital role in fostering confidence in the banking sector's stability and strength, as well as its significant contributions to economic activity in Kuwait. He also commended the dedication of the Executive Management and all employees for their roles in achieving the Group's financial objectives, highlighting ABK's endeavor to continue to develop its offerings to the highest levels.

Clear Vision

On his part, Abdulla Al Sumait, Acting Group Chief Executive Officer at ABK, said, "We are committed to achieving sustainable growth in the Bank's profits while adhering to the strategic framework set by our Board of Directors and Executive Management. Our focus is on building customer trust within the banking sector in Kuwait, as well as expanding our operations in the UAE and Egypt. We aim to provide the best banking and financial solutions, products, and services to meet our customers' needs."

He added that ABK is dedicated to continuously improving its systems to ensure customer satisfaction and build trust by providing the highest levels of security across all services. He noted that the Group emphasizes the adoption of advanced digital technologies in partnership with leading and specialized companies in the field.

Al Sumait mentioned that ABK consistently introduces

new and exclusive offers, along with promotional campaigns, to attract customers to its expanding family. He highlighted that in the first nine months of 2024, the Bank launched several new accounts and promotional initiatives tailored to various customer segments in the local market. Additionally, he revealed that ongoing studies are being conducted to better understand customer needs, allowing the Bank to innovate new solutions that enhance its competitive position across all sectors.

He announced that ABK is actively progressing with its branch development plan across various regions of Kuwait. This initiative involves modernizing branches with contemporary designs and advanced digital technologies, aiming to enhance customer comfort and deliver seamless service.

He noted that in the first nine months of 2024, the Bank completed the renovation of the Jabriya branch and relocated to a new branch in Salmiya. Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of ATMs at key locations to ensure ongoing service for customers in the local market.

Al Sumait emphasized the Bank's ongoing effort to attract top talents and skills across various divisions. Notably, ABK organizes numerous training programs to enhance employees' capabilities and skills. This initiative aims to address their needs and improve the benefits they receive, ultimately boosting productivity and fostering innovation in banking services and solutions. This commitment aligns with the Bank's dedication to providing a positive work environment.

Egypt and the UAE

AlSumait highlighted that ABK's operations in the UAE and Egypt play a significant role in its financial results. He noted the emphasis on strengthening its presence in these markets, which is reflected in the high-quality financial services provided to both individual and corporate clients in the UAE.

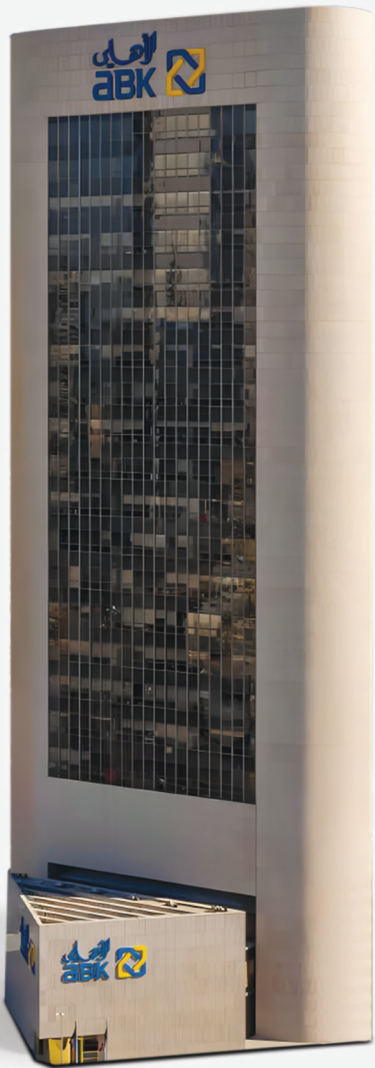
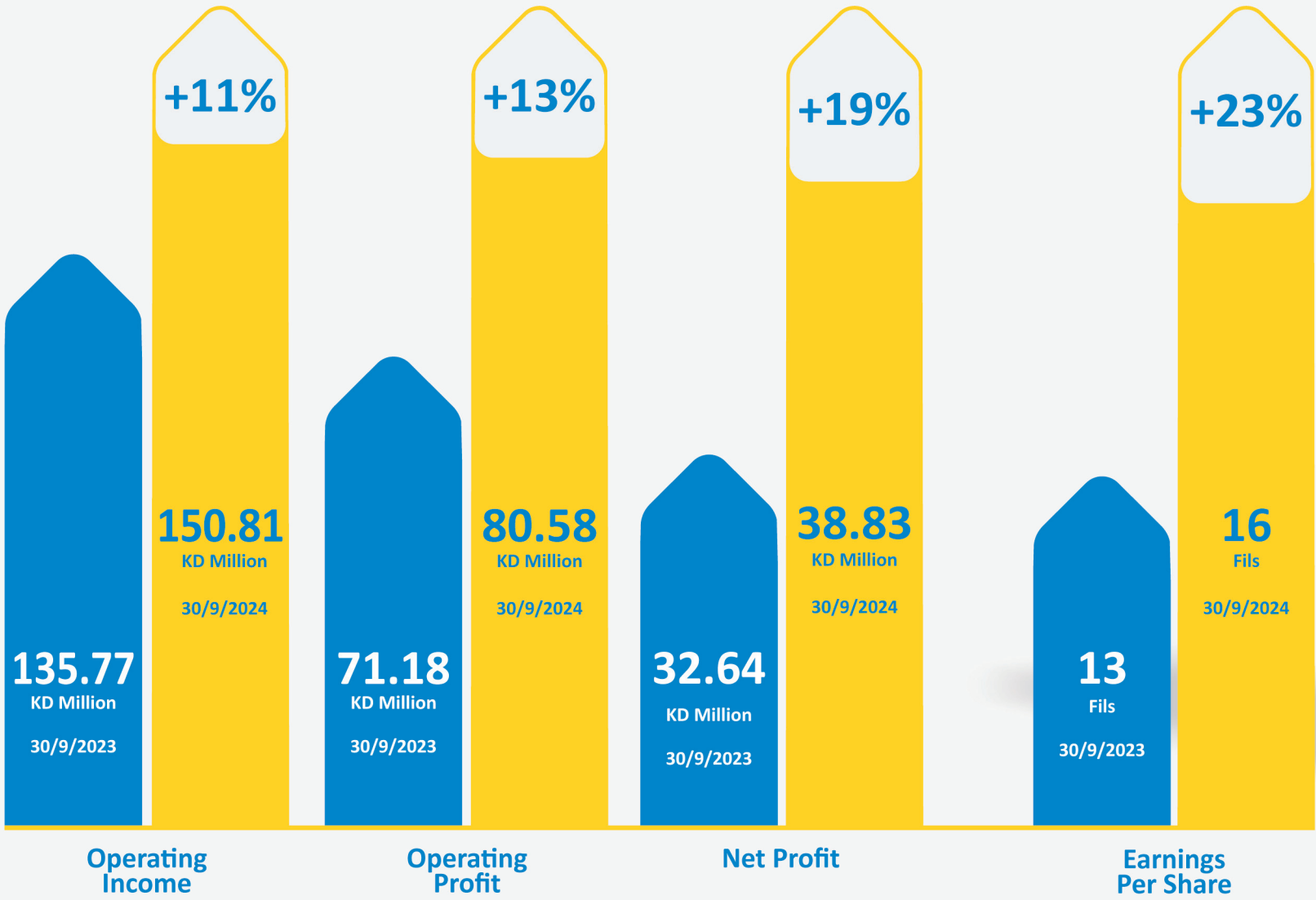
Meanwhile, ABK-Egypt is dedicated to excellence in servicing its clients and aims for planned expansion. This includes opening new branches and renovating existing ones across all Egyptian governorates, as well as offering advanced digital technologies and incentives to effectively reach and serve various customer segments.

Social Responsibility

He stated that the Group remains committed to continuously developing its social responsibility programs. This involves participating in, sponsoring, and supporting a wide array of health, sports, and educational initiatives throughout the year, in collaboration with various institutions and organizations from both public and private sectors. These efforts significantly enhance ABK's presence in the Kuwaiti community, reinforcing its role as a responsible institution in the market.

Concluding his statement, AlSumait emphasized the ongoing support for the 'Let's Be Aware' awareness campaign, which is a collaboration with the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwaiti Banking Association. The campaign aims to educate customers about the banking sector's role in safeguarding their rights. To achieve this, the Bank distributes targeted awareness content across its social media platforms, within its branches, and on its website. Additionally, various events and competitions are organized to engage all customer segments in the market.

9-Month Financial Results 2024



Held in Washington, D.C. from October 21st to 26th

NBK concludes its participation in annual meetings of IMF and World Bank Group

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The official delegation representing National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has concluded its participation in the annual events and meetings organized by the Board of Governors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group, which took place in Washington, D.C. from October 21st to 26th.

The delegation was headed by Mr. Isam Al-Sager, Vice Chairman and Group CEO, alongside Mr. Omar Bouhadiba, CEO of International Banking Group, and Mr. Nassif Chehab, Head of Financial Institutions Division, as well as Mr. Rani Selwanes, General Manager of NBK - New York.

The Annual Meetings discussed key economic and financial challenges in addition to various topics including public debt, fiscal sustainability, and economic growth, climate finance, scaling up climate finance. Furthermore, the meetings tackled international trade issues and the impact of geopolitical tensions on the global economic landscape.

On the sidelines of the IMF Meetings, NBK's delegation conducted numerous bilateral meetings with high-ranking international officials, which focused on addressing key current challenges in the global banking and financial industry.

The delegation also joined the reception ceremony hosted by Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) last Friday in Washington, D.C., under the patronage of Mr. Basel Al-Haroon, the Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait. The event was attended by Mrs. Noura Al-Fassam, Minister of Finance, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, and Acting Minister of Oil, and Sheikhha Al-Zain Al-Sabah, Ambassador of Kuwait to the United States, along with governors of Arab central banks, chairmen of Kuwaiti banks, Kuwaiti banking leaders, and a number of international economic and financial personalities.

The event featured interactions between bankers from Kuwait and their counterparts from Arab and foreign regions, facilitating discussions on the latest financial and banking developments and the exploration of potential collaborations in the fields of finance and investment.

NBK's delegation also joined the dinner banquet hosted by Sheikhha Al-Zain Al-Sabah, Ambassador of Kuwait to the United States, attended by Mrs. Noura Al-Fassam, Minister of Finance, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, and Acting Minister of Oil, and Mr. Basel Al-Haroon, the Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait, along with Kuwaiti banking leaders.

One of the significant highlights of this year's meetings for the official bank delegation was their participa-



The Minister of Finance and Al-Haroon during the reception ceremony.



Basel Al-Haroon and the leaders of Kuwaiti banks.



Isam Al-Sager, Omar Bouhadiba, Nassif Chehab, and Rani Selwanes.



Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah and Isam Al-Sager with the leaders of Kuwaiti banks.

tion in a symposium organized by the G30, held concurrently with the annual meetings of the IMF and the World Bank Group. Every year, central bank governors from around the world convene with industry leaders and academic experts at a symposium focused on addressing the most pressing financial and systemic challenges facing the global central banking community.

The bank's delegation also took part in meetings organized by the Institute of International Finance (IIF), where a range of topics were discussed.

These discussions covered global challenges, including interest rate reduction cycle, financial markets volatility, global geopolitical tensions, and strategies aimed at bolstering the resilience of the banking industry while fostering sustainable and broadly inclusive economic growth.

