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HH Amir, Kuwaiti people cherish UAE's 'Celebrating Decades of Brotherhood' initiative

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Government and the people of Kuwait extend their profound gratitude and deep appreciation to their brothers, President of the UAE Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, for launching the "Celebrating Decades of Brotherhood" initiative, said Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah Friday.

His Highness the Amir also extended his gratitude to UAE Vice President, Prime Minister, and Ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al-Maktoum.

Sheikh Hamad expressed Kuwait's appreciation for the noble positions, gracious sentiments, and sincere expressions conveyed by Their Highnesses, the UAE Government, and the brotherly Emirati people.



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince

He emphasized that this initiative reflects the depth of the historic fraternal ties that unite the two countries and embodies the cohesion of the joint Gulf family, as well as the solidarity of its leaders and peoples throughout his-

tory. These bonds, he noted, have strengthened the distinguished place of this relationship in the Gulf collective consciousness.

Sheikh Hamad conveyed Kuwait's wishes for continued progress, prosperity, and well-being to the UAE and its people under the wise leadership of His Highness Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

UAE President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed urged the UAE society and its institutions to celebrate decades of UAE-Kuwaiti brotherhood as of January 29 for a week.

"Our relations with Kuwait are a bond of brotherhood, love, and kinship," the UAE president was quoted by Emirate News Agency (WAM) as saying on Friday, commending Kuwait's support before and after the UAE union.

"Kuwait has been a longstanding supporter and partner of the UAE since before the Union. For one week this

coming 29 January onwards, we encourage our community to honour this enduring bond and celebrate Kuwait, its leadership, and its people. May God safeguard Kuwait and bless its continued journey of progress," he said.

Vice-President of the UAE, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum, affirmed on Saturday the depth of Emirati-Kuwaiti ties.

This came in his account on X, where he stated that bonds with Kuwait are unbreakable, and grow stronger with time.

He said that UAE President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan has directed celebrations be held across the country in January of 2026 in recognition of the close and longstanding ties between the UAE and the State of Kuwait.

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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Investors coming to Kuwait examine legal patronage

GLOBAL inflation has reached critical levels, affecting economies worldwide. Some countries have managed to cope, thanks to prudent policies, which mitigated the impact of rising prices while boosting GDP and reducing local inflation rates.

These countries are also utilizing their national wealth to strengthen local economies and expand partnerships with countries that have promising growth prospects.

Based on this, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries are increasingly seen as an ideal environment for investment, thanks to political, security, and social stability, combined with economic freedom and open opportunities for entrepreneurs from around the world.

Decisions and laws issued in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, and Qatar have played a significant role in encouraging both foreign and domestic investment. Furthermore, Gulf states have attracted capital by offering in-

centives such as citizenship, permanent residency, and golden visas, creating a secure and welcoming environment for investors.

These measures are based on lessons learned, particularly from World War II, when neutral countries opened financial and trade channels with the warring nations. This approach supported the global economy by allowing these countries to continue trading with both sides, ensuring the flow of essential goods and raw materials.

Some countries have since adopted this strategy as a model for managing emerging global crises, especially following the 2008 financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Stable look Kuwait gleams in reforms

Credit rating jumps from A+ to AA-

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22, (KUNA): Kuwait's Acting Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Sabeeh Al-Mukhaizeem said Saturday Standard & Poor's upgrading of Kuwait's credit rating from A+ to AA- reflects the country's structural and economic reforms.

"This rating boosts the State of Kuwait's capability of achieving long-term sustainable development and financial resilience," Al-Mukhaizeem, who doubles as Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, said in a press statement.

The minister underlined that this rating also reflected Kuwait's commitment to carrying on developing its economy and diversifying its income sources.

Standard & Poor's on Friday upgraded Kuwait's credit rating to AA- with a stable outlook following its periodical review in November, demonstrating Kuwait's remarkable development of economic and financial remarks.



Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem

It said in its report that Kuwait's stable outlook reflects its expectations that the country's public and external balance sheets will remain very strong over forecast horizon, backed by a significant stock of government financial assets.

"We expect these strengths and ongoing reform momentum to mitigate risks related to Kuwait's economic reliance on the hydrocarbon sector, potential oil price volatility, and sizable fiscal spending," it said.

"We expect the Kuwaiti government to continue implementing a package of fiscal and economic

reforms under Kuwait Vision 2035. These reforms primarily focus on economic diversification, modernizing infrastructure, and diversifying revenue sources to improve fiscal sustainability," it added.

It underlined that Kuwait's financing and liquidity law, passed in March 2025, has diversified the government's funding profile and reduced uncertainty around financing arrangements.

See Also Page 8

Kuwait, EC panel eye boost in terror funding oversight

BRUSSELS, Nov 22, (KUNA): A Kuwaiti delegation headed by Dr. Hamad Al-Mekrad, Chairman of the National Committee for Combating Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, along with head of the Committee for Implementing UN Security Council resolutions and member of the National Committee Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan, have held talks with European officials on cooperation against terrorism funding.

The talks, also addressing money laundering, were held between the Kuwaiti delegation and Director General of the European Commission's Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, John Berrigan, in Brussels.

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WSA handpicks 'Al-Hisba' platform for '25 awards

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22, (KUNA): The World Summit Awards (WSA), a United Nations initiative, has selected "Al-Hisba" platform to represent the State of Kuwait in the Business and Trade Category for 2025 in recognition of its role in developing digital real estate solutions and upgrading the level of transparency in the local market.

Speaking to KUNA on this selection, Khaled Al-Otaibi, the general manager of Al-Hisba real estate platform, said that the move was a national achievement that reflects the confidence of government bodies and the financial sector in the real estate data provided by his platform.

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Kuwait calls for IAEA check on Israel sites

VIENNA, Nov 22, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait Ambassador to Austria Talal Al-Fassam on Friday urged the international community to uphold its responsibilities and coerce the Israeli occupation into placing its nuclear sites under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards system.

Ambassador Al-Fassam, addressing a session of the IAEA Board of Governors on the Israeli nuclear potentials, said the State of Kuwait supports statements by the Arab Group on this issue and re-affirms the International Atomic Energy Agency's pivotal role as the authority entitled to inspect the safeguards and verify peaceful nature of nuclear programs.

All Middle Eastern states abide by the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), heed the comprehensive safeguards measures except for Israel that rejects placing its nuclear facilities under the agency's observation and any steps render the Middle East free of nuclear arms and weapons of mass destruction, as stated by the NPT revision conventions since 1995, said Al-Fassam, also the Permanent Representative at the International Organizations in Vienna.

The Israeli occupation continues to abstain from complying with the international legitimacy, namely the UNSC Resolution 487 that calls for subjecting all nuclear sites to the safeguards measures, he said.

The Kuwaiti ambassador also indicated at Tel Aviv's non-compliance with the 1995 NPT revision conference and the resolution issued by the 53rd session of the IAEA general conference (2009) regarding the Israeli nuclear capacities.

This topic should remain in the IAEA agenda until taking practical steps to tackle it, he stressed.

Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for Europe Affairs Ambassador Sadiq Marafi reiterated his country's unwavering support for the Palestinian issue.

Addressing a high-level event of the first meeting of the Palestine Donor Group (PDG) in Brussels on Thursday, he restated Kuwait's commitment to carrying on its efforts to ensure the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, mainly an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, on the June 4, 1967 border, as per international references and legitimacy resolutions.

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President Joseph Aoun

5-point initiative

Lebanon plan to halt attacks wins support

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: The five-point initiative announced by the Lebanese President Joseph Aoun to halt repeated Israeli attacks has received support locally, across the Arab world, and internationally, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Several Lebanese politicians and analysts view President Aoun's recent speech as reflecting a position of strength, determination, and resolve to protect Lebanon and its people from aggression.

They highlighted that choosing southern Lebanon as the venue for his speech, coinciding with the 82nd anniversary of independence, sent a message of reassurance to the Lebanese people and affirmed to the world Lebanon's control over its entire territory.

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XCAT powerboats compete in Hawalli Governorate. The UIM XCAT World Championship was held off the coast of Salmiya in Kuwait's Hawalli Governorate from November 20 to 22. (Xinhua)

Belgian gov't to shut Kuwait embassy for its restructuring

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: The Belgian government has announced an extensive plan to restructure its diplomatic network worldwide, which includes closing eight diplomatic missions, among them the Belgian embassy in Kuwait, according to a statement issued by the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Maxime Prévost explained that geopolitical shifts, trade tensions, and rising conflicts along Europe's borders have made a comprehensive reassessment of diplomatic deployments necessary. The objective is not to diminish bilateral relations but to reallocate resources in order to improve external effectiveness. Under the plan, Belgium will close eight diplomatic missions in 2026 and 2027, as well as open five new missions and strengthen around 20 existing ones to deal with the growing political and economic challenges.

The expansions include opening a new mission in Muscat, and strengthening the diplomatic presence in Riyadh and Doha, reflecting Belgium's strategy to enhance its role in the Middle East, particularly in the fields of energy, trade, and investment.

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The site of drill.

Live ammo drill Mon.

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22, (KUNA): Kuwait's Air Force and Navy were scheduled to conduct live-fire exercises on Monday and Tuesday (November 24-25) from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, announced the country's

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Kuwait Airways and Emirates to expand their global network of destinations

NBK successfully issues KD 150 million Tier 2 subordinated bonds

Prayer Timings

Fajr	04:54	Asr	14:31
Sunrise ..	06:17	Maghrib ..	16:51
Zohr	11:34	Isha	18:11

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Rather hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.
By Night: Rather cold with

Weather

light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 06-28 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	29	16
Kuwait Airport	28	12
Abdaly	29	10

Jahra	29	14
Failaka Island	30	11
Salmiyah	26	18
Ahmadi	27	12
Nuwaisib	28	13
Wafra	29	13
Salmy	27	07

Kuwait, GCC States make ‘strides’ in private sector wage protection

ILO commends timely salary payments

GENEVA, Nov 22, (KUNA): The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have made significant progress in building systems to ensure private sector workers are paid fully and on time, says a joint report by the International Labour Organisation and the Executive Bureau of Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs in GCC states (EB-GCC).

The report, titled “Wage Protection Systems in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries: A Regional Analysis,” offers a first regional analysis of the innovative Wage Protection Systems (WPS) in the GCC, and provides recommendations to further support fair and transparent wage practices across the private sector.

The report was unveiled at an information meeting organized by the EB-GCC at the ILO HQ in Geneva on Thursday. The event brought together policy-

makers, worker and employer representatives and international organizations under the umbrella of the Global Coalition for Social Justice, an ILO-led initiative to advance social justice across the globe.

The report outlines how, over the past decade and a half, the six GCC countries - Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates - have taken significant strides to ensure the timely and correct payment of wages through the establishment of WPSs.

These systems - electronic salary transfer systems that enable government oversight of wage payments in the private sector - were developed in line with the ILO Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95) and the Protection of Wages Recommendation, 1949 (No. 85).

They constitute a pioneering regional innovation that seeks to enhance transparency and accountability in wage payment practices.

The report provides a comprehensive analysis of how these WPSs were designed and operate, drawing on data and insights from GCC government focal

points and a joint ILO-EB-GCC workshop.

It identifies promising practices, key challenges, and actionable recommendations to further strengthen wage protection across the region.

EB-GCC and ILO representatives underscored the importance of collaborative regional efforts to strengthen wage protection frameworks and uphold decent work principles.

ILO Director-General Gilbert F. Houngbo highly commended the excellent cooperation between the ILO and the GCC in advancing fair, transparent and inclusive labour markets, noting that “the launch of this new regional analysis on Wage Protection Systems is a powerful testament to what we can achieve together.”

He underscored that the report itself reflects exemplary collaboration between the GCC Executive Bureau and the ILO and “provides a valuable reference point for other countries seeking to enhance transparency and fairness in wage payment.”

Director-General of the EB-GCC

Mohammad Al-Obaidli highlighted the Bureau’s long-standing partnership with the ILO and the practical value of the report.

He reaffirmed that “this joint effort builds on close cooperation between the GCC and the ILO.”

“The GCC’s journey in implementing the Wage Protection System serves as a valuable, established model for nations seeking to boost transparency and ensure fairness in wage payments globally,” Al-Obaidli stressed.

The report was developed under the ILO’s FAIRWAY Programme which is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

As a next step, the ILO and the GCC Executive Bureau will jointly organize a follow-up workshop with the participation of GCC member states to review and build upon the report’s findings.

The workshop will aim to identify practical measures to strengthen wage protection systems in the GCC and promote greater compliance and coverage, further supporting decent work outcomes in the region.



KUNA photo

Jamal Al-Ghunaim, Kuwait's Ambassador to Abu Dhabi

Enduring partnership

UAE to honor decades of Kuwaiti-Emirati ties

ABU DHABI, Nov 22, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Ambassador to the UAE Jamal Al-Ghunaim stated Friday UAE President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan’s call for Emirati society and institutions to mark a week-long celebration of Kuwaiti-Emirati ties, beginning January 29, represents a significant gesture reflecting the depth of relations between the two countries.

Al-Ghunaim told KUNA that the initiative highlights the longstanding and firmly rooted relations between Kuwait and the UAE and noted that the bonds shared by the two states extend over decades and are based on close historical, social, and cultural ties.

The ambassador expressed Kuwait’s appreciation for the call issued by the Emirati President, describing it as a source of pride for Kuwait’s leadership, government, and people, adding that such gestures are consistent with the UAE’s supportive stances toward Kuwait throughout their shared history.

Al-Ghunaim referred to the UAE’s positions during key moments, including its support during Kuwait’s liberation, as examples of the strong relationship between the two countries.

He said the upcoming celebration week is expected to contribute to further advancing bilateral cooperation in various sectors.

Al-Ghunaim reaffirmed Kuwait’s high regard for the initiative and expressed hope for continued progress in Kuwaiti-Emirati relations.

According to the Emirates News Agency (WAM), Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed described the UAE’s relationship with Kuwait as one of fraternity, warmth, and kinship and that the celebration reflects the long-established fraternal bonds between the UAE and Kuwait and reaffirms the UAE leadership’s commitment to reinforcing these ties.

Gulf vessels unite

Kuwait’s speedboat joins Oman’s ‘Fleet Review’ ’25

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22, (KUNA): The Kuwait speedboat “Istiqlal” partook in the “Fleet Review 2025” event, organized by the Sultanate of Oman to mark its National Day celebrations.

The Kuwaiti vessel’s crew performed a military salute to the Omani Royal Yacht Fulk Al-Salamah (Ship of Peace) while passing in front of Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq Al-Said, said the Kuwaiti army’s Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations said in a press release on Saturday.

Istiqlal’s participation in this Omani event came on the occasion of the Sultanate’s celebrations of the National Day, along with a number of Omani and Gulf vessels.



KUNA photo

The Kuwaiti naval vessel ‘Istiqlal’ docks at Sultan Qaboos Port to participate in the Omani National Day celebrations.

Celebrating Lebanon’s 82nd Independence Day

Lebanese in Kuwait gather for ‘Open Day’

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: The Lebanese Business Council in Kuwait organized an ‘Open Day’ under the auspices of the Lebanese Embassy, bringing together members of the Lebanese community in a warm family atmosphere, with the extraordinary participation of various segments of the Lebanese residing in the country.

At the start of the event, Chargé d’Affaires at the embassy Consul Mia Al-Adham asserted “we, the Lebanese, are always happy to meet our people in Kuwait, this generous land that gathered and embraced us. No Lebanese here has ever felt like a stranger. We feel as if we are returning home to our family and community. We are happy to see the positive spirit uniting members of the Lebanese community in events that reinforce communication and the sense of belongingness, especially since these events coincide with a cherished occasion for every Lebanese -- the 82nd Independence Day.”

She confirmed that “Lebanon resides in the hearts of its people and the initiatives of the Council are manifestations of the commitment to better serve the community.” She said the embassy continues to support every activity that contributes to unifying efforts, fostering cooperation and solidarity among the people of our nation, while showing the bright image of Lebanon as a land of civilization and peace.

Meanwhile, Chairperson of the Council Al Khalil stated “we are happy to gather today at this event, which we intended to be a family-oriented space, bringing together members of the Lebanese community in love and harmony. The large turnout confirms the strength of the bond between the Lebanese residing in Kuwait, and their commitment to maintain cooperation and solidarity among themselves.”

He added that “on this occasion, we can only express our deepest gratitude and appreciation to Kuwait, its leadership, government and people for embracing the Lebanese community for decades, and for its unwavering support for Lebanon under various circumstances. Kuwait always stands by Lebanon regardless of the circumstances, reaffirming its status as a genuine Arab nation that stands with its brothers and sisters, along with all its resources and noble stances.”

He affirmed the “deep-rooted rela-



Photos by Rezk Tawfiq

Top & above: Photos during the Lebanese community celebration.

tions between Lebanon and Kuwait,” stressing that “these ties are based on four fundamental pillars that embody the nature of the relationship between the two peoples. The presence of the Lebanese community in Kuwait for decades has strengthened this closeness. During my 30 years of residing in Kuwait, I have never felt like a stranger. While we are guests, Kuwaitis treat us like citizens. We, in turn, act as guests with our rights and as citizens with our responsibilities. We are committed to fulfilling such a duty”

He highlighted Kuwait’s historic role in supporting Lebanon in difficult times, asserting that “Kuwait has never abandoned Lebanon in

any crisis, from the civil war to the 2006 war, to the port explosion, and up to the recent events. Support has always been present from both the leadership and the Kuwaiti people.”

He also pointed out the cultural similarities between the two countries, stressing that the history of Lebanon and Kuwait is intertwined with trade and openness, making shared values a foundation for the convergence of the two peoples.

Regarding tourism, he cited the remarkable increase in the number of Kuwaiti visitors to Lebanon recently. “This is not surprising. It reflects their love for Lebanon and their confidence that the country is beginning to recover after its ordeal,” he added.

He affirmed that “Lebanon will remain a home for Kuwaitis, just as Kuwait is the second home for thousands of Lebanese who found safety, respect and opportunities for a dignified life here.”

At the conclusion of the event, Walid Kamal Shaaban, a board member and head of the Social Aspects and Capacity Building Committee in the Council, attributed the success of the event to everyone’s cooperation. He said “we are keen to ensure that the event becomes a space for Lebanese families to meet and enjoy each other’s company. We look forward to launching more social activities that strengthen the bond between members of the community.”



KUNA photos

Namaa Charity opens a specialized health center for cataract surgeries in Kenya.

Over 1,000 surgeries conducted

Kuwait’s Namaa opens center for cataract patients in Kenya

KHARTOUM, Nov 22, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Namaa charitable society inaugurated on Saturday a medical center to carry out cataract surgeries in Kenya, a step which aims to expand free medical services of the needy and boosts Kuwait’s humanitarian efforts in Africa.

Namaa CEO Abdulazizi Al-Kandari said opening the center was done by the donors’ support in Kuwait and the political leadership’s encouragement, adding it is a hope for thousands of patients waiting for treatment of their eyesight

The center has conducted so far 1,000 successful surgeries by a specialized medical team using modern equipment, he noted.

Al-Kandari thanked Kuwait’s Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Social Affairs for support and facilitations, which help charities professionally implement their projects.

Happiness reflected on the faces of beneficiaries who regain their eyesight has been the driving force behind pursuing projects that revive hope for those patients, he stated.

LOCAL



A Municipality bulldozer dismantles tents set up illegally in the desert. Municipality photo

124 illegal campsites in north, south dismantled

By Inaas Awad

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: The Spring Camping Committee of Kuwait Municipality launched intensive campaigns in both the southern and northern parts of the country to remove campsites operating without permits or in prohibited areas.

The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality explained that the campaigns were carried out under the directives of Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdul Latif Al-Mashari, and Director General of Kuwait Municipality Manal Al-Asfour.

The procedures were implemented in co-operation with the Ministry of Interior, Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), and the Environment Public Authority (EPA).

The inspection teams' efforts in the southern and northern parts of the country resulted in the issuance of 100 removal notices, 2 citations to street vendors, and the dismantling of 124 campsites that violated camping regulations of which 87 were in the southern part and 37 in the northern.

The department affirmed that the Spring Camping Committee teams will continue inspections of all camping sites to ensure they are free of unauthorized campsites and to enforce Kuwait Municipality's regulations and decisions.

All acquitted in ferocious brawl

'Not harmful to state interests'

By Jaber Al-Hamoud and Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: The Court of Appeals overturned the ruling issued by the Criminal Court in the brawl case involving 11 individuals accused of attempted murder and assault.

The lower court sentenced four of the defendants to five years in prison, but the Court of Appeals acquitted all of them.

The appeal ruling was issued after the higher court determined that the case file lacked conclusive evidence of intent to kill, and that the elements of the crime were absent. Furthermore, the investigation is deemed invalid and lacked seriousness, as the defense argued that its contents did not constitute admissible evidence in court, and that the incident was nothing more than an altercation resulting in injuries that did not amount to attempted murder.

Attorney Inam Haidar, lawyer for one of the defendants, submitted a comprehensive memorandum of defense. She pointed out the invalidity of the investigation, contradictions in the victim's statements, and implausibility of the footage included in the indictment.

She also argued that the case file lacked technical or medical evidence proving the defendants' intent to kill. She demonstrated the absence of the elements of the crime as defined by Article 45 of the Penal Code, which requires criminal intent and a premeditated plan to commit the act—elements not established in the case file.

In its reasoning, the higher court affirmed that the case file lacked conclusive evidence of intent to kill, the charges against the defendants are unsubstantiated and that the evidence was insufficient, thus, necessitating an acquittal, especially since the medical report did not establish that the injuries resulted from a criminal intent constituting attempted murder.

The court concluded by overturning the previous ruling and acquitting all the defendants of the charges against them, having

determined that the accusations were unfounded and that the incident, as described in the investigation reports, was impossible.

□ □ □

'Not harming state': The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Al-Dhuwaih Mubarak Al-Dhuwaih, acquitted an individual of engaging in cryptocurrency mining in a manner that harms national security.

The court affirmed that the activity – according to its findings – did not rise to the level of harming higher interests or damaging the political, economic or financial standing of the State, and did not exceed the scope of individual activity within a private residence.

The court explained in its reasoning that the presented facts do not, by their nature, reflect on the country's external perception or affect its stability or strategic relations. It was not proven that the defendant engaged in any industrial or commercial activity requiring a license, nor was it proven that the seized equipment was used in a way that caused unusual pressure on the electrical grid or resulted in public harm.

The court added that the concept of national security does not encompass every internal violation or limited individual activity, and that criminalization in this context must be based on a genuine danger that transcends the private sphere and threatens vital State interests, which was not the case in question.

Meanwhile, the court convicted the defendant on the second and third charges related to the possession of mining equipment in his residence and the consumption of electricity in a manner that violates the regulations, and fined him KDI,000.

□ □ □

11 juveniles nabbed: Traffic police arrested 11 juveniles in several areas for driving without a license and all of them were referred to the Juvenile Prosecution.

A security source revealed the juveniles were apprehended within a 24-hour period, stressing that traffic police are continuing their efforts to track down juveniles who are driving without a license to take legal action against them.

Graduation ceremony held for 1st batch freed inmates

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: The Special Security and Correctional Institutions Sector held a graduation ceremony for the first cohort of released inmates participating in the "Support Them" national initiative, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ceremony, which honored 86 graduates, was held under the patronage of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, and in the presence of the Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security Affairs at the Ministry of Interior Major General Hamed Al-Dawwas, and the Head of the Special Security and Correctional Institutions Sector Brigadier General Dakheel Al-Dakheel.

Major General Al-Dawwas expressed pride in the national initiative, highlighting that it reflects the ministry's commitment to programs that support released inmates and facilitate their positive reintegration into society.

He praised the collaborative efforts that contributed to the success of the program and the creation of a supportive environment for its beneficiaries.

Meanwhile, the acting Director General of the General Department for Correctional

Institutions, Brigadier General Osama Al-Majed, affirmed the Ministry of Interior's commitment to implementing comprehensive rehabilitation programs aimed at enhancing inmates' skills and empowering released inmates to build stable lives after their release.

He highlighted that the "Support Them" initiative serves as a national model showcasing the partnership between state institutions and civil society, and reflecting the ministry's vision for developing the reform and rehabilitation system in line with international human rights standards.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the patron's representative honored the graduates, participating teams, and organizations in recognition of their contributions to the initiative's success.

In this regard, the Ministry of Interior stressed that the patronage of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior for the ceremony underscores the ministry's strong commitment to reform and rehabilitation programs, and its dedication to providing meaningful opportunities to empower released individuals and reintegrate them into society.

diwaniya



A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

From gold and silver the journey of notes

"ABOUT 500 years ago, Europeans sailed wooden ships to the islands of Central and South America, where they discovered gold and silver. In their quest to seize the wealth of those lands, they resorted to oppression and even murder. The gold and silver soon flowed into the coffers of European nations. This influx of currency quickly found its way into European markets, where people used it to buy goods. However, they soon noticed something unusual. The prices had risen compared to previous levels," columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Economic thought was still in its infancy, but some European economists observed that this phenomenon reflected a law of economics - "An increase in the money supply leads to higher prices." Naturally, this had a negative impact on ordinary people. To simplify economics further, people, fearing thieves, began depositing their money with individuals who owned iron safes. Blacksmiths were among those who possessed such safes, so people entrusted their money to them. In return, the blacksmith would give each depositor a receipt.



Ahmad Al-Dawas

"Over time, the blacksmith noticed that people rarely came to withdraw their money, so he began lending it to others. This marked the beginning of what later became the banking system, eventually leading to the establishment of central banks, which is the government's banks. One of their main functions is to control prices by raising interest rates to encourage people to deposit money, thus reducing excess cash in circulation that could otherwise drive prices up.

"People once used gold and silver for their transactions. About a hundred years ago, around the time of World War I, Europe no longer had enough gold and silver in its treasuries to pay soldiers' salaries. As a result, governments began issuing banknotes, promising to pay the holder a certain amount of gold if they wished to exchange the paper currency at the bank. Gradually, people became accustomed to using paper money, and many no longer went to banks to exchange it for gold, feeling confident in the government's guarantee of its value.

"As mentioned earlier, the blacksmith, or anyone entrusted with safeguarding people's money, used to give depositors a receipt, since they rarely came to withdraw their funds. This receipt was known to the Arabs as a "check," a term that later evolved and spread throughout the world as the word "cheque."

