



Scan the QR code to access the Arab Times WhatsApp Channel



Amiri Diwan photo

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Monday a letter from King Hamad bin Esa Al-Khalifah of Bahrain to take part in the 46th regular session of the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), delivered by the Bahraini Ambassador to Kuwait Salah Ali Al-Maleki.

Amir invited to attend GCC top event

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Monday a letter from King Hamad bin Esa Al-Khalifah of Bahrain inviting His Highness the Amir to take part in the 46th regular session of the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on Wednesday (De-

cember 3). Handing His Highness the invite at Bayan Palace was Bahraini Ambassador to the country Salah Ali Al-Maleki.

Attending were Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Sabah, director of His Highness the Amir's office retired

Continued on Page 5



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

His Highness the Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and the Omani Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Saleh Al-Kharousi at the cake-cutting ceremony.

Ties with Kuwait deep-rooted: envoy

Oman's Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Saleh Al-Kharousi praised the close and distinguished historical relations between the two Arabian Gulf countries.

The Ambassador said in a speech during a ceremony held by the Omani Embassy in Kuwait celebrating the Sultanate's National Day that relations be-

tween the two countries enjoy special care and unlimited support from His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and his brother, His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

See Also Page 2

Huge number of companies fined in 'transparency drive'

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced that it implemented a comprehensive project during 2024/2025 to enhance transparency regarding beneficial owners. The project began with a cleanup of the commercial register, removing 73,700 inactive companies and updating the data of thousands of other companies in cooperation with several government agencies, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press release, the ministry explained that the first phase of the project covered 73,712 companies, which were imposed a fine of KD 1,000 (approximately \$3,255) each, totaling KD 2.845 million (approximately \$5.6 million).

The second phase included 1,836 companies, each fined KD 2,000 (approximately \$6,511), totaling KD 3.672 million (approximately \$9.2 million).

Awareness campaigns, workshops, media content, and guidance manuals helped raise the registration rate from 42.8 percent at the end of 2024 to 98.62 percent in October 2025.

The ministry verifies the registration of the beneficial owner by sending an authentication request through the electronic civil ID card application "Kuwait Mobile ID" to confirm the beneficiary's identity.

An official notification is sent after authentication via the government's Sahel application to the registered beneficial owner to verify the accuracy of the registration.

Continued on Page 5

WIDP holds forum

National unity is key in overcoming obstacles

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Women's Institute for Development and Peace (WIDP) on Monday held the first Kuwait Forum for Social Dialogue and Strengthening National Unity in the Gulf Region at the Arab Center for Educational Research for the Gulf States in Shamiya.



Al-Jouaan

With the slogan, "Peace is the Security of Nations," the forum is under the patronage of Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal.

In her opening remarks at the forum, Head of the Institute Attorney Kawthar Al-Jouaan pointed out "the forum is an approach adopted by our countries since the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council

(GCC), embodying our noble values and our commitment to strengthen national unity. This is our starting point in our beloved Kuwait." She stressed that national unity is the key in overcoming obstacles and it enables the GCC countries to keep pace with time, not only in terms of development and progress, but also in global events.

Al-Jouaan added "we look forward to the unity and integration of our nations in the economic, political, security and social spheres, with the hope of strengthening cooperation as per our shared action plans." She asserted that the GCC serves as a model of successful integration and interdependence at the regional and international levels.

Continued on Page 5

MoCI nods new rules for imported vehicles

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Minister of Commerce and Industry and Chairman of the Public Authority for Industry (PAI) Khalifa Al-Ajl approved the new regulations for imported used vehicles and motorcycles, including the cancellation of the previous Kuwaiti technical regulations and standards.

The new regulations will take effect six months after publication in the official gazette, 'Kuwait Al-Yaum', on Sunday.

Al-Ajl also issued Ministerial Decision No. 53/2025 on the application of the Gulf Standard for Terrestrial Audio Broadcasting Receivers (T-DAB) as a mandatory Kuwaiti technical regulation. The decision stipulates the implementation of the technical requirements outlined in the Gulf Standard for Radio Broadcast Receivers, as adopted in Ministerial Resolution No. 12/2023, for vehicles starting with models 2027 onwards.

In another development, the acting director general of PAI signed seven administrative decisions -- five on imposing administrative penalties and two on closing

Continued on Page 5

Digitization pivotal for '35 vision

Cornerstone of strong Kuwait economy: Minister Al-Omar

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): Minister of State for Communications Omar Al-Omar reaffirmed on Monday the government's commitment to accelerating digital transformation and building a modern system that enhances government efficiency and supports a competitive national economy.

Speaking at the Innovation Day forum, Al-Omar said digitalization has become a cornerstone of strong economies,

stressing that digital transformation is not an option but a national necessity to achieve the New Kuwait 2035 vision.

The forum, organized by SAP, was attended by the German Ambassador along with technology leaders and decision-makers.

The minister highlighted the political leadership's focus on developing digital infrastructure, raising the efficiency of state institutions, and strengthening partnerships with the private sector and global technology firms.

He stated that this would improve institutional performance, enhance service quality, and create an envi-



Omar Al-Omar

ronment conducive to innovation. Al-Omar emphasized that investing in national talent remains cen-

tral to the country's vision, noting ongoing efforts to advance training programs and expand cooperation with international institutions.

He pointed to the recent education-focused memorandum of understanding between the Central Agency for Information Technology and SAP as a step toward equipping Kuwaiti youth with future skills.

German Ambassador Hans-Christian Freiherr von Reibnitz praised the strong and steadily advancing ties between Kuwait and Germany, expressing his country's readiness to support Kuwait's 2035 vision across political and economic sectors.

SAP Kuwait General Manager Sundus Bushahri highlighted the

depth of Kuwait-Germany strategic cooperation and SAP's role in advancing the country's digital innovation through data-driven and AI-based solutions.

She noted that SAP supports 98 of the world's 100 largest companies and facilitates over 84 percent of global trade through its systems.

Bushahri announced that SAP Kuwait will launch its first AI Hackathon in February 2026 in partnership with Kuwait University, bringing together government entities, universities, and emerging innovators to develop advanced AI solutions.

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photo

The trainees and NATO officials pose for a picture.

NATO-ICI Regional Center begins course on integrity

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): The NATO and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) Regional Center Monday launched a training course entitled "Building Integrity in Operations", in cooperation with the Combined Allied Forces Command in Naples.

Twenty-two trainees from all Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries joined the training course.

Continued on Page 5

Boost in ties tops talks agenda

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): Acting Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Dr. Subaih Abdulaziz Al-Mukhaizeem met with Safaa El-Tayeb El-Kogali, World Bank Division Director for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan (MENAAP), to discuss strengthening ties.

Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem, also Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, and El-Kogali, a Sudanese national, explored ways of sustaining strategic partnership and increasing the Bank's support for Kuwait's economic reforms.

Continued on Page 5

Food market workers under PAM's scrutiny

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) issued Administrative Circular No. 11/2025 to direct inspection teams to conduct a comprehensive investigation of workers employed in food handling activities, in accordance with Article 32 of the Regulations for Granting Work Permits and Official Accreditation from the Gulf Bureau for Classification and Description of Occupations (ISCO-8), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

PAM explained on its official X account that the inspections will cover all food handling occupations listed in the updated Gulf Guide (October 2025), which includes more than 350 occupations in various sectors. These include: ■ Culinary and food preparation roles, such as chefs, meal preparers, food processing machinery operators, bakers, and dairy and meat product makers.

■ Direct sales and food handling occupations, including vendors of vegetables, fruits, fish, meat, dairy products, juices, sweets, and beverages.

■ Agricultural and animal production jobs related to food, such as crop farmers, livestock, poultry, and fish breeders, as well as food processing workers.

■ Food manufacturing professions at all levels, including operators of pasteurization, drying, canning, milling, juice, confectionery, fermentation, freezing, and other machinery.

■ Quality, supervision, and control roles, such as nutritionists, quality inspectors, technicians, and supervisors of restaurants and food factories.

Continued on Page 5

Mol staffer jailed five years in 'funds scam'

By Jaber Al-Hamoud/Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Court of Cassation on Monday sentenced an employee at the Citizen Service Center in the Ministry of Interior to five years imprisonment with hard labor for embezzling KD104,000 in salaries he received during a 10-year period of absence from work.

The court overturned the acquittal decisions in the two previous appeals and ordered the dismissal of the defendant from public office. He was also ordered to return the full amount he unlawfully obtained, in addition to paying a fine double the amount, bringing the total fine to KD312,000.

The court emphasized in its reasoning that the employee's action is considered misappropriation of public funds with malicious intent and abuse of his public office.

It stressed that the salaries he received without working is an attack on State funds, and that the punishment is necessary to serve as general deterrence and to protect public money.

Continued on Page 5

News watch

JEDDAH: The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Monday restated its commitment to backing member states' fight against "digital violence" and promoting women's empowerment and protecting women and girls from all walks of life.

In a press release marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the OIC cautioned against alarmingly surging violence through internet, artificial intelligence (AI)-based identity theft and the sharing of content without consent, which growingly targets women and girls, especially journalists, activists, and public figures.

It underlined that digital violence marks continued abuse against women's safety, psychological condition, economic participation and freedom of expression.

The Jeddah-based OIC called on all member states to promote legal protection, punish digital platforms, overhaul legislation pertinent to digital crimes and revamp digital culture in a way that complies with the organization's plan of improving women's status, and relevant ministerial decisions.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is annually held on November 25 on the basis of a United Nations (UN) Resolution urging governments and world non-government organizations to organize an international event to raise awareness about violence against women worldwide. (KUNA)



KUNA photo

Public Relations and Media director, Musab Al-Otaibi with Sudanese refugees.

Kuwait charity to help out refugees

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): Tanmeia Charity Society on Monday announced the launch of humanitarian mission supporting Sudanese refugees in Chad through a series of relief and development projects.

The society's Public Relations and Media director, Musab Al-Otaibi, told KUNA that Tanmeia places special priority on the Sudanese refugee issue,

Continued on Page 5



8 Gulf Bank marks 65 years with visit from Dr. Abdulaziz AlEssa



9 Kuwait Finance House honors winners of Innovation Challenge

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:56	Asr	14:31
Sunrise ..	06:19	Maghrib ..	16:50
Zohr	11:35	Isha	18:11

Local

Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Mild and clouds will increase gradually with light variable wind, with speeds of 06-22 km/h.			
By Night: Rather cold to cold			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	28	21	
Kuwait Airport	29	10	
Abdaly	28	11	
and partly cloudy to cloudy with light variable wind, with speeds of 06-22 km/h.			
Jahra	28	15	
Failaka Island	26	11	
Salmiyah	27	21	
Ahmadi	29	15	
Nuwaisib	27	15	
Wafra	28	12	
Salmy	27	10	

Ambassador Al-Kharousi praises wise guidance and historical roots

Oman National Day reception affirms deep Kuwaiti-Omani ties

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya attended the celebration organized by the Omani Embassy on the occasion of the National Day of the Sultanate of Oman at Waldorf Astoria Hotel recently.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah, and a large number of ministers, officials and heads of diplomatic also attended the event.

Al-Yahya expressed happiness over the opportunity to attend the celebration. “We extend our congratulations to Oman and its people on this blessed day. I am happy to be part of this celebration. We wish them continuous progress,” he said.

On the other hand, Omani Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Saleh Al-Kharousi praised the close and distinguished historical relations between the two countries, which enjoy special care and wise guidance under their respective political leaderships.

He said: “Kuwaiti-Omani relations are deeply rooted and fraternal. The leaderships of both countries have taken political, economic and cultural steps, which reinforced the paths of bilateral cooperation. This year witnessed important steps on the path of political cooperation, including the fraternal visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Oman on Oct 14, heading a high-level delegation, and his meeting with Sultan Haitham bin Tariq. During this meeting, cordial and positive discussions took place, reflecting the depth of the firmly established fraternal relations between the two countries. They also talked about ways to support the



His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah attends the celebration.

course of cooperation in various fields, especially in the economic field, in order to contribute to developing coordination and integration on the commercial and investment levels to serve mutual interests and achieve the aspirations of the two brotherly peoples for further progress and prosperity.”

He disclosed that “relations between the two countries are witnessing growth at different levels, particularly in the economic field, as Kuwait is one of the most important investing countries in the Sultanate, with investments valued at about \$1.362 billion this year, placing it first among the Gulf and Arab countries and third globally after the United Kingdom and the United States. The volume of trade exchange between the two countries reached around \$5 billion last year, an



Oman Ambassador with Foreign Affairs Minister Al-Yahya during the Omani National Day celebration.

increase of nearly 120 percent compared to the previous year.”

On the occasion, Al-Kharousi asserted “on this National Day, we celebrate the journey of our beloved nation and the remarkable achievements it has been witnessing since the launching of the blessed renaissance in 1970, whose foundations were laid by the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said – may Allah have mercy on him.”

He explained that the National Day is a celebration of the rich history of Oman, as well as the founding of Al Busaidi dynasty on Nov 20, 1744. “At the time, the founder, Ahmed bin Said Al Busaidi, unified the nation and established the foundations of the modern Omani State based on sovereignty, unity and dignity,” he added.

He affirmed that Oman continues its journey under the leadership of Sultan Haitham bin Tariq with a renewed vision, which balances tradition and modernization, while looking forward to a more prosperous and sustainable future.