The IMF and the World Bank Group Annual Meetings brought together governors of central banks, ministers of finance and development, parliamentarians, private sector executives, civil society, and academics to discuss issues of global concern. These meet-

ings encompass a wide array of activities, including seminars, regional briefings, press conferences, and numerous other events dedicated to addressing topics related to the global economy, international development, and the global financial system.

The 2024 Annual Meetings also covered a range of key topics including the strategies for establishing economic resilience in the face of a weak global economy and heightened uncertainty. Policymakers explored ways to build a more resilient future by reinforcing social safety nets to safe-

guard the most vulnerable segments of society, enhancing governance and accountability, strengthening policy frameworks, and addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

The Annual Meetings feature several significant committees, with the most notable ones being the Development Committee, the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC), the Group of Ten, the Group of Twenty-Four, and the Group of Thirty. The IMFC meeting, in particular, tackled evaluating the current state and potential future trends

in the global economy's performance, as well as examining developments in international financial markets and the types of risks that could impact these performance trends.

During its Annual Meetings, the International Monetary Fund conducted a comprehensive assessment of the global economic outlook. This review encompassed the insights IMF's experts regarding trends in the global economic performance, expected risks, and the prospects of the world economy.

Alghannam brings 26 years of experience

KFH appoints Hamad Alghannam as General Manager of Private Banking

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has appointed Hamad Mohammad Alghannam as the General Manager Private Banking and Wealth Management. This move aligns with KFH's ongoing strategy of promoting national talents, especially among the youth, to continue leading its journey of success and achievements.

This appointment is part of KFH plans to attract and develop national capabilities and boost competencies by recruiting internally. It is also based on its strategic vision to elevate service delivery, competitiveness standards and performance at all levels. Additionally, this step contributes to qualifying the next generation of leadership that represents KFH's core values, leading to sustainable success as KFH drives its leading journey forward.

As a member of the KFH family and leader of the next generation, Alghannam is one of the most accomplished and prominent bankers. With a professional career spanning 26 years, Alghannam brings a wealth of experience in many positions in private banking.

He took part in the department's development plans, while expanding its services and customer segments. This was achieved through an exceptional performance in serving Al Nukhba customer segment, structuring a business model dedicated towards offering



Hamad Alghannam

the best solutions and benefits to customers with competitive advantages.

Alghannam held the position of deputy General Manager Private Banking and Wealth Management in 2022. His career at KFH began in 1998 after his graduation from Kuwait University with a bachelor's degree in accounting. He also completed a training program in leadership and transformation.

In addition to possessing extensive experience and skills in organizational operations and leading teams with efficiency, Alghannam has obtained a number of professional certificates and successfully completed specialized training programs from prestigious and world-class institutions.



KUNA photo
Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Al-Sudani during his meeting with Iraqi Oil Minister.

Iraq reaffirms commitment to OPEC+ oil production cuts

BAGHDAD, Oct 27, (KUNA): The Iraqi government once again reiterated its commitment to decreasing crude oil production as agreed upon by OPEC+ group, and affirmed moving forward with developing the oil and gas sectors in the country.

The announcement came after Prime Minister Mohammad Al-Sudani met with Oil Minister Hayyan Abdulghani

on Sunday and discussed Iraq's commitments in relation to oil production and projects.

The meeting also touched on the importance of partnership between oil producing countries in order to maintain stability of the global market, reported the Prime Minister's media office adding that Iraq is committed to the agreed upon schedule of production.

Agency sets ambitious goals following 50% revenue growth in 2023

BPG focuses on talent, culture, and agile solutions for 2025

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Award-winning agency BPG (Bates PanGulf, part of WPP) recently concluded its 28th annual offsite event at the Waldorf Astoria in Ras Al Khaimah. The three-day BPG Camels, hailed as the agency's best offsite to date, brought together 154 attendees representing 35 nationalities across seven markets, reinforcing BPG's commitment to diversity, integration, and innovation.

Avi Bhojani, Group CEO, BPG Group said: "Culture is more than just words on paper. From collaboration without ego to embracing innovation and staying client-centric, we're reminded that ideas have no seniority; everyone brings something valuable to the table. In the age of AI, we continue to push together for excellence, celebrate success, and stay human by design."



The BPG offsite comes at a pivotal moment, amid growing demands for agility and innovative solutions, with AI integration, hyper-personalization, and sustainability driving new trends. BPG Camels fostered cross-discipline creative brilliance, highlighting BPG's 'digital-first, integrated by intent' positioning. Eleven teams tackled as many creative briefs, highlighting their ability to generate high-impact campaigns under pressure.

Toby Hoare, Global Client Lead for Unilever at WPP and BPG Board Member, said: "Awards validate creative thinking, foster ambition, attract and retain top-tier talent, and build client trust. They also enhance brand reputation, with creative brands achieving 2.4x higher income growth over five years. Awards also amplify campaign impact through earned media, demonstrate the power of data-driven creativity, and underscore a commitment to continuous innovation and future investment in creativity."

Building on an impressive 50% growth in 2023 revenue, BPG is setting ambitious goals for 2025. The offsite showcased the agency's potential to achieve these targets, focusing on high-stakes creative challenges evaluated by a jury of industry experts: Sonal Dabral, – Founder Creative Consultancy, Tribha and former CCO/Chairman of Bates Asia, DDB India, Ogilvy India, Malaysia, and Singapore; Mariagrazia De Angelis – GM at Landor MEA; Dominic Stallard – Founder, The Experience Makers; Clark Williams, Director of Marketing and Communications – NEOM/Trojana and Ravi Rao – former CEO GroupM, MENA and Strategic Advisor to BPG.

The offsite also underscored the critical role of culture in talent attraction and retention. As the industry grapples with hybrid work models and evolving employee expectations, BPG's cohesive culture stood out. Souheil Arabi,



Photos during the event.

Group COO, BPG Group, and CEO, BPG Kuwait, said: "Our agency culture is our 'secret sauce' – it's what makes BPG unique, and our annual offsite is an integral part of how we nurture and celebrate this culture. This year's offsite was like BPG's Olympics; we pushed our people to aim higher, go further and innovate faster. And the teams rose to the challenge superbly, surprising us with their creativity and resourcefulness."

With its multi-disciplinary approach, emphasis on collaboration, and a surge of fresh ideas, BPG is poised for global industry recognition and a successful 2025.

Jury comments

Clark Williams: "Nobody does 'culture' better than BPG, which continues to attract and retain excellent people

who eventually become some of the agency's biggest advocates. BPG's yearly offsite is the perfect culmination of how that culture manifests itself once a year through shared experiences and instilling a sense of belonging."

Dominic Stallard: "The BPG offsite was more than just an event – it was the start of a cultural movement. The agency is well on its way to major industry recognition. With fresh ideas and innovative solutions, the company is primed to take home major awards and solidify its status as a creative force."

Mariagrazia De Angelis: "It was an inspiring event – in just six hours the competing teams were able not only to come up with exciting ideas but also package them in a compelling way. Their approach was a clear proof point of the agency's 'integrated by intent'

strategy. The amazing talent and the cohesive team culture did the rest!"

Ravi Rao: "BPG's commitment to fostering a thriving company culture – both in workplace and through their off-site events has been key to their sustained success. Their ability to think differently, inspire creativity, and unite their talents ensures that they stay at the forefront of communications industry, ready to tackle the challenges of tomorrow."

Sonal Dabral: "What stood out for me, was the remarkable volume and quality of ideas generated in such a short time, driven by a powerful spirit of collaboration. It was heartening to see all the teams work seamlessly together in pursuit of great ideas. A true testament to the exceptional culture BPG is building around creativity and teamwork."

What's On



The insightful sessions discuss business success stories.



Zain and M2 Club representatives honor Bader Aloqaili for participating.



Great turnout by students.

Second FUN Talks initiative kicks-off in partnership with M2 Club at Kuwait University

Zain empowers students to excel in the world of business

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: For the second time running, Zain has kicked-off its FUN Talks initiative in strategic partnership with the Management and Marketing Club (M2 Club) at the College of Business Administration, Kuwait University. The initiative brings together a distinguished group of local entrepreneurs and business success stories to share their experiences with students, empowering them to pursue their dreams and contribute to the growth of the creative economy.

This initiative comes under the umbrella of Zain's Future University Network (FUN) program, which

provides university students with a plethora of opportunities to gain knowledge and skills through a wide range of year-round programs and initiatives. The programs are designed to upskill participants in diverse areas, preparing them to enter the local private sector and empowering them to excel in their future careers.

FUN Talks features insightful discussions with a select group of Kuwaiti entrepreneurs and founders of popular local startups who have achieved inspiring success in the business world. The guests share their stories with the students and

discuss how they transformed their dreams into competitive brands that excelled in the local market.

This platform enables students to interact closely with the speakers to learn from their unique journeys, something that inspires them to realize their own dreams one day. The discussions are moderated by Dr. Abrar Abul, a faculty member at the College of Business Administration.

This year, FUN Talks hosts several notable figures, including Bader Aloqaili, co-founder of the highly successful PICK chain that specializes in passionately made, fresh,

and nutritious food. Also joining the guests is Raghad Al Zamil, CEO of Arzi Holding, an enterprise spanning multiple sectors with a focus on creativity and sustainability. She is also the co-founder of 'Mawada', a unique online gifting platform, and the founder of Ocean Minded, an organization committed to educating younger generations on the importance of marine conservation.

Also joining the panels are Maryam Dashti and Abdullah Abu Qasim from Lose & Gain, a comprehensive health center focused on sports care and wellness activities, as well as Fahad Abu Al Hassan, the creator

of the popular social entertainment game MKHMKH.

This new edition follows the success of the first, which featured prominent local business figures such as Mohammed Al Hajraf, founder of FURDTK, the platform specializing in fresh produce, and Abdulrahman Al Khulaifi, CEO of Diet Station, a leading provider of healthy meal subscriptions.

Other notable participants from last season included Lujain Al Wazzan, Chief Operating Officer, and Janan Al Wazzan, Creative Director at Al Wazzan Education, which operates a number of world-class aca-

demie institutions, and Mohammed Al Dhubaib, CEO of Seazen Group, a leader in the hospitality sector managing popular restaurants across the country.

FUN continues to be one of Zain's most engaging sustainable programs since its launch in 2008, focusing on investing in the next generation of Kuwait's talents. Over the years, the program has provided hundreds of students with paid part-time experiences at Zain, helping them launch their careers, while also bringing them many development and training opportunities to empower them to excel in their fields.

Supporting Kuwaiti youth for successful job market integration

KIB participates in the AU Career Fair 2024

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) participated in the 2024 Career Fair organized by the Australian University (AU) in Kuwait, as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting Kuwaiti youth and preparing them for successful integration into the job market. The Bank's participation aims to provide job opportunities for graduates and prospective graduates, as well as to strengthen the presence of national talent across various banking and financial sectors. The fair serves as an important platform for connecting organizations with ambitious students aspiring to build a promising professional future.

On this occasion, Firas Al-Darmi, General Manager of Human Resources Department at KIB, stated: "We place great importance on attracting and developing Kuwaiti talent, and we are committed to supporting young Kuwaitis and enabling them to seize opportunities within the banking sector. Our participation in this fair reflects our dedication to creating a work environment that encourages skill development and fosters creativity, in alignment with



KIB's booth at AU Career Fair 2024

our strategy to support and nurture national talent."

Al-Darmi added: "KIB offers comprehensive training programs designed to develop the skills of young people and provide them with the knowledge necessary for success in the banking sector. We believe that investing in youth is an investment in Kuwait's future. Therefore, we are

committed to providing opportunities that enhance their capabilities and help them achieve their ambitions."