* * *

"A local newspaper that often defends merchants published a report yesterday claiming

that consumer spending in Kuwait is low. This situation is alarming because merchants' revenues have declined. The report even urged the government to encourage individuals to spend more. But hold on... this is not true. It is an exaggeration. One citizen commented on the report, saying, "Today, I couldn't find an empty table at the restaurant, or even at the one next door. That shows consumer spending is doing just fine."

"Of course, people spend on a variety of goods and services, and this reflects the reality of active consumer behavior. I agree with his opinion. Speaking of which, I was recently sitting with my family at a restaurant, and it felt as if we were somewhere in the south of France. The place had a beautiful view of boats, and we were surrounded by foreign visitors. The restaurant was in Souq Sharq. Unfortunately, it will be vacated in three months by the company managing it, at the request of the Ministry of Finance. We will no longer be able to enjoy such a place. I hope the government works to beautify our country, or at least preserve the lovely places we already have, instead of demolishing them."

Also:

"Olive oil and honey are among the most adulterated food products sold in the market. This is due to the limited production of olive oil and the even scarcer availability of honey from beehives," Palestinian journalist **Adnan Makawi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Because most consumers find it difficult to detect adulteration in olive oil and honey, many sellers, with few exceptions, act dishonestly in their trade and in the products they sell. Some are simply driven by greed, seeking quick profits, especially in the food and nutrition sector. The only way to curb this widespread adulteration in our markets, which is harmful to our health, is through intensified, rigorous, and trustworthy government oversight and inspection of all farms, factories, shops, markets, and restaurants.

"In addition, responsible and reliable laboratory testing must be conducted on all food, vegetables, and fruits to ensure they are free from contaminants, fertilizer and pesticide residues, and polluted water before being offered for wholesale and retail sale. And before I forget, don't be misled by the so-called "organic" production claims in agriculture, including vegetable and fruit production, livestock and poultry farming, and fish farming in most Arab countries. Don't let them deceive you with the label "organic." Your health is at stake, and you alone will bear the consequences."

□ □ □

"Two or three years ago, a Lebanese woman, who was a bookstore owner and saleswoman and a regular customer of mine, called me

from Beirut. Confident in her work, she asked me about selling accredited university degrees stamped with official seals from Lebanese universities," Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Hearing this alarming news left me in shock. I exclaimed, "Are you going to send me to prison for the rest of my life?" Then I added, "In Lebanon, selling or forging degrees is impossible. Education in Lebanon is sacred, and its people would rather starve than tamper with it."

"Lebanese printing presses are renowned for producing scientific encyclopedias, foreign language resources, and books of all kinds and languages with exceptional quality. It was once said, "Cairo writes, Beirut prints, and Baghdad reads." This saying reflects a bygone era when Arabs read widely, collected the finest books and poetry, and took pride in their home libraries.

"Today, with technology, the internet, and other modern innovations, the joy of reading and the passion for collecting books and poetry have diminished, negatively affecting tastes, especially among young people, school students, and university and postgraduate students. I remember a friend whispering to me, "I need you to write my master's thesis." I asked, "Who prepared it for you?" He replied, "A resident." I then asked how much he had agreed to pay, and he said, "500 pounds." I told him to add 200 pounds so the thesis could be properly written and printed without causing any trouble.

"Following the forged certificates scandal, the Kuwaiti courts moved to pursue the case, and I believe it has been discussed within judicial circles. Have any verdicts been issued, or has the matter been postponed? Many of our young people proudly earn advanced degrees from accredited and reputable universities, particularly in medicine and science. They would be shocked and dismayed if individuals with fake degrees were promoted to higher positions.

"What is most surprising is that such scandals seem to target Kuwait, even though the sale of forged degrees is a thriving and lucrative market across the Gulf, beyond, and even in Europe. Perhaps the scandal involving 300 Kuwaiti law students at an Egyptian university was just the tip of the iceberg. Currently, we hear of similar scandals at Lebanese universities, also involving Kuwaiti students. And who can guarantee that we won't hear of fake degrees from reputable international universities? Is that really so far-fetched?

"Money, my friend, has become the driving force behind corrupted consciences, even when the person carrying it holds a two-meter-long prayer beads."

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

Gang extorting money from porters arrested

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: The Criminal Investigation Department at the Interior Ministry apprehended a gang that exploited unpaid porters and extorted money from them, reports Al-Anba daily.

A security source stated that detectives assigned in the Hawally and Capital governorates arrested a gang that employed expatriates as porters in shopping malls without giving them wages. In addition to withholding salaries, the gang extorted protection money from the workers, demanding around KD4 per day. Any worker who failed to pay the protection fee would immediately be replaced.

The source added that the number of exploited workers is estimated to be in the dozens. The gang members were arrested after information emerged indicating that several workers were not receiving wages from the company sponsoring them. Investigations uncovered the unexpected reality that the workers were being forced to pay protection money in order to continue working.

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Expat held with drugs: Farwaniya support patrols apprehended an expatriate in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh for the possession of more than 100 bags

containing substances suspected to be narcotics, all ready for distribution, reports Al-Anba daily.

A security source revealed that the support officers got suspicious of the individual during a routine patrol, and upon searching him, they discovered the seized items.

The source confirmed that the expatriate confessed in the initial questioning that he was working for a prisoner, stressing his role was limited to distributing the drugs to users.

The suspect and the seized items were referred to the Drug Control General Department at the Interior Ministry to complete the legal procedures.

Nationality forger gets life in prison

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: The Criminal Court sentenced a Sudanese man to life imprisonment for forging Kuwaiti citizenship in 1993 and imposed a fine of KD480,000, reports Al-Rai daily.

The defendant obtained Kuwait citizenship under Article Three by falsely claiming to be of unknown parentage. He later worked for the Ministry of Defense, but was dismissed for absenteeism. In 2010, he left Kuwait and returned to Sudan.

The case surfaced when the Citizenship Investigation Department uncovered the forgery, which continued from 1993 until 2024. After coordinating with the relevant authorities in Sudan through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and securing the defendant's original documents, it was confirmed that he is a Sudanese national who has been living with his family.

His Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked in November 2024 through a Cabinet decision.

□ □ □

Account hacked: The Hawally Governorate Criminal Investigation Department-Nuqa Investigation Office, under the Criminal Investigation General Department in the Criminal Security Sector at the Interior Ministry, received information that an Egyptian complained about unauthorized withdrawals from his bank account, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the case was registered at Nuqa Police Station under number 230/2025, classified as a bank fraud. The complainant stated that he noticed a total of KD2,740 withdrawn from his account at a local bank in three separate transactions without his knowledge or consent. The source added that the Criminal Investigation General Department carried out its standard procedures in dealing with such reports by contacting the bank in question and verifying the details of the transactions, in preparation for completing the legal procedures. He then urged the public to be wary of text messages or links from unknown sources that request updates to bank information or that attempt lure them into accessing websites resembling that of banks.

Al-Mukhaizeem orders 12-post MEW shake-up

Reshuffles span maintenance, control units

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Minister of Electricity, Water, Renewable Energy and Finance and acting Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem issued 12 transfer decisions on Thursday.

These decisions include the transfer of the following:

- Director of the Main Substation Maintenance Department in the Transmission Networks Sector Eng. Nahar Al-Dhafeeri to the position of Director of the Operation and Maintenance Department in the Technical Services Sector,
- Head of the Operation Section in the Electricity Distribution Networks Control for Farwaniya Governorate Eng. Abdullah Saud to the position of Head of the Governorate's Emergency Section in the Electricity Distribution Networks Sector,
- Head of the Secondary Substation Implementation Section in the Follow-up Programs Planning Department of the Distribution Networks Sector Eng. Nawaf Al-Fadhli to the position of Head of the Operation Section in the Distribution Networks Control
- Head of the Governorate's Emergency Section in the Electricity Distribution Networks Control for the Capital Governorate Eng. Ahmed Al-Rajhi to the position of Head of the Operation Section in the Electricity Distribution Networks Control for Hawally Governorate,



Al-Mukhaizeem

- Head of the Cable Implementation Section in the Program Planning and Follow-up Department of the Electricity Distribution Networks Sector Eng. Jaber Al-Nallaf to the position of Head of the Follow-up Section in the Street Lighting Department,
- Head of the Overhead Lines Section in the Electricity Distribution Networks Emergency Department Eng. Musaed Al-Nufidi to the position of Head of the Works Implementation Follow-up Section in the Contracts Control Department,
- Head of the Transformer Maintenance Section in the Main Substation Maintenance Department Eng. Abdulaziz Al-Anzi to the position of Head of the Laboratory Section in the same department and sector,
- Head of the Underground Cables Section in the Electrical Networks Design Department of the Transmission Networks Sector Eng. Anas Al-Mushaili to the position of Head of the West Doha Warehouses Section,
- Head of the Mechanical Maintenance Section in the Water Facilities Operation and Maintenance Department Eng. Hisham Al-Habil to the position of Head of the Workshop Section in the Groundwater Production Department,
- Head of the Overhead Lines Section in the Electrical Networks Design Department of the Transmission Networks Sector Eng. Meshaal Al-Ghadhouri to the position of Head of the Doha East Warehouses Section,
- Head of the Planning Section in the Planning and Follow-up Department of the Technical Services Sector Eng. Ali Al-Shayji to the position of Head of the Security and Safety Section in the Transmission Networks Sector,
- Eng. Waleed Boudastour from Operations Monitoring in the Water Facilities Operation and Maintenance Department to the position of Operations Monitor in the Groundwater Production Department.

Approval required for burials after Isha

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Kuwait Municipality stressed the need to coordinate with the Funeral Affairs Department to obtain the necessary approval for burials after the Isha prayer, if the deceased's family wishes to do so, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement posted on its X account, Kuwait Municipality clarified that, in the interest of public safety and in accordance with the circular on burial times, which stipulates 9:00am and after the Asr prayer, families wishing to bury the deceased after the Isha prayer must coordinate with the Funeral Affairs Department to obtain the required approval.

Ministry serves over 300 pending applicants

Social Affairs distributes 25 new wheelchairs

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah confirmed the distribution of 25 wheelchairs to eligible people with disabilities on Thursday.

In a press statement during the distribution of wheel chairs at the Sulaibikhat Social Welfare Complex, Al-Huwailah stressed that these wheelchairs met the highest international standards in the assistive device category, were designed to suit the individual needs of each person with a disability, and there are different types to cover all age groups including children.

She said the remaining wheelchairs will be delivered next week until the last request, which has been pending for many years, is fulfilled. She pointed out that the distribution, adjustments and modifications are ongoing to improve services provided to people with disabilities.

Al-Huwailah, accompanied by Director General of the Public Authority for Disabled Affairs (PADA) Dr. Dalal Al-Othman and Deputy Director General for Medical and Residential Services Dr. Khalifa Al-Hilaa, inspected the wheelchair warehouse at the complex. They also observed the fitting and testing of the wheelchairs for a number of people with disabilities of various age groups.

According to the minister, her presence at the distribution was to personally oversee the delivery procedures and ensure that the devices met the quality standards and technical specifications in order to address the actual needs of the beneficiaries.

She emphasized that providing wheelchairs is vital in enhancing the independence of people with disabilities, facilitating their mobility, and integrating them into society. She said the Authority remains committed to overcoming bureaucratic hurdles and ensuring that services reach the beneficiaries within the specified timeframes.

She also affirmed the continuation of the open-door policy and direct communication with clients to listen to their feedbacks and suggestions, with the aim of improving services provided by all sectors in the Authority.



MoSA photo

Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, is following up on the mechanism for delivering wheelchairs at the Ministry of Social Affairs' care center in the Sulaibikhat area.

Meanwhile, citizen Fawzia Al-Anzi, one of the beneficiaries of the first batch of wheelchairs, expressed her happiness over receiving the new wheelchair, indicating that she suffered with the old one due to its large size, heavy weight and the difficulty of transporting it to the car.

She pointed out that the new wheelchair is light, easy to disassemble for transport, and simple to use and maneuver, expressing her gratitude to the wise leadership for paying attention to people with disabilities, meeting their needs, and providing devices with international specifications.

It is worth noting that the distribution of assistive devices (wheelchairs) resumed after a hiatus of almost five years. The number of applications has reached more than 300 and distribution is carried out weekly.

Farwaniya Governor, workers union boost co-op

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received on Thursday morning in his office the President of the National Union of Employees and the Higher Education Workers Union Dr. Khaled Hussein Al-Barrak, Secretary and President of the Competition Protection Authority Union Amer Al-Daihani, and Head of the Public Relations Committee of the Higher Education Workers Union Abdulaziz Al-Hamad.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, they discussed several topics, including



Farwaniya Governorate photo showing the Governor with the leaders of the National Union of Employees and the Higher Education Workers Union.

strengthening union work and developing the work environment to keep pace

with global digital advancements, as well as proposals to enhance cooperation between Farwaniya Governorate and union organizations.

The governor emphasized that such visits and the sharing of national ideas and initiatives are a civic duty, and are highly valued for their role in stimulating union work and contributing to the development of all sectors in service of Kuwait.

At the end of the meeting, the guests expressed their gratitude to the governor for his warm reception and his continued support for initiatives that benefit employees and union organizations.

Fair selection of supervisory staff

MoE and Teachers Association strengthen training programs

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaie expressed his appreciation for the constructive cooperation shown by the Teachers Association, particularly in supporting training courses for applicants for supervisory positions and providing a suitable training environment that can accommodate the increasing number through specialized trainers and qualified programs, within the framework of the existing cooperation protocol between the two parties.

Al-Tabtabaie made the statement in a meeting he held Thursday with Head of the Association Hamad Al-Holi to discuss ways to develop professional qualification programs and enhance leadership paths for those working in the educational field.

In a press statement, the Education Ministry revealed that the meeting addressed mechanisms for developing leadership courses that culminate in an examination, and agreeing on scientific content that reflects the different categories of applicants for supervisory positions, in order to ensure their professional readiness is enhanced, and to promote fairness and transparency in the selection procedures. It said that the two sides deliberated on mechanisms for developing supervisory job tests by preparing evaluation models that align with applicants' specializations and the nature of the tasks in each position. This aims to contribute to selecting qualified individuals capable of leading educational work efficiently and responsibly.

It added that the meeting addressed the importance of developing a comprehensive training program for new teachers. This program should focus on essential professional skills, classroom management, and



MoE photo

Engineer Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaie with the head of the Kuwaiti Teachers Association, Hamad Al-Holi.

the application of modern teaching strategies, facilitating their effective integration into the school environment. It affirmed that an agreement was reached to form a joint committee to develop the organizational framework for this program, ensuring its readiness before implementation.

The ministry stated that the meeting also touched on a proposal to require applicants for supervisory positions to submit a 'no criminal record' certificate. This requirement reinforces standards of integrity and adherence to the highest ethical and professional standards in selecting educational leaders.

It clarified that both sides emphasized the importance of developing kindergarten teachers' skills through a specialized training plan focused on enhancing their teaching and learning abilities. This is crucial because they work with a sensitive stage that necessitates modern educational tools to contribute to building a sound educational foundation for children from their earliest years.

Farmers Union opens Abdali Market

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Under the patronage and in the presence of Jahra Governor Hamad Jassim Al-Habashi, the Kuwait Farmers Union inaugurated the Abdali Seasonal Agricultural Market on Friday, November 21 at Abdali agricultural area behind Al-Shuraian Mosque in Qash'aniyah Al-Abdali, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The inauguration was held in the presence of the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works Engineer Eid Al-Rashidi.

The event highlights the importance of the agricultural sector and its vital role in supporting local produce, enhancing food security, encouraging Kuwaiti farmers, and boosting local production.

Governor Hamad Jassim Al-Habashi expressed his sincere thanks and appreciation to the Director General of the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish



Jahra Governorate photo

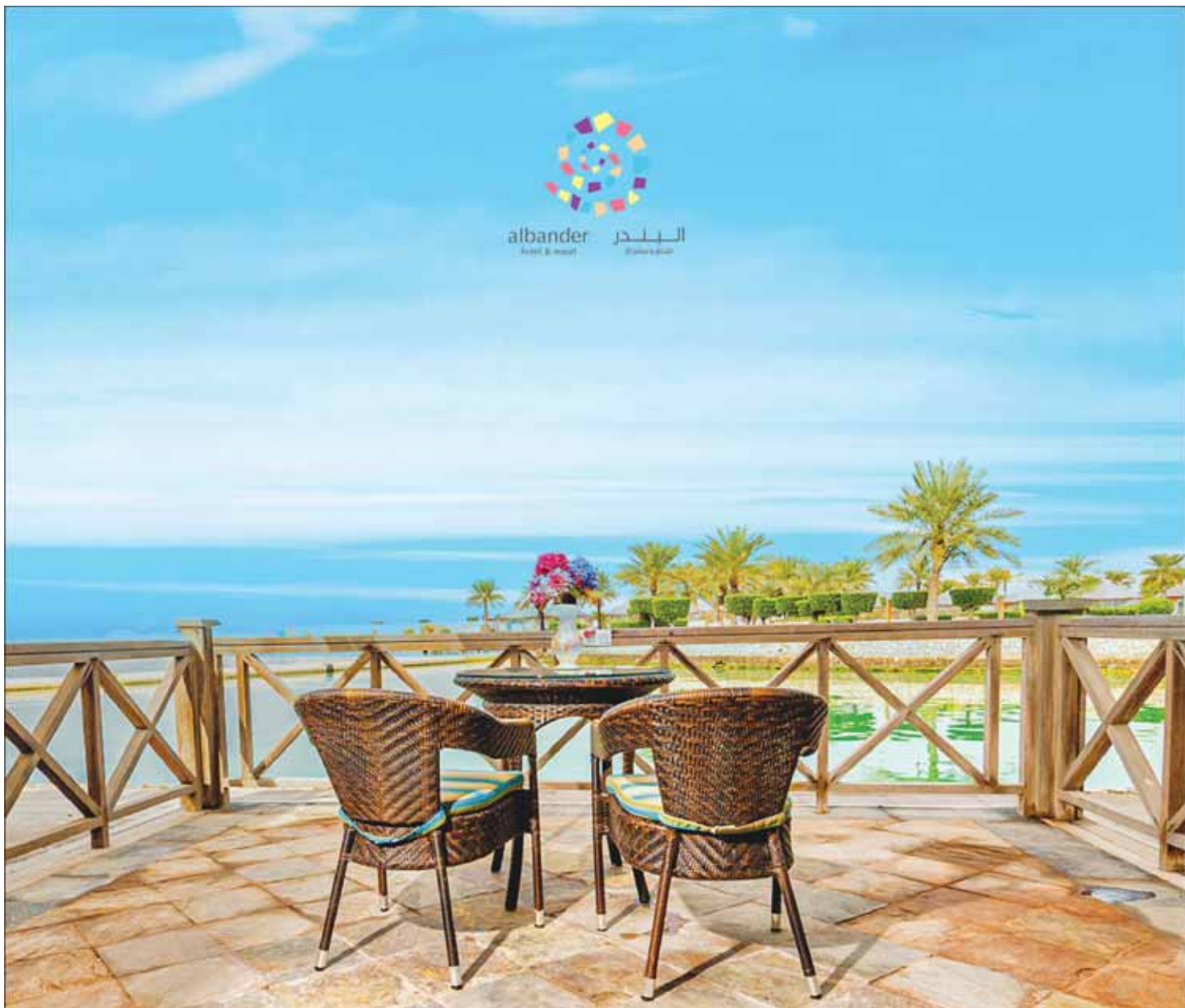
Jahra Governor opens Abdali Seasonal Agricultural Market.

Resources (PAAAFR) Engineer Salem Al-Hai, as well as to the Chairman of the Kuwait Farmers Union Ahmed Musallat Al-Adwani, and his colleagues in the union's administration for their efforts in developing agricultural work.

He emphasized the Jahra Governorate Council and its specialized committees' commitment to monitoring and dealing with the challenges faced by farmers, and to support-

ing all initiatives aimed at advancing the agricultural sector within Jahra Governorate, in coordination with relevant government agencies and the Kuwait Farmers Union, thereby contributing to the enhancement of food security for the population.

On this occasion, Treasurer of the Kuwait Farmers Union Ahmed Nasser Al-Shabak announced that the union's market welcomes all farmers in Al-Abdali without exception.



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Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
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Terms & conditions apply*

Kuwaiti photographer wins international wildlife honor

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22, (KUNA): Kuwaiti photographer Mohammad Murad earned an Honorable Mention in the Wildlife Portraits category at the Nature in Focus Photography Awards 2025, held in Bangalore, India.

The competition's website published the winning images on Friday, noting that more than 1,250 photographers from around 40 countries submitted about 16,000 photos across eight categories promoting creative nature conservation photography.

Murad told KUNA that the recognition adds to Kuwait's growing presence in Asian and global wildlife photography contests, stressing that such international acknowledgment motivates him to continue producing works that highlight the beauty of wildlife and raise awareness of nature conservation.

He explained that his awarded photograph, portrays the features of a rare and endangered Pallas's cat whose eyes were fully covered by a snowstorm, forcing it to rely on its other senses for survival, a scene reflecting the species' remarkable resilience in extreme conditions.



Mohammad Murad, Kuwaiti photographer



KUNA photos
The winning photo in the competition's Commendation Award.

Council to tackle safety, education, utilities

Municipal Committee holds key talks on ads law, KU exemption

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: The Legal and Financial Affairs Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Fahd Al-Abduljader, met on Thursday.

The committee retained two items in its agenda -- the draft amendment to Ministerial Resolution No. 599/2023 concerning the advertising regulations and its amendments, and Kuwait University's request for exemption from Article Seven on the insurance amount of Ministerial Resolution No. 206/2009 concerning the medical campus project in Sabah Al-Salem University City.

In another development, the Municipal Council, chaired by Abdullah Al-Muhairi, will hold its regular session on Monday to discuss the following:

■ Proposal of member Alia Al-Farsi regarding the provision of public re-

strooms as a necessity and a basic requirement, not an option,

■ Proposal of members Munira Al-Amir and Sharifa Al-Shalfan regarding the creation of regulations for preserving buildings from deterioration and dealing with buildings at risk of collapse,

■ Alternative sites for private residential schools,

■ Reasons behind the Kuwait Municipality's delay in handing over alternative sites to the Ministry of Education, as allocated through the council's resolutions for relocating schools from private residential areas,

■ Request to allocate a portion of the land designated for Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIP-IC) in North Zour Refinery to Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGO),

■ Request of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to expand a main transformer station in the Green Belt Sur Gardens to serve Al-Shaheed Park.

Celebrating contributions to Arab heritage and literature

Kuwait Book Fair honors cultural icon Al Zubair

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22, (KUNA): The 48th Kuwait International Book Fair, themed "The Land of Books - The Capital of Culture," honored Mohammad bin Al Zubair, a retired Economic Planning Advisor to the Sultan of Oman and founder of the Bait Al Zubair Foundation, for his contributions to Arab culture.

Speakers at the Cultural Cafe event on Thursday, included Oman's former Minister of Information Dr. Abdulmunim Al-Husseini, former Director of the Office of the Minister of Commerce and Industry Taye Jandal, Dr. Mohammad Al-Shehhi, and Director-General of Bait Al Zubair Foundation Dr. Mona Al-Sulaimyah.

Moderated by Ahmad Al-Kalbani, the discussion highlighted Mohammad bin Al Zubair's significant roles, including serving as the first Minister of Commerce and



Honoring Mohammad bin Al Zubair.

KUNA photo

Industry and as an advisor to the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said.

Al-Kalbani noted that Moham-

med bin Al Zubair has published 20 works, including his latest memoir, "Leaves That Will Not

Fall from the Tree: Memoirs of an Omani Student in Kuwaiti Schools 1954-1961."

Taye Jandal spoke about the impact of Mohammed's distinguished upbringing, characterised by a disciplined environment and humanitarian contributions from his family.

Dr. Al-Husseini highlighted the importance of Bait Al Zubair, describing it as a cultural institution that unifies various cultural groups.

Dr Al-Shehhi emphasised that the foundation aims to showcase cultural heritage, while Dr. Al-Sulaimi praised Mohammad's ability to embrace ideas and projects, which have led to their success.

The event concluded with Mohammad bin Al Zubair receiving honours from Dr. Mohammad Al-Jassar and Aisha Al-Mahmoud, and he signed copies of his memoir for attendees.

Kuwait upholds commitment to child rights and protection

‘Children are foundation of present and future’

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family Affairs and Childhood Dr. Amthar Al-Huwailah on Thursday affirmed the State of Kuwait's firm advocacy of child rights and protection emanate from the strong belief that children are "the bases of the present and future."

Minister Al-Huwailah, also Chairperson of the Supreme Council for Family



KUNA photo
Officials attend the 'Child Empowerment is a Right, Not an Option' conference in Kuwait, highlighting the nation's commitment to child rights and protection.

Affairs, was speaking during the conference, "child

empowerment is a right not an option," organized by the

Kuwait Bar Association in partnership with the supreme council, coinciding with the World Children's Day.

This conference emits a patriotic message expressing the state concern for building an aware an immune generation capable of partaking in the making the homeland's future, she said.

In line with this commitment, the state is seeking to enact legislations, draw up policies and provide services for the childhood, minister Al-Huwailah said, also noting the need for collaboration between the public and private sectors in the children's care sphere.

Continued from Page 1

Investors coming

These countries have developed mechanisms to maintain long-term stability, focusing not only on the present but also on securing the future for their people and their countries.

It is true that countries often deal with inflation by imposing taxes and fees. However, this alone is not enough. Continuity is the foundation of a strong economy and a cornerstone of social stability.

Prudent administrations therefore focus on attracting investments through sound policies, aiming to improve investments in infrastructure, energy, agricultural production, technology, and other emerging sectors.

These measures help boost public spending on major projects and support individual consumption, particularly in countries with sufficient wealth.

The Arabian Gulf states possess all these capabilities. As noted, they are utilizing their potential to the fullest, strengthening their global economic power.

So where does Kuwait stand? Has it seized the current opportunity, or is it still relying on outdated policies and merely reacting to economic events?