He disclosed that this year, significant steps were taken to enhance the efficiency of public spending, increase the attractiveness of the investment environment in the Sultanate, and sign international agreements to support innovation and the business environment. He indicated that Oman is confidently moving towards achieving its national priorities and strategies, which promote a balance between development and the environment, enshrine the values of justice and tolerance, and instill these values in its citizens.

He said Oman established a firm diplomatic approach based on neutrality, balance, dialogue and respect for the United Nations Charter and international law. He called for prioritizing wisdom, containing escalation in the region, and adopting peaceful means to resolve conflicts without interfering in the internal affairs of other states.

He reaffirmed the unwavering support of Oman for the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to establish their independent State within the June 4, 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with international resolutions.

He concluded “the Sultanate urges the international community to work diligently to achieve the two-state solution, as it is just and the only path toward establishing a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East. Anything less is merely a temporary solution that does not serve the collective interest or attain the desired stability.”



Top Kuwaiti officials, dignitaries, and prominent figures attend the celebration of Oman’s National Day at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, highlighting the strong ties between Kuwait and Oman.

GCC unites for energy and climate dialogue in Kuwait

Officials push clearer, science-based stance

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): The Ministry of Oil and the Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Kuwait Diplomatic Institute, in coordination with the GCC Secretariat General, conducted on Sunday a Gulf-wide workshop on Energy and Climate, attended by Minister of Oil Tariq Al-Roumi.

In a statement, Al-Roumi expressed pride in Kuwait for hosting the workshop, noting its success reflects the efforts and commitment of both organizing institutions, adding that it reinforces the GCC’s standing voice in global energy and climate dialogue.

Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Saud Al-Nasser Diplomatic Institute, Ambassador Nasser Al-Subaih, said that the workshop comes at a time when oil- and gas-producing nations are under rising global pressures.

He added that many climate discussions unfairly ignore the historical responsibility of industrialized states.

Al-Subaih stressed that Gulf oil and gas exporting states are being targeted by selective, unilateral measures that threaten their exports, while their real role as investors in renewables, hydrogen, and low-carbon technology is often downplayed.

He added that one of the workshop’s objectives is to build Gulf capacity to deliver a factbased, science-driven narrative that rebuts misperceptions in international forums and clarifies the Gulf’s positive contribution to the global energy transition.

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Oil Sheikh Dr. Nimer Fahad Al-Malik Al-Sabah said the workshop is especially vital amid the current volatile energy market.

He emphasized the need for unified Gulf coordination and a clear, responsible message to the world, underlining that media plays a central role in communicating the

GCC’s balanced policies - supporting both energy security and environmental protection.

The Undersecretary also stressed the importance of equipping Gulf institutions with effective communication tools and accurate data-driven media strategies, to present their positions with professionalism and transparency.

Foe her pat, Director of Public Relations and Petroleum Media at the Ministry Sheikha Tamader Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, affirmed Kuwait’s commitment to strengthening specialized media discourse in energy and climate.

She highlighted the need to train national oil-sector professionals in communication and analysis, so they can articulate the GCC’s evolving role in climate action and sustainable development.

Sheikha Tamader noted that the idea for such a specialized workshop was proposed in Kuwait during a meeting of GCC oil undersecretaries, recognizing a growing need to communicate scientifically backed, balanced narratives on energy.



Minister of Oil Tariq Al-Roumi mediates between the participants.

KUNA photo

Culture links Kuwait-Peru diplomacy

House of Al-Sadu hosts Peru’s traditional weaving exhibition

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Director General of Al-Sadu Society Sheikha Bibi Al-Duaij affirmed that ‘Bait Al-Sadu’ (House of Al-Sadu) is committed to being an open platform for communication between various traditional weaving cultures around the world.

Sheikha Bibi made the statement when she attended the two-day Peruvian traditional weaving exhibition and workshop held at Bait Al-Sadu. She pointed out that the Society’s hosting of the fourth exhibition of the Peruvian Embassy in Kuwait is part of the approach, which connects craftswomen and weavers from different countries.

She disclosed “since last summer, the Society has been hosting a number of Peruvian weavers who presented live demonstrations of traditional weaving and dyeing techniques, in addition to showcasing unique products that reflect their craft heritage. This interaction is a valuable opportunity for the members of the Society to learn the skills of Peruvian weavers and benefit from their expertise. This is invaluable for Peruvian weavers as well, because we opened a door for them to receive special wool orders from Kuwait, which are then sent to remote areas in Peru. Peruvian newspapers recently reported on orders arriving from Kuwait to those regions. This, in itself, is a beautiful example of communication between peoples.”

Meanwhile, Assistant Secretary General for the Arts Sector at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Mosaed Al-Zamel stated that the Traditional Peruvian Textiles Exhibition, hosted by the Peruvian Embassy at Bait Al-Sadu, is a space for cultural exchange between peoples, highlighting the close connection between Kuwaiti heritage and that of other peoples despite the geographical distance.

He pointed out that this type of traditional craft does not disappear, as it is rather revived in different countries around the world, even in the North Atlantic region, where some still practice traditional weaving similar to Sadu.

Moreover, Peruvian Ambassador to Kuwait Carlos Jiménez expressed his deep appreciation for the support of NCCAL and Bait Al-Sadu in hosting this event.

Jiménez confirmed that the Peruvian traditional weaving exhibition and workshop are part of the celebration of the fifth anniversary of the estab-



Top & above: Photos during Peru’s traditional weaving exhibition.

lishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. He explained that the choice of weaving as a theme was not accidental, as it is due to the potential as a cultural bridge between the two peoples.

He said the embassy invited renowned Peruvian weaving expert Martina Quispe to participate in the exhibition and present a live demonstration of traditional spinning and dyeing techniques, both current and future.

LOCAL

diwaniya



A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Subsidized food remains a crisis 50 years on

"THE crisis of smuggled food supplies continues, with these goods being sold in markets and on street stalls abroad. Those smuggling essential food items, particularly milk, rice, sugar, and possibly other commodities, are not doing so for personal use or for their families, but to profit from the basic needs of Kuwaitis," Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"This situation raises some important questions - How and through what methods is the smuggling of these supplies facilitated? Are employees or vendors within the food distribution system helping to divert supplies from cooperative society warehouses or main distribution centers? Or are the citizens entitled to these supplies selling them? Or are intermediaries involved, offering these goods for sale after they reach the countries to which they are smuggled?"

"Perhaps some families who do not need their rations give them to expatriate residents, who then sell or export them to buyers in their home countries. These residents offer the smuggled rations in local markets, where they are in demand due to their quality. I have personally seen certain types of 'ration milk' being sold at stalls in popular markets in Asian countries. We, as citizens, do not feel that our rights are being violated by residents who smuggle rations abroad. As families subject to the ration system, we receive our full entitlement. Therefore, the smuggling routes come from multiple directions, and perhaps some families are even complicit in the smuggling.

"The smuggling of rations is not limited to Kuwait. In Lebanon, for example, a Lebanese friend told me that rations allocated to some eligible families are sold or smuggled abroad, strangely enough, even to Europe. These people act like black market traders, forming an international network or mafia involved in trafficking food supplies, just as they traffic drugs, dollars, gold, and weapons. It is truly heart-breaking that food meant for impoverished citizens, entitled to their basic necessities, is being snatched from their hands to be sold on the black market. Yet, we are not surprised that smugglers prefer Kuwaiti food supplies, which are reputed to be top-quality, free from adulteration, impurities, or expired products.

"The prominent merchant Najib Musaed Al-Saleh, son of a respected businessman, has spoken out against the government's distribution of subsidized food rations to citizens, stating, "The subsidy system should be abolished, and eligible citizens should be able to purchase their rations directly from cooperative societies through the 'Sahel' application." I fully agree with this view, as we have long advocated in the press, calling for a review of the subsidy system and its allocation to citizens with low or middle incomes. However, it must be noted that the government continues its

policy of providing subsidies to the wealthy, the poor, and those with limited incomes alike.

"Mr. Najib Al-Saleh addressed the government via the media, saying that merchants "do not need to be given milk, sugar, and rice as a favor." He argues that the same merchants who act as subsidy agents benefit from the subsidized rations, just as the poor and those with limited incomes do.

"However, the government does not want to upset the citizens. It operates on the principle of treating everyone equally. While we cannot deny that there are poor Kuwaiti families who deserve assistance, if there are no such citizens, then the subsidy system should be cut off for them, including social assistance such as pensions paid by the Ministry of Social Affairs to some families. Anyone who assumes that all Kuwaitis are equally wealthy, with millions in their accounts, does not understand and will never understand the reality of the Kuwaiti situation.

"I say, and I am not alone in saying this, that three-quarters of Kuwaiti citizens are poor and burdened by accumulated debt, which consumes most of their salaries and pensions. Therefore, yes, Kuwaitis deserve subsidies, but these should be based on the assessment and living conditions of each family. The government, like all countries in the world, should impose taxes on high incomes. It is unreasonable for those earning millions every month to be treated the same as citizens with meager salaries, struggling with debt to banks, companies, and rent. The Cabinet needs a clearer vision."

Also:

"Such is fate; it takes beloved souls in an instant, leaving endless sorrow in the hearts of those who cherished them. The pain of separation lingers, weighing heavily on the hearts of your loved ones, who are struck by the news of your passing as if by lightning. They had been waiting to see you or speak with you, sharing love and affection," Security affairs reporter **Munif Nayef** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"O man of great stature and honor, you were never a fleeting presence in our hearts, nor a mere passerby. You were a noble and generous brother, overflowing with chivalry, honor, and kindness. Abu Mishal, I don't know how we will bear receiving condolences or how we will endure your absence. We know we will never see you again, nor will we enjoy your smile or your conversation.

"Abu Mishal, how can I describe the faces that accompanied you on the day of your departure, sharing in the grief and sorrow of your loss? How can I describe the eyes brimming with tears, trying to hide their pain, or the crowds that followed your pure soul, their hearts heavy with sorrow? Truly, the day of your passing was a momentous one. The late Saleh Ghannam Al-Enezi (May God have mercy on him) was a distinguished security leader who held several positions in the Ministry of Interior, including Director General of the Drug Control General Department, ultimately retiring as a Lieutenant General.

"Abu Mishal never ceased to connect with

people in their joys and sorrows, always among the first to offer support. About two months ago, I met Abu Mishal at an event, with Mansour Al-Sultan by my side. Abu Mishal greeted us with his characteristic smile and shared words of affection that will remain etched in my memory forever.

"My dear, beloved Abu Mishal, your sudden departure has left a deep void in our hearts, and you will always be remembered in our prayers and supplications. O God, forgive him and have mercy on him. O God, make his grave a garden of Paradise. Amen."

□ □ □

"Many governments that claim to support the suffering people of Gaza are offering nothing but empty words. Around a hundred Gazans were stranded at Johannesburg Airport in South Africa, a country that professes solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian people," Palestinian journalist **Adnan Makkawi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"They were denied permission to disembark from the plane they have been stuck on for nearly two days because South Africa had initially refused to allow them entry into its vast territory. Why? The greatest injustices faced by these Gazans are the loss of their money, health, children, homes, and education in the devastated Gaza Strip. Every country in the world, including Arab nations, refuses to receive Gazans who are seeking a new, dignified life, a life that would benefit both them and others, under the flimsy pretext of preventing their displacement from their own



Adnan Makkawi

land, the destroyed Gaza Strip. The land has been stolen - 53 percent controlled by Netanyahu's forces and 47 percent by Sinwar's forces. The people of Gaza live without work, housing, education, or dignity. They depend on daily aid and are facing constant threats of slaughter at the hands of the brutal Zionist-American war machine. Everyone talks

about the stability of the ceasefire, yet people continue to die every day, and this is a disgrace beyond all measure.

"Why is our displacement, or even our resettlement, denied? We, the people of Gaza, have lived in the countries where we sought refuge, contributing to their development and progress for many years. Gaza is finished, Jaafar. It was once a city with a soul. The free world has a duty to receive us as refugees or citizens so we can live with dignity, like the rest of humanity. For those who wish to emigrate, that is, those requesting resettlement in any country they choose, this is their human right. Refer to the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued after World War II, which was signed by all countries, including South Africa and the Arab states.

— Compiled by Simi K.Kutty

Briefs

Corpse found off coast of Al-Mangaf

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Marine patrols from the General Directorate of Coast Guard and the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) recovered the body of an unknown individual from the sea off the coast of Mangaf on Sunday, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the Operations Room of the Ministry of Interior had received a report of a body floating on the water's surface.

The body was handed over to forensic investigators to determine the deceased's identity and cause of death. Relevant authorities have launched an investigation to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident.

□ □ □

61 held: The General Directorate of Emergency Police conducted a series of security and traffic campaigns from November 16 to 22, resulting in the arrest of 61 individuals wanted for various offenses, 19 people without identification, and the impounding of 25 vehicles wanted by the courts, reports Al-Anba daily.

Patrols also responded to 11 fights, 178 traffic accidents, and two pedestrian accidents.

□ □ □

3 promoted: The official gazette "Kuwait al-Youm" published Decree No. 214/2025 concerning the promotion of three members of the Fatwa and Legislation Department to the position of First-Class Deputy, reports Al-Anba daily.