He also pointed out that KIB offers diverse employment opportunities for graduates across various departments and consistently seeks to strengthen its team with passionate and driven national talents. The Bank provides a supportive environ-



KIB's Firas Al-Darmi

ment that fosters growth and development.

Al-Darmi concluded his remarks, saying: "KIB remains committed to supporting initiatives aimed at empowering Kuwaiti youth. We firmly believe that young people are a crucial pillar of Kuwait's future, and we will continue to be partners in their journey toward professional success."

Event promotes job opportunities for new graduates

KIBS participates in AU's Career Fair in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: As part of its support for newly graduated Kuwaitis, the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies participated in the Job Opportunities Fair organized by the Australian University in Kuwait on Thursday, October 24, 2024. The aim is to connect with new Kuwaiti graduates, inform them about the services offered by the institute, and contribute to providing job opportunities for them.

The Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies was keen to respond to the invitation from the Australian University in Kuwait and participated in this important event to engage with new graduates, share its expertise, and introduce them to its activities including training programs, professional certifications, research studies, and other important services that help qualify them for employment and achieve their ambitions to build their future. These graduates are considered a national asset that must be nurtured, developed, and empowered to meet the requirements of working in banks, financial institutions, and other organizations operating in Kuwait.



A photo from the event

The Director General of the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies, Ms. Rana Abdullah Al-Nibari, emphasized the importance of support-

ing and investing in Kuwaiti youth, developing their skills, guiding them, and focusing on nurturing new generations to help them achieve their

ambitions in building their future, considering them the cornerstone for achieving the development, progress, and advancement of Kuwait.

In its participation, the institute highlighted the Kafa'a initiative programs, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait in collaboration with Kuwaiti banks and managed by the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies. This initiative aims to prepare national talents capable of playing a vital role in serving the national economy.

The Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies provides advanced professional services to help raise the levels of efficiency and effectiveness in the banking sector in particular and the financial sector in general. The Institute provides a set of professional, specialized, and educational training services, and strengthens the decision-making process at various administrative levels in local banks, by carrying out research and consultancy related to banking and finance.

For more information about KIBS, please visit its website: www.kibs.edu.kw

Multiple benefits offered

Warba Bank names winners of Salary Transfer Campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Warba Bank continues its salary transfer campaign for the year 2024, which gives the clients a chance to obtain different benefits, most notably an exceptional travel experience and cash prizes of up to KD 1,000, a 25-gram gold bar, and 35,000 miles provided by Warba Bank in cooperation with the Oasis Club of Kuwait Airways, in addition to a cash gift of up to KD 15,000.

The Bank stated that this year's salary transfer campaign will grant all Kuwaiti clients of Warba Bank whose salaries exceed KWD 500 exceptional benefits and entry into the monthly and weekly draws for the 2024 Salary Transfer Campaign.

The weekly draw was held and three clients won. The first winner was Nayif Abdullah Al-Dosari, who won a prize worth KD 1,000, while the second winner was Bader Naser Al-Anezi, who received a 25-gram gold bar. The third prize, went to Lina Marmi Al-Ruwe, who received 35,000 miles provided by Warba Bank in cooperation with the Oasis Club of Kuwait Airways.

On this occasion, Ahmed Mohammad Al-Mutawa - Area Manager Retail Banking Group, said: "We are always keen to provide the best distinctive offers and exclusive benefits to our clients that suit different segments and ages of Kuwaitis whose salaries exceed KD 500, so we launched this year's salary transfer campaign with exceptional benefits and rewards."

Al-Mutawa added: "Salary transfer gives clients the opportunity to enjoy the distinguished banking solutions provided by Warba Bank, including innovative digital services and the most advanced payment solutions using the latest technology, which contributes to providing clients with banking experience on the highest levels of luxury, security and peace of mind."

He stressed that all the offers included in the salary transfer campaign this year were carefully designed in line with clients' needs and seasonal requirements, with the aim of always providing the most valuable and suitable offers for our clients.

Al-Mutawa pointed out that transferring the salary gives clients the opportunity to obtain special benefits such as other banking and investment solutions, indicating that Warba clients obtain many exceptional benefits when transferring their salary to the Bank, which include benefiting from the largest banking networks in Kuwait, whether in terms of branches or ATMs.

Al-Mutawa explained that Warba clients can complete their banking transactions quickly, easily and at any time through the Bank's electronic channels, most notably the Warba mobile service, which the Bank is constantly developing and updating, and which is always highly demand by clients, as it has come to account for the largest share of banking transactions.

Warba Bank is one of the banks that have achieved great successes in a short period of time, as it has occupied a leading position by providing innovative digital banking services in accordance with Islamic Sharia for individuals and companies, and is one of the local banks with the largest number of shareholders, and these are among the most prominent elements that make the Bank close to all members of society.



Al-Mutawa



Advocating Animal Rights: Claudia Al-Rashoud with KES officials and students.

Claudia Al-Rashoud visits KES, talks new organization, KSAW

By Hisham Asad Ullah

Y10 student, Kuwait English School

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Claudia Al-Rashoud, Kuwait's first female photojournalist and a passionate animal rights activist, recently visited Kuwait English School to share her journey and insights into animal welfare. She was greeted by the school's students, teachers, and hosted by the school librarian, Ms. Chaitali Roy.

Established in 1979, her advocacy work has been crucial in rescuing and rehabilitating hundreds of stray animals in Kuwait, addressing the significant gaps in the country's animal welfare laws.

During her visit, Claudia spoke about the Kuwait Society of Animal Welfare (KSAW), a non-profit or-

ganization she supports that focuses on rescuing abused and neglected animals, providing them with medical care, and finding them loving homes. Al-Rashoud's founding of KSAW has been instrumental in initiating animal awareness in Kuwait, with plans to expand and work with others in the GCC.

She also mentioned other non-profits like Touch of Hope, run by Marlene Biggediene, which rescues and rehabilitates animals suffering from harsh conditions. Claudia highlighted the need for stronger animal welfare laws in Kuwait and encouraged students to get involved by volunteering, donating, adopting, or fostering animals. Her visit was a powerful reminder of the impact we can all have in promoting animal welfare.

Indian Embassy marks new 'Classical Language' status

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Embassy of India in Kuwait celebrated the recognition of Marathi, Bengali, and Assamese as classical Indian languages, along with Pali and Prakrit. This designation honors India's diverse cultural heritage, especially for communities associated with these languages.

Speaking to the audience as the embassy auditorium, HE the Ambassador of India to Kuwait HE Dr Adarsh Swaika, said, the status underscores the importance of these languages in preserving India's deep-rooted cultural and historical legacy.

He went on to say, "As some of you may be aware, the Government of India had decided to create a new category of languages as 'Classical Languages' on Oct 12, 2004 by declaring Tamil as the Classical Language for the first time.

"After Tamil, 5 other languages have been accorded this status - Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Odia.

"It is a matter of great satisfaction," he said, "that around 60-70 percent of the one million

strong Indian community in Kuwait has these languages as their native language."

A Linguistic Experts Committee (LEC) was constituted by the Ministry of Culture under Sahitya Akademi in Nov 2004 to examine the proposed languages for the status of Classical Language.

Certain criteria were set for eligibility for the Classical Language status which have been revised over a period time including recently by this committee.

India's Ministry of Education has initiated programs for these languages, including university research centers and translation efforts. Additionally, the government has implemented awards, research positions, and scholarships to promote the study and preservation of Classical Languages, creating opportunities in academia and cultural preservation.

The event featured cultural performances by associations from Maharashtra, Bengal, and Assam, highlighting the richness of each language. The embassy expressed gratitude to these groups for their partnership in celebrating this milestone.



HE Dr Adarsh Swaika addressing the gathering.

'The Great Impersonator' is reflective

In illness, Halsey tells deep truths on ambitious new album

LOS ANGELES, Oct 27, (AP): "Long story short, I'm lucky to be alive," are the words Halsey chose to introduce their fifth studio album, "The Great Impersonator."

Born Ashley Frangipane, the pop singer who uses she/they pronouns shared the note on Instagram in June, later revealing she'd been privately battling both a form of lupus and a rare T-cell lymphoproliferative disorder since 2022. "The Great Impersonator," out Friday, is a chronicle of that time, made in the space of survival. And it wasn't only health crises and treatment threatening their well-being: Across the last two years, she was also dropped from her longtime label and separated from the father of their son.

In some ways, "The Great Impersonator" is an artifact of someone not sure they'll live to make another record. It's full of reflection, from the early days of her career, the whirlwind that followed and the existential wisdom that comes when cut-



This album cover image shows 'The Great Impersonator' by Halsey. (AP)

ting it close to death.

It may seem ironic, then, that on this album - the one that feels like an artist trying

to get to the core of their interiority - she's chosen to compose songs that directly pull from her greatest inspirations. Each song is a kind of impersonation of another performer, filtered through her own songwriting style. But that's exactly the point: Halsey has been chameleonic across their career, a forerunner in the internet's age of genre-averse alt-pop. What is truest to them may very well be an album of impressions.

It's a return to both the music that made Halsey a teenage superstar all those years ago and the influences that were previously hidden from their work. In the former category, there's the interpolation of Britney Spears on "Lucky," the shoegaze-meets-nu-metal "Lonely is the Muse," where Deftones and Evanescence can be heard in equal measure, the pop-punky, Third Eye Blind-like "Ego" and the folky "The End."

Elsewhere, there's the big-hearted, reverberated Bruce Springsteen-channeling

"Letter to God (1983)," lest anyone forget Halsey is from New Jersey. Sonically, "Hometown" is Halsey's cursive-singing take on Dolly Parton; "Arsonist," a near-parody of Fiona Apple. "Panic Attack" pulls a Stevie Nicks, while the title track is her homage to Björk.

"The Great Impersonator" is also about an artist rectifying their relationship with fame and by extension, career. Halsey's blockbuster pop singles appear to be a thing of the past, a necessary sacrifice to make the most interesting work of their career. Her last album, 2021's "If I Can't Have Love, I Want Power," saw Halsey teaming up with Nine Inch Nails' Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross for an industrial concept record on motherhood and the Freudian "Madonna-whore complex." It is her most ambitious work, and what she has recently called her least commercially successful release. "The Great Impersonator" is aware of that legacy, and instead of at-

tempting to reclaim traditional markers of achievement, bucks up against them.

In the opening track, "Only Living Girl in LA," Halsey offers both brutal honesty and crippling satire: "I don't know if I could sell out my own funeral (Ah-ah) / At least not at this point in time." Near the end, the folky opener fractures into explosive distortion - something that might be at home on an Alex G record. He is one of this album's producers, along with Michael Uzowuru, known for his work with SZA, Frank Ocean, FKA Twigs, Beyoncé and more.

But those collaborators are only a piece of "The Great Impersonator," of course, an album that feels truest to Halsey - strangely, arriving in a moment where she's made herself the least available she has ever been to the public. It's an ambitious, contemplative album - self-involved and hyper-referential - perhaps the best document yet of the person behind the moniker.

Sheikha Abrar boosts Kuwait's media at El Gouna

Kuwait welcomed at Egypt's 7th edition of El Gouna Film Festival

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Driven by her mission to foster Kuwait's regional position in the media and entertainment industry, Founder of Abbey's Productions, Her Excellency Sheikha Abrar Al Sabah, arrived in El Gouna, Egypt on the 21st of October for a week of meetings with regional industry players, conduct strategic initiatives, and attend the El Gouna Film Festival 7th edition.