First, we must acknowledge that learning from the experiences of other countries is not a weakness. The world thrives on cultural exchange and knowledge sharing. This is what the Gulf states did in the past when they benefited from and built upon Kuwaiti experiences.

In Kuwait, we should similarly learn from the experiences of other Gulf states, especially since their economic models are similar to oil-producing countries. The difference lies in how some countries have used their wealth to build long-term strength, while others remain focused on short-term gains.

His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is laying the groundwork for a new era through his reception of international economic and financial figures, which reflects the political leadership's recognition of this approach as both essential and indispensable.

This undoubtedly requires the relevant ministries, including the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Interior, Kuwait Municipality, and other institutions, to exert their utmost efforts to translate these objectives into tangible results.

Openness to others is not a luxury but a necessity. It is required to create all possible avenues to encourage local investment and attract foreign capital, rather than issuing decisions that hinder industrial, commercial, service, and agricultural activity. Such restrictive measures also discourage foreign investors.

What prevents the simplification of procedures and the creation of more opportunities to make local investment more effective in Kuwait's economic

arena? What prevents granting long-term residency permits to investors, as has been done in other Gulf countries?

Finally, investors coming to Kuwait often feel apprehensive and hesitant in the face of decisions that hinder investment or complicate the local political process.

Belgian gov't

Prévoost stated that the plan aims to increase Belgium's diplomatic impact by refocusing missions on priority regions.

He emphasized that the closure of certain embassies does not indicate a decline in bilateral relations, but rather an effort to improve efficiency through better resource allocation, adding that these adjustments are set to be implemented gradually starting next year and continuing through 2027.

HH Amir,

He called on national institutions to mark the occasion and to honor the decades-long relationship by celebrating Kuwait, its leadership, and its people, noting that it reflects the deep-rooted historical bilateral ties.

For his part, UAE Vice-President, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Presidential Court Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan said that Kuwait's love is deeply rooted in the hearts of Emiratis, and its noble stances remain unforgettable.

Meanwhile, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum said Dubai's government will join the celebrations, adding that the bond between the two nations would remain strong and enduring.

UAE President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan called on the public and institutions to celebrate "decades of Emirati-Kuwaiti brotherhood" for one week starting January 29.

WAM said the one-week commemoration, which will start January 29, reflects the UAE leadership's commitment to strengthening historical fraternal relations with Kuwait.

Kuwait calls

He also underlined Kuwait's backing to the initiatives of sisterly and friendly countries, particularly the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution, led by Saudi Arabia and France, along with the efforts of the US, Qatar, Egypt and Türkiye to carry out the Gaza conflict resolution plan, which was adopted by the UN Security Council (UNSC) in its resolution 2803.

The Kuwaiti official commended the EU for hosting this significant meeting and hailed the joint international ef-

forts and responsibility for supporting Gaza financial stability and recovery.

He, further, called on the international community to play a role to wipe out the root cause of the catastrophic situation in all occupied Palestinian territories, aggravated by Israeli occupation's continued crimes against the Palestinian people in breach of international, international humanitarian law and international charters and human values.

The European Commission convened the first meeting of the Palestine Donor Group (PDG) in Brussels, co-chaired by Commissioner for the EU's Mediterranean Dubravka Suica and Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa, on Thursday, with ministers and senior officials of 60 countries and regional and international organizations.

Assistant Foreign Minister for Europe Affairs Ambassador Sadiq Marafi led the Kuwaiti delegation partaking in the gathering.

Kuwait, EC

State of Kuwait Embassy said in a statement on Friday the two sides discussed issues of joint concern, examined existing cooperation and means of deepening the coordination, prospected swap of expertise within the framework of FATF, the Financial Action Task Force, in addition to boosting joint action in the realms of money laundering and terrorism funding.

The statement added that they affirmed necessity of increasing the cooperation to enhance oversight systems' efficiency, bolstering protection of the financial sector in light of the FATF-adopted relevant international requirements.

Lebanon plan

Observers noted that the initiative conveys to all parties, both inside and outside Lebanon, the message that the Lebanese army is now the sole entity responsible for protecting the country, and that its efforts have restored security and normalcy in all parts of the country.

Live ammo

army on Saturday.

The drills are to be carried out in the marine shooting range at a distance of 16.5 nautical miles east Ras Al-Julaia and six nautical miles east Ras Al-Zour towards Umm Al-Maradim Island, the army's Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations said in a press release.

It warned citizens and residents, especially sea-goers, to stay clear of the designated area during the declared time only for their own safety.

The National Guard were set to carry out drills on operations at all po-

sitions and camps between November 23 and 27, the force declared on Saturday. Speaking on eve of the planned drills, Brigadier General Dr. Jadaan Al-Fadel said in a statement that the planned exercise would be in line with the annual training plan to test the personnel preparedness and response to deal with incidents.

The scheduled measures include calling on the troops to the line of duty during free time, moving vehicles and forces to the key posts.

Society role

She said the marathon is the first of its kind between the two organizations and coincides with the global '16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence' campaign, which runs from Nov 25 to Dec 15. She announced that the Society will organize a series of events and activities in the coming days as part of the campaign, including the screening of a film about the oppression and marginalization of women on Nov 26 at its headquarters.

She urged the public to follow the social media accounts of the Society to be updated on its activities and events aimed at raising awareness and combating violence against women, and to participate in them.

WSA handpicks

"Al-Hisba, in fact, has become one of the influential digital tools in Kuwait whining a short period of time," Al-Otaibi boasted.

He also regarded the choice of his platform as demonstrating Kuwait's growing presence in the technology and innovation sector, and promoting its global image as a country that produces digital solutions that are able to compete regionally and internationally.

For his part, Ahmad Al-Luhaib, a cofounder of the Kuwaiti real estate platform, told KUNA that the move was the fruit of building a technological system based on big data and smart algorithms, augmenting the accuracy of real estate decisions.

Al-Luhaib underlined that his platform would keep working on developing analytical tools that support investors, individuals, and decision-makers.

Also speaking to KUNA, Al-Hisba's Deputy General Manager Muneera Al-Mutairi said the selection of her platform to represent the State of Kuwait illustrates the quality of digital services based on reliable data.

The World Summit Awards (WSA) is a unique award system that selects and promotes local digital innovations aimed at improving society in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Results to be published online

Ministry begins interviews for cooperative supervisory roles

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi announced that the personal interviews for candidates for supervisory positions in cooperative societies will start on Sunday and will continue for two weeks.

In a press statement, Al-Ajmi disclosed that all interviews will be fully documented through audio and video recordings, in line with the commitment of the ministry to uphold the principles of transparency and impartiality in the evaluation process.

He explained that this stage follows the completion of online tests conducted at a private university.

He said a total of 795 citizens were qualified, indicating 627 of whom took the online test and 320 candidates successfully passed the first stage, advancing to the personal interview phase.

He said "the evaluation criteria were developed according to a precise formula that ensures complete fairness. The electronic test constitutes 90 percent of the final evaluation, while the personal interview is only 10 percent.

"This is done to select the most qualified candidates for supervisory positions in cooperative so-

cieties."

He added that the interviews will be conducted under the supervision of the Committee for Filling Supervisory Positions in Cooperative Societies, which includes representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs, Union of Cooperative Societies and Public Authority for Manpower (PAM). He affirmed the committee's commitment to apply the highest standards of professionalism and impartiality in all procedures, in accordance with regulations.

He stressed the need for the applicants to be on time and bring a 'no criminal record' certificate issued by the Sahel.

He indicated that the ministry will announce the results, including the test score, personal interview score and final score on its website and official social media platforms as soon as the committee concludes its work and approves the final results to guarantee transparency.

He said the commencement of the interview phase is a crucial step in the plan of the ministry to Kuwaitize supervisory positions in cooperative societies and enhance the presence of qualified national personnel in leadership roles. He asserted this will bolster operational efficiency and elevate the level of services provided to shareholders and consumers.

Damascus, Ibrahim Al-Muzain streets reopen for commuters

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22:

The Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART), in cooperation with the General Traffic Department, announced the opening of the intersection of Damascus Street (Mohammed Al-Fares Street) and Ibrahim Al-Muzain Street (Street 404), opposite Zahraa (traffic light intersection), reports Al-

Seyassah daily.

In a statement on its X account, PART said the opening will allow traffic from Damascus Street to Ibrahim Al-Muzain Street toward Sheikh Jaber Hospital, from Ibrahim Al-Muzain Street to Damascus Street toward the Fifth Ring Road, as well as traffic in both directions on Ibrahim Al-Muzain Street.



People make their way past a walkway and parking lot eroded by a combination of recent heavy rains and high tides at Cardiff State Beach on Nov 21, in Solana Beach, Calif. (AP)

Torrential rains return to S.Calif

The third storm in just over a week drenched Southern California on Friday and prompted some local flooding but caused no major widespread damage before heading east into the mountains and south toward Mexico’s Baja California Peninsula. The series of storms put Southern California on track for near-record November rainfall, the National Weather Service said. The region has received copious amounts of rain since Nov. 13, more than four times the normal amount that typically falls during the month in downtown Los Angeles, according to weather service reports.

Residents were warned before dawn Friday of flash flooding of streets, creeks and streams and possible mudslides in parts of Los Angeles and Orange counties. Some vehicles were stuck in floodwaters near Culver City before dawn, the weather service reported. (AP)

US Rep Greene, former Trump loyalist, resigns from Congress

WASHINGTON, Nov 22, (AP): US Rep **Marjorie Taylor Greene** of Georgia, a loyal supporter-turned-critic of President Donald Trump who faced his political retribution if she sought reelection, said Friday she is resigning from Congress in January.



Greene

Greene, in a more than 10-minute video posted online, explained her decision and said she didn’t want her congressional district “to have to endure a hurtful and hateful primary against me by the president we all fought for,” she said.

Greene’s resignation followed a public falling-out with Trump in recent months, as the congresswoman criticized him for his stance on files related to Jeffrey Epstein, along with foreign policy and health care.

Trump branded her a “traitor” and “wacky” and said he would endorse a challenger against her when she ran for reelection next year.

She said her last day would be Jan 5, 2026.

The White House did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment Friday night.

In a brief phone call Friday night, Trump told ABC News that Greene’s resignation is “great news for the country.” He said had no plans to speak with Greene but wishes her well.

Greene was one of the most vocal and visible supporters of Trump’s Make America Great Again politics, and she embraced some of his unapologetic political style.

Her break with him was a notable fissure in his grip over conservatives, particularly his most ardent base. But her decision to step down in the face of his opposition put her on the same track as many of the more moderate establishment Republicans before her who went crosswise with Trump.



This image taken from video provided by ABC7 shows first responders battling a blaze on a container ship docked at the Port of Los Angeles on Nov 21, in Los Angeles. (AP)

LA firefighters battle blaze on ship

Dozens of firefighters were battling a blaze on a container ship docked at a Los Angeles port on Friday night, according to officials.

All of the 23 crew members were accounted for and there were no injuries from the electrical fire, which appears to have started below deck, according to the Los Angeles Fire Department. The ship’s cargo includes hazardous materials.

By about 7 p.m., the fire had spread to several levels of the ship, according to the fire department, and later an explosion took place mid-deck. It was not immediately clear how the fire started.

More than 100 firefighters were fighting the fire at the Port of Los Angeles, according to Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass. The port is known as the busiest in North America. (AP)

‘Some of his ideas are really the same ideas that I have’

US President Trump and Mamdani go from adversaries to allies after WH meeting

WASHINGTON, Nov 22, (AP): US President Donald Trump on Friday met the man who had proudly proclaimed himself “Donald Trump’s worst nightmare,” but he seemed to find the opposite.

The Republican president and New York City’s Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani were warm and friendly, speaking repeatedly of their shared goals to help Trump’s hometown rather than their combustible differences.

Trump, who had in the past called Mamdani a “100% Communist Lunatic” spoke openly of how impressed he was with the man who had called his administration “authoritarian.”

“I think he is going to surprise some conservative people, actually,” Trump said of the democratic socialist as Mamdani stood next to him in the Oval Office.

The meeting offered political opportunities for both men. For Mamdani, a sit-down offered the state lawmaker - who until recently was relatively unknown - the chance to go head-to-head with the most powerful person in the world.

For Trump, it was a high-profile chance to talk about affordability at a time when he’s under increasing political pressure to show he’s addressing voter concerns about the cost of living.

Until now, the men have been political foils who galvanized their supporters by taking on each other, and it’s unclear how those backers will react to their genial get-together and complimentary words.

“We’re going to be helping him, to make everybody’s dream come true, having a strong and very safe New York,” the president said.

“What I really appreciate about the president is that the meeting that we had focused not on places of disagreement, which there are many, and also focused on the shared purpose that we have in serving New Yorkers,” Mamdani said.

Mamdani and Trump said they discussed housing affordability and the cost of groceries and utilities, as Mamdani successfully used frustration over inflation to get elected, just as the president did in the 2024 election.

“Some of his ideas are really the same ideas that I have,” the president said of Mamdani about inflationary issues.

The president brushed aside Mamdani’s criticisms of him over his administration’s deportation raids and claims that Trump was behaving like a despot. Instead, Trump said the responsibility of holding an executive position in the government causes a person to change, saying that had been the case for him.



US President Donald Trump shakes hands with New York City Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani in the Oval Office of the White House on Nov 21 in Washington. (AP)

He seemed at times even protective of Mamdani, jumping in on his behalf at several points. For example, when reporters asked Mamdani to clarify his past statements indicating that he thought the president was acting like a fascist, Trump said, “I’ve been called much worse than a despot.”

When a reporter asked if Mamdani stood by his comments that Trump is a fascist, Trump interjected before the mayor-elect could fully answer the question. “That’s OK. You can just say yes. OK?” Trump said. “It’s easier. It’s easier than explaining it. I don’t mind.”

Trump stepped in again when a reporter asked Mamdani why he flew to Washington instead of taking transportation that used less fossil fuels.

“I’ll stick up for you,” Trump said.

Mamdani, who takes office in January, said he sought the meeting with Trump to talk about ways to make New York City more affordable. Trump has said he may want to help him out - although he has also falsely labeled Mamdani as a “communist” and threatened to yank federal funds from the city.

But Trump on Friday didn’t sling that at the mayor. He acknowledged that he had said he had been prepared to cut off funding or make it harder for New York City to access federal resources if the two had failed to “get along,” only to pull back from those threats during the meeting. “We don’t want that to happen,” Trump said. “I don’t think that’s going to happen.”

Afterward, Mamdani’s former campaign manager and incoming chief of staff Elle Bisgaard-Church told NY1 that the pair clearly disagreed on some issues but were able to find common ground on things like reducing crime.

“We discussed that we share a mutual goal of having a safe city where everyone can move around in comfort and ease,” she said, before later adding, “We know that there have been labels thrown all around that are just simply not fair and we kept it, again, at where we could find agreement on making the city affordable.”

Trump loomed large over the mayoral race this year, and on the eve of the election, he endorsed independent candidate and former Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo, predicting the city has “ZERO chance of success, or even survival” if Mamdani won. He also questioned the citizenship of Mamdani, who was born in Uganda and became a naturalized American citizen after graduating from college, and said he’d have him arrested if he followed through on threats not to cooperate with immigration agents in the city.

Mamdani beat back a challenge from Cuomo, painting him as a “puppet” for the president, and promised to be “a mayor who can stand up to Donald Trump and actually deliver.” He declared during one primary debate, “I am Donald Trump’s worst nightmare, as a progressive Muslim immigrant who actually fights for the things that I believe in.”

The president, who has long used political opponents to fire up his backers, predicted Mamdani “will prove to be one of the best things to ever happen to our great Republican Party.” As Mamdani upended the Democratic establishment by defeating Cuomo and his far-left progressive policies provoked infighting, Trump repeatedly has cast Mamdani as the face of Democratic Party.

UK politician sentenced to over ten years for accepting bribes

LONDON, Nov 22, (AP): A hard-right British politician and former ally of Reform UK leader Nigel Farage was sentenced Friday to 10 1/2 years in prison for accepting bribes to make favorable statements about Russia in the European Parliament.

Nathan Gill, 52, pleaded guilty earlier this year to eight counts of bribery between December 2018 and July 2019. Police have estimated that the former leader of Reform in Wales took around 40,000 pounds (\$53,000) in bribes.

Prosecutors said Gill, a member of the European Union legislature until the UK’s departure from the bloc in early 2020, was tasked by the former pro-Russia Ukrainian politician Oleg Voloshyn to make pro-Russian statements about events in Ukraine in the European Parliament and in opinion pieces to news outlets, such as 112 Ukraine.

Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, having annexed parts of the country, including the Crimea peninsula, eight years earlier. The UK has been one of the most stalwart supporters of



Gill

Ukraine since the invasion.

Sentencing him at London’s Central Criminal Court, which is better known as the Old Bailey, Justice Bobbie Cheema-Grubb said Gill had allowed money to “corrupt his moral compass” when it had been his duty as an elected official to “speak with honesty and conviction.”

“When you say what someone has paid you to say you are not speaking with sincerity,” the judge said.

Gill was stopped at Manchester Airport in September 2021 as he attempted to travel to Russia, and was charged in February of this year following an investigation.

His mobile phone was examined and messages were found between him and Voloshyn, 44, that provided coded references to their financial dealings. The messages also indicated that Gill was co-opted to encourage other members of the European Parliament to back Russia’s stance on Ukraine.

“The communications between the two men showed that an established relationship existed between them,” prosecutor Mark Heywood said.

Gill was first elected to the European Parliament in 2014 for the anti-EU UK Independence Party, which was then led by Farage. He later represented the Brexit Party, the next party led by Farage, and remained in the legislature until Britain left the European Union in 2020.

European leaders scramble to respond to US peace plan for Ukraine seen as favoring Russia

KYIV, Ukraine, Nov 22, (AP): European leaders were set to meet in South Africa on Saturday to hash out alternatives to a US plan to halt Russia’s war in Ukraine seen as favoring Moscow, nearly four years after it invaded its neighbor.

The 28-point blueprint to end the Kremlin’s aggression sparked alarm in Kyiv and European capitals, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy saying Friday that his country could face a stark choice between standing up for its sovereign rights and preserving the American support it needs.

The U.S. plan foresees Ukraine handing over territory to Russia, something Kyiv has repeatedly ruled out, while reducing the size of its army and blocking its coveted path to NATO membership. It contains many of Moscow’s long-standing demands, while offering limited security guarantees to Kyiv.

European countries see their own future at stake in Ukraine’s fight to beat back Russia, and have insisted on being consulted in peace efforts. On Saturday, they prepared to meet on the sidelines of a Group of 20 summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, in a show of support to Kyiv.

“Time and again, Russia pretends to be serious about peace, but their actions never live up to their words,” UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer told reporters ahead of the G20 summit,



Rescue workers clear the rubble of a residential building which was heavily damaged by a Russian strike on Ternopil, Ukraine on Nov 21. (AP)

days after a Russian strike on western Ukraine killed over two dozen civilians.

European leaders have long accused Russia of stalling diplomatic efforts in the hope of overwhelming Ukraine’s much smaller forces on the battlefield. Kyiv has repeatedly accepted US ceasefire proposals this year, while Moscow has held out for more favorable terms.

Starmer added that the Europeans want to work closely with Washington

and Kyiv to secure “a just and lasting peace.”

Top European Union officials, EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and EU Council President António Costa, first announced the planned talks after their call with Zelenskyy on Friday.

Earlier that day, von der Leyen said a key principle for Kyiv’s European allies was “nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine.”

German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl also warned against rushing a peace agreement.

Speaking on Friday night on German television, Wadepuhl said lasting peace can only be achieved if Kyiv preserves its sovereignty, and if new security guarantees are in place “for Ukraine and all of us.”

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy struck a defiant note on Saturday as the country commemorated the “great famine” that Soviet leader Josef Stalin imposed on Ukraine in the early 1930s, which led to millions of deaths.

“We all know how and why millions of our people died, starved to death, and millions were never born. And we are once again defending ourselves against Russia, which has not changed and is once again bringing death,” Zelenskyy said in a post on Telegram marking Holodomor Memorial Day.

“We defended, defend, and will always defend Ukraine. Because only here is our home. And in our home, Russia will definitely not be the master,” Zelenskyy added.

A nighttime Ukrainian drone strike hit a fuel refinery in southern Russia, killing two people and injuring two more, a local official said. The attack on the Samara region in the latest of Kyiv’s long-range strikes against Russian oil infrastructure, which it says fuels the Kremlin’s war in Ukraine.

Poland struggle to fix justice system holds lessons for other countries

WARSAW, Poland, Nov 22, (AP): When Donald Tusk’s government came to power in Poland two years ago, it had high ambitions to roll back a political takeover of the judiciary by its national-ist, conservative predecessor.

The reality proved more complicated. Law and Justice (PiS), which ruled Poland between 2015 and 2023, established political control over key judicial institutions by stacking higher courts with friendly judges, and punishing its critics with disciplinary action or assignments to far-away locations. It appointed enough sympathetic judges to the Constitutional Tribunal that a PiS-aligned president can delay government plans by sending them for constitutional review.

European courts have condemned the PiS changes, while regular Poles found themselves facing legal chaos. Efforts to undo them, however, have been blocked by two successive PiS-aligned presidents.



Polish Justice Minister Waldemar Zurek speaks during an interview with The Associated Press at the Warsaw headquarters of the Ministry of Justice in Warsaw, Poland on Nov 5. (AP)

Europe

2 arrested over Vjesnik building fire: Two 18-year-olds have been arrested on suspicion of setting fire to the Vjesnik building, a landmark skyscraper in Croatia, the Zagreb Police Department said in a statement on Friday.

The two youths were arrested on suspicion of committing “serious criminal offenses against public safety” and “endangering life and property by a generally dangerous act or means,” according to the statement.

Police said the suspects arrived at the Vjesnik building at around 21:50 (2050 GMT) on Monday, jumped over the fence, entered the building, and climbed to the 15th floor. There, they allegedly ignited a cardboard box filled with paper in the hallway. The fire spread rapidly, prompting the suspects to flee the scene. (Xinhua)

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Slovenia enshrines right to use cash: Slovenia’s parliament on Friday approved a constitutional amendment guaranteeing the right to use cash, with 67 votes in favor and 1 against, marking a rare legal protection of cash payments in Europe. The amendment follows a citizens’ initiative in 2023 that collected over 56,000 signatures, urging parliament to secure the right to pay in cash. The move reflects growing public concern over the shift toward a cashless society and the need to safeguard monetary freedom, privacy, and resilience in times of crisis. (Xinhua)

□ □ □



Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez arrives to appear before a Senate commission in Madrid, Spain on Oct 30. (AP)

Spain’s AG guilty of leaking info: Spain’s Supreme Court found the country’s attorney general guilty of leaking confidential information about the boyfriend of a leading conservative politician and government rival.

The court banned Attorney General Álvaro García Ortiz from his post for two years in a split vote of 5-2.

The decision is a blow to Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, who defended García Ortiz during the monthslong investigation and trial. Spain’s government said that it “respected the decision but does not share it.” (AP)

‘There will be no special treatment, and nobody would be spared’

Philippine police deployed to arrest 18 suspects in corruption scandal, says Marcos

MANILA, Philippines, Nov 22, (AP): Philippine police and other law enforcement teams were deployed to arrest 18 suspects in a corruption scandal involving flood control projects that has sparked huge protests and forced implicated congressional leaders to step down, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and other officials said Friday.

Marcos has been scrambling to quell public outrage over the massive corruption, which has been blamed for substandard, defective or non-existent flood control projects in a poverty-stricken country, long prone to deadly typhoons, floodings and extreme weather in tropical Asia.

The warrants were issued by the Sandiganbayan, a special anti-corruption court, against Zaldy Co, who has resigned from the House of Representatives and fled to an unspecified country, and 17 others, including government engineers and executives of Sunwest Corp., a construction firm, over irregularities in a flood control project in Oriental Mindoro province.

Government prosecutors have recommended no bail for the suspects because of the scope of the irregularities in the river dike project, worth 289 million pesos (\$4.8 million).

“They will be arrested, presented to the court and made to answer to the law,” Marcos said in a video message where he thanked the public for its patience. “There will be no special treatment, and nobody would be spared.”

Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla and the National Bureau of Investigation said law enforcement teams have been deployed to arrest the suspects. The Interpol would be asked to help track and arrest Co through a Red Notice if he’s still out of the country, Remulla said, adding that the former lawmaker was last spotted in Japan a few days ago.

An immigration order has been issued to prevent the suspects in the



In this photo provided by the Malacanang Presidential Communications Office, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr speaks during the launching of Metro Cebu Waterways Clearing in Cebu city, central Philippines on Nov 21. (AP)

Philippines from leaving the country, officials said.

Last week, Marcos said many of at

least 37 powerful senators, members of Congress and wealthy construction executives implicated in the

corruption scandal would be in jail by Christmas.

Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla, a key prosecutor in charge of fighting government corruption, told The Associated Press that at least five former and incumbent senators were under investigation for allegedly pocketing huge kickbacks in the faulty flood control projects. Among them is former Senate President Chiz Escudero, who has strongly denied any wrongdoing.

Those implicated include lawmakers opposed to and allied with Marcos, including Rep. Martin Romualdez, the president’s cousin and key ally, who has denied any involvement but has stepped down as House of Representatives speaker. Sen. Bong Go, a key ally of former President Rodrigo Duterte, has also come under suspicion but has denied any wrongdoing.

Duterte was arrested in March and detained by the International Criminal Court in the Netherlands for alleged crimes against humanity over his deadly anti-drugs crackdowns.

He is a harsh critic of Marcos and father of the incumbent vice president, Sara Duterte, who has said that the president should also be held accountable and jailed for signing into law the 2025 national budget that carried appropriations for irregular infrastructure projects.

Aides have defended Marcos from allegations linking him to the irregularities, saying that he first raised alarm over them in July in his annual state of the nation address before Congress.

At least 9,855 flood control projects worth more than 545 billion pesos (\$9 billion) that were supposed to have been undertaken since Marcos took office in mid-2022 are under investigation. In September, Finance Secretary Ralph Recto told legislators that up to 118.5 billion pesos (\$2 billion) for flood control projects may have been lost to corruption since 2023.

Brazil ex-president Bolsonaro arrested over alleged plot to avoid prison term

SAO PAULO, Nov 22, (AP): Brazil’s former president Jair Bolsonaro was under arrest on Saturday over suspicion he was plotting to avoid starting a 27-year prison sentence for leading a coup attempt.

Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes, who oversaw the case on Bolsonaro’s attempt to keep the presidency after his defeat to President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in 2022, ordered the preemptive arrest after saying the far-right leader’s ankle monitor was violated at 0:08 a.m. on Saturday.

Bolsonaro, 70, who had been under house arrest, was ordered to wear the device after being deemed a flight risk.

The former president, who is an ally of US President Donald Trump, was taken to the headquarters of the country’s federal police in the capital, Brasília, from his home.

Bolsonaro’s aide Andriely Cirino confirmed to The Associated Press that the arrest took place around 6 a.m. on Saturday.

The Supreme Court panel hearing Bolsonaro’s case will vote on de Moraes’ order in an extraordinary session Monday. The same panel convicted him to jail by 4 votes to 1 in September.

The preemptive arrest is a dramatic and unexpected twist in the final stage of a long and divisive criminal trial. De Moraes claimed the embattled leader could escape, as some of his allies did, just days before he was set to begin his prison term. The judge cited a video posted by Bolsonaro’s son urging supporters to protest on Saturday outside the property where his father had been staying.

“(The) information shows the intent of the convict to break the an-



Brazil’s former president Jair Bolsonaro stands at the entrance of his home where he is under house arrest in Brasília, Brazil on Sept 2. (AP)

kle monitoring to assure his escape is successful, which would be made easier by the confusion that would be caused by a demonstration organized by his son,” de Moraes said.

The judge said there was a chance of Bolsonaro fleeing to the United States embassy in Brasília. The Supreme Court justice also mentioned other defendants in the coup case and political allies of the former president leaving Brazil to avoid jail.

New indictment accuses ex-leader Yoon of manipulating probe of marine’s drowning

SEOUL, South Korea, Nov 22, (Agencies): South Korea’s ousted President Yoon Suk Yeol was indicted Friday on allegations he and others tried to manipulate the investigation into a marine’s drowning, in another criminal case against the ex-leader.

Yoon earlier this year was removed from office after being indicted on a rebellion charge related to his Dec. 3 martial law decree that plunged the country into political turmoil. After taking office in June, new President Lee Jae Myung appointed three independent counsels to investigate Yoon’s martial law imposition and other allegations involving him, his wife and associates.

On Friday, one of the independent counsels charged Yoon, his former defense minister and 10 other figures with abuse of power, alleging they tried to alter an investigation report on the death of Cpl. Chae Su-geun, who died during a search-and-rescue operation for flood victims in 2023.

The marine corps’ early investigation report held one of the corps’ division commanders and seven other people responsible for Chae’s death. But Yoon expressed fury over the commander’s inclusion, prompting top presidential and Defense Ministry officials to pressure the marine corps to revise the report to exclude



Former South Korean president Yoon Suk Yeol, (center), arrives at a court to attend a hearing to review his arrest warrant requested by special prosecutors in Seoul, South Korea, on July 9. (AP)

the commander, assistant special counsel Choung Min-young told a briefing.

Park Jung-hun, the head of the marine corps’ investigation team, defied the pressure and sent the report to police but Yoon ordered officials to retrieve the report from police and dismiss Park and investigate him on charges of insubordination, Choung said.

Also:

SEOUL: A fire broke out at an apartment building in **South Korea’s** capital Seoul at about 5:33 a.m. local time on Friday, with fire authorities working to suppress the blaze, Yonhap News Agency said.

More than 10 residents have been rescued by firefighters. Casualties and the exact cause of the fire are still being investigated.

Number of children abducted in Nigerian school attack rises to more than 300

ABUJA, Nigeria, Nov 22, (AP): A total of 303 schoolchildren and 12 teachers were abducted by gunmen during an attack on St Mary’s School, a Catholic institution in north-central Nigeria’s Niger state, the Christian Association of Nigeria said Saturday, updating an earlier tally of 215 schoolchildren.

The tally was changed “after a verification exercise and a final census was carried out,” according to a statement issued by the Most. Rev Bulus Dauwa Yohanna, chairman of the Niger state chapter of CAN, who visited the school on Friday.

He said 88 other students “were also captured after they tried to escape” during the attack. The students were both male and female and ranged in age from 10 to 18.

The school kidnapping in Niger state’s remote Papiri community happened four days after 25 schoolchildren were seized in similar circumstances in neighboring Kebbi state’s Maga town, which is 170 kilometers (106 miles) away.

No group has yet claimed responsibility for the abductions and authorities have said tactical squads have been



The dormitories where gunmen kidnapped schoolgirls is seen in Kebbi, Nigeria on Nov 17. (AP)

deployed alongside local hunters to rescue the children.

Yohanna described as false a claim from the state government that the school had reopened for studies despite an earlier directive for schools in that part of Niger state to close temporarily due to security threats.

School kidnappings have come

to define insecurity in Africa’s most populous nation, and armed gangs often see schools as “strategic” targets to draw more attention.

UNICEF said last year that only 37% of schools across 10 of the conflict-hit states have early warning systems to detect threats.

Also:

ABUJA, Nigeria: The Indigenous People of **Biafra**, a separatist group in southeastern Nigeria, said Friday it remains committed to peaceful self-determination after a court sentenced its leader to life in prison for terrorism.

Nnamdi Kanu, founder of IPOB, was convicted and sentenced on Thursday.

IPOB has been accused of terrorism and extrajudicial killings in the country’s southeastern region where it has called for the creation of an independent state.

The separatist group condemned the sentence, claiming no weapons and “no attack plan” were ever found on Kanu and that the separatist leader did not commit any offenses under Nigerian or international law.



A general aerial view of an old city where roofs and walls collapsed after an earthquake in Dhaka, Bangladesh on Nov 21. (AP)

Powerful quake in Bangladesh kills 10 and hundreds injured

DHAKA, Bangladesh, Nov 22, (Agencies): A strong, 5.5 magnitude earthquake shook central Bangladesh on Friday, killing at least 10 people and leaving more than 300 injured, authorities and local media said. Buildings in the country’s capital, Dhaka, swayed in the temblor, sending panicked residents into the streets.

The quake hit at 10:38 am, with the epicenter in the Ghorashal area in Narsingdi district, about 25 kilometers (16 miles) from Dhaka. The U.S. Geological Survey said that it had a depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles).

Dhaka-based DBC Television said two children were among the dead. The fatalities occurred mostly from collapsed roofs and walls. A building’s railings fell and killed three people on a Dhaka street.

The three were shopping at a butcher’s shop in Armanitola, an area of Dhaka’s old city, and were taken to a hospital where they were pronounced dead, Prothom Alo newspaper said.

Local resident Mohammed Arif said he came out when he heard a loud noise and “saw that some bricks had fallen, and I saw some people injured also.”

The Fire Service and Civil Defense department deployed firefighters to locations where people reported tilting buildings, as well as to a fire in Dhaka’s Baridhara neighborhood.

The country’s leading Bengali-language Prothom Alo daily said 252 people, mostly garment workers, were hospitalized in the Gazipur district, just outside Dhaka. The area has hundreds of garment factories and other industrial facilities.

The workers tried to rush out of their factories when the quake hit, setting off stampedes that left many hurt, the daily said.

Television stations broadcast footage of worried and crying relatives as the victims were brought to medical facilities, including at the state-run Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Dhaka University students jumped from the upper floors of their dorms during the quake.

According to the USGS, though northern and southeastern Bangladesh are seismically active regions because of interactions between the India and Eurasia plates, the central region of the country is less active.

The USGS says that since 1950, only 14 earthquakes - with a magnitude of 5.5 and including two magnitude 6 quakes - have occurred within a 250 kilometers (156 miles) radius of Friday’s earthquake.

Experts warn that Bangladesh, a country of 170 million people, is less prepared for higher-magnitude quakes which could cause a lot of destruction. The capital city, which has about 2.1 million buildings, is particularly at higher risk.

Ashish Kumar, duty officer of old Dhaka’s Bangshal Police Station, told Xinhua earlier that the earthquake caused a railing to collapse from a five-story building. Three pedestrians were struck by the falling railing. Two died at the scene, and the third passed away after being rushed to the hospital.

Pakistan factory explosion kills 15

LAHORE, Pakistan, Nov 22, (Agencies): A boiler at a glue-making factory in eastern Pakistan exploded on Friday, killing at least 15 workers and injuring seven others. Police said they arrested the factory manager and were looking for the factory owner who fled shortly after the blast.

The blast also badly damaged the factory building and nearby homes, set off a fire at the factory and spread panic through the area, local administrator Raja Jahangir said.

Also:

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani security forces killed 13 militants linked to a foreign-funded group in two separate operations in the country’s northwest **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa** province, the military said on Friday evening.

Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistan army, said in a statement that the intelligence-based operations were carried out on Nov. 20 and 21 in Lakki Marwat and Dera Ismail Khan districts of the province.

☐ ☐ ☐

ISLAMABAD: Six people were killed when a passenger van fell into a ravine in Pakistan’s northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Saturday, rescue officials said.

The accident occurred in Abbottabad district after the vehicle’s brakes failed, causing the driver to lose control, according to a statement from state-run Rescue 1122.



Emergency services attend the scene after an Indian HAL Tejas crashed during a demonstration at the Dubai Air Show, at Al Maktoum International Airport at Dubai World Central, Dubai, United Arab Emirates on Nov 21. (AP)

Indian fighter jet crashes at Dubai Air Show, pilot dead

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Nov 22, (AP): An Indian fighter jet crashed Friday at the start of a demonstration flight in front of a crowd of spectators at the Dubai Air Show, killing its sole pilot.

The Indian HAL Tejas smashed into the ground at the vast Al Maktoum International Airport at Dubai World Central, sending a vast fireball into the air and thick black smoke into the sky. Police vehicles, ambulances and a helicopter rushed to the site of the crash, spraying firefighting foam to extinguish the blaze.

Onlookers, including families who gathered in a grand stand for the end of the air show Friday, gasped in horror and disbelief at the crash in this city-state in the United Arab Emirates. The airplane appeared to have lost control and dove directly toward the ground. The Indian Air Force confirmed the crash and said “the pilot sustained fatal injuries in the accident.”

Kuwaiti crude drops to \$65.15 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti crude oil price fell 35 cents during Thursday’s trading down to USD 65.15 per barrel (pb), compared with USD 65.50 pb the day before, Ku-

wait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Friday. Brent futures went down 13 cents to USD 63.38 pb and West Texas Intermediate dropped 30 cents to USD 59.14 pb.

Other Voices

Gulf states face supply questions

Oil is silent

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

For the past three weeks, oil prices have been plunging sharply, but not a single major oil organization has commented, raised concerns, or complained about the steep decline. U.S. crude has fallen below \$57 a barrel, while Brent crude is hovering under \$61. OPEC and its partners appear unconcerned, taking no visible action or note of the drop.



Al-Harami

The decline is impacting OPEC countries’ annual revenues, widening income gaps, and forcing some to seek support from international banks. Yet, there seems to be little response. What is happening? Why is such a critical development, which hurts OPEC’s income, being largely ignored?

Is OPEC no longer able, or willing, to defend oil prices, and not allowing others to benefit from high prices at OPEC’s expense? The lack of adherence to production quotas and the freedom given to member countries to produce without restriction may be a strategy, perhaps relying on an anticipated global increase in oil demand, or it could reflect a general lack of interest.

It is possible that OPEC is now testing the oil markets to determine the bottom price for a barrel of oil without in-

terference. Or could it be testing the U.S. and its domestic crude producers to gauge how far production and pricing can go?

Currently, oil prices are weakening despite sanctions on Russian oil exports. Russia, the world’s second-largest oil producer, produces around ten million barrels per day, with exports of roughly five million barrels daily, which is about 50 percent of its production. With the ongoing boycott, exports to India and Turkey may decrease, though both countries may hesitate to fully comply with U.S. demands.

At the same time, Russia may limit reductions to preserve its historically close ties with these nations. This raises questions about where these countries will source their oil. Will Gulf states supply additional volumes? Could Iran, another country at odds with the U.S., fill the gap? Or will India be allowed to import more oil from Iran?

Certainly, the U.S. administration has achieved its objective of reducing oil prices, but the question remains - are U.S. oil producers satisfied with a price of \$57 per barrel, and are they maintaining adequate profit margins? Only time will tell.

A price of \$57 per barrel is far from ideal and is not an encouraging figure for U.S. drillers. It is unlikely to provide strong support for the “Drill, Baby, Drill” approach unless the drop below \$60 is temporary and short-lived.



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Exports surge 24.8%

Kuwait’s trade surplus with Japan rises 46.3%

TOKYO, Nov 22, (KUNA): Kuwait’s trade surplus with Japan expanded significantly, rising by 46.3 percent compared to the previous year to reach JPY 51.5 billion (USD 308 million). This growth marks the second consecutive month of an increasing surplus, driven primarily by robust export performance. Kuwait has maintained a positive trade balance with Japan for an uninterrupted period of 17 years and nine months, according to a preliminary report from the Kuwaiti Finance Ministry.

Kuwaiti exports to Japan saw a substantial year-on-year increase of 24.8 percent, amounting to JPY 82.9 billion (USD 508 million), continuing a positive trend from the previous month. Imports from Japan into Kuwait also grew slightly, by 0.5 percent to JPY 31.3 billion (USD 186 million), representing the 11th month of continuous growth in imports.

In the broader Middle East region, the trade surplus with Japan narrowed by 10.7 percent to JPY 507.7 billion (USD 3.2 billion) in the same period. This reduction was largely due to a 6.3 percent decrease in exports from the re-

gion to Japan. Key exports such as crude oil, refined petroleum products, liquified natural gas (LNG), and other natural resources, which account for 94.1 percent of total regional exports to Japan, declined by 6.4 percent. Additionally, over-all imports from Japan to the region fell by 0.7 percent, impacted by weaker demand for Japanese automobiles.

Japan, the third-largest economy worldwide, recorded a global trade deficit of JPY 231.8 billion (USD 1.5 billion) in October, marking the fourth consecutive month of deficit. However, this deficit significantly shrank by 53.6 percent compared to the previous year. The growth in exports by 3.6 percent was supported by strong sales in the semiconductor and machinery sectors, while imports rose by a modest 0.7 percent, influenced by increased spending on US-manufactured airplanes.

China maintained its position as Japan’s largest trading partner, followed by the United States. The trade statistics reported are based on customs-cleared data prior to seasonal adjustments, providing a clear snapshot of trade flows during the period.

Financing law boosts funding certainty, diversifies borrowing

Kuwait reforms drive ‘AA-/A-1+’ S&P upgrade

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: S&P Global Ratings raised its long- and short-term sovereign credit ratings on Kuwait to ‘AA-/A-1+’ from ‘A+/A-1’. The outlook is stable.

We also revised upward our transfer and convertibility assessment on Kuwait to ‘AA’ from ‘AA-’.

Outlook

The stable outlook reflects our expectation that Kuwait’s public and external balance sheets will remain very strong over our forecast horizon, backed by a significant stock of government financial assets. We expect these strengths and ongoing reform momentum to mitigate risks related to Kuwait’s economic reliance on the hydrocarbon sector, potential oil price volatility, and sizable fiscal spending.

Downside scenario

We could lower the ratings if broader reform efforts—such as taxation, expenditure control, and economic diversification—progress more slowly than expected, weakening Kuwait’s fiscal metrics or growth outlook over the medium term.

Upside scenario

We could raise the ratings over the next two years if reforms simultaneously support the development of deep domestic capital markets and promote economic diversification and growth, alongside sustained strong public finances.

Rationale

The upgrade reflects Kuwait’s fiscal reform momentum and reduced fiscal funding constraints.

In our view, the recently implemented financing and liquidity law will ease hard budgetary constraints and pave the way for comprehensive financing arrangements over the medium to long term. Kuwait’s government issued three international bonds totaling \$11.25 billion (about 7% of GDP) in October 2025, its first in the capital market since 2017. We expect the government will continue to work on a medium-term financing plan that will be supportive of expanding non-oil revenue sources. The main fiscal reforms include ongoing work on the excise tax, repricing government services and state land leases, rationalizing subsidies, and optimizing government procurement.

Despite high deficit levels and a heavy reliance on the hydrocarbon sector, Kuwait’s sizable government financial assets will continue to serve as a buffer.

We estimate Kuwait’s liquid assets will average about 534% of GDP over 2025-2028—which is among the strongest ratios of all sovereigns we rate—due to large assets accumulated since 1953 within the country’s sovereign wealth fund Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA). Our assumption of lower oil prices of \$60 per barrel (bbl) for 2026 and \$65/bbl from 2027 onward (see “S&P Global Ratings Revises Hydrocarbon Price Deck Assumptions,” Nov. 10, 2025) and high expenditure levels mean we forecast headline fiscal deficits to remain high, averaging 7% of GDP over 2025-2028 compared with 2% in 2024 (fiscal year ended March 2025). In our base case we assume the fiscal deficit will be financed by a combination of annual debt issuances and drawdowns from the General Reserve Fund (GRF), the government’s treasury managed by KIA. As part of its role in managing fiscal stability and flexibility, the GRF consolidates government proceeds and provides financing for government expenditures. Along with this, the GRF also acts as a government’s investment arm and manages the state assets. Based on our financing assumptions, we forecast gross general government debt will increase to about 24% of GDP by 2028 from about 13% as of year-end 2025. Despite an upward trend in gross debt, we expect the Kuwait government will remain in a very strong net asset position due to the large stock of KIA assets.

We forecast growth to accelerate to average 2% over 2025-2028 after two consecutive years of economic contraction due to decline in oil production in line with OPEC quotas.

Easing fiscal funding constraints, a modest increase in the country’s oil production and large-scale capital projects will drive the growth. Despite our expectation of headline economic expansion over our forecast period, real GDP per capita growth will remain largely flat. This indicates that growth in Kuwait is largely driven by increasing labor supply, rather than technological advances or productivity gains.

Institutional and economic profile: GDP growth to pick up in the medium term on modestly higher oil production, infrastructure spending, and reforms

■ We expect real GDP growth to rebound to about 2% over 2025-2028, supported by a moderate increase in oil production and large-scale investment programs in the real estate, construction, and energy sectors.

■ Kuwait’s dissolution of parliament, while potentially affecting checks and balances, could speed up reforms, in our view.

During the parliamentary suspension, we expect continued momentum under the cabinet’s guidance.

In May 2024, Kuwait’s National Assembly (the parliament elected by the Kuwaiti population) was suspended, pending a review of parliamentary process. The parliamentary suspension follows a period of repeated political deadlock, resulting in four elections since 2020 and eight since 2012, largely due to parliamentary opposition stalling economic and fiscal reforms. During this suspension, the cabinet—always appointed by the Emir—has been tasked with expediting reforms. The Council of Ministers or the cabinet, working with the Department of Legal Advice and Legislation, is now responsible for drafting and reviewing laws, which still require final promulgation by His Highness the Emir. During the suspension, we expect the reform momentum to continue under the oversight of key bodies such as the State Audit Bureau, the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority, and the State Bureau of Financial Control, along with other

Overview

■ We expect the Kuwaiti government to continue implementing a package of fiscal and economic reforms under Kuwait Vision 2035. These reforms primarily focus on economic diversification, modernizing infrastructure, and diversifying revenue sources to improve fiscal sustainability.

■ Kuwait’s financing and liquidity law, passed in March 2025, has diversified the government’s funding profile and reduced uncertainty around financing arrangements.

■ Despite headline fiscal deficits, sizable net external and government asset positions provide the government with headroom for policy measures over the next few years. Ongoing fiscal reforms aimed at strengthening non-oil revenue will also help in the medium term.

■ Therefore, we raised our long- and short-term sovereign credit ratings on Kuwait to ‘AA-/A-1+’ from ‘A+/A-1’. The outlook is stable.

supervisory institutions that retain their full mandates.

Expedited reforms should help to achieve fiscal consolidation over the medium to long term.

The reforms include raising non-oil government revenue, containing government expenditure, optimizing procurement, and improving the performance of public entities. This year, the government implemented the financing and liquidity law, adopted a 15% minimum domestic top-up tax for multinational enterprises, and removed the longstanding cap on fees for public services. We understand the draft sukuk law is in its final stages, which should further diversify government’s debt profile. Regarding expenditure, the government is planning to moderate public sector wage growth through more efficient workforce planning and hiring caps. Various other fiscal reforms are in progress, ranging from initial planning and interministerial coordination to technical capacity building. These include implementing corporate and excise taxes, repricing state land leases, and subsidy rationalization. We expect these efforts to strengthen the government’s non-oil revenue base in the medium to long term.

We expect Kuwait’s real GDP to grow by an average of 2% in 2025-2026 following an economic contraction of 2.6% in 2024.

In the first half of 2025, the economy grew by 1.3% compared to the first half of 2024. In this period, average oil production remained broadly flat at about 2.4 million bbl per day (in line with Kuwait’s OPEC quota commitment) reflected in muted growth of the oil sector. This was more than offset by the non-oil sector, which grew by 2.5% year on year. This growth was supported by resilient sectors including construction (7.8%), real estate (5.2%), financial (2.6%), and manufacturing (2.2%), which together make up about a quarter of real GDP. Over 2027-2028, we expect real GDP growth to rebound to an average of 2.3% as project implementation and reform momentum improve. We assess Kuwait’s per capita GDP forecast of \$31,000 for 2025 as moderate in a global context; we expect it will rise to about \$32,700 by 2028.

Large scale capital investments will support growth.

Main investment projects in the country include developing the Northern Economic Zone, which includes the Mubarak al-Kabeer port along with several energy projects. We also expect the hospitality industry to benefit from Kuwait International Airport’s expansion (expected by 2027) and visa reforms, which include a visa-on-arrival for all Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) residents, an e-visa system offering single and multiple-entry options, and removing the minimum salary requirements for family visas. A pipeline of new residential cities and urban developments across the country will support broad-based economic activity over the long term. A housing law passed in 2023 enables public-private partnerships for new housing projects. Furthermore, a real estate finance law set to be approved by the cabinet will allow banks to offer long-term home financing to citizens for the first time. The development of residential zones and cities and legislative reforms will support the growth of the construction and other related industries. The Abdali Economic Zone will help to develop a new trade and industrial corridor, linking Kuwait more closely to regional markets, such as Iraq and the wider GCC. We understand the government aims to utilize public-private partnership and government-to-government models to develop projects across energy, housing, and logistics, which will help to boost growth in a fiscally sustainable way.

Risks to our GDP growth outlook could arise if infrastructure spending is significantly delayed.

We expect non-oil growth to be driven by the government and private sector investments in the country’s large-scale projects. An underexecution of those projects could impede economic growth. We do not anticipate U.S. trade tariffs will directly impact Kuwait since its non-exempt exports to the U.S. account for less than 0.5% of total exports. Kuwait exports most of its crude and refined petroleum (more than 80% of total exports) to Asia, Africa, and Europe. While we expect the direct impact of U.S. tariffs to be limited, indirect effects could stem from weaker oil prices or oil production, weighing on Kuwait’s economic growth.

We expect Kuwait’s neutral geopolitical stance to continue.

We view the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which could affect Kuwaiti crude export channels, as a remote event. We also understand the government is developing crude oil storage outside Kuwait to ensure continued export deliveries in the event of disruptions to main export

routes. A comprehensive Gaza peace plan was signed on Oct. 9, 2025, in Egypt, supported by the U.S., Israel, Arab states, and Hamas. The plan, which aims to end the two-year Israel-Hamas war, includes a ceasefire that took effect Oct. 10, 2025. The agreement’s multistage nature amid the complex and volatile political environment makes it very vulnerable to significant implementation risks. However, despite sporadic breaches, the ceasefire has so far held.

Flexibility and performance profile: A large stock of KIA assets supports the ratings amid elevated fiscal deficits

■ Despite strong net external and government asset positions, significant fiscal pressures persist (on a flow basis, excluding investment income) due to high expenditure levels and lower oil prices.

■ The financing and liquidity law permits the government to issue debt in domestic and external capital markets, which will help diversify the government’s funding sources.

■ We expect Kuwait’s exchange rate will remain pegged to an undisclosed basket of currencies, backed by large foreign reserves and government assets.

Kuwait’s economy relies heavily on the hydrocarbon sector, with oil constituting about 90% of exports and government revenue.

As a result, our fiscal and external forecasts remain closely linked with global oil price movements. Subdued oil prices and high expenditure levels will keep Kuwait’s fiscal deficits elevated over the next two to three years. We recently revised our Brent oil prices down to average \$60/bbl in 2026 followed by \$65/bbl over 2027-2028, compared with our previous expectation of \$70/bbl over 2026-2028. As a result, we forecast the headline fiscal deficit to remain high, at an average of 7% of GDP over 2025-2028. In the fiscal year ended March 2025, the government recorded a deficit of Kuwaiti dinar (KWD) 1 billion (2% of GDP), significantly smaller than the budgeted deficit of KWD5.6 billion (11.6% of GDP) due to lower wage expenditure and higher oil revenue compared with the budgeted estimates.

In our base case we assume the government will partially fund capital expenditure and fiscal deficits via debt issuance.

In October 2025, the government issued \$11.25 billion via three tranches which were oversubscribed by 2.5x. More than 60% of investors were based outside the Middle East. The financing and liquidity law is valid for 50 years. It sets a debt ceiling of KWD30 billion (about \$98 billion or 63% of GDP) and tenor limit of up to 50 years. Following the latest large issuance, we assume in our base case that annual borrowing (in both local and foreign currency) will reach 4%-5% of GDP over 2026-2028. We therefore expect debt will increase to about 24.0% of GDP by 2028 from about 13% at year-end 2025. About 70% of the government’s gross debt is denominated in U.S. dollar and mostly held by nonresidents. In addition to borrowing, the government can draw from the GRF to cover its fiscal deficits. Given Kuwait’s relatively low level of debt, we expect interest expenditure to remain below 5% of government revenue over the next three years.

Recurring current account surpluses and a strong aggregate external and fiscal net asset position remain credit strengths.