The three members are:

1. Noura Ahmed Mohammed Daoud Madouh
2. Fallah Fahad Fallah Al-Ajmi
3. Nawaf Mohammed Mohsen Al-Afasi Al-Mutairi

□ □ □

Tents removed: Fahaaheel Center Supervisor Mohammed Al-Hajri confirmed that, based on directives from the Deputy Director General of Hawally and Ahmadi Municipality Eng. Ahmed Al-Hazim, and the Director of Ahmadi Municipality Saad Al-Khuraifi, coordination was carried out with the Environment Public Authority (EPA), Ministry of Interior, and Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) to remove unlicensed camps, reports Al-Anba daily.

Al-Hajri revealed that six camps violating municipality regulations were removed, and 53 environmental warnings and citations were issued, affirming that inspections and the removal of unauthorized camps erected without permits will continue.

□ □ □

Thief returns Rolex watch: The Hawally Investigation Department in Nagra Investigation Office, affiliated with the General Department of Criminal Investigation, has solved an unusual theft case in which a man stole a valuable Rolex watch from a restaurant restroom but later returned it after failing to sell it, reports Al-Anba daily.

The incident began when a customer of a popular fast-food restaurant in Nagra reported that he had left his Rolex watch, valued at approximately KD 4,800, in the restroom of the restaurant.

The restaurant management later informed Nagra police that an unidentified individual had returned the watch to the branch manager, who instructed him to report to the police station, as the owner had already reported the case. The man quickly left the premises in an unknown direction.

Detectives reviewed surveillance footage and consulted confidential sources, ultimately identifying the suspect as an Arab expatriate born in 1976. When contacted, he voluntarily went to the police station and admitted that he had found the watch in the restroom and attempted to sell it.



Farwaniya Governorate photo
Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receives Director of the Citizen Service Centers Department in Farwaniya Governorate Colonel Thamer Khaled Al-Hashash and the Assistant Director Lieutenant Colonel Saad Abdullah Al-Jalal.

Digitization, development of citizen service centers sought

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received on Sunday morning the Director of the Citizen Service Centers Department in Farwaniya Governorate Colonel Thamer Khaled Al-Hashash and the Assistant Director Lieutenant Colonel Saad Abdullah Al-Jalal.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, they discussed important achievements in developing and digitizing public services and transactions at the Citizen Service Centers in Farwaniya

Governorate.

They also reviewed the plans and operational mechanisms of the service centers in the governorate over the recent period.

The governor highlighted the importance of enhancing service quality and facilitating procedures for citizens and residents.

He stressed the need to keep pace with technological and administrative advancements to improve the speed of transactions, in line with Farwaniya Governorate's urban growth and population density.

Duo acquitted of in-flight violence

Woman absolved of witchcraft

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Criminal Court acquitted a Kuwaiti man and woman - both members of Kuwait's National Boxing Team - of charges of deliberately committing acts of violence on board a Kuwait Airways flight. The charges arose from a verbal altercation between them during the flight.

An airport investigation officer stated that the investigations revealed a verbal dispute between the two defendants, during which they exchanged insults. The woman then slapped the man, and he responded by kicking and punching her, causing injuries documented in the medical report.

The investigations confirmed that there was no material damage to the aircraft and no indication of an actual threat to the safety of the aircraft or its passengers.

The defendants' lawyer, Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan, argued that the elements of the crime of committing acts of violence on board an aircraft, as defined in Article 3/2 of Law No. 6/1994 concerning crimes related to aircraft

safety and air navigation, were not met.

He emphasized the absence of criminal intent and the lack of any damage to the aircraft, adding that the actions attributed to the defendants, if assumed to be true, fall under legitimate self-defense.

□ □ □

Woman absolved ... : Citing insufficient evidence and the absence of the elements of the crime, the Misdemeanor Court acquitted a woman who had been charged with practicing witchcraft, sorcery, and defrauding several people. The court affirmed that the accusations against the defendant were unsubstantiated and inadequate for a conviction.

In its reasoning, the court noted that the items seized from the defendant, including cash, materials, herbs, talismans, and personal belongings, did not constitute physical evidence of sorcery.

During the court session, the defendant's lawyer Abdullah Al-Alanda argued that the legal interpretation of the incident was invalid, as the police investigation lacked any substantial evidence, adding that the sting operation conducted against his client was not based on a flagrant offense or a warrant from the Public Prosecution.

Lawyer Al-Alanda clarified that the cash found in his client's residence did not constitute evidence of the alleged acts, and that the seized items were merely personal belongings, some used for decoration, with no connection to the crime of witchcraft.



Al-Seyassah photo

The demolition process in progress.

Municipality begins demolition of 67 unsafe buildings in Jleeb

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kuwait Municipality began a large-scale campaign on Monday to demolish and remove 67 dilapidated and unsafe buildings in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh to protect public safety and preserve the area's aesthetic appeal, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, Kuwait Municipality explained that the demolition was carried out in the presence of the Director General Eng. Manal Al-Asfour, following the expiry of

the deadline given to the owners to remove the buildings to protect lives. The demolition followed an administrative decision to notify the owners of the 67 properties to evacuate, and demolish the buildings within two weeks of the decision's publication in the official gazette "Kuwait al-Youm".

Kuwait Municipality affirmed its commitment to completing the removal of all 67 properties at the owners' expense, after ensuring they are fully vacated.

Acquittals in visa forgery case

Two years jail for abusive mother

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Various courts on Monday dealt with a number of major cases related to publishing, domestic violence, insulting sisterly nations, urgent administrative cases, bribery and residency permits.

The most notable rulings include the three-year prison sentence imposed on a citizen for insulting and defaming the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on TikTok, and the two-year sentence imposed on a mother for beating and verbally abusing her daughter.

The Criminal Court decided to release artist Elham Al-Fadala without personal guarantee, postponing her case until the next hearing on Dec 8.

During the trial, Al-Fadala denied the charges filed against her, such as publishing false news on her digital platforms, while her defense team requested her release. Her defense team asserted that the case file lacked any evidence of a serious offense that could justify her continued detention.

The Court of Cassation dealt a significant blow to perpetrators of domestic violence, issuing a final ruling upholding the two-year prison sentence with hard labor imposed on a female citizen -- suspended for three years

upon payment of KD500 bail, after convicting her of repeatedly beating and verbally abusing her daughter and neglecting her health and living needs.

The Administrative Court scheduled a hearing for Dec 7 to consider an urgent lawsuit filed by Attorney Saud Al-Barghash to halt the decision of Kuwait Municipality to demolish several private residences in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, pending the issuance of a final ruling on the case.

Residents of the affected homes filed complaints claiming that the demolition orders were issued without granting them sufficient notice or assessing their circumstances. The Municipality, however, maintains that there were serious building and usage violations, prompting the homeowners to resort to the Administrative Court.

The Court of Cassation upheld the acquittal in the case of a security official, former parliamentary secretaries and a doctor. The defendants were convicted of accepting bribes totaling KD2,000 in exchange for processing family reunification applications and issuing residency permits.

In its ruling, the court stated that there is insufficient evidence to link the defendants to the bribery allegation, and that the investigation was inadequate to prove the charge against them.

GATE MALL - EGAILA

FOOD COURT

دجاج لولبويو
Chicken Lollipop
KD 1.750

براني دجاج بدون عظم
Chicken Biryani Bonedless
KD 1.750

كنداري / نوابي / ملاي توكا
Kandar / Naway / Malay Tikka
5 Pcs / KD 2.450

دجاج بالزبدة
Butter Chicken
KD 1.750

1800 188

900026 47 / 900026 48 www.mughalmahal.com @mughalmahalkuwait

Kuwait real estate deals hit KD102.8m in 1 week

Private housing drives 70% of market

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

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Kuwaiti real estate market witnessed remarkable activity during the third week of November, with the total value of transactions reaching KD102.8 million for 167 real estate deals.

Residential, investment, commercial and coastal strip real estate transactions were concentrated in the residential, investment and commercial sectors, while other real estate sectors were absent.

Data from the Real Estate Registra-

tion and Documentation Departments at the Ministry of Justice, covering the period from Nov 16-20, showed that the private sector accounted for the lion's share of transactions, 70 percent of the total deals, with 118 transactions valued at KD50 million. This reflects the continuous demand for private housing in various parts of the country, driven by the impending implementation of the law restricting the monopolization of vacant land and the recent increase in the supply of available land.

The investment sector recorded 46 transactions valued at KD41.5 million, indicating a trend among investors towards income-generating properties, given the relative stability of investment returns and bank interest rates.

The commercial sector had only two transactions with a total value of KD11.3 million, while the coastal strip

sector recorded one significant transaction of KD20 million, demonstrating the sustained attractiveness of this sector despite its limited activity.

On geographical distribution, Hawally Governorate ranked first in terms of real estate transaction value, recording 50 transactions worth KD38 million, while Ahmadi Governorate came in second with total transactions amounting to KD23 million due to some large-scale deals in residential expansion areas. Jahra Governorate came in third with 19 transactions worth KD6 million followed by the Capital Governorate with 18 transactions worth KD21.4 million owing to prime locations and prices in the capital.

Farwaniyah Governorate also recorded 18 transactions worth KD8.2 million while Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate is last with 16 transactions worth KD6.4 million.

13-month program equips participants with skills

Kuwait Fund holds orientation for 43rd batch of new engineers and architects

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Administrative Development and Training Department of the Kuwait Fund for Development organized an orientation for the participants of the 43rd batch of the Training and Qualification Program for Newly Graduated Kuwaiti Engineers and Architects. The event was attended by the Acting Director General of the Kuwait Fund, Mr. Waleed Shamlan Al-Bahar, and the Director of the Operations Department, Mr. Thamer Mohammed Al-Failakawi.

During his speech, Al-Bahar explained that the 13-month program consists of three interconnected phases. The first phase, lasting three months, includes lectures and 15 workshops designed to strengthen participants' administrative, technical, and professional skills. The second phase spans six months and involves overseas field training with international engineering firms and international consultancy offices, providing participants with exposure to international best practices.

The third and final phase, lasting four months, takes place in Kuwait and consists of practical field training with local companies and institutions, allowing participants to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired throughout the program.

Al-Bahar noted that since its launch in 2004, the program has successfully graduated more than 1,000 Kuwaiti engineers across 42 batches. He emphasized that the program equips participants with the practical skills and technical ex-



KFAED photo
Photo from the orientation session for the 43rd batch of newly graduated Kuwaiti engineers and architects.

pertise they need to enter the labor market confidently and contribute effectively to the needs of the local economy.

Al-Bahar commended the efforts of the program's organizers and their commitment to keeping pace with developments in the engineering and architectural fields. He affirmed the Fund's continued support for the program as one of its key national initiatives to develop and empower Kuwaiti human resources.

Kuwait unveils 'Tamkeen Tech 2025' for special needs

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

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Director of the Emergency Medical Services Department at the Ministry of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Shatti affirmed that caring for people with special needs and the elderly is a humanitarian and societal obligation, especially in light of technological advancements that contribute to improving the quality of their life and facilitating their access to services.

Al-Shatti made the statement at the launching of Kuwait International Exhibition for People with Disabilities and the Elderly, 'Tamkeen Tech 2025', on Sunday, with the participation of more than 70 local, regional and international entities. A number of ambassadors, officials and those interested in the fields of care and rehabilitation attended the launching ceremony.



MoH photo
Opening ceremony of the 'Tamkeen Tech 2025' exhibition.

In a statement to journalists, Al-Shatti stressed that the ministry spares no effort in developing its ambulance services. He disclosed that a study is underway to

acquire modern vehicles and emergency equipment, which meet the needs of people with disabilities and for more effective handling of emergency cases.

He pointed out that the participation of his department in the exhibition is aimed at getting closer to this group and learn more about their needs. He praised the use of modern technologies that save time and effort and contribute to expediting response to reports.

He confirmed that the exhibition is an opportunity to learn about the latest devices and supplies relevant to the elderly and people with disabilities. He then invited the public to visit the exhibition and explore the latest developments in this field.

On the other hand, Nasser Al-Murdi, head of the exhibition's organizing committee, said this event brings together specialists and service providers for people with disabilities and the elderly under one roof, and promotes their integration into society through a safe and stimulating environment for learning and growth.

CAPT approves KD16.7m fiber optic upgrade for substations

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) approved the awarding of a tender for supplying and installing fiber optic equipment in the main substations at a cost of KD16.729 million, in order to develop and modernize the performance of the stations in transmitting electrical power from generation plants to secondary stations.

In addition, the Board of Directors of CAPT, by a majority vote, approved the request of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to award the tender for connecting its external sites to the control center to the lowest bidder who met the requirements, at a cost of KD91.555.

The agency requested that bidders extend the initial bid bond for all companies participating in the tender, based on Article 46 of Public Tenders Law No. 49/2016.

Through this tender, the ministry aims to connect all its external branches to the data centers in its main building and the National Control Center to exchange data, provide electronic services, and integrate all departments within the ministry.



albander
البندر





Other Voices

Beyond brushing: How soap and fluoride transformed toothpaste

By Ahmad alsarraaf

THE invention of toothpaste dates back to more than 5,000 BC, when the Egyptians created a paste using ingredients such as burnt eggshells, ox hooves, water, and pumice (a light, glassy volcanic rock) to clean their teeth, long before the toothbrush was invented.