Al Sabah's trip focused on fostering Kuwait's regional position in today's Arab media and entertainment industry through active efforts in building collaborations with key industry drivers. Negotiations and initial agreements carried during her trip aimed to pave the way for Kuwaiti artists, filmmakers, producers, and fashion designers to strengthen their presence in the regional sphere.

Al Sabah's trip included high-level meetings with the C-suites of El Gouna and leading players in the 'Orient of Hollywood'. Meetings held with El Gouna were attended by the Chief Executive Officer, Mohamed Amer, Chief Commercial Officer, Mohamed Ashour, Egypt's renowned entrepreneur and the Gouna Film Festival Co-Founder and Executive Director, Amr Mansi.

"Fostering Kuwait's global position in the media and entertainment industry has always been my ultimate goal. I was thrilled to witness the GFF's team acknowledgment of Kuwait's valuable position in the industry and their keenness in involving Kuwait on many levels in their upcoming initiatives," said HE Sheikha Abrar Al Sabah.

Mohamed Amer, CEO of El Gouna commented: "Supporting the arts and culture scene in Egypt and the region is a priority for us in El Gouna, and our recent discussions with HE Sheikha Abrar highlights our dedication to this mission. We believe that by collaborating with key industry players and stakeholders, we can enhance the cultural fabric of our region and contribute to the growth of the film industry. Together, we have the opportunity to inspire and elevate the Film industry, as part of our belief in the El Gouna Film Festival theme

'Cinema for Humanity'."

Pivotaly, she met with various key players in the film industry such as the Founder of Egypt's Film Clinic, Mohamed Hefzy to support Kuwait's filmmakers in integrating the regional media and entertainment media scene.

"The presence of Kuwait in this golden field has to be supported by our nation's officials and Kuwait's private sector. There needs to be a more significant role for Kuwait on a regional and global scale in this industry. We have so many talents and aspiring writers, directors, and filmmakers who deserve to be acknowledged in such events, and guided to reach markets beyond the Gulf," she added.

Her Excellency mentioned that her trip came in to explore potential opportunities of collaboration with key players in the industry to strengthen Kuwait's position in this sector on a regional scale.

"Since the establishment of Abbey's Productions, I took it upon myself to promote Kuwait's position in the media and entertainment sector given the lucrative economic impact that it would have on our nation. And now, it is time for a more significant action and display my commitment towards Kuwait's global positioning," asserted Al Sabah.

Al Sabah has recently co-produced Kuwait's theater hit, Made in Kuwait, a show that broke all the records of above 100 plays and reached Gulf theaters promoting Kuwait's culture and history through art.

HE Sheikha Abrar is a renowned female media entrepreneur and producer who has produced numerous successful series in the Gulf, mostly acquired by prominent Pan Arab channels and streaming platforms such as MBC, Shahid.net, Dubai TV, and more. She established Abbey's Productions in 2019, a Kuwait-based production house that is dedicated to elevating the cinematic and new media content in our region, and Barwa Productions in 2022, a production company that merely focuses on producing meaningful commercial content and corporate advertisements.



Sheikha Abrar Al-Sabah at the El Gouna Film Festival in Egypt.



Sheikha Abrar Al-Sabah with CEO of Gouna Mohamed Amer; Commercial Sector Head Mohamed Ashour, and Gouna Festival Organizer Ahmed Mansi



Sheikha Abrar Al-Sabah and Mohamed Hefzy

Variety

CLEVELAND: Jim Donovan, the beloved radio play-by-play announcer for the Cleveland Browns and a TV sports fixture for more than four decades, died Saturday. He was 68.

Donovan retired from his broadcast career earlier this year and stepped away from his game-day duties with the team before this season while battling cancer. He had called Cleveland's games since the team's expansion rebirth in 1999.

"This is an incredibly difficult day for us and the entire Cleveland Browns organization," Browns owners Dee and Jimmy Haslam said. "His impact as the Voice of the Browns for 25 years is immeasurable as he touched the lives of our fans each and every Sunday with his love for the Browns and his brilliance at his craft.

"He will be greatly missed, but he cemented a legacy that will live on forever. The only thing that outweighed his love for this city and this team was the love he had for his family. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Cheryl, his daughter, Meghan, and everyone who was fortunate enough to call Jimmy family or friend."

A Boston native known to everyone as "Jimmy," Donovan endeared himself to Cleveland fans with his passion, sense of humor and professionalism. He was a stickler for detail, spending countless hours preparing for game broadcasts.

Donovan had recently been inducted into the Browns' Legends Club and the Greater Cleveland Sports Hall of Fame. He had been too ill to attend the events.

Even in some lean, losing years for the Browns, Donovan managed to find moments to celebrate. (AP)

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NEW YORK: Leonardo DiCaprio is endorsing Kamala Harris for president, with the Oscar-winning actor expressing support for the Democratic nominee in a video Friday.

"Climate change is killing the earth and ruining our economy, we need a bold step forward to save our economy, our planet and ourselves," DiCaprio said in the video posted to Instagram. "That's why I'm voting for Kamala Harris."

DiCaprio, long an outspoken advocate for addressing the climate crisis, has supported Democratic candidates in the past. In early 2020, he attended a fundraiser for Joe Biden at the home of former Paramount Pictures chief Sherry Lansing.

His Instagram caption cited the recent devastation from Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton. In the video, DiCaprio praised Harris' ambitious targets for achieving net zero emissions by 2050 and helping to build a green economy. He also noted her involvement in passing the Inflation Reduction Act. As vice president, Harris cast the tiebreaking vote on President Joe Biden's landmark climate law that was approved with only Democratic support. (AP)

□ □ □

SANTA FE, N.M.: A New Mexico judge has upheld her decision to dismiss an involuntary manslaughter charge against Alec Baldwin in the fatal shooting of a cinematographer on the set of a Western movie.

In a ruling Thursday, state District Court Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer stood by her July decision to dismiss an involuntary manslaughter charge against Baldwin. She said prosecutors did not raise any factual or legal arguments that would justify reversing her decision.

"Because the state's amended motion raises arguments previously made, and arguments that the state elected not to raise earlier, the court does not find the amended motion well taken," the judge wrote, adding that the request was also untimely.

A spokesperson for Baldwin's lawyers said Friday that they had no immediate reaction to the decision. The case was thrown out halfway through trial on allegations that police and prosecutors withheld evidence from the defense in the 2021 death of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins on the set of the film "Rust."

Baldwin's trial was upended by revelations that ammunition was brought into the Santa Fe County sheriff's office in March by a man who said it could be related to Hutchins' killing. (AP)



Assistant professor of information science Allison Koenecke, an author of a recent study that found hallucinations in a speech-to-text transcription tool, works in her office at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y., Friday, Feb. 2, 2024. The text preceded by #Ground truth' shows what was actually said while the sentences preceded by 'text' was how the transcription program interpreted the words. (AP)

‘Healthcare risks rise’

AI tool used in hospitals fabricates transcriptions

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct 27, (AP): Tech behemoth OpenAI has touted its artificial intelligence-powered transcription tool Whisper as having near “human level robustness and accuracy.”

But Whisper has a major flaw: It is prone to making up chunks of text or even entire sentences, according to interviews with more than a dozen software engineers, developers and academic researchers. Those experts said some of the invented text - known in the industry as hallucinations - can include racial commentary, violent rhetoric and even imagined medical treatments.

Experts said that such fabrications are problematic because Whisper is being used in a slew of industries worldwide to translate and transcribe interviews, generate text in popular consumer technologies and create subtitles for videos.

More concerning, they said, is a rush by medical centers to utilize Whisper-based tools to transcribe patients’ consultations with doctors, despite OpenAI’s warnings that the tool should not be used in “high-risk domains.”

The full extent of the problem is difficult to discern, but researchers and engineers said they frequently have come across Whisper’s hallucinations in their work. A University of Michigan researcher conducting a study of public meetings, for example, said he found hallucinations in eight out of every 10 audio transcriptions he inspected, before he started trying to improve the model.

Problems

A machine learning engineer said he initially discovered hallucinations in about half of the over 100 hours of Whisper transcriptions he analyzed. A third developer said he found hallucinations in nearly every one of the 26,000 transcripts he created with Whisper.

The problems persist even in well-recorded, short audio samples. A recent study by computer scientists uncovered 187 hallucinations in more than 13,000 clear audio snippets they examined.

That trend would lead to tens of thousands of faulty transcriptions over millions of recordings, researchers said.

Such mistakes could have “really grave consequences,” particularly in hospital settings, said Alondra Nelson, who led the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy for the Biden administration

until last year.

“Nobody wants a misdiagnosis,” said Nelson, a professor at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. “There should be a higher bar.”

Whisper also is used to create closed captioning for the Deaf and hard of hearing - a population at particular risk for faulty transcriptions. That’s because the Deaf and hard of hearing have no way of identifying fabrications “hidden amongst all this other text,” said Christian Vogler, who is deaf and directs Gallaudet University’s Technology Access Program.

Hallucinations

The prevalence of such hallucinations has led experts, advocates and former OpenAI employees to call for the federal government to consider AI regulations. At minimum, they said, OpenAI needs to address the flaw.

“This seems solvable if the company is willing to prioritize it,” said William Saunders, a San Francisco-based research engineer who quit OpenAI in February over concerns with the company’s direction. “It’s problematic if you put this out there and people are overconfident about what it can do and integrate it into all these other systems.”

An OpenAI spokesperson said the company continually studies how to reduce hallucinations and appreciated the researchers’ findings, adding that OpenAI incorporates feedback in model updates.

While most developers assume that transcription tools misspell words or make other errors, engineers and researchers said they had never seen another AI-powered transcription tool hallucinate as much as Whisper.

The tool is integrated into some versions of OpenAI’s flagship chatbot ChatGPT, and is a built-in offering in Oracle and Microsoft’s cloud computing platforms, which service thousands of companies worldwide. It is also used to transcribe and translate text into multiple languages.

In the last month alone, one recent version of Whisper was downloaded over 4.2 million times from open-source AI platform HuggingFace. Sanchit Gandhi, a machine-learning engineer there, said Whisper is the most popular open-source speech recognition model and is built into everything from call centers to voice assistants.

H5N1 bird flu spreading widely in the US

No evidence bird flu is spreading between people

NEW YORK, Oct 27, (AP): Health officials have said recently that there’s no evidence bird flu is spreading between people after investigating a mysterious infection in Missouri.

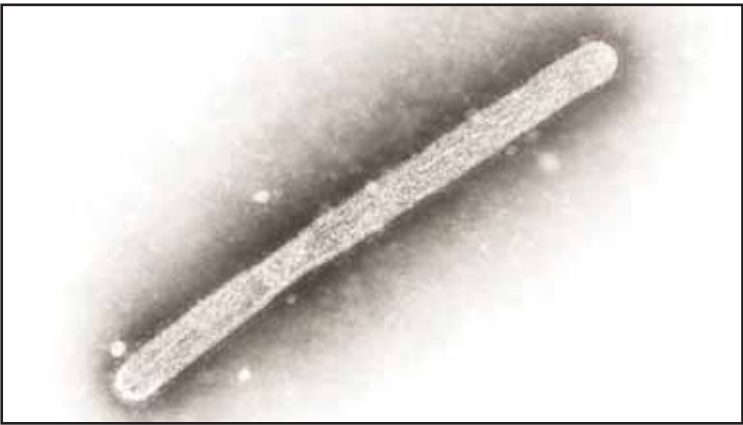
The illness reported last month was different from the 30 other bird flu infections in people in the US so far this year. Those cases have been in farmworkers who had contact with infected dairy cows or chickens.

There was no known contact with an infected animal in the Missouri case, but health officials said that’s the only remaining explanation.