Despite weaker oil prices, Kuwait posted a current account surplus of 13% of GDP in the first half of 2025, partially supported by large primary income receipts, largely from returns on the large stock of KIA assets. We forecast that the current account surpluses will moderate to an average of 21% of GDP over 2025-2028 due to lower oil prices, compared with 29% in 2024. Given these large current account surpluses, we estimate Kuwait’s net external creditor position will average a substantial 750% of current account receipts over 2025-2028, which is among the strongest of all the sovereigns we rate.

We expect Kuwait’s exchange rate will remain pegged to an undisclosed basket of currencies.

We understand the basket is dominated by the U.S. dollar, the currency in which most of Kuwait’s hydrocarbon exports are priced and sold. This monetary regime has historically helped Kuwait manage inflation, although we note that Kuwait’s domestic debt markets are less developed than those of similarly rated peers. Despite U.S. tariff-related pressures, we expect consumer price index inflation will remain modest at about 2.4% over 2025-2028. This is lower than in many developed and emerging markets, due in part to sizable government subsidies, particularly for energy and food staples.

We do not envisage significant contingent liabilities for the Kuwaiti government from the banking sector.

Following robust performance over the last two years, we anticipate a slight decline in the profitability of Kuwaiti banks in 2025. This is partly due to the introduction of a minimum corporate tax (which will only affect multinational Kuwaiti banks) and partly from reduced margins resulting from comparatively lower interest rates. The lending books of Kuwait’s eight largest banks expanded by 11% annually in the first half of 2025. We expect 8%-10% growth over 2025-2026 supported by a modest improvement in the country’s economic environment and lower interest rates. The banking sector’s credit losses and nonperforming loans (NPLs) are approaching cyclical lows, and we expect Kuwaiti banks’ cost of risk to remain at 40-50 basis points (bps) over 2025-2026, compared with about 19 bps in the first six months of 2025. High provision buffers have helped banks manage their NPLs through economic cycles. As of June 30, 2025, provision coverage for the eight largest banks stood at 248%. We expect banks will resort to write-offs to limit the increase in NPL ratios. Kuwaiti banks have so far managed risks to asset quality stemming from a sluggish real estate sector, but risks remain, given the banks’ still-significant exposure to the sector. An unexpected increase in geopolitical risk also poses a challenge to banks’ operating environment and asset quality.

Kuwait Airways and Emirates to expand their global network of destinations

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Kuwait Airways and Emirates Airlines have announced an expansion of their commercial cooperation, offering passengers enhanced travel options.

In April, the two companies signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen their bilateral partnership agreement, aiming to provide passengers more travel options to Dubai and other operating routes across their network.

With this expansion, Kuwait Airways will have access to nineteen international destinations within Emirates’ global network, covering multiple regions and countries around the world including Australia, China, Cyprus, Japan, the United States, South Africa, and others. This will offer Kuwait Airways passengers greater connectivity and convenience across a diverse network of destinations. In return, Emirates will have access to eight destinations within Kuwait Airways’ network, including key points in Egypt, Turkey, Iraq, and Azerbaijan, providing its passengers with expanded travel options to these important markets.

Kuwait Airways Chairman, Captain Abdulmohsen Salem Al-Fagaan, stated, “Kuwait Airways is pleased to expand its route network with Emirates, one of the largest airlines in the region and among the leading airlines in both regional and global markets. This cooperation enables passengers of both airlines to benefit from the available destinations and enhanced travel options. Customers will also be able to book tickets to these destinations through all Kuwait Airways sales offices in Kuwait, including the Call Center at 171.”

He added that this cooperation with Emirates aligns with Kuwait Airways’ vision to provide more diverse and flexible travel options for passengers in the region.

Al-Fagaan emphasized that the agreement is within the framework of the national carrier’s strategic plans to expand its international route network and strengthen its global presence through effective partnerships with leading airlines. He noted that this agreement contributes to providing high-quality services and seamless travel



Captain Abdulmohsen Al-Fagaan, Kuwait Airways Chairman



Adnan Kazim, Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer at Emirates

Al-Fagaan: This cooperation aligns with the national carrier’s vision of providing passengers more diverse and flexible travel options

Covering multiple regions and countries including Australia, China, Cyprus, Japan, the United States, and South Africa

experiences that meet the expectations of its valued customers while enhancing Kuwait’s connectivity to the world.

Al-Fagaan concluded by stating that this agreement will strengthen and develop relations between the two companies, bringing mutual benefits to all parties involved. He also expressed his sincere appreciation to the leadership of Emirates Airline and extended his best wishes for continued success.

Adnan Kazim, Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer at Emirates, said:

“The expansion of our partnership with Kuwait Airways marks an important step that enhances travel options for our customers and strengthens connectivity across regional and global markets. This collaboration enables travellers of both airlines to access a wider network of destinations via Dubai and Kuwait, delivering greater value and a smoother travel experience. It also reinforces our commitment to working closely with Kuwait Airways to provide reliable services and integrated travel offerings that meet customer expectations and support the flow of travel and trade between our two countries.”

About Kuwait Airways

Kuwait Airways established in 1954, operates a modern and diverse fleet comprising the latest type of aircraft from the world’s leading manufacturers namely Airbus and Boeing. The fleet is equipped with cutting-edge technology and advanced features that align with the best international aviation standards, including state-of-the-art inflight entertainment systems and designed seating specifications to suit the needs of the national carrier’s customers. Kuwait Airways takes pride in employing some of the region’s most skilled and experienced professionals across various technical specializations, reflecting the airline’s commitment to operational excellence. In addition, Kuwait Airways strives to attain the highest levels of quality in customer service and to develop the company’s operational system in line with the latest developments in the commercial air transport sector.

Bank’s issuance reaffirms its position as the largest issuer of Tier 2 bonds in Kuwait

NBK successfully issues KD 150 million Tier 2 subordinated bonds

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announced the successful issuance of KD 150 million Tier 2 subordinated bonds, aimed at enhancing Tier 2 capital adequacy in accordance with Basel III requirements and the Central Bank of Kuwait’s guidelines.

This issuance serves to refinance NBK’s outstanding KD 150 million bonds, initially issued on 18 November 2020.

Marking NBK’s third market entry in 2025, the transaction is also the Bank’s first Kuwaiti-dinar-denominated issuance to incorporate a par call option, providing a 3-month call window from year 5 up to 5 years and 3 months

It received an investment-grade rating of A- from Fitch Ratings, the highest rating assigned in Kuwait to a Tier 2 instrument and stands as the largest domestically issued bond of its class offered to fixed-income investors through a private placement structure.

Order books reached approximately KD 315.5 million, more than 2.1x oversubscribed. Subscription opened on 3 November and closed on 13 November, with the issuance and settlement completed on 18 November.

The issuance attracted strong interest from a diverse base of institutional and retail investors in Kuwait. The new issuance was conducted with a liability management exercise, allowing existing holders of the old securities issued in 2020 to exchange their holdings into the new bonds. Notably, 45% of holders of the redeemed bonds elected to roll over their investments into the new issuance. This rollover reflects strong investor confidence in the Bank as a leading financial institution in Kuwait and a clear willingness from investors



Shaheen Al-Ghanim, Principal - Debt Capital Markets Desk Treasury Group

- NBK reaffirms its position as the largest issuer of Tier 2 securities in Kuwait
- The issuance achieved the lowest reset spread ever recorded for a Tier 2 transaction in Kuwait
- First Kuwaiti-dinar-denominated issuance to incorporate a 3-month par call option
- Order books reached KD 315.5 million, representing 2.1x oversubscription
- This issuances marks NBK’s third entry into the capital markets in 2025
- Strong demand from Kuwait-based investors across both retail and institutional segments



NBK headquarter

est Tier 2 bond issuance reflects deep confidence in NBK’s financial strength. The transaction was met with robust interest, achieving an oversubscription of more than 2.1x. Nearly half of our previous investors chose to reinvest in the new bonds, a clear vote of confidence in NBK and their commitment to stay with us for the long term.”

“This issuance, which secured the lowest reset spread ever recorded for this class of bonds in Kuwait, has set a new benchmark in the domestic market -reflecting the profound confidence that local investors place in NBK’s solid fundamentals and robust financial standing. The Investment Grade issuance rating of A- assigned by Fitch further underscores NBK’s strong credit standing and financial position” AlGhanim added.

He noted that this marks the Bank’s third capital-markets transaction in 2025, underscoring NBK’s resilience and its ability to capitalize on opportunities across varying economic conditions.

Public Equity – Value vs Growth Investing

By NBK Wealth

VALUE and growth investing are two of the most widely discussed approaches to equity investing. They reflect fundamentally different philosophies about how markets behave and how investors can capture returns over time. Understanding the core principles that set them apart and how each performs in different market environments and market cycles can help investors make better decisions.

Value investing is based on the principle that the market does not always price securities efficiently. Sometimes, investor sentiment, market overreactions, or short-term uncertainty drive stock prices below their fair value. Value investors seek to take advantage of this

mispricing by purchasing shares that appear cheap relative to their underlying fundamentals. Growth investing takes the opposite view. Instead of focusing on what a company is worth today, growth investors concentrate on what it could become in the future. They seek businesses with the potential for above-average revenue or earnings growth, often driven by innovation, new technologies, or structural trends that reshape industries. Growth investors are comfortable paying a premium for such opportunities based on expectations that future profits will expand rapidly.

Different Market Environments Favor Different Styles

Both investment styles have periods when they outperform. Their relative success tends to alternate, reflecting the economic backdrop, monetary policy, and investor psychology.

Value stocks often do well when the economy is either recovering or expanding. In such periods, profits in cyclical industries rebound, interest rates may rise, and investors favor tangible earnings over long-dated expectations.

Growth stocks, on the other hand, typically outperform in environments characterized by low inflation, low interest rates, and strong investor confidence.

Growth investors are, in essence, paying today for the promise of tomorrow’s profits. Value investors, meanwhile, seek companies whose current fundamentals already justify higher prices than the market currently assigns.

It is difficult to predict which style will outperform in the short term and therefore many investors choose to maintain exposure to both value and growth.

Performance Through the Decades

Historically, the market leadership between growth and value has tended to rotate over multiyear cycles. However, over the very long term, both styles have produced compelling results, but with different risk profiles. Specifically, value strategies have



tended to offer lower volatility, while growth strategies have delivered higher absolute returns in recent years. In a historical context, growth is currently valued very highly relative to value.

Value and Growth Performance Jan 2000 – Oct 2025

	Value	Growth	50/50
Return	7.59%	8.35%	8.14%
Volatility	15.34%	17.42%	15.50%

The past performance of value and growth suggests that they complement each other, and past risk adjusted returns could have been improved by including both approaches in a diversified portfolio.

Valuation and Risk Profiles

For most retail investors, the practical question isn’t “Which is better?” but rather “What mix suits my goals and risk tolerance?”

■ Conservative or income-focused investors might tilt toward value stocks for their stability, dividends, and resilience in downturns.

■ Investors with longer time horizons or higher risk tolerance might lean toward growth stocks to maximize returns and capture innovation-driven opportunities.

An often-overlooked aspect of the value vs. growth debate is the behavioral element. Value investing requires the discipline to buy when sentiment is negative, while growth investing demands the patience to hold investments despite volatility. Both challenge investors emotionally as value investors must tolerate underperformance during momentum-driven bull markets, while growth investors sometimes must weather sharp corrections when optimism fades.

Ultimately, successful investing is less about choosing one philosophy over the other and more about maintaining consistency and adhering to a chosen approach through changing conditions.

Over 170 vessels sanctioned

US sanctions new Iran oil-sales network funding armed forces

WASHINGTON, Nov 22, (KUNA): The US Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) imposed sanctions on a network of front companies and shipping facilitators that bankroll the Iranian armed forces by selling crude oil.

Following its defeat in the 12-Day War with Israel, Iran’s military has increasingly come to rely on the sale of Iranian crude oil to supplement its annual budget and finance the rebuilding of its depleted forces, the Treasury said in a statement on Thursday.

“Today’s action continues Treasury’s campaign to cut off funding for the Iranian regime’s development of nuclear weapons and support of terrorist proxies,” said Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent.

“Disrupting the Iranian regime’s revenue is critical to helping curb its nuclear ambitions,” he noted.

OFAC today is also targeting six vessels, expanding sanctions on the shadow fleet of tankers Iran relies on to transport its oil exports to market.

The Trump Administration has sanctioned over 170 vessels responsible for shipping Iranian petroleum and petroleum products, driving up costs for Iranian oil exporters and reducing the revenue Iran receives for each barrel of oil sold.

Lastly, OFAC is taking further action today against Iranian airline Mahan Air, which has worked closely with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) to arm and supply Iran-backed terrorist groups throughout the Middle East.

In line with its support for the Knowledge Club series

Zain Kuwait hosts global experts in exclusive sessions to develop leaders & national talents

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Zain Kuwait hosted a set of exclusive sessions for its leaders and employees at its Shuwaikh HQ, delivered by a group of renowned global speakers and experts in leadership, employee experience, influence, and communication. This came as part of the company’s sponsorship of the Knowledge Club corporate learning and leadership excellence series in collaboration with ALGAS Events.

Zain invests in its people and focuses on building leaders who can navigate digital transformation and the fast-changing world of technology. By bringing world-class experts directly to its HQ, the company aims to offer high-impact learning experiences that enrich employees’ capabilities, spark new ideas, and support strategic projects across the business.



Peter Docker with a group of Zain employees.

The Knowledge Club series is a leading platform for executive and professional development. Since its launch, it has brought together an elite roster of international speakers and authors to deliver conferences, advanced workshops, and executive seminars that turn the latest thinking in leadership and management into practical tools that can be applied inside organizations.

At Zain, the exclusive sessions attracted strong participation from leaders and employees across all departments. The events created an interactive space for sharing experiences, discussing day-to-day challenges, and exploring new ways to strengthen a culture built on trust, belonging, and a distinctive employee experience.

In his session Leading from the Jumpseat, global leadership expert Peter Docker presented a practical framework for a leadership style that focuses on empowering others, building trust, and knowing when to step back and hand over control.

Drawing on his experience as a former Royal Air Force senior officer and professional pilot, as well as his work as an adviser to executives around the world, Docker showed Zain employees how humble leadership, clear communication, and calm decision-making under pressure can create exceptional opportunities for teams, especially in times of change and uncertainty.

In The Holistic Employee Experience (HEX) workshop, Ben Whitter, one of the world’s foremost thinkers on employee experience and creator of the award-winning HEX model, focused on how to design truly human-centered organizations.



From Ben Whitter’s session.



Zain is investing in developing national leaders to lead digital transformation.



Betsy Myers with a group of Zain employees.

He walked Zain employees through how to shape an integrated employee journey from pre-hire to retirement, align internal culture with the brand promise, strengthen trust and belonging, and connect HR and organizational initiatives to clear employee experience and business impact metrics, including performance and customer satisfaction.

During the Lead with Impact: Balancing Insight & Intuition session, leadership expert Betsy Myers, former adviser to U.S. Presidents Bill Clinton

and Barack Obama, offered Zain teams a deep dive into the art of leading with impact.

She highlighted the importance of balancing rational analysis with emotional intuition when making leadership decisions, and shared tools for building self-awareness, confidence, and inclusive teams where people feel valued and heard. Myers also drew on her experience in advancing women’s leadership and values-driven change across government, academia, and the private sector.

In Culture, Cognition & The Future of Work, influence and leadership specialist Warren Cass introduced participants to new ways of understanding human behavior and stakeholder dynamics in a fast-moving, distraction-filled work environment.

Cass explored how individuals and teams make decisions, how influence networks form inside organizations, and how to craft compelling narratives that win support and move strategic plans from idea to execution. The session included practical exercises and

simulations that helped Zain employees turn insights into concrete action plans they could apply immediately in their roles.

Zain continues to support specialized leadership and capability-building initiatives, alongside developing sustainable in-house programs to prepare the next generation of Kuwaiti leaders. The company underlined its belief that investing in people is the foundation for sustaining its success and providing the best possible digital experience to its customers.

Wall Street IPO boom slows amid government shutdown

NEW YORK, Nov 22, (AP): A strong year for initial public offerings on Wall Street has fizzled out due to the government shutdown and a cautious turn by investors.

Many IPOs targeted for the end of this year will likely be pushed into next year as the Securities and Exchange Commission works to clear a backlog of hundreds of registration statements. Meanwhile, shares of companies that did make their market debuts haven’t fared well lately amid concerns that stocks have gotten too expensive after another double-digit gain for the market this year.

“A backlogged SEC, the approaching holiday slowdown, and pressure on AI and other tech stocks are all weighing on hopes for a near-term rebound,” wrote Bill Smith, CEO of Renaissance Capital, in a note to investors.

Despite the backlog, Wall Street is still anticipating several IPOs in November and December that were already in the later stages of the regulatory process.

Central Bancanomy was one of the bigger companies going public following the end of the government shutdown. The bank holding company for The Central Trust Bank raised \$373 million from its IPO on Thursday. Still, November is on track to be among the slowest months for IPOs in 2025, according to Renaissance Capital.

Wall Street anticipates that medical supplies company Medline could go public in December, potentially raising up to \$5 billion, while cryptocurrency technology company BitGo remains another potential IPO for next month.

The more cautious turn for the market has also checked the gains of some more

recent IPOs, sending some falling sharply since their debuts.

Web design software company Figma has essentially lost all its gains since going public in July. It more than tripled on its first day of trading after pricing at \$33 per share. It is now trading slightly above the IPO price.

Klarna, the Swedish buy now, pay later company priced its IPO at \$40 per share in September and is currently trading close to \$29 per share. Cloud computing company CoreWeave also priced its IPO at \$40 per share, in March. It surged in the months following its IPO, but has pulled back significantly to about \$72 per share.

Software company Navan went public at \$25 per share in the midst of the government shutdown but failed to gain much ground and is now trading at about \$15.

The benchmark S&P 500 is having a bleak November. It’s down 3.5% for the month, with much of that decline being led by the tech sector, which had been driven higher by enthusiasm over developments in artificial intelligence. Wall Street has grown more concerned about whether the gains have been justified.

The S&P 500 is still up more than 12% for the year and the tech-heavy Nasdaq is up more than 15%.

Renaissance Capital’s IPO Index is down about nearly 0.8% so far this year as of Friday and has been falling against the S&P 500 since mid-October.

“What that shows is that investors very quickly monetized, they didn’t want to take the long-term risk,” said Samuel Kerr, head of global equity capital markets at Mergermarket.

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SPOTLIGHT



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In cooperation with the Ministries of Education and Information

KFH a strategic partner for 'Ma'aAttalaba' program

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced its strategic partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Information for the "Ma'aAttalaba" competition. The program provides a platform for students to showcase talents and enhance knowledge, engaging over 1,200 students from 24 schools and broadcast via Kuwait TV and the 51 Platform.

KFH Executive Manager Social Media and PR Services Center, Abdullah Al-Saif affirmed that KFH's role as a strategic partner in the long-running program, a viewing staple for over 50 years, highlights its leadership in social responsibility. This involvement confirms the bank's dedication to supporting students, youth, and educational initiatives.

He noted that this program is a national project focused on educational development. It aims to support students by honing their talents and broadening their experience, thereby preparing them for a better future. The program also significantly contributes to purposeful media that provides valuable information to the community.

Al-Saif highlighted KFH's commitment to prioritizing students and education through its CSR program. This commitment is realized via initiatives for student development, including strategic

university partnerships and participation in workshops designed to enhance graduate performance. KFH is keen on supporting student achievements, graduation projects, and innovations through various events. Crucially, the KFH Academy was launched to familiarize university students and graduates with KFH's departments, aligning with the Bank's strategy to achieve sustainable development by empowering youth.

Since its first broadcast on Kuwait TV in 1975, the student competition "Ma'aAttalaba" has been a prominent educational media fixture. The program uses an entertaining format to test knowledge in science, literature, history, and Kuwaiti heritage, aiming to foster national identity in a positive, competitive setting.

Re-introduced with a modern approach, the program blends educational content and interactive digital elements, making it dynamic and appealing to the new generation.

The strategic partnership was announced in the presence of Executive Manager Social Media and PR Services Center at KFH, Abdullah Al-Saif, Director General of Support Services at Ministry of Education, Maryam Al-Enezi, and VO Platform Chief Executive Officer, Zahra Dahdari.



Abdullah Al-Saif, Maryam Al-Enezi, and Zahra Dahdari



Dr. Nawaf AlShuraiaan of ABK attends conference under Ministerial patronage.

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait sponsors Child Protection Conference '25

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) proudly announces its sponsorship of the Child Protection Conference 2025 for the second consecutive year. The conference organized by Kuwait Lawyers Association, in cooperation with the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, was held at The Regency Hotel.

Dr. Nawaf AlShuraiaan, General Counsel, Legal at ABK participated in the conference, which was held under the patronage of the Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, and Chairperson of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah.

The event featured several sessions and workshops addressing issues related to violence against children, and mechanisms for ensuring criminal, civil, psychological, and international protection.

On this occasion, Dr. AlShuraiaan stated that the conference served as a vital platform for exchanging expertise and perspectives, and for discussing the challenges and opportunities associated with ensuring the highest levels of protection and care for children.

He emphasized that the Child Protection Conference represents a critical and necessary step toward building a healthy society and a promising future, as it provides an essential forum to review and enhance protection mechanisms against all forms of abuse, neglect, and violence. It also created space for sharing best practices and experiences in combating crimes committed against children.

Dr. AlShuraiaan noted that the theme of the conference reflects Kuwait's commitment to the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and is rooted in Article 10 of the Constitution, which states: "The State shall ensure the care of youth and protect them from exploitation and from moral, physical, and spiritual neglect." This commitment has been reflected in the provisions of Law No. 21 of 2015 concerning the Rights of the Child.

He added that the conference aimed to reinforce legal protection and to discuss and develop legislative and regulatory frameworks that ensure the highest degrees of safety for children against all

forms of violence, abuse, and neglect, in addition to strengthening penalties imposed on offenders.

Dr. AlShuraiaan pointed to the review of the latest research and innovative solutions in the fields of psychological and social support for children, particularly victims of violence, as well as the presentation of plans and initiatives designed to empower them and ensure their healthy reintegration into society.

He further highlighted the conference's role in enhancing collaboration between civil society organizations, government entities, and the private sector to adopt a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to child protection.

He continued, "Legal protection for all members of society remains one of the most pressing societal priorities in Kuwait and across the world. At ABK, we were keen to take part in the Child Protection Conference as part of our responsible role and our commitment to strengthening our presence among all community segments in Kuwait, in line with our social responsibility program, within which children constitute a key focus."

In conclusion, Dr. Al Shuraiaan expressed gratitude to the all those involved for hosting this impactful conference affirming that the importance of the conference extends beyond protection alone, encompassing the empowerment of children on educational, psychological, and social levels.

The sessions emphasized the need to equip children with the necessary skills and knowledge, while underscoring the importance of holding such conferences and launching effective national awareness campaigns targeting families, schools, and communities to combat violence and promote awareness of child rights and positive parenting.

He also stressed the value of leveraging leading international experiences and best practices in child protection and empowerment such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child to keep pace with global developments and help shape effective, applicable policies and legislation that safeguard the rights of young children.

Part of bank's ESG & social responsibility program

Burgan Bank concludes its sponsorship of Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah's 9th annual Fall Festival

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: In line with its ongoing efforts to support and advance Kuwait's arts and culture fields, Burgan Bank concluded its sponsorship of Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah's (DAI) ninth annual Fall Festival. The event, aheld at Yarmouk Culture Center, welcomed over 1,000 visitors of all ages, and numerous artists who performedlive music and theatre acts as well as facilitated workshops and activities for the whole family.

Burgan Bank's continued support of DAI's seasonal events comes as part of its comprehensive social responsibility strategy, which aims to preserve Kuwaiti culture and national heritage through sponsoring artists and supporting cultural events. It further aligns with the Bank's committed adherence to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices within the banking sector.

This year, DAI dedicated the Fall Festival to capturing and reenacting 1980s Kuwaiti art scene in its vibrant dynamism that iconically defined various arts from music to theatre and other forms of visual and performative arts. This year's edition was warmly welcomed by the audiences, engulfing older generations in nostalgia while introducing the younger generations to a chapter in Kuwait's art history that still bears influence on today's popular culture.

In addition to its role in supporting Kuwait's arts and culture, the Fall Festival also marks an annual opportunity for small-and-medium-sized businesses to reach a wider audience through its arts bazaar, Burgan

Bank's yearlong support for business owners and the Kuwaiti youth, as well as reaffirming the Bank's faith in their role in reinforcing the national economyand fueling its sustainable growth.

Burgan Bank also participated in the festival through its own booth, which offered a range of interactive competitions and activities that were met with great enthusiasm from children and families. In addition, the Bank's representatives distributed gifts to visitors, adding a special atmosphere to the festival experience.

Upholding its support for the "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) financial literacy and banking awareness campaign – launched and supervised by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), with the support of Kuwaiti banks – Burgan Bank representatives shared awarnesstips on safe online banking, and how to avoid fraud attempts.

As part of its commitment to social responsibility and sustainability pillars, Burgan Bank continues to support a range of key sectors such as health, through awareness initiatives and partnerships that enhance health awareness, in addition to supporting entrepreneurship by empowering business owners and encouraging innovation among youth. The bank also seeks to strengthen the environmental sector through sustainable activities that contribute to raising environmental awareness, in line with New Kuwait 2035.



The Bank organized competitions and interactive activities for the public.



The Burgan Bank team distributes gifts to visitors.



A glimpse of the products showcased at the arts bazaar.



Lulu Hypermarket unveils 'Layer Up in Style 2025' winter collections at Al Rai outlet

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Lulu Hypermarket officially launched its "Layer Up in Style 2025" winter collections on 20th November 2025 at the Al Rai outlet, in a vibrant ceremony attended by some of Kuwait's leading fashion influencers and vloggers alongside Lulu's senior management.

The launch highlighted new-season fashion lines for men, women, and children, featuring an extensive range of apparel, footwear, and ladies' bags—offered at competitive prices.

Customers also enjoyed a special promotion of a flat 50% off on every KD 10 purchase. The promotion continues from



Photos during the event.

November 20 to 22.

The event showcased major winter fashion brands, including Eten, Cortigini, Tom Smith, Debackers, Marco Doneteli, John Louis, Reo, and

others.

Influential fashion bloggers took part in the unveiling and engaged with the latest trends by trying on pieces from the new collection.