The Greeks and Romans, and later civilizations in India and China, used similar pastes, with ingredients evolving to include abrasives like ground bones, charcoal, and various herbs.

The first toothpaste resembling modern formulations was developed in the early 19th century, when Dr. Peabody added soap to toothpaste in 1824. In the 1850s, chalk was introduced as an ingredient. By the 1870s, toothpaste was being sold commercially in tubes, and in 1896, Colgate produced the first toothpaste in a collapsible tube, inspired by paint tubes. Fluoride, known for its anti-cavity properties, was added in 1914, and Crest launched its first major fluoride toothpaste in 1956.

Brushing teeth became widespread as public awareness of personal and general dental health grew in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The mass production of toothbrushes



alsarraaf

and toothpaste, particularly after World War II when American soldiers were required to brush their teeth as part of their daily routine, helped promote toothbrushing globally during the mid-20th century.

The use of toothbrushes and toothpaste further increased with advertising campaigns by manufacturers and public health authorities, especially in schools, establishing toothbrushing as a normal daily habit for most people.

Gargling with warm salt water in the morning helps keep the mouth fresh by reducing the bacteria that cause bad breath and gum disease. It also helps decrease inflammation, supports oral hygiene by removing food debris, and neutralizes acids.

The salt water works through osmosis, drawing water from oral tissues, which helps reduce swelling, relieve inflammation, and loosen thick mucus and irritants in the mouth and throat. However, regular brushing and flossing is essential for optimal oral health.

The warmth of the water, combined with the salt, also has a soothing effect and increases blood flow to the gums, which can promote healing, particularly after dental procedures.

However, excessive gargling may affect calcium levels or increase sodium intake. Therefore, it is best to limit salt water gargling to once or twice a day, unless a dentist recommends otherwise for a short period.

✂ ✂ ✂
e-mail: a.alsarraaf@alqabas.com.kw

Exclusive in-flight offerings

Jazeera Airways signs five-year deal with United Refreshments

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Jazeera Airways and United Refreshments Company announced Sunday the signing of a partnership agreement, under which the products of the company will be offered exclusively on all international flights operated by Jazeera Airways for the next five years.

CEO of Jazeera Airways Barathan Pasupathi and CEO of United Refreshments Company Rashid Al-Manea signed the agreement, coinciding with the 71st anniversary of the company, which provides the Kuwaiti market with leading products, as well as Jazeera Airways' 20th anniversary of operations. The signing ceremony brought together senior leaders from both entities to celebrate a collaboration aimed at enhancing the travel experience on Jazeera Airways flights and providing passengers with greater enjoyment.

Barathan Pasupathi stated "at Jazeera Airways, the exceptional passenger experience is at the heart of everything we do. This collaboration with United Refreshments allows us to offer a wider range of refreshing and high-quality options on our in-flight menu. As we enter our 20th year

in the aviation industry, and as we intend to more than double our fleet size from 24 to 50 A320 aircraft, increase our passenger number from five million to 10 million, and expand our network from 64 to 100 destinations over the next five years, we are committed to delivering more innovative offerings that we are confident will be appreciated by our passengers and enhance their experience with us."

Starting in early 2026, United Refreshments will supply Jazeera Airways cabins with a wide and refreshing selection of beverages and snacks, including Pepsi, 7UP, Mirinda, Aquafina water, Lipton iced tea, Gatorade, and popular snacks such as Doritos and Sushitos.

On the other hand, Al-Manea disclosed "we are happy over this partnership with Jazeera Airways, which confirms the success of our vision and a significant step in our growth at all levels. This partnership is not limited to providing products, as it also enhances trust and deepens our relationship with consumers. Passengers on Jazeera Airways flights will enjoy a diverse range of products and exciting activities throughout their journey. This reflects confidence in our products and our ability—as a Kuwaiti company—to meet the highest standards."

Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 50.000	BHD 111.000/-net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 61000/-net	BHD 136.198

Terms & conditions apply*

Over 165 local and international artists participate

Kuwait Art Creativity Exhibition opens under patronage of Ahmadi Governor

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Under the patronage of the Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Kuwait Art Creativity Exhibition was inaugurated on Sunday evening. Organized by the Artists and Media Professionals Syndicate in cooperation with Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), the exhibition will run until October 27 at the Kuwait Oil Company tent.

According to a press release issued by Ahmadi Governorate, the inaugural ceremony was attended by the Syndicate's President Dr. Nabil Al-Failakawi, and KOC's Director of Public Relations and Media, Mohammed Al-Basri, along with a select group of artists from Kuwait, several GCC countries, and other Arab and international nations.

The governor toured the exhibition for viewing the paintings and artworks, and expressed his admiration for their quality as well as wished the participants continued success and creativity.

He highlighted that his presence reflected his belief in the power of art to shape societal awareness, and his commitment to celebrating works that embody Kuwait's authentic culture, adding that visual and applied arts

offer a broad platform to express national identity and societal values.

Sheikh Hamoud affirmed that Kuwait's dedication to the arts is evident through the establishment of cultural institutions, government support for art societies, exhibitions, museums, and festivals that nurture artists and encourage young talent.

Meanwhile, Dr. Nabil Al-Failakawi expressed gratitude to the Governor Sheikh Hamoud for sponsoring the exhibition, to KOC for its support, and to all participating artists.

Furthermore, the Artistic and Cultural Director of the Syndicate Ibtihal Al-Awadhi praised the efforts that contributed to organizing the exhibition, which attracted 165 visual and applied artists from Kuwait and abroad.

In addition, Mohammed Al-Basri highlighted the governor's patronage and commitment to encouraging talent, noting that Kuwait Oil Company's support reflects its dedication to social responsibility.

The event concluded with the distribution of certificates of appreciation to the participating artists in recognition of their creativity and contributions.



Top & above: Photos during the inauguration of the Kuwait Art Creativity Exhibition.

Council probes delays



Members of the Municipal Council pose for a group photo during the 10th regular session of the fourth term, chaired by Abdullah Al-Mahri.

Restrooms, buildings rules passed

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Municipal Council, chaired by Abdullah Al-Mahri, held its 10th regular session for the fourth term on Monday.

During the session, the Council approved the following:

- Proposal of member Alia Al-Farsi on the provision of public restrooms,
- Proposal of members Munira Al-Amir and Sharifa Al-Shalfan to lay down regulations for preserving dilapidated buildings and dealing with crumbling buildings,
- A number of requests related to merging and allocating parts of certain plots and sites.

The Council retained on its agenda the discussion of the reasons behind Kuwait Municipality's delay in handling over the alternative sites allocated

to the Ministry of Education as per the Council resolutions on relocating schools from private residential areas.

It referred the Executive Authority's response to the questions of member Farah Al-Roumi about intensifying oversight and inspection efforts to ensure compliance with accessibility requirements for people with disabilities to the Municipal Committee for People with Disabilities.

Meanwhile, Al-Shalafan expressed her regret over the absence of a technical study for the proposal that she and Al-Amir submitted to lay down regulations for preserving buildings from deterioration and addressing dilapidated or collapsing buildings. She pointed out that the proposal was submitted in 2022 and approved in 2025, meaning it took the Executive Authority three years to review. She said the Executive Authority's response did not mention the 20 criteria included in the original proposal, as it merely indicated the in-

clusion of a new schedule, number 20, in the regulations for dealing with dilapidated or collapsing buildings.

Al-Amir stated that the response is positive, but ambiguous. She expressed concern that the Council's approval could be just symbolic, especially since the Municipality did not submit any technical study for the proposal and did not utilize the standards and commitments it contained.

Al-Farsi emphasized that her proposal to provide restrooms in vital public facilities falls under the category of essential services to maintain public health and safety and enhance the quality of life. She asserted that providing, maintaining and operating public restrooms is not a simple matter, as it is a challenge faced by most cities. "The issue has become pressing, considering the ardent promotion of tourism in Kuwait," she stressed, while commending the Council's approval of her proposal.

AU hosts annual blood donation drive

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Australian University (AU) successfully hosted its annual blood donation campaign, under the theme "Every drop of blood writes a new message of hope."

The campaign was organized by the Health and Safety department in collaboration with the Ripple Effect, a community project by the AU English Language Program that brings together student and faculty volunteers to give back to the community. The blood drive brought together staff, students, faculty members, and contractors, all united by one purpose: to give back to the community and support lifesaving efforts.

The university hosted the initiative in coordination with the Central Blood Bank of Kuwait, to ensure a smooth and impactful donation process for all participants.



Photo during the annual blood donation campaign.

Commenting on the campaign, Ms. Mariam Al Maraghi, Manager of Health, and Safety at AU, said: "To everyone who extended their arm out

of love and generosity, thank you from the heart. Every drop of blood writes a new message of hope in someone's life."

Continued from Page 1

Digitization

The Vice Chairman of the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) Manal Al-Mazyad said the event provides an important platform to explore the latest innovations in data systems and artificial intelligence, helping CITRA update regulatory frameworks and support more efficient digital operating models.

The forum concluded with honoring Minister Al-Omar and several institutions for their contributions to innovation and investments in integrated applications, data, and AI to support Kuwait's sustainable growth.

SAP is a Germany-based multinational company specializing in enterprise software, cloud solutions, and technical support services.

Amir invited

Lieutenant General Jamal Al-Theyab, Amiri Diwan undersecretary Sheikh Abdulaziz Meshal Al-Sabah and Amiri Diwan undersecretary for foreign affairs Mazen Al-Essa.

Boost in

The meeting took place after the new director of World Bank office in Kuwait took office, according to a statement from the Ministry of Finance.

Attendees included Acting Resident Representative of the World Bank's local office in Kuwait Huda Youssef, Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Services Affairs at the Ministry of Finance Saad Al-Alati, and Director of the International Economic Cooperation Department Saad Al-Rashidi.

CAIT signs

Acting Director General of CAIT, Najat Ibrahim told KUNA that the agreement aims to strengthen the skills of government-sector employees through specialized technical training programs offered at no cost. These programs focus on advanced technologies that support Kuwait's digital transformation initiatives. Ibrahim noted that the MoU also enables government entities to benefit from SAP's cloud services, particularly in financial transactions and human resources management, while training modules will cover artificial intelligence and innovation-driven solutions.

She said 30 employees are currently enrolled in the training, with the number expected to grow as the program expands to include additional government bodies, emphasizing the agency's commitment to building sustainable national expertise aligned with the Kuwait's long-term development goals.

The signing took place on the sidelines of SAP's Innovation Day forum, attended by Minister of State for Communications Omar Al-Omar, German Ambassador Hans-Christian Freiherr von Reibnitz, and leading technology experts and decision-makers.

SAP is a Germany-based multinational company specializing in enterprise software, cloud solutions, and technical support services for financial, HR, and project management operations.

Huge number

In case of any error or discrepancy, the beneficiary must contact the ministry to update or correct the information.

The purpose of the Beneficiary Register is to ensure transparency and help identify the true owner or controller of a company. It provides accurate data that reflects actual business activity and uncovers hidden relationships.

The register promotes effective compliance with international standards, including Recommendation 24 of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), and contributes to improving Kuwait's ranking, supporting the national assessment, and strengthening the country's anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing framework.

Enhanced oversight provides regulatory bodies with immediate and accurate access to essential data on ownership and control. This facilitates the detection of commercial concealment, the analysis of suspicious patterns, and supports investigations, thereby strengthening the government's ability to protect the business environment and mitigate economic risks.

The ministry went on to explain that it will hold a workshop titled "The Beneficial Owner" on Monday at 10:00am at the Ministries Complex. The workshop will be conducted in partnership with the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI), the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), the Ministry of Justice, and the Public Institution for Social Security (PISSF).

The workshop aims to raise awareness of emerging risks in the corporate sector and highlight the importance of maintaining a Beneficial Owner Registry and continuously updating registered information. The workshop will help financial institutions and designated non-financial businesses and professions understand the concept and data related to beneficial owners.

The ministry affirmed that Kuwait has made significant efforts in recent months to promote understanding of the beneficial owner concept and its associated identification and verification requirements in both the public and private sectors. It indicated that this service allows any government entity to search for and view company registration details, thereby enhancing trust in the commercial sector and supporting national efforts toward transparency and accountability.

It is worth noting that the beneficial owner is the natural person who directly or indirectly benefits from the results of a transaction, contract, or assets, whether personally or through intermediaries. The beneficial owner must be disclosed in accordance with national laws and regulations to ensure transparency and combat financial crimes.

National unity

She revealed the forum coincides with the GCC Ministerial Meetings in Kuwait scheduled for December, as well as the 46th GCC Summit in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

She also affirmed the aspiration of all GCC member states for an integrated strategy, which contributes to security, stability and development in the region and the world.

Meanwhile, Dr. Ahmed Al-Jarwan, former Speaker of the Arab Parliament and founder and President of the Global Council for Tolerance and Peace, stressed the importance of resuming activities aimed at spreading the culture of awareness, tolerance and peace in general, especially in light of the geopolitical changes and the current situation in the region, indicating that "peace is a shared responsibility".

On the sidelines of the forum, a number of dialogue sessions and seminars were held, featuring speakers from various GCC countries, in addition to a workshop.