“There is no evidence of person-to-person transmission,” said Dr. Demetre Daskalakis of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The H5N1 bird flu has been spreading widely in the US among wild birds, poultry, cows and a number of other animals. Its growing presence increases the chances that people will be exposed, and potentially catch it, officials say.

The most recent of the 31 confirmed human cases are two workers at a commercial egg farm in Franklin County, in southeast Washington state. The



This 2005 electron microscope image shows an avian influenza A H5N1 virion. (AP)

rest: 15 in California, 10 in Colorado, two in Michigan, one in Texas and the unusual one in Missouri. Symptoms have been mostly mild, including eye redness.

Few details have been released about the Missouri case. The person had preexisting health problems and was hospitalized in late August. The

possibility it had come from another person with an undetected infection. That kind of spread would be a worrisome sign the virus might be turning into a more common threat to humans.

They did complicated blood testing of the patient, five hospital workers, and a person described as a “household contact” of the patient - looking for antibodies that would serve as proof of a past infection. The household contact got a stomach illness at the same time as the patient, but was not initially tested.

On Thursday, CDC officials said test results were negative for the health care workers. The patient and the household contact showed signs of past infection in one round of testing, but not in others. Neither met the World Health Organization’s blood testing threshold for a bird flu case. The household contact is not part of the U.S. tally.

Since they both got sick at the same time, officials believe the patient and the contact were exposed together to some unknown animal or animal product - ruling out spread of the virus from one of them to the other, Daskalakis said.

UN urges nations to fulfill climate pledges

World on pace for significantly more warming without swift climate action

NEW YORK, Oct 27, (AP): The world is on a path to get 1.8 degrees Celsius (3.2 Fahrenheit) warmer than it is now, but could trim half a degree of that projected future heating if countries do everything they promise to fight climate change, a United Nations report said Thursday.

But it still won’t be near enough to curb warming’s worst impacts such as nastier heat waves, wildfires, storms and droughts, the report said.

Under every scenario but the “most optimistic” with the biggest cuts in fossil fuels burning, the chance of curbing warming so it stays within the internationally agreed-upon limit “would be virtually zero,” the United Nations Environment Programme’s annual Emissions Gap Report said. The goal, set in the 2015 Paris Agreement, is to limit human-caused warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times. The report said that since the mid-1800s, the world has already heated up by 1.3 degrees Celsius (2.3 degrees Fahrenheit), up from previous estimates of 1.1 or 1.2 degrees because it includes the record heat last year.

Instead the world is on pace to hit 3.1 degrees Celsius (5.6 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times. But if nations somehow do all of what they promised in targets they submitted to the United Nations that warming could be limited to 2.6 degrees Celsius (4.7 degrees Fahrenheit), the report said.

In that super-stringent cuts scenario where nations have zero net carbon emissions after mid-century, there’s a 23% chance of keeping warming at or below the 1.5 degrees goal. It’s far more likely that even that optimistic scenario



Pumpjacks operate in a pasture, Monday, Sept. 30, 2024, near Hays, Kan. (AP)

will keep warming to 1.9 degrees above pre-industrial times, the report said.

“The main message is that action right now and right here before 2030 is critical if we want to lower the temperature,” said report main editor Anne Olhoff, an economist and chief climate advisor to the UNEP Copenhagen Climate Centre. “It is now or never really if we want to keep 1.5 alive.”

Without swift and dramatic emission cuts “on a scale and pace never seen before,” UNEP Director Inger Andersen said “the 1.5 degree C goal will soon be dead and (the less stringent Paris goal of) well below 2 degrees C will take its place in the intensive care unit.” Olhoff said Earth’s on a trajectory to slam the door on 1.5

sometime in 2029.

“Winning slowly is the same as losing when it comes to climate change,” said author Neil Grant of Climate Analytics. “And so I think we are at risk of a lost decade.”

One of the problems is that even though nations pledged climate action in their targets submitted as part of the Paris Agreement, there’s a big gap between what they said they will do and what they are doing based on their existing policies, report authors said.

The world’s 20 richest countries - which are responsible for 77% of the carbon pollution in the air - are falling short of their stated emission-cutting goals, with only 11 meeting their individual targets, the report said.

3.7m kids under 5 in Sudan face acute malnutrition

KHARTOUM, Oct 27, (Xinhua): Two United Nations agencies have said that 3.7 million children under five in Sudan are at risk of acute malnutrition, warning of a worsening humanitarian crisis across the country.

“There are 3.7 million children under five projected to suffer from severe acute malnutrition this year alone and (they) are in urgent need of life-saving treatment,” the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) said in a

joint statement late Friday.

According to the statement, “These children are already weakened by hunger. If not reached soon, these children are 11 times more likely to die from preventable diseases than their healthier peers in Sudan.”

“The humanitarian crisis in Sudan continues to spiral, with millions of people in desperate need of assistance,” UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations Raouf Mazou and UNICEF Deputy Executive Direc-

tor Ted Chaiban were quoted in the statement as saying.

The two UN officials stressed that a key issue in delivering critical aid has been ensuring safe, unimpeded access to communities in need across Sudan.

They said UN agencies responsible for the delivery of aid and the provision of technical assistance need to be permitted by government authorities to have a sustained presence in all affected communities.

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Echavarria claims Zozo Championship for 2nd PGA Tour victory

Yin breaks away from tie to win Maybank Championship

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia, Oct 27, (AP): Starting her final round in a three-way tie for the lead, Yin Ruoning shot a 7-under 65 on Sunday to win the LPGA Tour's Maybank Championship in Malaysia by one stroke for her second title this month.

Yin of China finished at 23-under 265 after a safe two-putt on the final hole held off Thai player Jeeno Thitikul (66), who was also runner-up at last year's event after losing the second longest playoff in LPGA Tour history.

Yin had a dominant 6-shot win at LPGA Shanghai earlier this month and also won the 2024 Dow Championship in June, where she partnered with Thitikul.

"I had such great year last year I was wondering if I can win again, what if I can't, such things," Yin said. "But I think I just really learned that I just need to enjoy myself out here and have fun, happy, so that's what I do."

South Korea's Haeran Ryu shot a 67 and was two shots behind Yin.

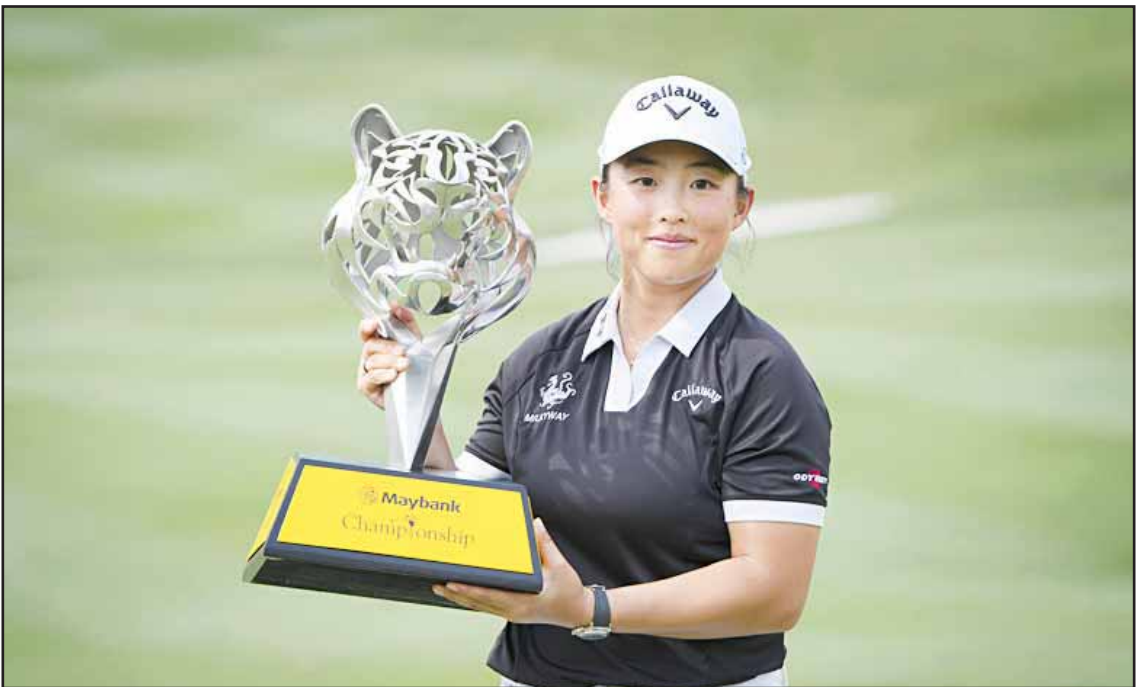
American Bailey Tardy, who shot the round's equal best of 65, and second-round leader Maja Stark (70) of Sweden were tied for fourth at 16-under 272.

Hannah Green, who earned her third victory of 2024 and sixth of her career last week in South Korea, also carded a 65 to finish sixth at 15-under 273. She was tied with American Marina Alex (69), Hsu Wei-Ling (68) and Choi Hye-Jin (66).

Defending champion Celine Boutier of France was 11 strokes behind Yin after a 72 and was tied for 12th.

Nico Echavarria claimed the Zozo Championship for his second PGA Tour victory, shooting 3-under 67 on Sunday to win by a shot over Max Greyserman and Justin Thomas.

Echavarria, a Colombian who played at the University of Arkansas, birdied two of the final three holes - includ-



Yin Ruoning of China holds the winning trophy during the awards ceremony after winning the LPGA Tour's Maybank Championship at Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country club in Kuala Lumpur. (AP)

ing the 18th - to add to the title he won last year at the Puerto Rico Open.

He finished at 20-under 260 at the Narashino Country Club, located about 50 miles (80 kilometers) from central

Tokyo. It's course record, topping the 261 Tiger Woods shot in winning in 2019.

"It's incredible to win a tournament that Tiger's won," Echavarria said, setting up a joke. "This is my second

victory, so I just need 80 more victories to catch him. I'm on my way, though."

Echavarria said the win last year helped build his confidence.

"I don't think I would have won this week without the victory in Puerto Rico," he said. "I pulled a lot from that moment in the last round on Sunday in Puerto Rico, I used it a lot this week to stay patient, stay calm."

Echavarria hugged his girlfriend, Claudia De Antonio, on the 18th after the victory in what he called "a very special moment."

"It's surreal," he said. "It's been a good year for me, I just haven't had that top result. I've been very consistent, I've learned a lot this year. To finish the year this way is, it's incredible, especially doing it here in Japan in such an amazing country."

Thomas, who played in the final threesome with Greyserman and Echavarria, closed with a 66. He is trying to win his first PGA title in 2 1/2 years. His last was the 2022 PGA Championship, which gave him 15 PGA titles.

"Obviously bummed and disappointed, but I played so well," Thomas said. "I played plenty well enough to win the tournament. Hit so many good putts today that just didn't go in, that's the difference."

Greyserman, trying for his first tour win, took a one-shot lead with a 30-foot birdie on the 14th - his only birdie on the back nine. He closed with a 65 at the Narashino Country Club and has been runner-up in three of his last five PGA events.

He's a close friend of Echavarria's. But the loss, of course, hurt.

"You know, I didn't quite execute down the stretch when I needed to. I mean, Nico stepped up there and he hit a great second shot (on 18). He earned it."

Afridi demoted in new contracts offered

Babar, Naseem & Afridi return for Pakistan series in Australia

ISLAMABAD, Oct 27, (AP): Pakistan recalled Babar Azam, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Naseem Shah for next month's white-ball series in Australia.