Adding to the excitement, Lulu Hypermarket organized a kids' fashion show as part of the launch festivities.

More than 50 children walked the runway wearing the sea-

son's trendy winter outfits.

Winners of the first, second, and third places received high-value prizes, while all participants were presented with attractive consolation

gifts.

With strong participation from the public and social media personalities, the event ushered in a dynamic beginning to Lulu's winter lineup.



This image released by Peacock shows filmmaker Jordan Peele from the documentary 'High Horse: The Black Cowboy.' (AP)

'The Black Cowboy'

Peele's docu spotlights erased part of history

NEW YORK, Nov 22, (AP): Texas-bred hip-hop duo UGK glared confidently into the camera atop stallions in the music video for their fan-favorite song "Wood Wheel." The visuals reflected the expertise of the legendary Houston-area music act: blending tales of big city hustling with charming Texas cowboy culture.

"This is not Black people trying to assimilate with this country Western lifestyle. Black people across this country - East Coast to West Coast - have been prevalent in this space for years," said Bun B, who, with partner Pimp C, became pillars of southern hip-hop, creating hits to help it become today's current dominant rap genre.

Bun, an ambassador for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and the first and only Black male hip-hop headliner in its history, shares his experiences in "High Horse: The Black Cowboy," a new docuseries executive produced by Jordan Peele and his Monkeypaw Productions. The project highlights Black men, who it says were the first Americans referred to as cowboys, a term initially steeped in racism as it contrasted them with white "cowhands." The series attempts to refute the pop culture images of the men whose tall boots and Stetson hats are seared into American mythology.

One in four cowboys were Black, even though in the late 19th century they made up a much smaller segment of the US population, according to research by historian Bruce Glasrud.

"Being a Black performer at this 90-plus year concert series has been amazing for me, but it's also given me a deeper perspective of understanding the Black cowboys' place in American history," Bun told The Associated Press. "It's really energized me to try to fill this void of confusion where people who are somewhat aware typically will have a distorted view."

Directed by Jason Perez and streaming on Peacock, the three-part docuseries is an extension of Peele's 2022 blockbuster film "Nope." Starring Daniel Kaluuya and Keke Palmer, the movie follows siblings who operate the only Black-owned horse ranch in California, training horses for Hollywood productions.

The sci-fi horror film mentions Eadweard Muybridge, a pioneer of motion photography and his groundbreaking "The Horse in Motion" moving image, noting that while the horse, Sallie Gardner, has always been recognized, the Black jockey riding her remains largely unknown.

Journey

"We just decided to go on this journey to really figure out, or to pose the question, what happened to the Black cowboy? Who erased the Black cowboy?" said Keisha Senter, the company's senior vice president of culture and impact and an executive producer on the project. "At Monkeypaw, we really think erasure is a horror story."

"High Horse" is filled with archival footage and photos to provide context of the lives of early Black cowboys. In addition to creating a more complete composite of the Old West, it documents how Black cowboy communities remain vibrant in various pockets across the country, while following their struggles and triumphs.

The docuseries focuses on the history and erasure of the Black cowboy, systemic racism and the current battles Black citizens face with land ownership dating back to the post-slavery Reconstruction era, and the entertainment impact African Americans have made throughout country western history. It arrives amid the nation's current political flashpoints. Critics of the Trump administration note its policies disproportionately and negatively affect Black Americans, including eliminating DEI programs, mass layoffs at federal agencies, and cuts to SNAP benefits, Medicare and Medicaid.

Peele, Glynn Turman, Pam Grier, Tina Knowles and Rick Ross, who all make appearances, speak to their own experiences with cowboy culture. R&B legend Raphael Saadiq provides the project's original score.

"This is an important time in history, and I can see the writing on the wall," said Turman, a New York City-raised actor who's lived on a California ranch for decades. "This is a survival tool that we've been handed with this documentary."

Turman, the 78-year-old Emmy winner who received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in July, is no stranger to using entertainment to educate. He starred as retired Army colonel Bradford Taylor on the hit '90s sitcom "A Different World," a spinoff from "The Cosby Show" set on the campus of a historically Black college.

"I'm from the generation where we made great strides - strides at great costs. And to see us in a time where the institutions are trying to indeed negate those strides, it's disheartening," Turman said of the current political divisiveness in the country.

The docuseries also wades briefly into the conversation surrounding the ownership of cowboy culture and the gatekeeping surrounding it.

Award-winning film praised for rare cinematic vision

Chinese film 'The Botanist' wins award at Cairo film festival

CAIRO, Nov. 22, (Xinhua): The Chinese film The Botanist achieved a big success at the 46th edition of the Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF), which concluded here Friday night, winning the best Asian feature film award, or the Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema (NETPAC) Award.

The film, directed by Jing Yi, also received a special mention in the International Critics' Week Competition.

Ahmed al-Saeed, a jury member of the NETPAC Award, said The Botanist stands out for offering a rare cinematic vision defined by its quiet confidence and mature restraint, noting that the director shapes the film's world through emotion and imagery rather than plot.

"With a gentle, poetic touch, the director portrays the bond between the Kazakh boy and the Han girl as a soft whisper of coexistence, turning ethnic diversity

in China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region into a purely human and aesthetic experience," al-Saeed told Xinhua.

He said the film's strength lies in its ability to transform nature into a spiritual space the boy breathes in, pointing out that mountains, valleys and shifting light become a narrative language of their own, mirroring the director's solitude and the subtle changes surrounding him.

Debut

"Taken together, these elements reveal The Botanist as an impressively mature debut, crafted with sensitivity, attentive to the pulse of people and landscapes. Its human sincerity, fused with its quiet, lyrical visual style, is ultimately what earns the film its deserved recognition," he said.

Film



This image released by Searchlight Pictures shows Brendan Fraser, left, and Akira Emoto in a scene from 'Rental Family.' (AP)

Film sheds light on Japan's unique rental culture

'Rental Family' shows Fraser's vulnerable charm

NEW YORK, Nov 22, (AP): It sounds rather like a mixed compliment to say of an actor that he's persuasive at playing, well, a mediocre actor.

But then, this is Brendan Fraser we're talking about. The man seems to become more emphatically human with each role, each passing year, each new wrinkle. And what's more human, or at least more vulnerable and relatable, than mediocrity?

It is this essential vulnerability that keeps Fraser's latest venture, filmmaker Hikari's Tokyo-set "Rental Family," from inching over that thin line between heartwarming and totally sappy.

Certainly the film has a fascinating premise, one that would have worked well enough were it totally fictional - but works better with the knowledge that it's based on fact. There are, indeed, companies in Japan like the one at the center of Hikari's film - businesses that "rent out" actors to play roles in people's everyday lives.

In "Rental Family," these actors play lovers, parents, friends, admirers, people to cry at a funeral or cheer at a karaoke bar - whatever a client needs to address whatever they're missing. There are scenarios that raise definite moral questions. But these companies do offer something basic and essential: human connection.

Fraser's Phillip Vandarpleog, too, is looking for connection, not to mention gainful employment. This middle-aged - and middling - actor originally came to Tokyo to star in a big toothpaste commercial. But that was seven years ago, and acting gigs have dried up.

As good as Fraser is at radiating humanity, he's maybe even better at projecting discomfort - within his own skin, and within his large frame. And that's what's striking as we first meet Phillip, rushing to catch the subway, looking and feeling so different from everyone else.

After yet another fruitless audition, he makes his

way home to a dark apartment where he eats takeout and gazes out into other apartments where people are living their lives, together.

Soon his agent calls with a quick gig: he needs a dark suit, and the role is "sad American." He finds himself not at a shoot but at a funeral. That's strange enough, even before the man in the coffin lifts his head and reacts to one of the loving eulogies.

Turns out everyone's an actor, hired by the man to remind him his existence is worthwhile. The head of the rental company, Shinji (Takehiro Hira) tells Phillip to come by the office. There, he explains what they do. "You sell people!" Phillip exclaims. "We sell emotion," Shinji counters. He further explains that mental health issues are stigmatized in Japan, and therapy thus not always a viable option.

Assignment

A reluctant Phillip takes on a new assignment: In an elaborate wedding (beautifully rendered by director Hikari), he plays a groom, fooling the bride's parents and family. At first he almost botches the job by hiding in the bathroom, mortified.

Soon, though, he's a regular. There's even a cute montage of his various "rental" gigs. In these transactional relationships, everyone seems to be getting what they want. But then two new jobs come up that will expose the moral complications of this line of work.

One involves an aging movie star (Akira Emoto, poignant) who's fast losing his memory. His daughter hires Phillip to pose as a journalist and document his life. Things get dicey when the man begs Phillip to travel secretly with him to another town on an unexplained mission - expressly against the daughter's wishes.

Then there's Mia. The young girl's single mother hires Phillip to pose as Mia's long-absent father during

the admissions process for an exclusive school, so they can present as a two-parent family.

The catch: Mia needs to believe the story to act truthful, so she can't know Phillip is an actor. They will need to spend some bonding time together.

It's not difficult to see where this is going. Of course, Mia (charming 11-year-old newcomer Shannon Mahina Gorman), initially reticent, will come to love the dad she didn't know she had.

Of course, Phillip will develop feelings as well. Their bonding scenes, in art class and at a street carnival, pop with gorgeous color; Phillip's life is literally becoming brighter. (Hikari, who co-wrote with Stephen Blahut, excels at these beautiful urban scenes, which may have many checking airfares to Tokyo.)

But the ruse strains credulity. Honestly, is this a way anyone with a brain would treat a young girl? Trick her into thinking she has a father, only to cause pain when she learns he's not?

The film will try to put a neat bow on this subplot by the end, along with a few other twists and turns along the way.

Some of these moments land more successfully than others. It's not clear, though, exactly how we're supposed to feel about the whole "rental family" phenomenon. In some ways, people get what they want and nobody gets hurt - like that bride at the beginning, who can now go off and live with the love of her life.

But other scenarios are fuzzier, and the broader message may simply be that genuine connection, that holy grail we all crave, can sometimes be found in the oddest of places - even in a bizarre no man's land between fake relationships and real ones.

"Rental Family," a Searchlight Pictures release, has been rated PG-13 "for thematic elements, some strong language, and suggestive material." Running time: 103 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

Eddie Murphy to receive life achievement award at AFI

LOS ANGELES, Nov 22, (AP): Eddie Murphy is being celebrated with a life achievement award from the American Film Institute, AFI's board of trustees said Friday. The award will be handed out at a gala tribute in Los Angeles, at the Dolby Theatre, on April 18.



Murphy

"Eddie Murphy is an American icon," said Kathleen Kennedy, who chairs the institute's board of trustees. "A trailblazing force in the art forms of film, television and stand-up comedy, his versatility knows no bounds."

Murphy, 64, has been a force in entertainment for nearly 50 years, as a teenage stand-up phenomenon, on television as a part of the "Saturday Night Live" cast, and in film where he's ruled the box office in multiple decades, with hits like "Beverly Hills Cop," "Coming to America," "The Nutty Professor" and the "Shrek" movies. In 2007, he was nominated for a best supporting actor Oscar for "Dreamgirls," which had already earned him a Screen Actors Guild award and a Golden Globe, but he didn't win the Academy Award.



This image released by Netflix shows characters Zoey, (from left), Rumi and Mira in a scene from 'KPop Demon Hunters.'

'KPop Demon Hunters' eligible for Oscars

LOS ANGELES, Nov 22, (AP): "KPop Demon Hunters" is one step closer to another golden moment: The Oscars. The Netflix phenomenon is among 35 films features eligible for the animated feature film category at the 98th Academy Awards. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences released on Friday lists of all the films eligible for animated, documentary and international feature prizes at next year's Oscars.

Though "KPop Demon Hunters" made its name on Netflix, it also received a qualifying theatrical run in New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco in June, which satisfied the film academy's requirements for Oscar consideration. Its UK theatrical run was not enough to qualify for the BAFTAs, however. Other animated titles that qualified for the Oscars animated feature category were Neon's "Arco," Disney's "Elio" and "Zootopia

2," GKids' "Little Amélie or the Character of Rain," Netflix's "In Your Dreams" and Crunchyroll/Sony's "Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba Infinity Castle" and "Chainsaw Man - The Movie: Reze Arc." Notably, the Chinese blockbuster "Ne Zha 2" was not among the 35 titles listed.

"KPop Demon Hunters," which Netflix has said is its most watched film of all time, has amassed more than 541 million hours viewed worldwide. It's the highest charting soundtrack of 2025 with eight of its songs landing on the Billboard Hot 100. It also made a splash in theaters in August where it was estimated to have made around \$18 million (which would have topped the charts if Netflix released theatrical earnings) and got a subsequent release over Halloween weekend. Netflix won their first animated feature Oscar in 2022 for "Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio."

New songs and lyrics raise the stakes

‘Wicked: For Good’ album expands the magic with Erivo, Grande

LOS ANGELES, Nov 22, (AP): Are you ready for more “Wicked”? “Wicked: For Good - The Soundtrack” offers a bulked-up take on the music of the original “Wicked” musical’s second act, grounded in yet-again stellar vocals from Cynthia Erivo as a misunderstood but defiant Elphaba and Ariana Grande as a conflicted but changing Glinda. New songs and lyrics raise the stakes - even if the music itself is at times weighed down by the plot it helps move along, like the film it accompanies.

The soundtrack opens with “Every Day More Wicked,” a lengthened-version of a section of the original Act 2 opener “Thank Goodness” with new verses about Elphaba’s perceived wickedness and Glinda’s presumed goodness set to bold orchestration that matches the first film’s opening number. “No One Mourns the Wicked.” Drum beats and ensemble singers are the world builders here, twisting the melody into a march.

The album’s first solo goes to Michelle Yeoh’s Madame Morrible, the sorceress at the center of a propaganda campaign against Elphaba - a choice that works for the plot, but which offsets the power of Erivo and Grande’s forthcoming vocals. They are introduced later, through brief interpolations of the Act 1 showstoppers “The Wizard and I” and “Popular.” All of that makes for a dynamic film opener - but is more fractured in audio form, sans the sumptuous visuals and character reveals that tie those musical references together on screen.

Fortunately, “Thank Goodness / I Couldn’t Be Happier” quickly follows, bringing Grande center-stage - and providing a rare-here opportunity for her soprano head-voice to give way to a deeper belt (her passionate tone, like other



This album cover image released by Republic Records shows ‘Wicked: For Good: The Soundtrack.’ (AP)

Glindas before her, turns this almost nonsensical lyric, “There are bridges you cross you didn’t know you crossed until you’ve crossed them,” into a revelation.

That’s not the last we hear from this capital “G” Good, Glinda. “Wonderful,” usually a duet between Elphaba and the Wizard of Oz, is ‘Galinda-fied,’ with Grande adding

welcome harmonies - and a brief “Defying Gravity” interlude - to Jeff Goldblum’s Wizard romp.

It was always going to be hard for this album to live up to the soundtrack of the first “Wicked,” which ended with Erivo’s take on the iconic “Defying Gravity” battle cry, and saw Grande own the over-the-top glitz of “Popular.” But that grandness is replicated in key moments: In Grande’s operatic soprano, in Erivo and Jonathan Bailey’s sensual “As Long As You’re Mine,” in which Bailey as Fiyero manages to keep up with Erivo’s beckoning vocals, and in “No Good Deed,” the album’s sonic peak.

At 44 minutes and 52 seconds, the soundtrack adds over 15 minutes of music to the runtime of the original Broadway cast recording’s second act. That includes two brand new songs written for the film (making them eligible for Oscar consideration), one for Erivo’s Elphaba and one for Grande’s Glinda.

In lengthening the shorter second act into a 2 hour and 17 minute long film, director Jon M. Chu stretches some of these songs across scenes, filling them out with dialogue, additional verses from composer and lyricist Stephen Schwartz and additional scoring from composer John Powell. All of that is a double-edged sword (broom? wand?), at times deflating the power of the tight original tracks, at others adding felt emotional stakes ripe for sat- isfying listening.

For example: Some of the drama of Marissa Bode, Ethan Slater and Erivo’s “Wicked Witch of the East,” a song performed on Broadway that was also left off the original cast recording, is weakened by which pieces of the interspersed dialogue remain, and which don’t, in the

soundtrack version of the song. Like the Tin Man, it feels a bit piecemeal.

But the new tracks are highlights, fleshing out the album. Erivo’s “No Place Like Home” pulls on the iconic line said by Dorothy in “The Wizard of Oz,” providing this Oz- inspired show its take on the theme, like another Oz-inspired show, “The Wiz,” found before. (“Home,” that show’s nod to the line, was sung by Erivo at this year’s Oscars ceremony). The song is the most inherently political, a timely tale of borders, defiance and community. It starts with Erivo’s voice almost isolated, strings swelling behind her, and ends with the first of her transcendent vocal runs, restored to a full open note (after being cut short by the Cowardly Lion on screen) in the album.

That power is felt tenfold in Erivo’s take on “No Good Deed.” The film may belong to Glinda’s emotional trajectory, but it is Erivo who steals the soundtrack’s climax. Drums return as the agony heard in her voice intensifies, the strings crescendoing with her final call.

Glinda’s emotional journey may at first be more subtle, but Grande portrays it deftly. Airy and introspective, “Girl in the Bubble” serves as turning point, filling in gaps about Glinda’s internal reckoning. Her voice is restrained but emotional, Schwartz’s lyrics straightforward with a cheese that feels earned, and thus earnest. This is Glinda after all, not Grande.

Both songs boost the emotional payoff of the character’s finale duet, the fan-beloved tear-jerker “For Good.” And it’s no surprise, years into their own journey with the characters, that Erivo and Grande nail the chemistry of their character’s friendship.

Variety

WASHINGTON: The Kennedy Center said Friday that it is being paid \$7.4 million to hold the draw for the World Cup at the performing arts venue on Dec. 5.

FIFA is donating \$2.4 million to the Kennedy Center as it prepares to host one of the biggest events in sports, Roma Daravi, the Kennedy Center’s vice president of public relations, told The Associated Press. Soccer’s world governing body “has also given us sponsorship opportunities separate from their commitments for an additional \$5 million,” she said.

The figures, which haven’t been previously reported, emerged as Senate Democrats question spending and management practices by Kennedy Center leadership. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, the top Democrat on the Environment and Public Works Committee, released documents Thursday showing the Kennedy Center entered into an agreement giving FIFA “exclusive” use of the facility from Nov. 24 through Dec. 12 at no cost, arguing that the venue was at risk of losing millions in potential revenue because of the arrangement. (AP)

MISSOURI: A Missouri judge who wore an Elvis Presley wig in his courtroom and played the singer’s music from his phone during court proceedings has agreed to a deal that would cut his career on the bench short.

Judge Matthew Thornhill in suburban St. Louis faces a six-month unpaid suspension under the deal he reached with a state board to avoid a disciplinary hearing. After the suspension, he would serve 18 more months on the bench before resigning from the St. Charles County Circuit Court.

The agreement, reached last month, is pending before the Missouri Supreme Court, spokeswoman Beth Riggert said Friday. The court agreed Thursday to accept 35 letters in support of Thornhill’s character. Thornhill wrote that he intended “to add levity at times when I thought it would help relax litigants.” But he added: “I now recognize that this could affect the integrity and solemnity of the proceedings.” (AP)

LONDON: Gary Mounfield, the former bass player of the Stone Roses and Primal Scream, two of the most influential British rock bands of the past four decades, has died. He was 63.

His former Stone Roses bandmate, Ian Brown, confirmed the death of Mounfield, who was better known by his fans as Mani, on Thursday on social media - “rest in peace Mani,” he said, alongside a kiss symbol.

Mounfield was part of The Stone Roses’ classic lineup alongside singer Brown, guitarist John Squire and drummer Alan “Reni” Wren during their 1989 self-titled classic debut album, which featured hits such as “I Wanna Be Adored,” “She Banges The Drums” and “I Am The Resurrection.”

The album heralded a new sound in British music as the 1980s drew to a close, mixing classic rock rifts with dance music. Hailing from Manchester, the band augured in the “Madchester” sound that dominated the early 1990s and laid the foundations for the ensuing “Britpop” phenomenon with the likes of Blur, Oasis and Pulp. (AP)

PARIS: Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy will publish a book about his recent time behind bars, titled “Diary of a Prisoner,” on Dec. 10, his publisher Fayard announced Friday. The house is part of the media group controlled by conservative billionaire Vincent Bolloré.

Sarkozy trailed the release in a post on X, writing that in La Santé prison “the noise is, unfortunately, constant” and that “the inner life of man becomes stronger in prison.” He spent three weeks in detention there this autumn.

The former head of state, who governed France from 2007 to 2012, was convicted on Sept. 25 of participating in a criminal organization over alleged Libyan financing of his 2007 presidential campaign. He was released pending appeal on Nov. 10, and his appeal against the conviction is scheduled to be heard from March 16 to June 3. (AP)

Miss Universe



Miss Mexico Fatima Bosch, center, is celebrated by other contestants after winning the 2025 Miss Universe pageant in Nonthaburi, north of Bangkok, Thailand, Friday, Nov. 21. (AP)

President Sheinbaum hails her stand

Fátima Bosch’s Miss Universe win echoes in Mexico where women fight for equality

MEXICO CITY, Nov 22, (AP): Fátima Bosch Fernández’s Miss Universe victory resounded across Mexico on Friday, framed as the vindication of a disrespected contestant from a country where women have pushed their way into positions of power and are increasingly calling out traditional chauvinism.

The 25-year-old from the Gulf coast state of Tabasco was scolded by the competition’s Thai director, Nawat Itsaragrisil, during a livestreamed sashing ceremony for the more than 100 contestants on Nov. 4. She allegedly did not follow his guidelines for taking part in local promotional activities. He called security when she spoke up to defend herself, and she responded by walking out with a number of other contestants following in solidarity.

The Miss Universe Organization president, Mexican business owner Raúl Rocha Cantú, had released a statement condemning Nawat’s conduct as “public aggression” and “serious abuse.”

Nawat later apologized for his actions, appearing both tearful and defiant at the same time.

The fireworks in Thailand earlier in the competition had already drawn Mexico’s attention, leading even President Claudia Sheinbaum to hail Bosch.

So on Friday, Sheinbaum did not try to hide her pleasure that Mexico’s contestant ended up winning the crown.

“I like that she spoke up when she felt that was an injustice and that is an example,” Mexico’s first woman president said during her daily news briefing. “That thing they said about being

prettier when you’re quiet has been left behind. Women are prettier when we speak and we participate.”

Patricia Bustamante, a 72-year-old retiree in Mexico City, shared the president’s enthusiasm.

“How good that she didn’t let it slide and how good that she fought to stay there,” Bustamante said, noting that Mexican women used to be “submissive.” She called Bosch “very brave.”

Briana González, a 40-year-old nurse, said in general she doesn’t like beauty pageants because “beauty goes beyond the physical,” but she saw Bosch standing up for herself as a positive example. “For some time now, Mexican women have come out to defend ourselves and fight inequality.”

When Bosch was announced as the winner, cheers and screams erupted from the audience, with Mexican flags waved by elated supporters.

Her home state of Tabasco, where thousands watched the competition from a local baseball stadium in southeast Mexico, parted into the night.

In Villahermosa, Tabasco’s capital, Gabriel Arcos, who sells eyeglasses, said Bosch had represented the state well.

“For us Tabasqueños, we’re proud that she has gone so far despite the setbacks Miss Bosch had,” said the 37-year-old.

Speaking to the media after her victory, Bosch said that she would like to be remembered as “a person that changed a little bit the prototype of what is a Miss Universe and a real person that gives the heart.”

She also paid tribute to the pageant,

describing it as “a platform that is strong because they have the space that women are searching to have a voice.”

The first runner-up was 29-year-old Praveenar Singh of Thailand and 25-year-old Stephany Adriana Abasali Nasser of Venezuela placed third. Rounding up the finishers were Ahtisa Manalo, 28, of the Philippines, and 27-year-old Olivia Yacé of Ivory Coast who came fifth.

At the livestreamed sashing ceremony for the more than 100 contestants on Nov. 4, Thai national director Nawat Itsaragrisil hectorated Bosch for allegedly not following his guidelines for taking part in local promotional activities. He called security when she spoke up to defend herself.

Bosch walked out of the room, joined by several others in a show of solidarity, including Miss Universe 2024, Victoria Kjer Theilvig of Denmark.

“What your director did is not respectful: He called me dumb,” an unbowed Bosch told Thai reporters. “If it takes away your dignity, you need to go.”

Nawat insisted that he did not call her “dumb.”

The Miss Universe Organization president, Mexican businessman Raúl Rocha Cantú, released a statement condemning Nawat’s conduct as “public aggression” and “serious abuse.”

Even Mexico’s first woman president, Claudia Sheinbaum, piled on, saying at a news conference in her country’s capital that she wanted to give “recognition” to Miss Mexico for voicing her disagreement in a “dignified” way.

‘French tribute to Lady Di’

Wax Diana in ‘revenge dress’ unveiled in Paris

PARIS, Nov 22, (AP): Princess Diana returned to Paris in wax Thursday as one of Europe’s oldest wax museums unveiled a new figure of the British royal in the so-called “revenge dress,” decades after her tragic death in the city.

The statue was ordered in Paris after the director of the Grevin Museum visited London and came away underwhelmed by the Diana likeness at Madame Tussauds, prompting him to commission his own version, museum officials said.

Grevin’s life-size - and very convincing - figure of the late Princess of Wales is dressed in a replica of the black, off-the-shoulder, figure-hugging cocktail dress Diana wore to a Serpentine Gallery event in London in 1994. It was the same night that King Charles III - at the time Prince Charles - acknowledged on television that he had been unfaithful with Camilla Parker Bowles, now Queen Camilla.

For Paris, the tribute carried extra weight: Diana - “Lady Di” to the French, who still use the nickname affectionately even though she spent most of her public life as a princess - died after a car crash in a tunnel by the Seine in 1997, a death that helped immortalize her in the Parisian imagination, where she still remains present in the flowers and handwritten notes left at informal memorials.

Museum officials noted that the unveiling came on the 30th anniversary of an explosive interview that Diana gave to BBC “Panorama,” which observers say dented the standing of the monarchy and the Queen.

Some observers noted wryly how the museum’s newest royal guest was positioned far from wax likenesses of her famous ex-husband and mother-in-law.