Food market

■ Transportation and distribution professions related to food handling.

PAM clarified that inspection teams will follow the guidelines attached to the circular to ensure standardized procedures and accurately verify employees' eligibility and compliance with approved working conditions.

It added that the provisions of this circular are effective from its issuance date, November 23, and urged employers to ensure the validity of their employees' health licenses to avoid any legal action in cases of non-compliance.

Kuwait charity

adding that the new mission continues a chain of humanitarian initiatives aimed at easing hardships.

Al-Otaibi said the mission, which runs until next Friday, includes a medical camp for eye surgeries targeting 200 free operations, drilling wells to secure sustainable water sources, distributing 100 Qurans, and implementing five local economic-empowerment projects.

He added that the humanitarian team will also operate a medical camp to treat child malnutrition and malaria amid rising infection rates and limited health services, contributing to improved health conditions for women and children in refugee camps.

He noted that the program further includes the distribution of food baskets to the most affected families and the establishment of a two-day community kitchen, supporting efforts to reinforce food security among vulnerable groups.

Kuwait, US

Al-Mukhaizeem praised the strategic ties between Kuwait and the United States and reiterated the ministry's commitment to exchanging expertise and supporting Kuwait's energy transition.

Butler commended Kuwait's efforts in developing its water and power sectors and affirmed his country's readiness to deepen cooperation.

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity, Water & Renewable Energy Dr. Adel Al-Zamel also attended the meeting.

Mol staffer

1 dead in mishap: A 45-year-old citizen died in a traffic accident on Mutlaa Road and his body was referred to the Forensic Medicine Department at the Interior Ministry, reports Al-Seyassah .

According to a security source, the Operations Unit at the ministry on Monday received a report about the accident on Mutlaa Road. Security and ambulance personnel rushed to the location. Upon their arrival, they found out that the citizen already succumbed to his injuries.

A case was registered and investigations are ongoing to determine the circumstances that led to the fatal accident.

NATO-ICI

Addressing the course, Director of the NATO-ICI Regional Center Emad Al-Kandari said the center's hosting of this course at its headquarters in Kuwait reflected its role as a significant partner within the framework of the ICI.

He added that the training course is meant to promote the principles of integrity, transparency and accountability in military and civilian operations through a training program that combines interactive lectures and deliberations about lessons learnt and how to improve performance, promote successful experiences and intensify relevant expertise in a practical manner that can be used as a guide.

Al-Kandari underlined the center's commitment to living up to its role in supporting and developing regional capabilities and promoting cooperation with partner countries.

MoCI

industrial plots after the discovery of several violations committed by the owners.

These violations include renting the plots to others in violation of the terms of the contract, using the plot for an unlicensed activity, operating administrative offices without a license, and failing to pay debts to the Authority.

The Authority affirmed that these measures are part of its efforts to tighten control over industrial plots, ensure compliance with the terms of contracts and regulations, and organize industrial activity in a way that achieves the goals of industrial development in the country.



Required for Academic Year 2025-2026 at Private American School

KG	English Teacher (Native English speakers only)
	Science Teacher
Elementary	
	Female Physical Education Teacher
	English Teacher (Native English speakers only)
Middle and High School	
	Math Teacher
	Social Studies/Humanities Teacher (Native English speakers only)
	AP English Teacher (Native English speakers only)
	English Teacher (Native English speakers only)
	Culinary Arts Teacher
	Science Teacher
Leadership Positions	
	MSHS Counselor
	MSHS College Counselor
	MSHS Dean of Students

Interested applicants may apply through our website at the following link:
<https://www.abs.edu.kw/careers/abs>

Mamdani stands by US president criticism despite friendly meeting

WASHINGTON, Nov 24, (AP): New York City Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani didn't back down in an interview that aired Sunday from past criticism that President Donald Trump acted like a despot and a fascist after a surprisingly friendly White House meeting between the two men.

The newly elected democratic socialist and the Republican president have fiercely criticized each other in the past. Trump called Mamdani a "100% Communist Lunatic" in a social media post following the incoming mayor's election victory, and Mamdani has said Trump was attacking democracy. Yet the two political foils emerged smiling after the meeting Friday and spoke of shared goals.

Pressed about his past criticism during a "Meet the Press" interview conducted Saturday, Mamdani said his views remained unchanged.

"Everything that I've said in the past, I continue to believe," Mamdani said. "And that's the thing that I think is important in our politics, is that we don't shy away from where we have disagreements, but we understand what it is that brings us to that table, because I'm not coming into the Oval Office to make a point or make a stand. I'm coming in there to deliver for New



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

Yorkers."

Trump had brushed aside Mamdani's criticisms Friday and even jumped in on his defense several times. When a reporter asked if Mamdani stood by his comments that Trump is a fascist, Trump interjected before Mamdani could fully answer the question.

She is the easiest to run against: Robinson

Bottoms aims to be first Atlanta mayor to become Georgia gov

COLUMBUS, Ga., Nov 24, (AP): It's the longest walk in Georgia politics - the 600 steps from the mayor's office in Atlanta's towering City Hall to the governor's office in the gold-domed state Capitol.

No Atlanta mayor has ever made the journey to the state's top office, but Democrat Keisha Lance Bottoms is undeterred.

"I'm going to be the first because I am working to earn people's votes across the state," she said after a campaign appearance in Columbus last week. "So just because it hasn't happened doesn't mean that it can't happen."

The former mayor must initially overcome six others in a Democratic primary in May. If she pushes through that thicket, Republicans lie in wait to attack Bottoms on how she managed crime, disorder and the COVID pandemic as mayor before jolting Atlanta politicians by not seeking reelection.

"She is the easiest to run against," said Republican strategist Brian Robinson, who calls Bottoms "unelectable."

While Georgia Democrats are elated after two unknowns won landslide victories over Republican incumbents in statewide elections to the Public Service Commission on Nov. 4, they need a nominee who can reach independents and even some Republicans for the party to win its first Georgia governor's



Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms speaks during a campaign stop in her 2026 Democratic bid for governor on Nov 17, 2025 in Columbus, Georgia. (AP)

race since 1998.

Democrats hoped Joe Biden winning the state's electoral votes for president in 2020 marked a lasting breakthrough. But Republican Gov. Brian Kemp handily defeated Democrat Stacey Abrams in their 2022 rematch despite Abrams outspending Kemp. And 2024 saw Donald Trump substantially boost Republican turnout in his Georgia victory over Democrat Kamala Harris.

For some Bottoms supporters, the primary is a process of elimination in a field highlighting many of the fissures Democrats face nationally, including suburban-versus-urban, progressive-versus-centrist and fresh faces-versus-old warhorses.

Former state Sen. Jason Esteves is backed by some party insiders but is unknown statewide. Former state labor commissioner and DeKalb County CEO Michael Thurmond has vast ex-

perience but is 72 years old and has historically been a weak fundraiser. Former Republican lieutenant governor Geoff Duncan's party switch has drawn curiosity, but apologies for past GOP positions may not be enough for lifelong Democrats. State Rep. Ruwa Romman promises Zohran Mamdani-style progressivism, but may face an uphill battle among moderate Democrats. And state Rep. Derrick Jackson boasts a military record but finished sixth in the 2022 Democratic primary for lieutenant governor.

Bottoms starts with advantages. She's the best-known of the Democrats running. She's got executive experience. Being considered by Biden as a possible vice presidential nominee and then joining his administration gave her national fundraising connections. Additionally, Bottoms is the only Black woman in the Democratic field in a state where Black women are the backbone of the party. In 2022, for 10 statewide offices, Georgia Democrats nominated five Black women.

Sheana Browning, who attended the Columbus event, said she liked Bottoms' promise of pay raises for Browning and fellow state employees. Like 70% of the roughly 125 attendees, Browning is a Black woman. She cited Bottoms' "previous mayoral status and the fact that she's a Black woman" as key reasons to vote for her.

Human cost of it is astounding, says Spickler

Thousands of arrests by Trump's crime-fighting task force in Memphis strain jail, courts

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Nov 24, (AP): A task force ordered by US President Donald Trump to combat crime in Memphis, Tennessee, has made thousands of arrests, compounding strains on the busy local court system and an already overcrowded jail in ways that concerned officials say will last months or even years as cases play out.

Since late September, hundreds of federal, state and local law enforcement personnel tied to the Memphis Safe Task Force have made traffic stops, served warrants and searched for fugitives in the city of about 610,000 people. More than 2,800 people have been arrested and more than 28,000 traffic citations have been issued, data provided by the task force and Memphis police shows.

The task force, which includes National Guard troops, is supported by Republican Gov Bill Lee and others who hope the surge reduces crime in a city that has grappled with violent crime, including nearly 300 homicides last year and nearly 400 in 2023.

From 2018 to 2024, homicides in

Memphis increased 33% and aggravated assaults rose 41%, according to AH DataLytics, which tracks crimes across the country using local law enforcement data for its Real-Time Crime Index. But AH DataLytics reported those numbers were down 20% during the first nine months of this year, even before the task force got to work.

Opponents of the task force in majority-Black Memphis say it targets minorities and intimidates law-abiding Latinos, some of whom have skipped work and changed social habits, such as avoiding going to church or restaurants, fearing they will be harassed and unfairly detained. Statistics released at the end of October showed 319 arrests so far on administrative warrants, which deal with immigration-related issues.

The effects have rippled beyond the streets, into the aging criminal courthouse and the troubled jail. Officials are concerned about long waits in traffic court causing people to miss work and packed criminal court dockets forcing inmates to spend extra days



Federal law enforcement officers detain a man, (right), Oct. 11, 2025, in Memphis, Tenn. (AP)

waiting for bail hearings.

"The human cost of it is astounding," said Josh Spickler, executive director for Just City, a Memphis-based organization that advocates for fairness in the criminal justice system.

The mayor of Shelby County, which includes Memphis, has requested more

judges to hear cases that could span months or years. County officials are discussing opening court at night and on weekends, a move that would help manage the caseload but cost more.

Meanwhile, Shelby County Jail inmates are being moved to other facilities because of overcrowding, officials say. Inmates at jail intake are sleeping in chairs, and jail officials are asking county commissioners for funding to help address problems, such as a corrections employees shortage.

These issues raise concerns from activists and officials about safety in a jail that has seen 65 deaths since 2019, according to Just City. Court case backlogs mean defendants and crime victims could spend an unfair amount of time dealing with the criminal justice system, said Steve Mulroy, the county's district attorney.

"The task force deployment probably could have used more planning," said Mulroy, a Democrat whose office is cooperating with the task force. "More thought could have been put into the downstream effects of the in-

creased arrest numbers."

There were hundreds more jail bookings and bail settings during the first several weeks of the task force's operation than during the comparable period last year, an increase of about 40% in each category, according to county statistics.

The jail, which has a regular capacity of 2,400, had an average daily population of 3,195 inmates in September, the most recent month when statistics were available. County officials said that number was expected to rise for October.

As of mid-November, 250 overflow jail detainees were being housed at other facilities, compared with 80 in November 2024. Some of those are outside Shelby County, which makes it harder for lawyers and relatives to visit and increases the cost of bringing defendants to Memphis for hearings.

In a letter to commissioners, Chief Jailer Kirk Fields has requested at least \$1.5 million in emergency funds, noting that more inmates means more expenses for food, clothing, bedding and linens.

Ally of separatist leader Dodik leads election race for Bosnian Serb president

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Nov 24, (AP): An ally of separatist Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik on Sunday was leading the presidential election in the Serb-run half of Bosnia, according to preliminary results released by the Bosnian election authorities.

The snap vote on Sunday in Republika Srpska was held after Dodik was removed from the presidential office over separatist policies that were stoking instability in the ethnically tense Balkan nation.

Dodik's ally Sinisa Karan won around 50% of the ballots while his main opponent Branko Blanusa won around 47%, with 92% of the votes counted.

Dodik was ousted in August after a Bosnian court convicted him of disobeying the orders of the international High Representative for Bosnia, sentenced him to a year in prison and banned him from holding any public office for six years. He has since paid a fine to avoid jail and stepped aside as president while staying at the helm of his governing Party of Independent Social Democrats.

Dodik on Sunday declared victory for Karan and lashed out at the proceedings that led to his ouster from the presidency.

"They wanted to bring down Dodik



Sinisa Karan casts his ballot in a snap presidential election of Republika Srpska at a polling station in Banja Luka, northwest of Sarajevo, Bosnia on Nov 23. (AP)

in an unfair process and now they got two Dodiks and they will watch us every day," he said.

Karan added that "we will continue where we left off."

Blanusa said Sunday night Karan was favored in the official media, although he said earlier in the day that

the campaigns were carried out in a "fair and tolerant atmosphere."

He said that "if there had not been for the manipulations I would have declared victory tonight."

The office of the High Representative oversees the implementation of the 1995 peace agreement that ended the devastating war in Bosnia.

Bosnian Serbs are in charge of about one-half of Bosnia, which is called Republika Srpska. The other half is run jointly by Bosniaks, who are mainly Muslims and Croats. The two entities are bound together by a central administration.

Four more contenders took part in Sunday's race.

Bosnia's complex political structure was established 30 years ago in a US-brokered peace agreement to end a bloody 1992-95 ethnic conflict that killed more than 100,000 people and left millions homeless.