Babar was dropped for the last two test matches against England for his indifferent form in red-ball cricket while Afridi and Naseem were rested as Pakistan went for an all-spin attack to beat the tourists 2-1.

Pakistan opens its white-ball series in Australia with the first ODI in Melbourne on Nov. 4. Adelaide and Perth will host the remaining two ODIs before Brisbane, Sydney and Hobart host three T20s from Nov. 14-18.

Babar, Afridi and Naseem will be rested for the three ODIs and three T20s in Zimbabwe with the selectors picking several top performers from domestic white-ball cricket. Pakistan will play all six white-ball games against Zimbabwe at Bulawayo from Nov. 24-Dec. 5.

Surprisingly the PCB didn't give any reason why Fakhar Zaman and Imam-ul-Haq were not included in any of its four white-ball squads. Both left-handed batters were earlier also omitted from the list of 25 players who were offered central contracts by the PCB.

Australia tour squads:

ODIs: Aamer Jamal, Abdullah Shafique, Arafat Minhas, Babar Azam, Faisal Akram, Haris Rauf, Haseebullah Khan, Kamran Ghulam, Mohammad Hasnain, Mohammad Rizwan, Irfan Khan, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Shaheen Shah Afridi

T20s: Arafat Minhas, Babar Azam, Haris Rauf, Haseebullah Khan, Jahandad Khan, Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Rizwan (WK), Irfan Khan, Naseem Shah, Omair Bin Yousuf, Sahibzada Farhan, Salman Ali Agha, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Sufyan Moqim, Usman Khan

Zimbabwe tour squads:

ODIs: Aamer Jamal, Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Ahmed Daniyal, Faisal Akram, Haris Rauf, Haseebullah Khan, Kamran Ghulam, Mohammad Hasnain, Mohammad Rizwan, Irfan Khan, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Shahnavaz Dahani and Tayyab Tahir

T20s: Ahmed Daniyal, Arafat Minhas, Haris Rauf, Haseebullah, Jahandad Khan, Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Hasnain, Irfan Khan, Omair bin Yousuf, Qasim Akram, Sahibzada Farhan, Salman Ali Agha, Sufyan Moqim, Tayyab Tahir and Usman Khan

Afridi has been demoted in the new central contracts offered to 25 players by the Pakistan Cricket Board on Sunday.

Former all-format captain Babar



Pakistan's Noman Ali, left, and Sajid Khan, right, display the ball jointly as they walk off the field on the end of England's second innings during the day three of third test cricket match between Pakistan and England, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. (AP)

Azam and Mohammad Rizwan were retained on the top tier contracts, while fast bowler Naseem Shah, test captain Shan Masood and Afridi are in category B.

The PCB didn't give a reason why Afridi had been downgraded but did say Masood's contract level was subject to whether he continues to lead the national team in red-ball cricket.

Masood lost six successive test matches since he was appointed test captain last year before Pakistan's rally to beat England 2-1 in its home test series on Saturday.

The new contracts are from July 1, 2024 to June 30 next year.

The notable omissions from the list are batters Fakhar Zaman and Imam-ul-Haq, along with all-rounder Mohammad Nawaz.

Category A: Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan.

Category B: Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah, Shan Masood (subject to captaincy).

Category C: Abdullah Shafique, Shadab Khan, Abrar Ahmed, Sajid Khan, Salman Ali Agha, Saud Shakeel, Noman Ali (subject to fitness), Haris Rauf, Saim Ayub.

Category D: Aamer Jamal, Mohammad Wasim, Mohammad Hurraira, Mir Hamza, Khurram Shehzad, Mohammad Ali, Usman Khan, Irfan Khan, Haseebullah Khan, Abbas Afridi, Kamran Ghulam.

Washington St tops San Diego State

Colorado beats Cincinnati to become bowl eligible

BOULDER, Colo., Oct 27, (AP): Shedeur Sanders threw a pair of touchdown passes to Travis Hunter and ran for a score to help Colorado become bowl-eligible with a 34-23 win over Cincinnati.

Sanders put on quite an efficient aerial show, completing 25 of 30 passes for 323 yards. He completed his first 15 passes, which was the most to start a game in program history. Not bad considering he's getting over the flu.

Hunter had nine catches for 153 yards, including a 34-yard TD grab with three seconds left before halftime. On defense, the two-way star and Heisman hopeful broke up four passes.

The Buffaloes (6-2, 4-1 Big 12) are eligible for a bowl game over a full season for the first time since 2016. They also went to a bowl game in 2020 during the COVID-shortened year. It's been quite a turnaround for Colorado in Year 2 under Sanders. The team finished 4-8 a year ago after a fast start.

The first call Sanders made after securing the win was to Peggy Coppom, the Buffaloes super-fan who turns 100 next month. She's been a rallying point for Sanders - to get her to a bowl game.

Washington State 29, San Diego State 26

In San Diego, John Mateer threw two touchdown passes and ran for two scores and Washington State scored the final 15 points to rally for a 29-26 victory over San Diego State.

Washington State (7-1), which has won three in a row, led by two points at halftime, but San Diego State scored 20 unanswered points for a 26-14 advantage with 13:39 left to play.

Mateer answered quickly when he found Carlos Hernandez open for a 34-yard touchdown four plays later and Washington State trailed 26-21 with 12:08 remaining.

San Diego State (3-4) drove as far as the Cougars' 14-yard line, but Taariq Al-Uqdah intercepted a Danny O'Neil pass and returned it 20 yards to the WSU 37-yard line.

Jokic's 41 points not enough as Clippers edge out Nuggets



Charlotte Hornets guard Seth Curry (30) shoots under pressure from Miami Heat forward Duncan Robinson (55) during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Charlotte, N.C. (AP)

Celtics hold on for a victory over Pistons

DENVER, Oct 27, (AP): James Harden had 23 points and 16 assists, Norman Powell scored 26 of his 37 points in the second half and the Los Angeles Clippers overcame Nikola Jokic's 41 points to beat the Denver Nuggets 109-104 on Saturday.

Jokic made a career-high seven 3-pointers but missed a free throw with 20 seconds left that would have tied the game. Harden made four from the line in the final 30.5 seconds.

The Clippers trailed 103-100 when Powell hit a 3-pointer. Jamal Murray, who had 22 points, missed a layup and Harden then made two free throws.

After Jokic split a pair from the line, Harden made two more foul shots to make it 107-104 and Jokic missed an off-balance 3-pointer.

Celtics 124, Pistons 118

In Detroit, Jayson Tatum scored six of his 37 points in the final 65 seconds and Boston held on for a victory over Detroit.

The Celtics led by as many as 23 points in the first half, but trailed for much of the third quarter. Jrue Holiday tied the game with back-to-back 3-pointers, and Tatum put the Celtics up 116-114 by hitting a pair of free throws with 1:05 left.

The Pistons missed two shots on the ensuing possession and Tatum's jumper made it 118-114 with 29 seconds left.

Cavaliers 135, Wizards 116

In Washington, Donovan Mitchell scored 30 points, Jarrett Allen added 23 while going 10 for 10 from the floor and Cleveland eased to a victory over Washington.

Darius Garland also had 23 points, and Evan

Mobley scored 13 points and grabbed 13 rebounds as Cleveland remained perfect three games into their new season.

The Cavaliers shot 54% (47 of 87) from the floor to complete their ninth consecutive victory over Washington. A night earlier, they defeated Detroit for a 10th straight time.

Heat 114, Hornets 106

In Charlotte, Jimmy Butler scored 13 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter, Tyler Herro added five 3-pointers and 22 points and Miami spoiled Charlotte's home opener with a victory.

Terry Rozier had 19 points and Bam Adebayo finished with 12 points and 11 rebounds for Miami (1-1). Butler added eight assists and eight rebounds.

LaMelo Ball had 27 points, eight rebounds and seven assists for the Hornets on an emotional night when they honored their late longtime public address announcer Pat Doughty, and showed livestream feeds on the arena scoreboard of a star-studded benefit concert for victims of Hurricane Helene taking place less than a mile away at Bank of America Stadium.

Thunder 114, Bulls 95

In Chicago, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 23 points, Chet Holmgren added 21 points and a career-high 16 rebounds, and Oklahoma City pounded Chicago in the Bulls' home opener.

Jalen Williams added 24 points, nine rebounds and eight assists.

Zach LaVine had 22 points and nine rebounds for Chicago. Nikola Vucevic added 18 points and 13 rebounds.

Grizzlies 124, Magic 111

In Memphis, Santi Aldama scored 22 points, reserve center Jay Huff added a career-high 18 and Memphis built a 26-point halftime team in a victory

over Orlando in their home opener.

Ja Morant added 16 points and 10 assists in his first regular-season home appearance since Jan. 3. Aldama was 9 of 12 from the field, while Huff made seven of his nine shots.

Franz Wagner scored 23 points for the Magic and Jalen Suggs added 21, both players grabbing seven rebounds apiece.

Timberwolves 112, Raptors 101

In Minneapolis, Julius Randle had 24 points nine rebounds and five assists and Minnesota beat Toronto.

Anthony Edwards also scored 24 for Minnesota, while Rudy Gobert added 15 points, 13 rebounds and four blocks.

Toronto's Grady Dick led all scorers with 25 points, while Scottie Barnes had 20 points and Ochai Agbaji added 19 for the Raptors.

Spurs 109, Rockets 106

In San Antonio, Victor Wembanyama scored 29 points, Jeremy Sochan added 17 points and 12 rebounds, and San Antonio held on to beat Houston in their home opener.

Wembanyama added seven rebounds and three blocks while shooting 10 for 17 from the field.

Chris Paul added three points and nine assists, including a drive and feed to Sochan for an open layup that put San Antonio up 104-99 with 1:35 remaining.

Suns 114, Mavericks 102

In Phoenix, Kevin Durant scored 31 points, Jusuf Nurkic added 18 points and 14 rebounds and Phoenix beat Dallas.

The Suns never trailed after the first quarter, though the Mavericks kept the deficit in the single digits for much of the night. Luka Doncic scored 40 points and grabbed 10 rebounds while Kyrie Irving added 22 points.

Lewis and captain Shai Hope combined for 72 runs.

When Hope was caught for 22, Lewis was joined by Sherfane Rutherford and they saw West Indies home by eight wickets with one over to spare.

Rutherford took just 26 deliveries for his fourth ODI half-century, an unbeaten 50 including three sixes and four boundaries.

He also scored 74 and 80 in the series but Sri Lanka captain Charith Asalanka was named player of the series for scoring 145 runs and taking two wickets.

Lewis ton powers WI to consolation win vs Sri Lanka

PALLEKELE, Sri Lanka, Oct 27, (AP): Evin Lewis' unbeaten 102 steered West Indies to a consolation victory against series winner Sri Lanka in the third and last one-day cricket international.

Lewis, playing his first ODI since 2021, hit a straight six to bring up the winning runs and his fifth ODI century off 61 balls. The opener played through even after rolling his left ankle on 51.

The West Indies reached 196-2 in reply to Sri Lanka's 156-3 after a five-hour rain delay reduced the match to 23 overs per side at Pallekele International Stadium.

Pathum Nissanka, dropped before he scored and on 17, and Avishka Fernando, also dropped, opened with an 81-run stand in 17 overs for Sri Lanka followed by the rain delay.

When play resumed, Kusal Mendis hit the first four deliveries to the boundary.

Nissanka reached his 15th ODI half-century off 58 balls and was run out for 56.

Mendis went on to a 19-ball half-century and was dropped twice before finishing 56 not out after nine boundaries and a six over midwicket.