High heels, a pearl choker at her neck and a small handbag clasped in both hands completed the sculpture. Tabloids later dubbed the out-



The life-size wax figure of Lady Diana is presented at Grevin Museum in Paris, France, Thursday, Nov. 20. (AP)

fit the “revenge dress,” and the museum leaned into that symbolism.

French novelist Christine Orban, who wrote “Mademoiselle Spencer,” a novel imagined from Diana’s point of view, said the figure was overdue.

She called the black dress a turning point in Diana’s story.

“The dress is very significant of her liberation because in the royal family, black is only worn for funerals, and then such a sexy dress for a Princess of Wales, well, that’s not common either,” she said. “So she decides to wear her high heels and Louboutins. And to go to the Serpentine Gallery to make an impression, to get photographed.”

Grevin, founded in the 19th century, has long packed its ornate halls with political leaders, artists, pop-culture figures - and, yes, British royals. Diana is the latest in a steady stream of star wattage additions the museum uses to refresh the collection and boost visitors at the site that has attracted some 700,000 annual visitors in recent years.



A painting by Frida Kahlo titled ‘El sueño (La cama)’ or The Dream (The Bed), is displayed at Sotheby’s auction rooms in London, Sept. 19, 2025. (AP)

Frida Kahlo breaks auction record for female artists with \$54.7M sale

NEW YORK, Nov 22, (AP): A haunting 1940 self-portrait by famed Mexican artist Frida Kahlo sold Thursday for \$54.7 million and became the top-selling work by any female artist at an auction. The painting of Kahlo asleep in a bed - titled “El sueño (La cama)” or in English, “The Dream (The Bed)” - surpassed the record held by Georgia O’Keeffe’s “Jimson Weed/White Flower No. 1,” which sold for \$44.4 million in 2014.

The sale at Sotheby’s in New York also topped Kahlo’s own auction record

for a work by a Latin American artist. The 1949 painting “Diego and I,” depicting the artist and her husband, muralist Diego Rivera, went for \$34.9 million in 2021. Her paintings are reported to have sold privately for even more.

The self-portrait is among the few Kahlo pieces that have remained in private hands outside Mexico, where her body of work has been declared an artistic monument. Her works in both public and private collections within the country cannot be sold abroad or destroyed.

‘Archaeological value’

2 robbers overpower guard, steal ancient gold coins from Swiss museum

GENEVA, Nov 22, (AP): Swiss authorities searched Friday for two robbers who overpowered a security guard at a Roman-era museum in Lausanne, smashed a display case and made off with dozens of gold coins that had been displayed inside. City police said late Thursday that the suspects had purchased tickets and waited until

other visitors had left shortly before closing time, before assaulting and restraining the guard, and then breaking the display case.

The monetary value of the coins stolen in the heist Tuesday was not immediately revealed, but police said they had “archaeological value.”

The theft comes at a time when gold prices

have soared in global markets - even if they have dropped off their highs lately - and a high-profile robbery at the Louvre in Paris exposed vulnerabilities and security lapses at museums.

Officials said the Lausanne museum employee, a 64-year-old Swiss national, was interviewed by investigators and that he was not injured in the

incident. No other people - staff or visitors - were on hand at the time.

State prosecutors have opened an investigation. Lausanne city officials filed a legal complaint for damage to the museum, and the regional government - the owner of the gold coins - announced plans to file a criminal complaint.

5,500 OB-GYN surgeries, 4,000 births recorded over 2 years

Jahra Hospital reports major advances in women’s health services

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

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Director of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department at Jahra Hospital Dr. Hanan Al-Husseini said the department has been witnessing remarkable progress since September 2022, in line with international medical standards and regulations, thus, improving the quality of services provided to patients.

In a press statement, Al-Husseini revealed that the department performed around 5,500 surgeries over the past two years. She said the surgeries were fully reorganized after the

move to the new facility, indicating the addition of modern technologies such as 3D, 4D and Doppler ultrasound helped in the early diagnosis of fetal abnormalities and reduced the need for beds in inpatient wards.

She added these steps positively impacted service and recovery, indicating that the Day Surgery Unit is considered one of the most distinguished in Kuwait, having performed more than 500 surgeries last year like hysteroscopy, cerclage, curettage and polyp removal, which helped alleviate pressure on beds and improve the efficiency of surgical services.

On outpatient clinics, Al-Husseini confirmed the addition of specialized clinics, such as a laser therapy clinic and a pelvic

floor exercise chair for treating gynecological urological problems. She said a total of 28,283 cases were handled and the improvement rate in these cases is high, thanks to the advanced technologies. She disclosed that a specialized cervical endoscopy clinic was also established to treat infections and chronic problems. She said the maternity ward witnessed around 4,000 births during the past period, along with the implementation of new policies and work protocols aligned with the latest global research. “Epidural anesthesia was added to alleviate labor pain, as well as modern techniques for emergency surgeries and complex deliveries. The inpatient wards were improved by implementing clear policies to regulate patient admission and dis-

charge in accordance with best global medical practices. This has positively impacted the quality of service and the speed of recovery,” she elaborated.

Regarding the IVF Unit, she said the unit performed more than 600 treatment cycles -- the highest since its establishment in 2012, in addition to 326 successful IVF cases.

She emphasized that Jahra Hospital is undergoing rapid development to better serve patients and align with Kuwait’s vision for comprehensive healthcare modernization. She added that her department is committed to adopting modern technologies and providing ongoing training to improve medical services offered to Kuwaiti and expatriate women.



Participants during the DDI workshop on diabetic foot prevention and management.

15 doctors trained in evidence-based care

DDI organizes prevention and management of diabetic foot complications workshop

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI), established by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), concluded its three-day workshop titled “The Prevention and Management of Diabetic Foot Complications” held November 16–18, 2025 at DDI’s premises. The workshop is organized multiple times in the year in collaboration with the Central Administration for Primary Health Care at the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO).

This workshop brought together 15 physicians from primary and secondary care. Over three intensive days, participants practiced evidence-based evaluation and treatment techniques for diabetic foot, including risk assessment, screening and classification, ulcer prevention, debridement principles, infection recognition, off-load-

ing strategies, referral pathways, and patient self-care education.

The Institute emphasized that preventing foot ulcers and avoiding amputations require timely screening, standardized protocols, and a multidisciplinary approach. By building practical skills among frontline clinicians, DDI aims to reduce complications and amputations and improve quality of life for people living with diabetes.

Despite the high prevalence of diabetes in the Middle East and North Africa, many health systems underutilize foot screening and patient education. DDI continues to address this gap by offering hands-on training, clinical guidelines, and public awareness initiatives that help embed best practices across Kuwait’s healthcare network.

Flu slow, but experts worry about new strain

First US death linked to rare bird flu

GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY, Wash., Nov 22, (AP): A Washington state resident is believed to be the first person to die from a rare strain of bird flu, but state health officials said Friday the risk to the public is low.

The person, an older adult with underlying health conditions, was being treated for a bird flu called H5N5 after becoming seemingly the first known human infected by the strain, according to a statement from the Washington State Department of Health.

The person from Grays Harbor County, about 78 miles (125 kilometers) southwest of Seattle, had a backyard flock of domestic poultry that had been exposed to wild birds, health officials said.

“The risk to the public remains low,” the statement from state health officials said. “No other people involved have tested positive for avian influenza.”

Health officials said they will monitor anyone who came in close contact with the person, but “there is no evidence of transmission of this virus between people.”

Earlier this month, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a statement about the infection that said no information would suggest “the risk to public health has increased as a result of this case.”

H5N5 is not believed to be a greater threat to human health than the H5N1 virus behind a wave of 70 reported human infections in the U.S. in 2024 and 2025. Most of those have been mild illnesses in workers on dairy and poultry farms.

The distinction between H5N5 and H5N1 lies in a protein involved in releasing the virus from an infected cell and promoting spread to surrounding cells.

Meanwhile, the US flu season is starting slowly, and it’s unclear if it will be as bad as last winter’s, but some health experts are worried as US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data posted Friday shows a new version of the virus has emerged. An early analysis suggests current vaccines may still be somewhat effective against the new version of the flu, which has been the main driver of recent infections, CDC data shows.

Some scientists and medical professionals are more worried about disappointing vaccination rates, a main reason why flu hospitalizations and deaths were unusually bad during last year’s flu season - one of the deadliest this century.

“I think we’re going to see a really severe season,” said Asefeh Faraz Covelli of the George Washington University School of Nursing.

Last winter, the overall flu hospitalization rate was the highest seen since the H1N1 flu pandemic 15 years ago. Flu was the underlying or a contributing cause of more than 18,000 deaths, and one seven-day stretch early this year saw more than 1,800 deaths - the highest one-week spike in at least a decade. Child flu deaths also were far higher than usual.

CDC data posted Friday showed low flu activity so far, with only one state - Louisiana - reporting moderate activity. Most of the reported infections have been in children, said the CDC’s Alicia Budd, who tracks flu infections for the Atlanta-based agency.

Most also have been a new version of the type A H3N2 virus that historically has caused the most hospitalizations and deaths in older people. That type is responsible for most



A sign with the CDC logo is displayed at the entrance to the agency’s headquarters in Atlanta on March 2, 2025. (AP)

flu infections so far this year, and more than half have been a new subclade K variant that is different from the strain this year’s flu shots were built to fight.

A preliminary analysis from the United Kingdom suggests the shots do provide at least partial protection, although it will take some time for scientists to know exactly how effective they are. Experts say any protection that softens the blow of a flu infection is important to get.

Flu seasons tend to get bad between December and February, and illnesses likely will accelerate as people travel and gather for Thanksgiving, Covelli said. “I think it’s going to start picking up here,” she said. “This is the ideal time to get vaccinated.” Researchers this year have been facing an unusual struggle to get a handle on how respiratory infection and vaccination rates have been trending.

They usually rely on the CDC for data, but a recent government shutdown halted data collection and reporting just as respiratory infections started ramping up.

Meanwhile, government efforts to promote disease-preventing shots have been more limited since U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. was put in charge of the CDC and other federal health agencies. Kennedy, a leading anti-vaccine activist, has fostered uncertainty about the safety of vaccines, including flu shots that contained a preservative called thimerosal.

Indeed, vaccination rates against COVID-19 clearly continue to plummet, with about 6% of children and 14% of adults up to date on their shots, according to other CDC data posted Friday. Each figure is about 3 percentage points less than it was at this point last fall.

For the flu, vaccination trends are a little muddier. Some sources have suggested flu vaccinations are down. Over two million fewer flu shots were given at U.S. pharmacies through the end of October compared to last year, according to data from IQVIA, a health information and research company.

ment Dr. Sarah Al-Qabandi, noting that the achievement reflects scientific, technical, and technological excellence, adherence to international standards, and the staff’s dedication to staying up to date with the latest scientific developments and applying them efficiently in Kuwait.

Dr. Ghloum said this success would not have been possible without the technical and logistical support provided by the Ministry of Health to the public health laboratories and their staff, acknowledging the vital role and continuous support of Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi and his tireless efforts to develop the health system and enhance its efficiency in line with global best practices.

Kuwait Polio Lab gets full marks in WHO assessment

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: The National Polio Laboratory achieved a 100 percent score in the proficiency assessment test organized and supervised by the World Health Organization, reflecting Kuwait’s commitment to the highest standards of quality and excellence in laboratories and public health, reports Al-Anba daily.

Dr. Hamid Ghloum, Director of the Public Health Department, confirmed that the laboratory’s achievement represents international recognition of the competence of national staff and their continuous efforts to enhance laboratory services.

He praised the efforts of the public health laboratories team, led by Head of the Public Health Laboratories Depart-

Kuwait hosts 2nd National Conference of Dental Association

Ministry committed to modernizing dental infrastructure: Health minister

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi affirmed that his ministry remains committed to developing the infrastructure of dental clinics and centers, modernizing their medical equipment, improving quality and accreditation systems, and expanding fellowships and specialized programs.



KUNA photo
Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi delivers a speech during the opening of the Second National Conference of the Kuwaiti Dental Association.

In his speech during the opening of the Second National Conference of Kuwait Dental Association (KDA) last Thursday, Al-Awadhi stressed that the abovementioned commitment is crucial in the preparation of a professional generation capable of keeping pace with the latest scientific and technological developments in this vital field.

Al-Awadhi said the ministry considers the Association and the private medical sector as essential partners in health development, emphasizing that the ministry is committed to supporting efforts and endeavors to improve the health services and keep updated on the latest scientific and technological developments in the field of dentistry.

He disclosed that the dental sector

witnessed remarkable development in recent years in terms of its preventive and therapeutic services, along with the training and professional development programs aimed at increasing the efficiency of national personnel.

He explained that fulfilling the

aspirations of dental service beneficiaries, meeting their needs, and raising the quality of services provided to the highest international standards are the fundamental goals that they strive to achieve through planning, development and concerted efforts.



KUNA photo
Minister of Health receives international and Gulf delegation to strengthen early cancer screening programs and develop the national registry.

Kuwait boosts chronic disease prevention

Health Ministry meets regional delegation to enhance early cancer detection programs

KUWAIT, Nov 22, (KUNA): Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi met on Thursday with a high-profile delegation from the Gulf Center for Disease Prevention and Control, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), and the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, in addition to representatives from the GCC member states.

The delegation’s visit aim to back and enhance the programs of early detection of cancer in Kuwait, and develop the national record, the Ministry of Health said in a statement. During the meeting, the minister was informed about the results of the delegation’s

field visit to some health facilities concerned with the early detection of breast, cervix and colon cancer.

The delegation reviewed the key outcomes of session on sharing expertise, and building potential with Gulf and national efficiencies that aimed to unify regional efforts in protection, early detection and improving health services, according to the statement.

Meanwhile, acting director of prevention and control department of non-communicable diseases Dr. Wafaa Al-Kandari said the visit constituted a key step toward advancing early detection system of cancer in Kuwait.

She noted that cooperation among

the Gulf center, the IARC and the World Health Organization contributes to upgrading health services and maximizing its benefits.

The Ministry of Health is pursuing its efforts in prevention and early detection of chronic diseases in a manner that positively shows life value and public health in society, she stressed.

Founded by the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in 2021, the Riyadh-based Gulf Center for Disease Prevention and Control aims to enhance cooperation in the field of public health and exchange of knowledge among all GCC member states.

Curbing climate change would make world more peaceful and safer: UN

BELEM, Brazil, Nov 22, (AP): Harms from climate change are the biggest threat to world peace, the president of the United Nations General Assembly says.

“To those who are arguing that in these times we have to focus more on peace and security, one can only say the climate crisis is the biggest security threat of our century,” General Assembly President Annalena Baerbock told The Associated Press in an interview at the U.N. climate talks at the edge of the Amazon. “We can only ensure long-lasting peace and security over the world if we fight the climate crisis altogether and if we join hands in delivering on sustainable development because they are heavily interconnected,” said Baerbock, a former German foreign minister.

Baerbock pointed to droughts and other damage from climate extremes in places such as Chad, Syria and Iraq. When crops die, people go hungry and then migrate elsewhere or fight over scarce water, she said.

“This is a vicious circle,” Baerbock said. “If we do not stop the climate crisis it will fuel hunger and poverty which will fuel again displacement and by that will challenge regions in a different way, leading

again to instability, crisis and most often also conflict. So, fighting the climate crisis is also the best security insurance.”

But at the same time, dealing with climate change’s problems can make the world more peaceful, Baerbock said, pointing to conflicts over water in Central Asia. There, an agreement on water became “a booster for peaceful cooperation and peaceful settlement.”

Drought can take a long time to make an impact, but storms made worse by Earth’s warming atmosphere can strike in a flash. Baerbock pointed to last month’s Hurricane Melissa decimating Jamaica and two typhoons smacking the Philippines.

“Achievements of sustainable development can be diminished in just hours,” Baerbock said. That’s why foreign aid from rich nations to poor to help deal with climate disasters and adapt to future ones “are also investments in stable societies and regions,” she said.

Baerbock, a veteran of climate conferences, said people scoffed at the young people of small island nations who filed a suit in the International Court of Justice about climate change, damage and their future. But the

court’s ruling in July that action must be taken to limit warming “shows the power of the world if it works together,” she said.

Small island nations have said they will take the court’s decision to the U.N. General Assembly, where votes are decided by majority unlike the veto power of the U.N. security council or the consensus unanimity of U.N. climate talks.

“Now it’s up to the majority of the member states if they want to bring a resolution forward underlining the importance of this case,” said Baerbock, adding that she has to follow the desires of the majority of the 193 U.N. member states.

With a spotlight on the Brazilian Amazon, where agriculture drives a significant chunk of deforestation and planet-warming emissions, many of the activists, scientists and government leaders at United Nations climate talks have a beef. They want more to be done to transform the world’s food system. Protesters gathered outside a new space at the talks, the industry-sponsored “Agrizone,” to call for a transition toward a more grassroots food system, even as hundreds of lobbyists for big agriculture companies are attending the talks.

Raptors rout Wizards to reach NBA Cup quarterfinals

Avdija, Clingan get double-doubles as Trail Blazers beat Warriors

TORONTO, Nov 22, (AP): Brandon Ingram and RJ Barrett each scored 24 points, Scottie Barnes had 23 and the Toronto Raptors became the first team to reach the NBA Cup quarterfinals by beating the Washington Wizards 140-110.

Toronto secured first place in Group A with the victory and Indiana’s loss at Cleveland.

Sandro Mamukelashvili scored a season-high 23 points and Immanuel Quickley added 17 as Toronto improved to 3-0 in NBA Cup play and extended its winning streak to six games.

CJ McCollum scored 20 points, Tre Johnson had 14 and Cam Whitmore added 11 for the woeful Wizards (1-14), who lost their 13th straight and fell to 0-10 against Eastern Conference opponents.

Jamal Shead had a season-high 10 assists for the Raptors. Toronto has won 10 of 11 since a four-game skid that followed a season-opening win at Atlanta.

Trail Blazers 127, Warriors 123

In San Francisco, Deni Avdija had 26 points, a career-high 14 assists and six rebounds as the Portland Trail Blazers held off the Golden State Warriors.

Avdija shot only 6 for 14 from the floor but made 12 of 13 free throws, including two with 9.8 seconds remaining as the Trail Blazers beat the Warriors on the road for the first time since Jan. 1, 2021.

Donovan Clingan had a career-high 22 points and 10 rebounds. Caleb Love scored 26 points, Toumani Camara added 20 and Sidy Cissoko scored 15.

Portland led the entire fourth quarter but Golden State kept it close behind another mercurial night from Stephen Curry. The two-time MVP scored 38 points and made nine 3-pointers, two in the final minutes to keep the Warriors close.

Trailing 115-111 with 4:08 remaining, the Warriors missed a chance to get closer when Butler was called for an offensive foul while battling for a rebound. Golden State coach Steve Kerr challenged but the call was upheld.

Butler scored 20 points and Brandin Podziemski each scored 20 points. Draymond Green had 11 points and eight rebounds in the Warriors’ third consecutive loss.



Golden State Warriors guard Gary Payton II, left, dives for a loose ball as Portland Trail Blazers forward Kris Murray (24) gives chase during the first half of an NBA Cup basketball game in San Francisco. (AP)

Thunder 144, Jazz 112

In Salt Lake City, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 31 points, Oklahoma City had a 33-4 run and the defending champion Thunder routed the Utah to improve to 16-1 and push their winning streak to eight.

Gilgeous-Alexander was shooting less than 27% on 3-pointers after seven games but has made half his long-range shots since then and all three attempts from beyond the arc against Utah to go along with 9-of-13 shooting from the field and 10 of 12 from the line.

Isaiah Joe scored 16 points and Jaylin Williams made five 3s for a season-high 15 points for Oklahoma City. The Thunder - 2-0 in the NBA Cup - shot 61.4% from the field and a season-best 62.2% on 3s, making 23 of 37.

Keyonte George scored 20 points and Lauri Markkanen added 19 for Utah. The Jazz are 5-10 overall and 0-3 in tournament play.

Suns 114, Timberwolves 113

In Phoenix, Collin Gillespie made

a go-ahead jumper with 6.4 seconds left and the Phoenix Suns stunned the Minnesota Timberwolves with a final-minute rally.

Minnesota appeared to have a comfortable 113-105 lead with 1:09 left, but Phoenix rallied to cut it to 113-112 on Jordan Goodwin’s layup with 21.4 seconds remaining.

Minnesota’s Anthony Edwards - who had 41 points - missed two free throws with 12.7 seconds to go, giving the Suns a chance at the win.

Gillespie obliged, driving into the lane and hitting a contested 10-foot jumper for the lead and the last of his 20 points.

Minnesota scrambled for the final shot, but Julius Randle’s 3-pointer at the buzzer was off the mark.

Nuggets 112, Rockets 109

In Houston, Nikola Jokic had 34 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists, and Jamal Murray added 26 points and 10 assists as the Denver Nuggets held on to beat the Houston Rockets.

Jokic, who scored 24 points in the

second half, finished 11 of 20 from the field. Tim Hardaway Jr. had 12 points off the bench for the Nuggets, who shot 53%.

Denver improved to 2-1 in NBA Cup play with one game remaining on Nov. 28 at home against the Spurs, while the Rockets dropped to 1-2 in NBA Cup play, with one game left at the Warriors on Wednesday.

Reed Sheppard scored a career-high 27 points to lead the Rockets, who had their five-game winning streak snapped

Mavericks 118, Pelicans 115

In Dallas, Cooper Flagg scored a career-high 29 points, Naji Marshall hit the go-ahead 3-pointer against his former team with 30.7 seconds left and the Dallas Mavericks beat the New Orleans Pelicans.

The 3-pointer by Marshall, who played four seasons with New Orleans before signing with Dallas in July 2024, put the Mavericks ahead 116-115.

The Pelicans missed three 3-point-

ers in the closing seconds, the last attempt from rookie center Derik Queen with four seconds left after Dallas’ Max Christie made two free throws with 10.9 seconds to go. The Mavericks’ P.J. Washington Jr. grabbed the rebound amid a crowd on the baseline, and the teams scuffled after the final buzzer.

Flagg, the No. 1 overall pick last summer, was 12 of 19 from the field and had seven rebounds and five assists after sitting out an NBA game for the first time Wednesday night.

Washington had 24 points, tying a season high with five 3-pointers, and Christie scored 23, tying a career best with five 3s. The Mavericks are 5-12 overall. They have won two of their last three home games after beginning the season 2-7 at American Airlines Center.

Dallas is 1-2 in NBA Cup play. New Orleans is 0-3.

Heat 143, Bulls 107

In Chicago, Kel’el Ware had 20 points and 14 rebounds, Norman Pow-

ell scored 19 points and the Miami Heat rolled past the Chicago Bulls.

Bam Adebayo scored 18 points, while Pelle Larsson and Davion Mitchell each scored 16 for Miami, which topped the 140-point mark for the fourth time this season - matching its total of such games from the last seven seasons combined.

Miami - which ended the game averaging an NBA-best 124.8 points per game this season - led by 41 in the closing minutes. That was the second-biggest Heat lead of the season and the biggest Bulls deficit (the previous was 25 against New York on Nov. 2).

Ayo Dosunmu scored 23 points for Chicago, which got 19 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists from Josh Giddey. Jalen Smith scored 14 for the Bulls.

The Heat moved to 2-1 in NBA Cup games, a half-game behind Milwaukee (2-0) for the East Group C lead. Chicago (1-2 in Cup games) fell to fourth in the group, a half-game behind New York and a half-game ahead of Charlotte.

Cavaliers 120, Pacers 109

In Cleveland, Donovan Mitchell scored 32 points, Darius Garland had 20 in his return to Cleveland’s lineup and the Cavaliers pulled away in the second half for victory over the Indiana Pacers.

It was the first meeting between the teams since the Pacers eliminated the top-seeded Cavaliers in five games in last season’s Eastern Conference semifinals.

Evans Mobley added 22 points and 12 rebounds for the Cavaliers, who improved to 2-1 in East Group A.

Andrew Nembhard had a career-high 32 points for injury-plagued Indiana, which fell to 0-2 in group play. Pascal Siakham added 26 points and nine rebounds and Bennedict Mathurin scored 21 points.

Nets 113, Celtics 105

In Boston, Nic Claxton had 18 points, 11 rebounds and 12 assists for his first NBA triple-double and the Brooklyn Nets beat the Boston Celtics for their first victory in the NBA Cup in-season tournament.

Michael Porter Jr. scored 33 points, and Noah Clowney had 19 to help Brooklyn snap a nine-game losing streak against Boston. The Nets improved to 3-12 overall and 1-2 in NBA Cup play.

Jaylen Brown led the Celtics with 26 points but was limited to 32 minutes because of trouble. Neemias Queta had 16 points and 12 rebounds as Boston dropped to 8-8 overall and 1-2 in the tournament.

‘The title came at an important moment’

China’s Zhao defeats Robertson to win Saudi Riyadh Season 167 snooker event

RIYADH, Nov 22, (Xinhua): China’s Zhao Xintong lifted the title at the Riyadh Season Snooker 167 Championship in the early hours of Saturday, defeating Australian star Neil Robertson 5-2 in the final at the Global Theater in Boulevard City, the Saudi capital Riyadh.

It was Zhao’s first trophy since being crowned world champion in May.

The final, played over the best of nine frames, got underway at 10 p.m. local time, with 250,000 pounds on offer for the winner. Both players settled quickly, sharing the opening two frames at 1-1.

The third frame proved the turning point of the match. Zhao and Robertson became embroiled in a prolonged safety battle, producing several high-quality snookers. Under pressure in the exchanges, Robertson repeatedly failed to hit the intended red, incurring a total of 20 penalty points.

Zhao, by contrast, remained composed and patient, focusing on tight safety rather than forcing the issue. When Robertson’s errors finally left a clear opportunity, Zhao stepped in to clear and take the frame, moving 2-1 ahead and seizing the momentum.

From there, the young Chinese player began to fully impose himself. Breaking off in the fourth frame, Zhao quickly took control of the table with precise cue-ball control and fluent positional play. A series of assured pots saw him compile a superb 131 break to extend his lead to 3-1.