The war started when Bosnia declared independence from Yugoslavia and the country's Serbs took up arms to carve up their own territory, hoping to join with neighboring Serbia. Dodik still advocates eventual separation of the Serb-controlled entity from Bosnia, which he has repeatedly declared unviable.



US (left) and Ukrainian (right), delegations at the beginning of their talks at the US Mission to International Organizations in Geneva, Switzerland on Nov 23. (AP)

European officials welcome progress in talks on US proposals to end Russia-Ukraine war

GENEVA, Nov 24, (AP): European officials welcomed Monday what they said were steps in the right direction at talks in Geneva on US peace proposals seen as heavily favoring Russia after its invasion of Ukraine, but they offered few details and warned the discussions still have a long way to go.

"The negotiations were a step forward, but there are still major issues which remain to be resolved," Finnish President Alexander Stubb wrote on social platform X about Sunday's meeting in Switzerland.

The talks went over a 28-point peace proposal presented last week by the United States that triggered alarm in Kyiv and European capitals by heavily favoring Moscow's demands.

The plan pressed Ukraine to consent to handing over some of its territory to Moscow and slashing the size of its army, leaving it vulnerable. The proposal also sought Europe's agreement that Ukraine will never be admitted into the NATO military alliance, though the alliance has previously said Ukraine is on an "irreversible path" to membership.

The surprise emergence of the peace plan coincided with a bleak period for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, with the war less than three months shy of its fourth anniversary.

It is under severe strain on the front line against Russia's bigger army, it is short of money, and Zelenskyy is trying to defuse a major corruption scandal that has tainted his government.

The Geneva meeting offered some



Rescue workers clear the rubble of a house destroyed in a Russian strike in Kharkiv, Ukraine on Nov 23. (AP)

hope for Kyiv. "Diplomacy has been reinvigorated, and that's good. Very good," Zelenskyy said late Sunday.

It wasn't clear whether the talks would continue on Monday.

Russian officials still haven't seen the revised peace plan text since amendments were made over the weekend, a Kremlin spokesperson said Monday.

Dmitry Peskov added that there was currently no plan in place for US and Russian delegations to meet this week, but that the Russian side remained "open for such contacts."

German Foreign Minister Johannes Wadepuhl said US Secretary of State

Marco Rubio, who directed the talks in Switzerland, "made decisive positive contributions to ensuring that this plan can be accepted by both the European and Ukrainian sides."

"I would like to say that all issues concerning Europe or NATO have been removed from this plan, which is a decisive success that we achieved yesterday," he told public broadcaster Deutschlandradio.

Rubio said Sunday the talks were "very worthwhile" and constituted the most productive day in "a very long time."

"I feel very optimistic that we can get something done," Rubio said.

UK navy intercepts Russian corvette and tanker as Moscow steps up its naval activity

LONDON, Nov 24, (AP): A UK patrol ship has intercepted a Russian corvette and a tanker after shadowing them through the English Channel, the Defense Ministry said Sunday, adding that Russian naval activity around U.K. waters had increased by 30% over the past two years.

With the past two weeks, the patrol ship HMS Severn intercepted the Russian corvette RFN Stoikiy and tanker Yelnya as they sailed through the English Channel, the ministry said. The Severn eventually handed over monitoring duties to an unidentified NATO ally off the coast of Brittany.

In addition to the ships stationed around the UK coast, Britain has deployed three Poseidon surveillance aircraft to Iceland as part of a NATO mission patrolling for Russian ships and submarines in the North Atlantic and Arctic, the ministry said.

The news comes just days after Defense Secretary John Healey told reporters that the Russian spy ship Yantar had aimed lasers at the pilots of surveillance aircraft monitoring its activities off the coast of Scotland. Britain described the Yantar's actions as "reckless and dangerous," adding that Britain was ready to respond to any incursions into its territory.



In this undated aerial photo released by the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, HMS Severn, lower section, is seen tracking the Russian corvette RFN Stoikiy off the UK coast. (AP)

"My message to Russia and to Putin is this: We see you. We know what you're doing," Healey said on Wednesday.

The Russian Embassy in London responded to Healey's comments by accusing the British government of "whipping up militaristic hysteria," adding that Moscow has no interest in undermining the U.K.'s security.

Healey issued the warning as he made

the case for increased defense spending a week before the government releases its new budget. Even though Prime Minister Keir Starmer has pledged big military spending increases in light of threats from Russia, China and Iran, the government is facing tough tradeoffs as it eyes tax increases and spending cuts to close a multi-billion-pound shortfall in its finances.

No matter where you are in the world, we will find you: Remulla

7 suspects in corruption scandal detained, others being sought: Philippine president

MANILA, Philippines, Nov 24, (AP): Philippine authorities detained seven suspects and several more were being sought in a major corruption scandal involving flood control projects, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said Monday as he tried to quell public outrage over the brazen anomalies that have implicated powerful members of Congress.

Massive corruption has been blamed for substandard or non-existent flood control projects in the poverty-stricken Southeast Asian country long prone to deadly floods and extreme weather. Two Philippine presidents, including Marcos' late father, were overthrown in peaceful public revolts due to alleged plunder and misrule.

The initial batch of more than a dozen suspects, including Zaldy Co, a former member of the House of Representatives, and government public works engineers, were indicted by the Sandiganbayan, a special anti-corruption court, in the first of what is expected to be dozens of criminal graft and corruption lawsuits that Marcos promised would lock up implicated senators, House members and wealthy construction company owners by Christmas.

The first corruption case involved irregularities in flood control projects in Oriental Mindoro province, including a river dike worth 289 million pesos (\$4.8 million), that were undertaken by Sunwest Corp., a construction firm that officials say is owned by Co's family.

Marcos said one suspect was arrested and six others surrendered over the weekend to police. The arrested suspect was found in a house in suburban Quezon city in the capital region where an unspecified number of people who were trying to help hide the suspect were also arrested, he said.

"My advice to the remaining suspects is for all of you to surrender, don't wait to be pursued," Marcos said in an early Monday post on his Facebook account. "This will continue, we will not stop."

Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla said the location of Co, who is believed to be outside the Philippines, was unknown, but three other suspects may soon sur-



Police escort the initial batch of arrested suspects in a major corruption scandal involving flood control projects as they arrive at the Sandiganbayan, a special anti-corruption court, in Quezon city, Philippines on Nov 24. (AP)

render to the Philippine embassies in the United States, New Zealand and Jordan and be flown back home.

"No matter where you are in the world, we will find you," Remulla said at a

news conference, where mug shots of the arrested suspects in orange detainee shirts were shown.

Witnesses have testified in Senate hearings and in an independent fact-finding commission established by Marcos that several former and incumbent senators and House members have pocketed huge kickbacks from favored construction companies, which cornered lucrative flood control contracts for years. A number of Department of Public Works and Highways officials and engineers have testified under oath in the Senate hearings that they helped arrange the corrupt deals and received large sums for doing so.

The lavish lifestyles, mansions, suitcases of cash and fleets of luxury cars and private jets of the leading corruption suspects have sparked huge protests. An upcoming demonstration scheduled for Nov. 30 is backed by the dominant Roman Catholic church.

Those implicated include Rep. Martin Romualdez, the president's cousin and key ally, who has denied any involvement but has stepped down as House of Representatives speaker. Former Senate President Chiz Escudero has also been accused of pocketing kickbacks and has stepped down from his post but strongly denied any wrongdoing.

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.

The anomalies may have started under Marcos's predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte, and flood control projects undertaken in his time would also be investigated, officials said.

Death toll climbs in SE Asia as heavy rains cause floods and landslides

HANOI, Vietnam, Nov 24, (AP): The death toll in widespread flooding and landslides caused by heavy rains in Southeast Asia mounted on Monday with another person reported killed in Vietnam, and five others in Thailand with tens of thousands of people displaced.

The total number of confirmed dead in Vietnam is now 91, with 11 others missing as the heavy rain that began a week ago has caused severe flooding and triggered landslides from Quang Tri to Lam Dong provinces, a stretch of 800 kilometers (500 miles) along the country's central region, including the highlands.

In Dak Lak, the worst hit province, 63 people were killed, mostly due to drowning. Other fatalities were from Khanh Hoa, Lam Dong, Gia Lai, Danang, Hue and Quang Tri provinces.

With roads washed out in many areas, helicopters have been deployed to drop food and aid supplies and to assist in evacuating people.

After a break in the rain on the



Houses submerged by floods in Khanh Hoa, Vietnam on Nov 20. (AP)

weekend, Pham Thu Huyen was one of many hundreds of residents and visitors who helped clean up debris washed ashore in Nha Trang, a popular tourist destination in Khanh Hoa province, known for its white sand beaches.

"We've never experienced that much rain and such bad flooding," the

45-year-old said.

Waters have also taken their toll on this year's crops, submerging coffee farms in Dak Lak, Vietnam's major coffee growing region.

Overall, damage so far is estimated to be around \$500 million in this round of floods.

Asia

Car rams into pedestrians in Tokyo, 1 dead: A man driving a stolen car struck 11 people in Tokyo on Monday, killing one and seriously injuring a woman, Japanese media reported. The driver was arrested after fleeing.

Police didn't immediately comment.

Kyodo News reported that a seriously injured man in his 80s was confirmed dead. A woman in her 20s was seriously injured and remains unconscious, according to Nippon TV. Nine other people were injured. Initial media reports said 12 people were struck.

The car, a stolen vehicle, drove onto a walkway for pedestrians, the report said.

Police arrested a 37-year-old man who fled the scene, Nippon TV said.

Other details weren't immediately available. Monday was a national holiday in Japan. (AP)

South Korea car crash kills 3: Three people were killed and 10 others were injured in a car crash Monday, according to Yonhap news agency.

A van, driven by a man in his 60s, crashed into a big road sign pole next to the waiting room of ferries after disembarking from a ferry that arrived at the port of Udo, an islet near the southern resort island of Jeju, at about 2:47 p.m. local time.

Three people, including a woman in her 60s inside the van and two men walking on the road, were taken to hospitals by helicopters, but they died.

Ten people, including the driver, sustained minor to serious injuries and were transported to hospitals. (Xinhua)

Drug syndicate busted

India bus collision kills 6 people

NEW DELHI, Nov 24, (Xinhua): At least six people were killed and over 50 others injured Monday in a head-on collision between two private buses in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, police said.

The accident took place in a village in Tenkasi district, about 550 km southwest of Chennai, the capital city of Tamil Nadu.

Following the accident, local authorities carried out a massive rescue operation and ferried the injured to the nearest hospitals. Police fear the death toll could increase, owing to the critical condition of some of the injured.

A detailed investigation into the accident has been launched, and the police are examining footage from closed-circuit television cameras and recording eyewitness accounts. Enditem

Also:

NEW DELHI: Security agencies seized around 328.54 kilograms of methamphetamine drug worth 2.62 billion Indian Rupees (around 29.38 million US dollars) and arrested two persons in India's Delhi.

The operation to bust the drug syndicate was carried out over the past three days, said a police officer on Monday.

The drug syndicate, said to be having links overseas, was busted in an operation jointly carried out by the Narcotics Control Bureau and the Delhi Police. The two persons nabbed in this regard included a man from the northern state of Uttar Pradesh and a woman from the northeastern state of Nagaland.

Suicide bombers strike security force HQ in northwestern Pakistan, killing 3 officers

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Nov 24, (AP): Two suicide bombers and a gunman attacked the headquarters of a security force in northwestern Pakistan on Monday morning, killing three officers and wounding 11 others, police and rescue officials said.

The attack took place in Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan, when security forces were preparing for the morning parade at the sprawling facility located in the heart of the city, said Peshawar Police Chief Saeed Ahmad.

He said one attacker detonated his explosives at the main gate of the provincial headquarters of the Federal Constabulary, while the second bomber and an accomplice were shot and killed by officers near the parking area.

According to Ahmad, about 150 security personnel were on open ground inside the headquarters for morning parade drills when the attack took place. "The terrorists involved in today's attack were on foot and failed to reach the parade area and a timely response by our forces prevented a much larger tragedy," he told The Associated Press.

He said police had concluded that three attackers were involved in the assault. Ahmad said police had completed the clearance operation and authorities had collected samples of the body parts of the two suicide bombers for DNA tests. He said police are still investigating to determine the identity and nationality of the three attackers.

Asim Khan, a spokesperson at the government-run Lady Reading Hospi-



Security officials examine the site of a suicide bombing attack at the main gate of headquarters of the Federal Constabulary (FC), in Peshawar, Pakistan on Nov 24. (AP)

tal said all 11 persons wounded in the Peshawar attack were listed in stable condition.

Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in separate statements, condemned the attack in Peshawar, with Zardari calling it a "cowardly act by foreign-backed terrorists," and Sharif saying the swift response of security forces prevented a larger tragedy. They offered condolences to the families of the victims.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

However, the Pakistani Taleban, also known as Tehrik-e-Taleban Pakistan, have been blamed for similar

previous assaults in the country, which has witnessed a surge in militant attacks. The TPP is separate from but allied with the Afghan Taleban that leads Afghanistan.

The latest attack came less than two weeks after a suicide bomber struck outside a court in Pakistan's capital Islamabad, detonating his explosives next to a police car and killing 12 people.