The West Indies lost its first wicket on 36 but

Kuwait Club eyes redemption

Khaitan plays Al-Tadamon

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Kuwait Club is set to raise multiple banners as it faces Kazma today at 7:50 pm at the Friendship and Peace Stadium in the eighth round of the Zain Premier League. Earlier in the same round, Khaitan will go up against Al-Tadamon at 5:50 pm at Nasser Al-Osaimi Stadium.

Kuwait Club, topping the league standings with 21 points, aims to secure its eighth win in the league, maintaining momentum toward another title while leaving behind last Wednesday's heavy AFC Champions League loss to Shabab Al-Ahli of the UAE (4-1), which dented its qualification hopes for the next round.

Montenegrin coach Nebojsa Jovicic knows that a win is essential for Kuwait Club to restore confidence, continue its winning streak in the league, and move

past the Asian setback. Securing three points would not only boost team morale but also widen the gap to six points over Al-Arabi, who is idle this round due to its Asian Challenge League commitments and postponed match against Al-Nasr.

Kazma, ranked seventh with 7 points, also has ambitions of its own, eyeing goals and aiming for a second straight victory after defeating Khaitan 2-0 in the last round. Kazma seeks to move further from the relegation zone, possibly handing Kuwait Club their first league loss, and keeping the title race alive for other teams.

Tunisian coach Lassad Al-Shaabi of Kazma understands that challenging the title-holding Kuwait Club won't be easy. Achieving a positive result will require maximum effort against a team in pursuit of a fourth consecutive title.

In the other fixture, Al-Tadamon (8 points) looks to break out of a rough patch after recent results, losing to Al-Qadisiya 3-1 and drawing 2-2 with Al-Fahaheel. It aims for a third tournament victory.

Meanwhile, Khaitan (5 points) is also eyeing a win to climb toward mid-table safety. The recent loss to Kazma pushed Khaitan into the relegation zone, currently positioned eighth, one point behind Al-Nasr in ninth and two points above bottom-placed Al-Yarmouk.



Kazma looking for new win in the league.

Al-Arabi pursues key victory over Maziya Sports to boost Cup hopes

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: Al-Arabi resumed training ahead of their AFC Challenge Cup Group 2 clash against Maziya Sports of the Maldives, scheduled for tomorrow. Al-Arabi lost its group opener to Kyrgyzstan's Abdish-Atta by a single goal, while Turkmenistan's Arkadag defeated Maziya Sports 2-1 in the same group.

Al-Arabi coach Nasser Al-Shatti attributed the recent loss to the team's missed opportunities, emphasizing the need to secure victories in the next two matches to keep its qualification hopes alive. At the post-match press conference, Al-Shatti mentioned that limited information on Abdish-Atta led both teams to approach the first half with caution, resulting in few scoring chances. He noted that Al-Arabi controlled much

of the second half and created a scoring opportunity, but the finishing was off, while Abdish-Atta capitalized on its chance and netted the winning goal.

After conceding, Al-Shatti made substitutions to energize the squad, but despite the players' efforts, they couldn't find an equalizer.

Meanwhile, Abdish-Atta coach Islam Akhmedov expressed delight over the win, stating that the team's journey is just beginning, and it's committed to advancing further. Akhmedov also praised Al-Arabi's strong lineup and overall performance.

Abdish-Atta player Erbol Atabaev, who scored the decisive goal and was named Man of the Match, described the game as challenging but credited his team's collective efforts in overcoming a tough opponent. He hopes they will continue to advance successfully in the tournament.



Al Arabi coach Nasser Al Shatti.

Kazma prepares in Cairo for Club Championship in Doha

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 27: The Kazma Club first handball team departs for Cairo to conduct an international training camp in preparation for the 27th Asian Club Championship for League Champions, set to take place in Doha from November 13-24.

The Kazma delegation, led by Club Treasurer Omar Al-Mulla, includes game manager Salem Abdul Salam, administrator Tariq Al-Subaie, media coordinator Nasser Al-Fadhli, Serbian coach Radric Bozo, goalkeeping coach Hamdi Al-Maraq, physical trainer Abdullah Thaqib, physiotherapist Darko Antik, and technical analyst Walid

Al-Enezi, along with 20 players: Hamed Al-Sulaili, Saud Al-Dhuwaihi, Mohammed Mufreh, Fahd Al-Rawdan, Mohammed Jawad, Saad Al-Haidari, Hussein Al-Kandari, Mubarak Bakhit, Ibrahim Al-Amir, Fawaz Al-Mishari, Abdulrahman Al-Shammari, Abdul Aziz Al-Masoudi, Abdul Aziz Khaled Al-Najjar, Abdulrahman Al-Enezi, Turki Al-Khalidi, Hamad Al-Dashti, Abdul Aziz Al-Dhafiri, Abdulrahman Al-Sabaji, and Tunisian players Anwar Bin Abdullah and Mohammed Farad.

The recent tournament draw placed Kazma in Group B with defending champion Saudi Gulf, Omani Ahli Sidab, Qatari Al-Duhail, and Iranian Mes Kerman. Meanwhile, Kuwait Club another national representative in the Asian Championship is in Group A with Qatari Al-Rayyan, Iraqi Al-Karkh, Emirati Sharjah, and Bahraini Al-Shabab.

Salem Abdul Salam noted that the management is currently in talks with five foreign professionals, from whom two will be selected to join Kazma for the Asian Championship. He stated, "The team will return to Kuwait on November 8, then travel to Doha on November 10."



Abdul Aziz Al-Najjar is one of Kazma's talents.

Move over Messi and Ronaldo

New generation of soccer stars lining up to win Ballon d'Or

MANCHESTER, England, Oct 27, (AP): No Lionel Messi. No Cristiano Ronaldo.

When the Ballon d'Or is presented at a gala ceremony in Paris on Monday, it will feel like the start of a new era in soccer. There is also a sense of void now that one of sport's most engrossing rivalries is likely over.

"It's interesting that as it starts to come to an end, we are sort of saying, what's the next equivalent rivalry going to be," soccer author Jonathan Wilson told The Associated Press. "As if that kind of rivalry was a natural state. But there's never been a rivalry like that before."

Messi and Ronaldo won soccer's most prestigious individual award a combined 13 times over a 16-year period of unprecedented dominance. Neither has been nominated this year.

Instead Real Madrid winger Vinicius Junior is the favorite to be crowned the world's best player and become the first winner born this century.

He underlined his credentials this week with a stunning Champions League hat trick against Borussia Dortmund.

"Vinicius had an incredible season where he was a key player... he proved he's the best player in the world," Madrid teammate Lucas Vazquez said.

But rather than Vinicius spearheading a new era of dominance, it seems likely the award will revert to a time



Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior runs with the ball during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Barcelona at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

before Messi and Ronaldo when multiple winners were relatively rare.

France great Zinedine Zidane, for instance, only won it once. The same goes for Ronaldinho, Rivaldo, Luis Figo and George Best. Originally limited to European players, it was never won by Pele or Diego Maradona.

Before Messi, the last player to win back-to-back awards was Dutch striker Marco van Basten in 1988 and '89.

Messi won a record-extending

eighth Ballon d'Or last year after leading Argentina to triumph at the World Cup in 2022. Wilson, who wrote about the history of Argentinian soccer in his book "Angels With Dirty Faces," sees no obvious successor to the Barcelona great, now at Inter Miami.

"Messi's been phenomenal for 17, 18 years," he said. "It's not a pure tallying process, but in terms of greatness over a protracted period, Messi is the greatest there has ever been by quite some margin."

"I don't think there's anybody in the world now who has anything remotely close to that talent."

Such was the dominance of Messi and Ronaldo, not only would Vinicius Junior become the first winner born this century, but there has never even been a recipient born in the '90s.

Vinicius Junior, whose goals helped Madrid to a record-extending 15th European Cup last season, is part of a new generation of stars that are flourishing as Messi and Ronaldo reach the final stages of their careers.

Kylian Mbappe, Erling Haaland, Jude Bellingham and Lamine Yamal make up a field of contenders who could challenge for years to come.

Manchester City midfielder Rodri is second favorite to win this year and would become the first player born in the '90s to take the award.

Mbappe, who has long-been seen as the heir to Messi and Ronaldo as the world's best player, was born in 1998, meaning it's likely there will eventually be a winner from that decade even if Rodri misses out.

The only other winners since Ronaldo won his first Ballon d'Or in 2008 were Luka Modric in 2018 and Karim Benzema in 2022. Both were born in the 1980s.

The award was cancelled in 2020, when Robert Lewandowski was widely regarded the best player that year. He was also born in the '80s.

Renard back to coach Saudi Arabia

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Oct 27, (AP): Herve Renard was hired to coach Saudi Arabia for a second time on Saturday, two days after the departure of Roberto Mancini.

"I'm back," Renard said in a social media video posted by the Saudi Arabia Football Federation.

The Frenchman most recently coached France women to the Paris Olympics quarterfinals.

He was previously in charge of Saudi Arabia from 2019-23, a tenure that included a famous 2-1 win over Argentina at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

"I did not intend to leave (Saudi). But when your country

knocks on your door you have to respond," Renard said. "My connection with Saudi, the fans, the players and all the memories - I can never forget. I did not finish my story with Saudi."

Renard's contract will run until the end of 2025 with an option to extend until the 2027 Asian Cup, which will be hosted in Saudi Arabia for the first time.

Mancini was hired by Saudi Arabia in August 2023 having led Italy to victory at the 2021 European Championship. But the serial trophy winner was quickly under pressure after an underwhelming Asian Cup in January and an exit in the round of 16.

In left Saudi third place in the six-team group. The top two qualify automatically for the 2026 World Cup while the third- and fourth-placed finishers progress to the fourth stage.

Renard's first game back in charge is against Australia in Melbourne on Nov. 14.



Herve Renard



Los Angeles Galaxy defender Miki Yamane (2) takes the ball away from Colorado Rapids forward Kimani Stewart-Baynes (27) during the second half of the first match of an MLS Cup playoffs opening round in Carson, Calif. (AP)

Galaxy routs Rapids 5-0 in playoff opener

Dejan Joveljic and Riqui Puig both had two goals and an assist to propel the Los Angeles Galaxy to a 5-0 victory over the Colorado Rapids on Saturday night in the opener of a best-of-three first-round series.

The second-seeded Galaxy took a 1-0 lead in the 32nd minute and held it through halftime on a goal by Joveljic. Puig notched his first postseason assist on Joveljic's second career postseason goal. Joveljic scored once in

two appearances and eight minutes of action in the 2022 playoffs. It was Puig's first assist in three postseason appearances - all starts.

John Nelson took a pass from fellow defender Miki Yamane and scored in the 52nd minute for a 2-0 lead. Puig followed with a goal two minutes later and LA cruised from there. Nelson netted his first postseason goal in his first appearance with the Galaxy. Nelson made two starts for FC Dallas in 2020. (AP)



Chelsea's Cole Palmer celebrates after scoring his side's second goal during the English Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and Newcastle at Stamford Bridge in London. (AP)

Sports

Barcelona ends Real unbeaten run in style

Lewandowski shines with double, Yamal breaks record

BARCELONA, Spain, Oct 27, (AP): Robert Lewandowski scored twice and Lamine Yamal piled on to ruin Kylian Mbappé's first clasico as Barcelona routed Real Madrid 4-0.

The lopsided victory in Spain's capital ended the host's unbeaten run in La Liga at 42 games, one shy of Barcelona's record streak in 2017-18. Carlo Ancelotti's side suffered its first loss since Sept. 23 last year.