After a short interval, Robertson began the fifth frame, but Zhao immediately resumed his heavy scoring. Having briefly stretched his shoulder before the restart, he produced another near-faultless scoring visit, compiling a 134 clearance to whitewash the frame and push the score to 4-1, moving to within one frame of the title.



Zhao Xintong (2nd right) of China poses with the trophy during the awarding ceremony after defeating Neil Robertson of Australia in Riyadh Season Snooker 167 Championship in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. (Xinhua)

Facing a steep deficit, Robertson responded in the sixth frame by raising the tempo. After Zhao’s break-off, the Australian chose to open the pack early and launch an aggressive counterattack. With his cue action loosening up and touch returning, Robertson constructed a fluent 91 to pull one back at 4-2, keeping his hopes alive.

However, any prospect of a fightback was quickly checked in the seventh frame. Robertson again broke off, but in the ensuing safety exchanges he twice failed to make contact with the red, conceding eight points in fouls. Zhao maintained a defense-first approach, keeping

the balls tight and waiting for further mistakes. When Robertson once more left an opening after another error, Zhao clinically stepped in to finish the match, sealing a 5-2 victory and the championship.

Earlier on Friday evening, Zhao had come through a high-quality semifinal against England’s Judd Trump, edging the contest 4-3 in a deciding frame to avenge a previous defeat to the same opponent.

“Even for the very top players, the difficulty level is still extremely high,” he added. “With such a big prize fund on the line, it definitely adds extra pressure.

I’ve seen players go after 167 where everything goes smoothly early in the break, only for them to miss on the final black and end up losing the frame. This format gives us a very different kind of psychological test.” **Reflecting on his season, Zhao said that the title in Riyadh came at an important moment.**

“After winning the World Championship this year, my form for much of the season was fairly average, and I didn’t produce many standout results,” he noted. “But in the past month I’ve reached three semifinals, and now I’ve added this title. It’s a big boost to my confidence.

Australia and Uzbekistan to host warmup mini-tournaments

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ZURICH, Nov 22, (AP): World Cup qualifiers Australia and Uzbekistan will prepare for the tournament by hosting FIFA-backed tournaments of intercontinental friendlies in March, soccer’s governing body said.

The “FIFA Series” of mini-tournaments designed to help developing soccer nations debuted two years ago and will add the first women’s events next year, in Brazil, Ivory Coast and Thailand. Brazil will host the Women’s World Cup in 2027.

Australia and World Cup newcomer Uzbekistan are among 42 teams which have secured a spot in the 48-team tournament being co-hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. Six more places will be decided by playoffs in March.

Uzbekistan hired coach Fabio Cannavaro, who captained Italy to the 2006 title, after advancing from its Asian qualifying group in June.

The 42 teams are free to organize their own warm-up games during the nine-day

international break in March, and often pick opponents based on which teams they will play in the World Cup group stage.

Storied men’s teams like defending champion Argentina, Brazil, England, France, Germany and Spain have few problems finding opponents. The U.S. is expected to face Portugal with Cristiano Ronaldo in March.

The FIFA Series “provides a pathway for national teams that rarely face opponents from other continents,” the

governing body said.

Other mini-tournament hosts in March include Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan from European soccer body UEFA, Indonesia from Asia, Mauritius and Rwanda in Africa, plus Puerto Rico in the north American region known as CONCACAF.

In 2024, the first FIFA-backed mini-tournaments were hosted by Algeria, Azerbaijan, Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka. The highest profile event in Egypt was won by Croatia.

‘I’m here to shock the world’

Paul predicts big win over Joshua

MIAMI, Nov 22, (AP): Jake Paul brashly anticipates his brand won’t take a hit with his latest boxing venture.

In fact, the YouTuber-turned-boxer expects his brand to flourish and predicts the outcome of his upcoming fight against recent world heavyweight champion Anthony Joshua will rival Buster Douglas’ knockout win over Mike Tyson in upset proportions.

Paul even predicts that the bout will end via a knockout victory in the fifth round.

Those are brash words indeed, considering that Paul won’t be facing a long-retired champion, former UFC belt holder, ex-NBA players or a fighter giving up 50 pounds.

Many in the boxing world question why the Paul-Joshua match scheduled for Dec. 19 at the Kaseya Center in Miami was made. Paul and Joshua, a two-time heavyweight champion, came together Friday to officially announce the scheduled eight-round bout that will be shown on Netflix.

“I’m here to go out there and shock the world,” Paul said. “I know what I’m capable of. People say, ‘Oh he’s out of his mind.’ I’ve gotten to where I am today because of delusional optimism. No one thinks I’m going to win, so join the list and be ready to be shocked.”

Paul has a 12-1 record five years into his boxing career. His fight docket is highlighted by an eight-round decision over 58-year-old Tyson in an event that attracted 72,300 at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas. The 28-year-old Paul also has victories over Julio Cesar Chavez Jr., as well as retired UFC fighters Anderson Silva and Nate Diaz. In his second bout, Paul stopped former NBA player Nate Robinson in two rounds.

But Joshua offers a much different - and imposing - challenge. It’s true that Joshua’s aura of invincibility has waned following consecutive distance-lasting losses to reigning heavyweight champion Oleksandr Usyk in 2021 and 2022, and in a fifth-round knockout loss against fellow Englishman Daniel Dubois last year.

But Joshua (28-4, 25 KOs) possesses the punching arsenal that result in knockout wins. How Paul, who has fought primarily at the 200-pound cruiserweight class in the majority of his bouts, evades the shot that shatters his dream will be the narrative leading into the fight.

“He’s one of the best heavyweights ever,” Paul said. “But I believe that fighting a smaller man is oftentimes harder for a heavyweight because of the speed difference and because of the foot speed, because of the angles. All that power is great. I just have to avoid that one shot. I believe that I can do that. I know I can pick him apart and score points.”

It will be Joshua’s first bout since the loss to Dubois in September 2024. During his ring break, the 36-year-old Joshua also underwent elbow surgery.

“You can’t underestimate anyone. I’m going to take him seriously,” Joshua said. “After a year out, I’ve realigned a lot in my life. I got my focus back to where it needs to be.”

Joshua acknowledged that anything short of a quick knockout win will be perceived as additional erosion of his standing among the elite heavyweights.

“I’ve seen it. I’ve heard it,” Joshua said. “As I said to Jake respectfully, I need to cut him up. I need to break him up and I need to hurt him. That’s just what we do.”

Jake Paul, left, and Anthony Joshua, right, pose during a news conference promoting their upcoming heavyweight boxing match in Miami. (AP)

Salmiya faces Al-Qurain

Al-Mousawi makes debut with Burgan



Yacoub Al-Mousawi

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

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Burgan Club's handball team takes on Al-Sulaibikhat today at 5:00 PM in the sixth week of the preparatory tournament at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex, while Salmiya will face Al-Qurain at 7:00 PM. Yarmouk leads the standings with nine points, followed by Burgan with eight, Al-Fahaheel with six and both Al-Qurain and Salmiya on five points. Al-Sulaibikhat has four points, Al-Arabi three, and Al-Nasr has yet to earn a point. Today's match marks the official debut of Burgan's new national coach, Yacoub Al-Mousawi, who joined the club two days ago to lead the team for the remainder of the 2025–2026 season, including the upcoming Asian Clubs Championship, which has not yet been scheduled. Al-Mousawi brings extensive

experience, having served as assistant coach at Salmiya for four years before leading the team as head coach for two seasons. Under his guidance, Salmiya finished as runner-up in the Arab Clubs Championship in the penultimate edition, losing the final to Kuwait. Burqan is now the second local club he has taken charge of. Expressing gratitude to Burgan's management, Al-Mousawi said he is well-acquainted with the team and each player, having faced Burgan several times while coaching Salmiya. He stressed that he will work closely with the technical and administrative staff to maintain the team's high performance levels. Al-Mousawi also revealed that the club is seeking a third foreign player to strengthen the squad, following the recent departure of Serbian player Jovica.

Salwa Al-Sabah & Al-Fatat in competitive groups for maiden Volleyball Champ'ship

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

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: The West Asian Volleyball Federation, in partnership with Salwa Al-Sabah Club, has unveiled the schedule for the inaugural West Asia Women's Volleyball Club Championship. The tournament will take place at Khalid Al-Marzouq Hall from December 3 to 13, under the patronage of Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi. Salwa Al-Sabah's women's team will open the championship on the first day against Yemen's Al-Nasr, while Kuwait's Al-Fatat Club will play its opening match on the second day against Lebanon's Al-Qalamoun. The tournament draw placed host Salwa Al-Sabah in the competitive Group 2 alongside Qatar's Al-Arabi, UAE's Sharjah, and Yemen's Al-Nasr. Group 1 features Qatar SC, Al-Fatat (Kuwait), Saudi Arabia's Al-Ula, and Lebanon's Al-Qalamoun, while Group 3 includes Jordan's Al-Nasr, Palestine's Al-Quds, Saudi Arabia's Al-Fay-



Salwa Al-Sabah players in action during their friendly against the U.S. Army women's team.

ha, and Iraq's Sanharib. In preparation for the championship, Salwa Al-Sabah trained intensively and played a friendly match against the U.S. Army women's team, securing a 3–0 victory. Tunisian coach Karim Bouyiad praised the team's commitment and high morale, highlighting the presence of three international professionals: Russian sisters Anna and Anastasia Merkierfa, and Serbian player Almina. Bouyiad also thanked the Salwa Club management, led by Sheikhha Naeema Al-Ahmad, for their strong support in developing the women's volleyball program and preparing the team for the championship.

Italian rider Antonio finishes in second place

Al-Musallam claims 130cm crown at Al-Sakab Show Jumping Championship

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Abrar Al-Musallam of the Hunting & Equestrian Club clinched the title of the second Al-Sakab Show Jumping Championship of the season, topping the main sixth round (130 cm) with an impressive time of 36.96 seconds and zero penalties. Italy's Antonio Morozzo finished runner-up, while Salem Al-Wuhaib secured third place. They were followed by Madi Al-Khamees, Saleh Al-Tabtabaei, and Bandar Jumaa. International rider and course designer Yaacoub Nasrallah oversaw the awards ceremony. Lajos Sixte dominated both the fourth and fifth rounds at heights of 110 cm and 120 cm, respectively, while Abdulwahab Al-Baloul earned first place in the third round (100 cm). Masila Club President Bader Al-Mailam highlighted the remarkable progress witnessed from season to season. With over a decade at the helm of Messilah Club, he praised the ongoing development driven by leaders of Kuwaiti equestrian sport, applauding the significant efforts of local clubs. He noted that the growing number of domestic tournaments has played a key role in preparing riders for international competitions.



Abrar and the top finishers celebrate on the podium.

Al-Sakb Club President Mohammed Al-Mailam emphasized the strong cooperation among local clubs and with the national equestrian federation, which he said includes dedicated individuals committed to advancing and elevating the sport in Kuwait.

Head blazes 123 off 83 balls as Australia crushes England

Aussies extend unbeaten run in home Ashes tests to 16

PERTH, Australia, Nov 22, (AP): Travis Head flipped the narrative and dominated the England pace bowlers with one of the great centuries in Ashes cricket Saturday as Australia raced to an eight-wicket victory with three days to spare in the first test. Head turned England's attack-at-all-costs "Bazball" tactics back on the visitors, clobbering a century from 69 deliveries after being promoted up the order to open the innings when Usman Khawaja was injured. "That innings from Travis Head was out of this world," Australia captain Steve Smith said. In three innings across five sessions, fast bowlers were right on top as 30 wickets fell for 468 runs in 113 overs at Perth - 19 on a chaotic Day 1 and 11 before the tea interval on Day 2. Set 205 to win, Head plundered 123 from 83 balls, clobbering boundaries to all parts of the ground as he



Australia's Jake Weatherald bats on day two of the first Ashes cricket test match between Australia and England in Perth. (AP)

hit the rope 16 times and cleared it on four occasions. Australian media reported it was the first time since 1921 that an Ashes test was won in two days. Head was eventually caught in the outfield, trying to rush the victory, with Australia just 13 runs short. Marnus Labuschagne leveled the scores with a six and was unbeaten on 51 when Australia reached 205-2. England captain Ben Stokes said his team was "a little bit shell

shocked," and described Head's innings as "phenomenal." The result, he said, "obviously hurts extremely, but then we've got to get our heads around it and move on." Australia extended its unbeaten run in home Ashes tests to 16. England hasn't won a test in Australia since winning the 2010-11 series. England was on top for most of the first four sessions but lost control with a batting collapse after the lunch interval on Day 2.

Stokes won the toss, batted and England was skittled for 172, with veteran Australian paceman Mitchell Starc leading an under-strength bowling attack with a career-best 7-58. Australia was then bowled out for 132, giving England a 40-run first innings lead, with Stokes snaring a five-wicket haul after some early fireworks from express bowlers Jofra Archer and Mark Wood. In its second innings, England was cruising at 65-1 until the big momentum shift. From 76-2, England lost three wickets without scoring and slid to be all out for 164. That left Australia with 3 1/3 days to chase a modest victory target. Head achieved it in one session with the third-fastest test century ever by an Australian. The statistics suggested the Perth Stadium pitch was playing like a minefield for most of the first two days. Starc had 10 wickets for the match including the 7-58 in the first innings, starting Day 2 with a spectacular return catch to remove Zac Crawley and also removing Joe Root and Stokes as England was dismissed for 164 in its second innings. England lost three wickets without scoring in a momentum-shifting spell after lunch.

Tristan Stubbs top-scores with 49

Yadav's 3-48 restricts Proteas on historic Guwahati pitch

GUWAHATI, India, Nov 22, (AP): Wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav picked 3-48 as South Africa finished at 247-6 in 81.5 overs on the first day of the second cricket test against India on Saturday. Tristan Stubbs top-scored with 49 off 112 balls, as the Proteas lost four wickets in the final session to concede and advantage gained in the first two sessions on a decent batting surface. Skipper Temba Bavuma also scored 41 off 92 balls, adding 84 runs for the third wicket with Stubbs. Play was called off in the late afternoon because of bad light, with 8.1 overs yet to be bowled. At stumps, Senuran Muthusamy

was unbeaten on 25 runs with Kyle Verreynne (1 not out) for company. Earlier, South Africa had won the toss and opted to bat, reaching 82-1 at tea after the morning session. Aiden Markram got an early life off Jasprit Bumrah - dropped on four at slip - and went on to score 38 off 81 balls with five fours. He added 82 runs for the first wicket with Ryan Rickelton, who scored 35 runs. Bumrah bowled Markram on the penultimate ball before tea. Stubbs was promoted to number three, but Rickelton was out immediately after resumption of play. He was caught behind off Yadav - in



India's Rishab Pant bowls a delivery on the first day of the second cricket test match between India and South Africa in Guwahati, India. (AP)

all, he faced 82 balls and hit five boundaries. Then, Stubbs and Bavuma had their long partnership, together facing 180 deliveries. South Africa lost just the early wicket in the second session as the Indian bowlers struggled to get a breakthrough. The Proteas were 156-2 at lunch. Yashasvi Jaiswal took a wonderful catch to dismiss Bavuma and set things in motion in the third session. He was caught off Ravindra Jadeja (1-30). Stubbs added another 21 off 35 balls with Tony de Zorzi before Rahul snapped up a sharp catch at slip to give Yadav his second wicket in the 64th over.

Batran steps in for Brazilian Lucas

Al-Fahaheel signs Palestinian defender

KUWAIT Club, Nov 22: Al-Fahaheel has strengthened its squad by signing Palestinian defender Islam Batran, who replaces Brazilian Brendon Lucas. The Kuwaiti club currently fields several foreign players, including Algeria's Zakaria Ben Shaa and Brazilians Lucas Brambilla, Bruno Clise-tao, and Vitor Da Silva. Born in 1994, Batran began his career with Shabab Yatta in the 2012–2013 season and has since played for Ahli Al-Khalil (Palestine), Wadi Degla (Egypt), Al-Jazeera and Al-Hussein (Jordan), and Hilal Al-Quds (Palestine) in the 2021–2022 season. He has also represented the Palestinian senior and Olympic national teams. Al-Fahaheel currently sits seventh in the Zain Premier League with



New Al-Fahaheel defender, Islam Batran

10 points from eight rounds, while league leaders Kuwait Club top the table with 19 points.

French skier Rassat rockets from 14th to victory in Slalom World Cup

GURGL, Austria, Nov 22, (AP): Unheralded French skier Paco Rassat had a blistering final run to win the second men's World Cup slalom of the Olympic season Saturday. Rassat was 14th after the opening run but posted the fastest second-run time by far to earn his first career win. He finished 0.07 seconds ahead of Armand Marchant, who gave Belgium its first-ever podium in Alpine skiing's World Cup. First-run leader Atle Lie McGrath of Norway dropped to third, 0.09 behind Rassat. "This is insane," Rassat said. "My dream just came true today, so this is amazing." His victory sent Rassat to the top of the slalom and overall standings. The Frenchman had his best career result last week, when he placed sixth in the first slalom of the season in Levi after only one previous top-10 result, finishing ninth in Wengen in January. "It helped me today to enjoy, to push during this race. It's always easier to come to a new race on (the back of) good results," said Rassat, who was 0.27 seconds faster than any other racer in the final run. Finnish prodigy Eduard Hallberg shared second place with Tanguy Nef after the opening run but lost his balance in a right turn and fell shortly before the finish. Hallberg earned Finland's first World Cup podium result in nearly 18 years last week by finishing third in his home race in Levi.



France's Paco Rassat celebrates on the podium after winning an alpine ski, men's World Cup slalom, next to second-placed Belgium's Armand Marchant, left, in Gurgl, Austria. (AP)

Nef dropped to fifth. Lucas Pinheiro Braathen, who gave Brazil its first-ever Alpine skiing World Cup win last week, finished 10th, and Olympic champion Clement Noel of France was 12th. Slalom world champion Loic Meillard was 20th after the opening run before the Swiss skier failed to finish his second, a week after he started the season in 14th in the race in Finland.

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Burnley's Jaidon Anthony, left, has a shot blocked by Chelsea's Andrey Santos during the English Premier League soccer match between Burnley and Chelsea, in Burnley, England. (AP)

Sports

Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr commends Saudi Arabia's outstanding hosting of Islamic Solidarity Games

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr Al-Sabah, President of the Kuwait and Asian Swimming Federations, praised the significant sporting advancement and development witnessed in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under the wise leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and His Royal Highness Crown Prince and Prime Minister Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr congratulated Saudi Arabia on the exceptional success and impressive organization of the 6th Islamic Solidarity Games, noting that the Kingdom continues to achieve remarkable sporting milestones. He attributed this progress to the directives of the country's leadership, its unwavering support for sports and

athletes, and the dedicated efforts of those leading the sports sector—efforts that have firmly positioned Saudi Arabia on the global sporting stage. He added that this achievement is a source of pride for all GCC nations.

He emphasized that the Islamic Solidarity Games are among the most prominent sporting events held across the Islamic world. Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr also praised the tremendous work of the Supreme Organizing Committee, led by Prince Fahad bin Jalawi, in delivering a highly successful edition of the Games. He concluded by expressing his sincere wishes for continued progress, prosperity, and stability for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, reaffirming its status as a nation of security and development under its wise leadership.



Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr Al-Sabah

Golden farewell for Kuwait



Gold medalist Yaqub Al-Youha



Silver medalist Issa Al-Zankawi

Al-Youha and Al-Zankawi star at Islamic Solidarity Games

RIYADH, Nov 22: Kuwait wrapped up its participation in the 6th Islamic Solidarity Games—recently concluded in Riyadh—by securing the gold medal in the 110m hurdles through star athlete Yaqub Al-Youha. His teammate Issa Al-Zankawi added silver in the discus throw, lifting Kuwait's total medal tally at the event to seven.

Kuwait's haul also included:

- Gold in the under-75 kg kumite by Omar Al-Jassem
- Gold in the under-60 kg kumite by Abdullah Shaban
- Silver in kata by Sayed Mohammed Al-Mousawi

Bronze in the women's under-55 kg kumite by Asrar Al-Jassem

Silver in the "Rocket League" esports competition earned by Youssef Al-Mutairi, Abdullah Al-Shammari, and Mohammed Al-Mutairi

The Kuwaiti contingent featured 65 male and female athletes competing across 11 sports: handball, athletics, karate, jiu-jitsu, fencing, show jumping, swimming, esports, weightlifting, camel racing, and duathlon.

Head of the Kuwaiti delegation and Director General of the Kuwait Olympic Committee, retired Lt. Gen. Mohammed Al-Khalifan, praised the athletes' strong performances, describing Kuwait's participation as successful on all fronts.

He said the athletes displayed commitment, discipline, and admirable spirit throughout the competition, noting that the seven medals reflect the hard work of federations, players, and technical

staff and highlight the continued progress of Kuwaiti sports regionally and within the Islamic world.

Al-Khalifan extended gratitude to Saudi Arabia for its exceptional organization and warm hospitality, calling the Games a model of excellence that strengthened unity and cooperation among athletes from across the Islamic community.

He affirmed that the Kuwait Olympic Committee will continue supporting national federations and athletes to enhance Kuwait's presence in major continental and international events, adding that the achievements in Riyadh will be a strong motivator for future success.

He concluded by expressing pride in all those who contributed to Kuwait's participation—administrators, coaches, and athletes—stressing that the ultimate goal remains raising Kuwait's flag high in every sporting arena.

Kuwait judo team clinches 9 gold medals at West Asia Championship

AMMAN, Nov 22, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti juniors' judo team delivered a stellar performance at the West Asia Judo Championship in Amman, securing nine gold medals, four silver, and one bronze.

Hussein Akbar, head of the Kuwaiti delegation, told KUNA on Saturday that the outstanding results reflected the team's rigorous training, and he praised the Public Sports Authority for its strong support of the country's sports federations.

Among the champions, Abdulwahab Al-Shemmari, Ali Al-Ramzi, Salman Kamal, Mohammad Al-Shatti, and Ahmad Al-Eidan claimed gold medals, while Abuljelil Al-Shemmari and Khaled Al-Kandari earned silver, and Turki Al-Enezi took bronze.

The youth team excelled as well, capturing four gold medals through Khaled Al-Kandari, Ali Al-Shemmari, Mohammad Al-Shatti, and Ahmad Al-Eidan, with Ali Al-Ramzi adding a silver to Kuwait's medal tally.



KUNA photo
The head of the Kuwaiti delegation, Hussein Akbar poses with the Kuwaiti champions.

Al-Shamiya to face Al-Jazeera in Crown Prince Cup playoff



Players fight for the ball.

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 22: Al-Shamiya secured a spot in the final playoff round against Al-Jazeera next Thursday for a place in the Crown Prince Cup, following a 3-1 victory over Sporty at Abdullah Al-Khalifa Stadium.

The winner of the Al-Shamiya vs. Al-Jazeera match will advance to the main tournament, scheduled to begin in January.

Sporty initially took the lead through Ibrahim Al-

Tamimi in the 14th minute, but Al-Shamiya responded quickly, with Khaled Fahd equalizing just two minutes later. Fawaz Al-Rashidi then sealed the win with two late goals in the 77th and 86th minutes.

Both Al-Shamiya and Sporty are participating in the tournament for the first time, while Al-Jazeera competed last season but was eliminated in the preliminary round by Kuwait Club.

The Football Association's Competitions Committee arranged the playoff matches among the three teams to determine the 16 clubs that will advance to the Round of 16 in January.

Senior team boosts preparations ... U-23 kicks off Dubai camp

Kuwait makes strong start at U-17 Asian qualifiers

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

BANGKOK, Nov 22: Kuwait's U-17 team got off to a strong start in the AFC Asian Cup qualifiers, defeating Turkmenistan 1-0 at Chonburi Stadium in Thailand, in the opening match of Group F.

Omar Redha scored the decisive goal in stoppage time, giving Kuwait its first three points in a group that also includes Mongolia, the Maldives, and hosts Thailand. The "Azraq" will face Mongolia in its second group match on Wednesday, as no matches are scheduled for tomorrow.

Only the top team from each of the seven groups will advance to next year's finals in Saudi Arabia. Kuwait's U-17 squad is aiming to reach the finals for the sixth time, marking a return since its last appearance in 2014.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's senior team continues daily training at Al-Oqla Stadium in Doha ahead of its Arab Cup playoff against Mauritania on Wednesday. Since concluding the Egypt training camp last Wednesday, head coach Hélio Sousa has focused on enhancing players' fitness, strengthening midfield organization, and correcting errors observed during friendlies against Tanzania and Gambia.

Kuwait aims to qualify after missing the previous edition. If successful, they will join Group D alongside Egypt, Jordan, and the UAE, with their first group-stage match against Egypt set for December 2.



Omar Redha celebrates with teammates after scoring the decisive goal.

Kuwait's Olympic (U-23) team also started a training camp yesterday in Dubai. The camp will run until December 2, before the team departs for Doha to participate in the Gulf U-23 Cup, hosted by Qatar from December 4 to 16.

Chelsea beats Burnley to gain ground on leader Arsenal

LONDON, Nov 22, (AP): Chelsea reduced the gap to Premier League leader Arsenal to three points with a 2-0 win over Burnley on Saturday.

Pedro Neto and Enzo Fernandez scored at Turf Moor. Arsenal plays Tottenham on Sunday.

Neto headed Chelsea in front in the 37th minute for his second goal in as many games and his fourth this season.

Fernandez sealed the win in the 88th with a low shot from inside the box.

Burnley remained one place above the relegation zone in 17th, but could be dragged into the bottom three depending on later results.

Meanwhile, Premier League teams agreed Friday to introduce spending caps in England's top flight from next season.

Clubs' on-field spending will be restricted to 85% of their soccer revenue and net profit or loss on player sales. There will

also be an allowance of an extra 30% - but if clubs exceed that limit they face a points deduction.

English soccer's top clubs voted to implement the new "Squad Cost Ratio" (SCR) and "Sustainability and Systemic Resilience" (SSR) financial rules. They replace the "Profitability and Sustainability Rules" (PSR), which resulted in points deductions for Everton and Nottingham Forest in recent years.

The League said the new regulations were more closely aligned to those used by European soccer's governing body UEFA.

It said the new rules "promote the opportunity for all of its clubs to aspire to greater success, while protecting the competitive balance and compelling nature of the League."

Squad costs cover the salaries of players and the head coach, as well as agents' and transfer fees.