The attacks have strained ties between Islamabad and Afghanistan's Taleban government, with Pakistan accusing the Pakistani Taleban of operating freely inside Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover in 2021.

US set to label Maduro-tied Cartel de los Soles as a terror organization

CARACAS, Venezuela, Nov 24, (AP): US President Donald Trump's administration is set to ramp up pressure on Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro on Monday by designating the Cartel de los Soles as a foreign terrorist organization. But the entity that the US government alleges is led by Maduro is not a cartel per se.

The designation is the latest measure in the Trump administration's escalating campaign to combat drug trafficking into the US. In previewing the step about a week ago, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio accused Cartel de los Soles, or Cartel of the Suns, of being "responsible for terrorist violence" in the Western Hemisphere.

The move planned Monday comes as Trump evaluates whether to take military action against Venezuela, which Trump has not ruled out despite bringing up the possibility of talks with Maduro. Land strikes or other actions would be a major expansion of the monthslong operation that has included a massive military buildup in the Caribbean Sea and striking boats accused of trafficking drugs, killing more than 80 people.

Venezuelans began using the term Cartel de los Soles in the 1990s to refer to high-ranking military officers who had grown rich from drug-running. As corruption later expanded nationwide, first under the late President Hugo Chávez and then under Maduro, its use loosely expanded to police and government officials as well as activities like il-



Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro attends a Student Day event at the Miraflores presidential palace in Caracas, Venezuela on Nov 21. (AP)

legal mining and fuel trafficking. The "suns" in the name refer to the epaulettes affixed to the uniforms of high-ranking military officers.

The umbrella term was elevated to a Maduro-led drug-trafficking organization in 2020, when the US Justice Department in Trump's first term announced the indictment of Venezuela's leader and his inner circle on narcotics and other charges.

"It is not a group," said Adam Isaacson, director for defense oversight at the Washington Office on Latin America organization. "It's not like a group that people would ever identify themselves as members. They don't have regular meetings. They don't have a hierarchy."

Up until this year, the label of foreign terrorist organization had been reserved for groups like the Islamic State or al-Qaida that use violence for political ends. The Trump administration applied it in February to eight Latin American criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking, migrant smuggling and other activities.

The administration blames such designated groups for operating the boats it is striking but rarely identifies the organizations and has not provided any evidence. It says the attacks, which began off the coast of Venezuela and later expanded to the eastern Pacific Ocean, are meant to stop narcotics from flowing to American cities.

But many - including Maduro himself - see the military moves as an effort to end the ruling party's 26-year hold on power.

Since the arrival of US military vessels and troops to the Caribbean months ago, Venezuela's U.S.-backed political opposition also has reignited its perennial promise of removing Maduro from office, fueling speculation over the purpose of what the Trump administration has called a counterdrug operation.

Pope calls on kidnappers in Nigeria to free 265 students and teachers

ABUJA, Nigeria, Nov 24, (AP): Fifty of the 303 schoolchildren abducted from a Catholic school in north-central Nigeria's Niger state have escaped captivity and are now with their families, the school authority said Sunday, as the pope called for the immediate release of those still missing.

The schoolchildren, aged between 10 and 18, escaped individually between Friday and Saturday, according to the Most Rev. Bulus Dauwa Yohanna, chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria in Niger state and the proprietor of the school.

A total of 253 schoolchildren and 12 teachers are still being held by the kidnappers, Yohanna said in a statement. "We were able to ascertain this when we decided to contact and visit some parents," he added.

Pope Leo XIV called for the immediate release of the schoolchildren and staff of the school, saying at the end of a mass in St. Peter's square on Sunday that he was "deeply saddened" by the incident.

"I feel great sorrow, especially for the many girls and boys who have been abducted and for their anguished



People stand near a display of local newspapers on the street of Lagos with headlines on gunmen abducting schoolchildren and staff of the St. Mary's Catholic Primary and Secondary School in Papari community in Nigeria on Nov 22. (AP)

families," the pontiff said. "I make a heartfelt appeal for the immediate release of the hostages and urge the

competent authorities to take appropriate and timely decisions to ensure their release."

Sudan top general rejects United States-led ceasefire proposal, calling it 'the worst yet'

CAIRO, Nov 24, (AP): Sudan's top general rejected a ceasefire proposal provided by US-led mediators as "the worst yet," in a blow to efforts to stop a devastating war that has gripped the African country for over 30 months.

In video comments released by the military late Sunday, Gen Abdel-Fattah Burhan said the proposal was unacceptable, accusing the mediators of being "biased" in their efforts to end the war.

Sudan plunged into chaos in April 2023 when a power struggle between the military and the powerful paramilitary Rapid Support Forces exploded into open fighting in the capital, Khartoum, and elsewhere in the country.

The devastating war has killed more than 40,000 people, according to UN figures, but aid groups say that is an undercount and the true number could be many times higher. It created the world's largest humanitarian crisis with over 14 million people forced to flee their homes, fueled disease outbreaks and pushed parts of the country into famine.

Known as the Quad, the mediators have been trying for over two years to



Sudan's military chief Gen Abdel-Fattah Burhan, (center), is greeted by troops as he arrives at the Republican Palace, recently captured by Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary group, in Khartoum, Sudan on March 26. (AP)

bring an end to the fighting and reestablish a path to democratic transition which was hampered by a military

coup in 2021. They are comprised of the US, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates.

Boursa Kuwait posts mild gains

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Monday’s trading session on a positive note, as the general market index edged up by 3.23 points, or 0.04 percent, to settle at 8,820.69 points. Trading

activity saw approximately 370.6 million shares change hands through 24,586 cash transactions, with a total value of 119.9 million Kuwaiti dinars (about 366.8 million U.S. dollars).

Award spotlights Zain Group’s regional excellence in secure, scalable, and intelligent data management

Zain Group Data Office and ZainTECH’s regional leadership in Data and AI modernization recognized at Cloudera’s Data Impact Awards

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Zain Group’s Data Office, in collaboration with ZainTECH, has been awarded the Hybrid & Infrastructure Modernization Award at Cloudera’s EVOLVE25 Data Impact Awards in Dubai. This recognition celebrates Zain Group’s regional leadership and commitment to building a modern, scalable, and intelligent data ecosystem across its operations.

The Cloudera Data Impact Awards celebrate the remarkable achievements and groundbreaking stories of customers who are driving meaningful change through data.

The award highlights Zain Group’s successful transformation toward a modernized hybrid data infrastructure, powered by Cloudera. Through this transformation, Zain Group has achieved a unified, secure, and flexible environment that bridges on-premise and cloud systems — enabling faster innovation, optimized costs, and seamless data access across its seven operating companies.

Key benefits of the modernization include:

■ **Agility and scalability:** Empowering teams to manage and analyze data efficiently across multiple environments.

■ **Improved data governance and security:** Ensuring data privacy, consistency, and compliance across all business units.

■ **Enhanced performance and cost efficiency:** Leveraging hybrid cloud flexibility to optimize infrastructure usage.



Nadia Al-Saif, Head of Zain Group Data Office (center) receives the award from Cloudera management.

■ **Accelerated innovation:** Enabling advanced analytics and AI-driven insights that support smarter business decisions.

Mohammed Al Murshed, Chief Technology Officer of Zain Group commented, “This award reflects Zain Group’s ongoing journey toward digital and data excellence. Enterprise data has become one of the most valuable assets within organizations, and the ability to organize and store it, secure

it, and gain actionable insights from it, is a critical success factor. By modernizing our hybrid infrastructure with Cloudera, together with ZainTECH and Zain operating companies, we are building a stronger foundation for innovation, security, and growth.”

Sergio Gago Huerta, Chief Technology Officer at Cloudera said, “In the era of AI-driven innovation, we are delighted to recognize Zain’s meaningful change through data. The future

belongs to those who can act on all their data securely, responsibly, and in real time. Zain has not only successfully transformed its environment but is leading the way with innovation.”

Zain Data Office is a central function within Zain that focuses on managing and leveraging the company’s data assets to drive innovation, enhance decision-making, and ensure compliance with data regulations. It aims to standardize data management,

- Receives “Hybrid & Infrastructure Modernization Prize” for impressive infrastructure and impact on data and AI
- Empowering a unified data strategy across multi-operating companies
- Zain recognized the value of enterprise data early on and pioneered Data monetization, operational efficiency, and strategic decision-making through agentic AI

promote a data-driven culture, and enable advanced analytics and AI strategies to benefit the business and its customers.

Key functions and benefits of the Zain Data Office

■ **Improved Data Governance and Compliance** - data is managed in line with regulatory requirements and internal policies, thus reducing risks associated with data privacy, security breaches, and legal penalties.

■ **Enhanced Data Quality:** setting standards for data accuracy, consistency, and completeness to make more informed and strategic data-driven decisions to optimize network performance, understand customer behavior, and marketing strategies.

■ **Efficient Data Utilization:** A centralized data office enables cross-functional teams to access the right data efficiently, eliminates data silos and promotes collaboration between marketing, customer service, and network operations departments.

■ **Innovation and Competitive Edge:** Leveraging advanced analytics, AI, and machine learning, the data office can identify new business opportunities, such as offering personalized customer services or predictive maintenance for network equipment.

■ **Better Customer Experience:** By analyzing customer data and feedback, helps tailor services to individual needs thus improving customer satisfaction and retention.

■ **Support for Business Agility:** With centralized data governance and streamlined data pipelines, the data office enables faster access to real-time data supporting quick decision-making, responding to market trends and customer demands more efficiently and stay ahead of competitors.

Zain Group’s Data Office continues to lead the company’s vision of becoming a data-driven organization, using modern infrastructure and technology to unlock value, efficiency, and intelligence across the business.



A group photo of Mr. Ahmed AlBahar, Dr. Abdulaziz AlEssa, Mr. Sami Mahfouz, and Mrs. Najla Aleisa.

Bank honors legacy, advances green building

Gulf Bank marks 65 years with visit from Dr. Abdulaziz AlEssa

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: As part of Gulf Bank’s celebrations marking 65 years since its establishment, the Bank welcomed Dr. Abdulaziz Sultan AlEssa, Chairman of the International Engineering Consultancy (KEO) and former Chairman and General Manager of Gulf Bank, during an official visit to the Bank’s headquarters. He was received by Gulf Bank’s Chairman, Mr. Ahmed AlBahar, in the presence of Acting CEO Mr. Sami Mahfouz and Chief Marketing Officer Mrs. Najla Aleisa.

Dr. AlEssa congratulated the Board of Directors and all Gulf Bank employees on this milestone, recalling memories of the Bank’s early beginnings in 1960, when operations started from a small rented apartment on Fahad Al-Salem Street with only fifty employees. Over the years, the Bank evolved into one of Kuwait’s most prominent and fastest-growing financial institutions, playing a vital role in driving economic and social development.

He noted that Gulf Bank’s first headquarters was located next to the former Central Bank of Kuwait building, remaining in use until the Bank relocated to its current headquarters— a building that has become an integral part of Kuwait’s financial history.

Dr. AlEssa stated: “Gulf Bank’s main headquarters represents a convergence of history, architecture, and sustainability. This building is not only an architectural achievement, but also a national legacy that must be preserved for future generations.”

He explained that the construction of the current headquarters began between 1972 and 1973 and was completed in 1976, emerging at the time as one of Kuwait’s most advanced architectural projects. The design reflected Kuwait’s ambitious post-oil-boom spirit by combining functionality, aesthetic appeal, and an early environmental consciousness.

The building’s precast concrete façade, engineered to provide natural shading and reduce sun exposure, was a pioneering concept in Kuwait’s desert climate, predating modern global sustainability trends by decades. This distinguished architectural feature became a hallmark of engineering excellence, positioning Gulf Bank among the region’s earliest adopters of sustainable design.

Dr. AlEssa added that supervising the construction of Gulf Bank’s headquarters was one of KEO’s first major accomplishments. He highlighted the role of French architect Jean-Robert Delb, who brought to Kuwait a modern European vision blending form, function, and authentic Kuwaiti identity, honoring the past while embracing modernity.

Architectural and Organizational Legacy

For his part, Mr. Ahmed Mohammad AlBahar expressed his appreciation for Dr. AlEssa’s visit, saying: “Dr. Abdulaziz Sultan AlEssa played a pivotal role in shaping the architectural and organizational legacy of Gulf Bank. His visit today serves as a reminder of our responsibility to protect our history as we continue progressing toward a sustainable future.”

He added: “The Gulf Bank headquarters remains a living symbol of resilience, innovation, and national pride. As we advance on our sustainability journey, we strive to balance heritage with modernity reflecting our institutional culture and core values.”

He concluded: “The Gulf Bank building embodies the



Dr. Abdulaziz AlEssa and Mr. Ahmed AlBahar in front of the bank’s headquarters.

Abdulaziz Sultan AlEssa:

- “Gulf Bank’s headquarters stands as a distinguished architectural landmark- a national asset whose preservation is essential for future generations.”

Ahmed Mohammad AlBahar:

- “Preserving this building embodies our commitment to a forward-looking vision, while honoring Kuwait’s architectural heritage and identity.”

continuity of our story from the Bank’s founding to its transformation into a modern, customer-centric institution. Preserving it is not merely an acknowledgment of our past; it is a strategic message of our forward-looking vision and respect for Kuwait’s architectural identity.”