And what a loss it was. Lewandowski got the visitors going from a superb pass by Barcelona's latest youth talent Marc Casadó in the 54th minute and rose up to head in a fine header three minutes later to silence Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

Yamal made it a rout in the 77th when the teenage phenom rifled a shot from an angle over goalkeeper Andriy Lunin. That goal made him the youngest scorer in a clasico at 17 years, 105 days, surpassing teammate Ansu Fati, who was about 250 days older in October 2020.

Raphinha then broke free with Madrid completely unhinged and chipped Lunin in the 84th.

The win came three days after Barcelona thumped Bayern Munich 4-1 in the

Champions League. It has outscored its last five opponents 21-2.

"We came here to do just this," Yamal said. "We had lots of confidence and when we scored the second goal, we wanted to score a third, and then a fourth, as many goals as possible. To win 4-0 at this ground and beat Bayern 4-1, we showed that we are ready for anything."

It is an understatement that Mbappé had a frustrating first game against Barcelona in a white shirt.

The France star was caught eight times offside by Barcelona's synchronized back four and failed to beat second-choice goalkeeper Iñaki Peña one-on-one with his team down two goals.

"We knew that they played with a high line, and we just couldn't take advantage of it," Ancelotti said. "Sometimes (Mbappé) fell offside, but he had three or four chances to score and needed a better finishing touch."

Hansi Flick, meanwhile, had a night to remember in the first clasico for the German coach. Barcelona still has financial troubles that cast doubt over its future but its youthful team has made huge steps forward since Flick replaced Barcelona great Xavi Hernández in the summer.

"Today we made a fantastic match and it is all about the team. Everyone gave it 100%," said Flick, who Ancelotti called "a gentleman" for telling his bench to cool it when they effusively celebrated the fourth goal near Madrid's dugout.

After opening a six-point lead over Madrid at the top of La Liga, it is no longer a foregone conclusion that with Mbappé on board Madrid will waltz to a second straight domestic title.

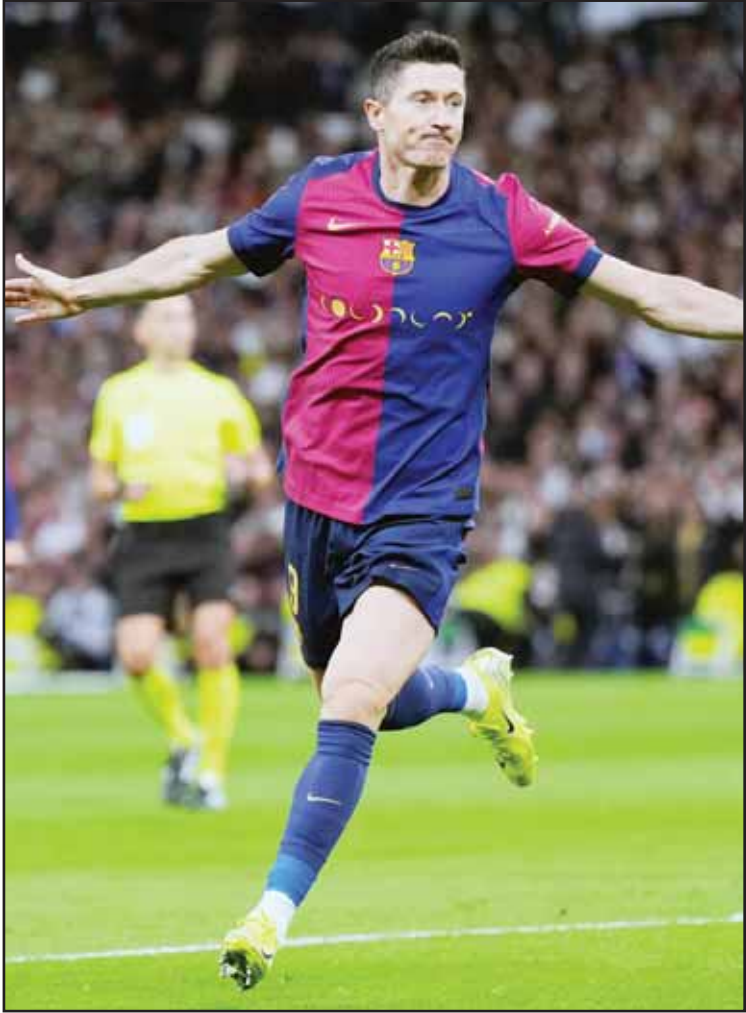
Casadó was one of five homegrown players that Flick put in his starting lineup, the same 11 from the Bayern win. Six players under 22 years old started for Barcelona, led by 17-year-olds Yamal and Pau Cubarsí.

Casadó had flashes of the flawless ball control of a Sergi Busquets as he helped compensate for Madrid's extra man in the midfield before he cued up the game-changing pass to play Lewandowski clear to slot home.

Yamal upstaged Mbappé this summer when Spain beat France en route to winning the European Championship, and he did it again. To top it off, he scored with his supposedly "not as good" right foot before flashing his new braces decorated with Barcelona's colors for the cameras.

Mbappé was ruled offside five times in the first half hour, as Barcelona pressed high. Vinícius Júnior, who featured in a fascinating duel with Cubarsí, missed a golden chance in the 21st when he shot past the post from close.

"When they scored those back-to-back goals it took the energy out of us," Ancelotti said. "This is a complicated moment for us. It hurts to lose a game and especially after going 42 games unbeaten, but we shouldn't just throw everything away because this team will play better."



Left: Barcelona's Robert Lewandowski celebrates after scoring his side's opening goal during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Barcelona at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain. Right: Barcelona's Alejandro Balde jumps for the ball against Real Madrid's Lucas Vazquez during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Barcelona at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

Steen Olsen leads Norwegian sweep in skiing WCup opener



Norway's Alexander Steen Olsen, centre, winner of an alpine ski, men's World Cup giant slalom, is carried shoulders high by second placed Norway's Henrik Kristoffersen, left, and third placed Norway's Atle Lie McGrath, in Soelden, Austria. (AP)

SOELDEN, Austria, Oct 27, (AP): Alexander Steen Olsen held on to his first-run advantage to lead a Norwegian sweep of the podium at the season-opening men's World Cup giant slalom on Sunday, while Lucas Pinheiro Braathen and Marcel Hirscher made successful comebacks to the circuit.

Defending overall champion Marco Odermatt skied out in the opening run.

Holding a slim lead after the first run, Steen Olsen finished 0.64 seconds ahead of Henrik Kristoffersen and was 0.65 faster than Atle Lie McGrath.

"That is what we have been dreaming of, everybody on the podium," Steen Olsen said.

Former slalom World Cup winner Pinheiro Braathen, who returned after one year off and a switch from the Norwegian to the Brazilian federation, started 41st and finished 0.90 behind in fourth after posting the fastest second-run time.

Austrian great Hirscher, who came out of retirement after five years to start for the Netherlands, trailed Steen Olsen by 2.16 seconds in 23rd position, after the record eight-time overall champion just qualified for the final run but then posted the third-fastest time.

Hirscher's comeback drew a record number of spectators to the traditional World Cup opening weekend in Austria, with 33,000 fans in total attending Sunday's event and the women's race on Saturday, which was won by Federica Brignone.

Steen Olsen celebrated his third career podium, after winning a slalom in Palisades Tahoe, California, two seasons ago and finishing runner-up in a GS in Bansko, Bulgaria, in February.

"I feel like I'm learning from my mistakes last year. I'm not scared to grab the opportunity. I know my contenders went full speed down the hill, I just did give it my everything," Steen Olsen said.

Odermatt, who dominated the GS discipline last season by winning nine of the 10 races, started the opening run strong in perfect sunny conditions on the Rettenbach glacier and posted the fastest split times at the first two check points.

However, he later suddenly lost control over his left ski and slid off the course.

"For sure, we are all humans and mistakes can happen. I took the risk today that this could happen," Odermatt said.

LONDON, Oct 27, (AP): Manchester United missed an open goal and conceded in stoppage time to lose 2-1 at West Ham in the Premier League, piling more pressure on manager Erik ten Hag on Sunday.

A fourth defeat in nine league games left United languishing in 14th place in the 20-team standings.

Jarrod Bowen converted a highly disputed penalty in the second minute of added-on time after a foul by Matthijs de Ligt as United counted the cost of a string of wasted chances, notably when Diogo Dalot sidefooted over when faced with an empty net in the first half.

If that was surely the miss of the season so far, Cole Palmer might have delivered the pass of the season in Chelsea's 2-1 win over Newcastle.

Palmer provided more glimpses of his outrageous talent by scoring the winner after helping to set up the opener, by Nicolas Jackson, with a stunning through ball.

Facing his goal inside his own half, the 22-year-old England playmaker span round and curled a 50-meter pass behind Newcastle's defense toward Pedro Neto, who set up Jackson in the 18th minute.

Alexander Isak equalized but Palmer drove home his seventh goal of the season in the 47th to secure the victory for Chelsea at Stamford Bridge. With five assists, too, Palmer has a league-leading 12 goals involvements this campaign.

Crystal Palace finally claimed its first league win of the season by beating Tottenham 1-0 thanks to Jean-Philippe Mateta's goal.

In-form Jonathan David's penalty in stoppage time broke the deadlock for Lille to beat bitter rival Lens 2-0 in the Ligue 1 Derby of the North.

David scored eight minutes into added time amid whistles and boos from the home fans. It was the Canadian's 11th goal in 16 appearances in all competitions.

David celebrated by mimicking firing pistols with his hands, and received a yellow card.

Palmer stars for Chelsea

Man United misses open goal in loss at West Ham



West Ham United's Jarrod Bowen, left, attempts to pass the ball under pressure from Manchester United's Bruno Fernandes during the English Premier League soccer match between West Ham United and Manchester United at the London Stadium in London. (AP)

"It's a derby, it's hot, to win here is always important," David said.

Mohamed Bayo added the second on the break three minutes later to give Lille more luster to a scrappy win.

Lens, which looked solid throughout but cracked at the very end, slumped to its first league loss.

Tempers frayed at the end as players and staff from both sides got involved in heated exchanges of words and gestures.

Lille was awarded the late penalty after a VAR check which confirmed that Kevin Danso handled the ball in the area.

"You can feel that strength of character," Lille defender Bafodé Diakité said. "They posed us problems, but our strength at the moment is to play all together, to try not to concede goals and not giving up until the end."

Lille's second straight road win followed a 3-1 victory at Atletico in the Champions League. After scoring the winner against Real Madrid this month, David had a pair of goals against Atletico on Wednesday.

Lille stayed in fourth place, extending its lead over Lens to three points.

Angers and Saint-Etienne are struggling for goals but turned on a lively contest in which Angers won 4-2.

Ibrahima Niane put host Angers back in front from the penalty spot in the 69th minute and Bamba Dieng completed their first win in nine league matches in added time.

"We waited for this win for so long," said Jean-Eudes Aholou, who also scored for Angers. "We suffered a lot to get it."

It was the first time Angers scored more than three goals in the league in

more than two years.

Angers moved to 14th overall, level on points with Saint-Etienne but with a better goal difference.

Zuriko Davitashvili scored twice, his fifth goal in October for Saint-Etienne following a hat trick.

The highly rated winger joined from Bordeaux this summer as Saint-Etienne prepared to return to the top-flight following a two-year absence. He was a member of the Georgia team which reached the European Championship last 16 this summer and upset Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal.

Brest scored twice within the opening 18 minutes and held on to win 2-1.

Unbeaten in the Champions League, Brest has not been so successful domestically, losing four matches already. Saturday's result moved it into eighth place, one point behind Reims.