Comprehensive Restoration and Modernization

Gulf Bank has carried out extensive restoration and modernization works to preserve the historical integrity of the building while aligning it with the latest efficiency and sustainability standards. The restoration was executed with exceptional precision to maintain the original architectural character designed nearly five decades ago, while integrating modern green-building innovations.

Today, Gulf Bank’s headquarters stands as one of the few remaining early-modern commercial buildings in Kuwait still serving its original purpose with its façade and structure fully preserved. Recent upgrades incorporated green-building principles, including energy-efficient lighting systems, advanced ventilation technologies, and enhanced indoor air quality.

As part of these ongoing efforts, Gulf Bank is currently pursuing global certification to join the list of internationally recognized green buildings in Kuwait, reinforcing its position as a leading institution that bridges heritage with environmental sustainability.

AAW hosts Italian Ambassador to strengthen business relations

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Chairman and CEO of Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co. (AAW), Mr. Faisal Ali Al Mutawa, and Deputy CEO, Mr. Khalid Faisal Al Mutawa, welcomed the Italian Ambassador to Kuwait, H.E. Lorenzo Morini, and the Commercial Attaché at the Italian Embassy Ms. Elena Bardini at the company’s headquarters today. The two parties discussed opportunities for cooperation and ways to strengthen trade relations with Italian companies.

AAW Chairman and CEO Mr. Faisal Ali Al Mutawa said: “We were honored to receive the Italian Ambassador to Kuwait today. We value our continued dialogue with the Italian Embassy and are always pleased to explore potential collaboration opportunities with Italian companies across different sectors.”

Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Company is one of the largest retail and distribution companies in Kuwait, operating across various



A photo showing His Excellency the Italian Ambassador, Mr. Lorenzo Morini, and the Commercial Attaché, Elena Bardini, with Mr. Faisal Ali Al Mutawa and Mr. Khalid F. Al-Mutawa.

industries. The company is the distributor for over 100 global brands in Kuwait’s wholesale and retail market.

Committing to HR innovation and employee development

ABK concludes its Gold Sponsorship of the HR Excellence Conference & Awards

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) has concluded its Gold Sponsorship of the HR Excellence Conference & Awards, held over two days with the participation of experts and specialists from Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Egypt, USA, Spain, and other countries. The event underscored the Bank’s commitment to staying informed of the latest developments in the HR field and leveraging them to enhance its internal work environment.

Jamil Girgis, Assistant General Manager of Human Resources, and Abdullah Behbehani, Head of Talent Development at ABK, took part in panel discussions during the conference.



Al Arbash

approach to cultivating a positive and engaging workplace across all functions and divisions.

The conference sessions provided an integrated view of fostering creative thinking in HR solutions, strengthening leadership capabilities, institutional excellence, improving recruitment, retention strategies, enhancing effective communication across teams, optimizing performance management and employee development. Discussions also addressed innovation in applying



Jamil Girgis, Abdullah Behbehani, and some members of the bank’s human resources management team during the conference.

HR technologies and boosting strategic decision-making capabilities.

On this occasion, Afrah AlArbash, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK, said, “Our sponsorship of the HR Excellence Conference & Awards reflects our dedication to exchanging best practices, learning from global HR expertise, acquiring essential leadership and team-management skills. It also mirrors our distinguished approach to investing in human capital, advancing employee skills, competencies, elevating creativity and innovation across our workforce.”

She emphasized that ABK continues to adopt a progressive model for developing its human capital

and embedding a culture of creativity and innovation among employees. The Bank is home to exceptional capabilities and consistently provides all necessary resources to empower its teams to learn, grow, and excel.

AlArbash concluded by expressing her pride in ABK’s position as one of the leading institutions that invests in human capital to strengthen employee capabilities. She reiterated that employees are the central pillar in achieving the Bank’s strategic objectives, equipping them with the latest skills and expertise enables them to keep pace with the evolving banking industry locally and globally contributing to ABK’s strong competitive standing in the Kuwaiti market.



Khaled AlShamlan and Haytham Alterkait honor one of the winners.



Khaled AlShamlan and Haytham Alterkait honor the winning team.

Innovation core to KFH strategy for leadership in Islamic banking

Kuwait Finance House honors winners of Innovation Challenge

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) honored the winners of the ninth annual, Group-wide Innovation Challenge, a competition designed to motivate staff and leverage their ideas and expertise in developing innovative solutions for system and customer experience improvements.

The top seven ideas were recognized after being evaluated by a specialized committee against rigorous criteria.

The ceremony was attended by a select group of KFH’s leaders, including Group CEO, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan, Deputy Group CEO Transformation, Technology and Operations, Haytham Alterkait, and other executives.

During the ceremony, Alterkait emphasized that honoring the Innovation Challenge winners celebrates the spirit of creativity and development central to KFH’s success. He stressed that innovation is core to the bank’s strategy and a key pillar for maintaining its leadership in Islamic banking and reshaping the future of financial services.

Alterkait congratulated the winners, praising their valuable contributions and initiative as the main drivers for continued development and innovation.

He also thanked the Transformation, Technology and Operations Department and all contributors for the initiative’s success.

Nine consecutive years of success

Deputy General Manager Digital Transformation and Innovation at



Haytham Alterkait

Alterkait

■ Innovation is core to KFH's strategy and a key pillar for maintaining its leadership



Tareq Al-Ajeel

Al-Ajeel

■ The Innovation Challenge is a platform for professional development and creative teamwork

KFH, Eng. Tareq Al-Ajeel, congratulated the Innovation Challenge winners, noting their achievements and ideas are a source of pride and in-

spiration for the bank.

Al-Ajeel noted that KFH successfully runs the Innovation Challenge across Group subsidiaries in Kuwait, Bahrain, Turkey, the UK, and Egypt. “This initiative reflects KFH’s commitment to fostering a culture of innovation and improving performance.”

He praised the competition’s nine years of success in generating key innovations and new ideas, stressing that this reflects the excellence of KFH employees and their ability to support development and digital transformation.

Al-Ajeel highlighted that the competition is a platform for professional development, teamwork, and the exchange of expertise across departments. This cooperation supports KFH’s commitment to continuous development and its ability to achieve sustainable growth and excellence.

A unique workplace

The Innovation Challenge winners thanked KFH for the valuable opportunity to unleash their potential and innovative ideas. They praised the distinguished work environment for its stimulating climate that fosters creativity and innovation.

It serves to note that the Innovation Challenge competition aligns with KFH’s ongoing efforts to build an innovation culture and encourages employees to submit new ideas for improving performance and customer services.

SDGs powered by investment, partnerships

21st UNIDO General Conference opens in Riyadh with 173 nations

RIYADH, Nov 24, (KUNA): The 21st General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) opened in Riyadh on Sunday with industry leaders, experts, and representatives of international organizations from 173 countries taking part.

The conference, co-organized by UNIDO and the Saudi Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources under the umbrella of the “Global Industry Summit 2025,” is themed “The power of investment and partnerships to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals.”

Addressing the opening session, Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources Bandar Al-Khorayef said the Kingdom’s Vision 2030 charted the future of national industry and aimed at turning the Kingdom into highly competitive global power.

The national strategy for industry created more than 800 investment opportunities in

various promising industries such as electric cars, robotics and clean energy through 2035, he pointed out.

More than 150 speakers at the conference, including 20 ministers and 35 CEOs of global corporations, are expected to explore ways to ensure sustainable manufacturing, strengthen cooperation between major industrialized and developing nations, and empower women and youth to play an integral role in shaping the future of global industry.

The conference, being hosted at the King Abdulaziz International Conference Center, will last until November 27.

It serves as a global platform to chart the future of sustainable industry and a road-map connecting digital transformation, climate action, and economic resilience. It will also play a key role in unifying a comprehensive industrial agenda across both emerging and advanced economies.

KIBS organizes high-level forum on governance and anti-money laundering in the banking sector

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS) organized a specialized session within its Banking Leadership Forum titled “Governance and Oversight of Anti-Money Laundering in the Banking Sector.” The session, designed exclusively for chairpersons and board members of Kuwaiti banks, garnered substantial participation and focused on the latest global and regional developments in governance, compliance, and anti-money laundering (AML) practices.

In her opening remarks, delivered at the Four Seasons Hotel, Ms. Rana A. Al-Nibari, Director General of KIBS, emphasized that the session aligns with the institute’s mandate to respond proactively to the evolving needs of the banking sector and to strengthen the resilience of financial institutions across Kuwait. She noted that over the past decades, Kuwait’s banking system has played a pivotal role in navigating economic shifts, anchored by the Central Bank of Kuwait’s continuous efforts in maintaining financial stability and elevating transparency

and trust.

These efforts, she added, have reinforced Kuwait’s standing regionally and internationally.

Ms. Al-Nibari highlighted that Kuwait today continues to fortify its national framework for combating money laundering and financing of terrorism, further solidifying the country’s resilience and supporting sustainable economic growth. She described these advancements as “a source of inspiration that reinforces values of responsibility, commitment, and innovation across institutions.”

She also reaffirmed KIBS’ commitment to leveraging more than five decades of sector expertise to ensure its programs and services remain closely aligned with regulatory priorities and market transformations.

Al-Nibari underscored the institute’s continuous drive toward a qualitative leap in learning and development particularly in areas such as compliance systems, digital transformation, artificial intelligence applications, risk manage-

ment, and cybersecurity. She noted that these efforts have resulted in a significant expansion of training output for the banking sector and strong growth in programs for non-banking professionals, bringing total annual trainees to several thousand.

She further highlighted that in critical domains such as governance, AML, and digital transformation, KIBS has delivered numerous specialized programs, graduated hundreds of professionals, and contributing to the development of research and innovation.

This includes the preparation of specialized studies and supporting graduates in enrolling in renowned international universities, while also enhancing institutional readiness for emerging cybersecurity challenges.

For more than fifty years, KIBS has remained at the forefront of developing the banking and financial sector in Kuwait, offering specialized training programs, professional certifications, and capacity-building initiatives to prepare and empower national talent across the industry.

IMF sees inflation easing across MENA in 2025

GCC price stability continues despite shocks in the region

By KAMCO Invest

Inflation in the MENA region followed a downward trajectory during 2025. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its latest Regional Economic Outlook, highlighted its projection for inflation to ease across most MENA countries throughout 2025, a trend supported by lower anticipated energy prices and more constrained fiscal policy stances. Conversely, the IMF underscored that inflationary pressures could persist within key advanced economies, potentially elevating global borrowing costs. Furthermore, contributing factors such as the tariff exemption for US oil imports, the front-loading of consumption and investment ahead of anticipated tariff increases in certain nations, and trade diversion via third countries have also likely influenced the general disinflationary trend across the GCC and the broader MENA region.

The IMF projects GCC inflation will remain stable, positioned moderately under or at the 2% target for both 2025 and 2026. Similarly, for MENA oil importers, the IMF emphasized its forecast for persistently low inflation in several nations, including Jordan, while in others, such as Egypt, inflation is anticipated to recede from its historically elevated levels as the impacts of prior currency depreciation and energy-price increases diminish. Specifically, GCC inflation is forecast to rise modestly from 1.6% in 2024 to 1.7% in 2025 and 2% in 2026, staying beneath the central bank target of 2% throughout the forecast horizon. Nevertheless, in the global context, persistently high tariffs may compel central banks to adopt stricter, more restrictive monetary policies, which could translate into increased funding costs for MENA economies. This, in turn, might inadvertently intensify inflationary pressures across the region, counteracting existing disinflationary forces.

Despite heightened geopolitical instability and global trade disruptions, primarily instigated by US tariffs, the inflation rate throughout the GCC region remained stable during Q3-2025. However, a resurgence of inflation in major developed economies could trigger central banks to slow down the path to monetary easing to control domestic price growth, a policy shift with potential spillover effects on central banks within the GCC and the wider MENA region.

Concurrently, oil production among OPEC+ producers was revised upwards during the third quarter of 2025. GCC oil output increased by 968,000 barrels per day between February-2025 and June-2025, with a further rise of 158,000 barrels per day from June-2025 to August-2025. OPEC+ has collectively increased output targets by approximately 2.9 million barrels per day since April-2025. This expanded oil supply is anticipated to influence inflation performance both within the GCC and globally. Increased oil output exerts a stabilizing downward pressure on oil prices, which subsequently reduces a diverse array of costs, including those for transport and electricity. Consequently, the heightened oil production from the OPEC+ group is expected to maintain a mild GCC inflation rate for the forecast period.

In contrast, inflationary pressures in the United States intensified in September-2025. The annual inflation rate climbed to 3% y-o-y, with a 0.3% increase month-on-month during the same period. This September-2025 uptick of 3% marked the second sharpest increase recorded over the first nine months of 2025, rising from 2.9% in August-2025. However, excluding the volatile food and energy categories, the US Core (CPI) witnessed a more modest 0.2% month-on-month growth in September-2025 and a 3% y-o-y increase vs 0.3% month-on-month during both July-2025 and August-2025. The overall rise in US inflation during September-2025 was largely attributable to price growth in food, non-alcoholic beverages, and natural gas.

Global Food Prices

Global food prices registered a moderate decline in September-2025, primarily driven by falling prices within the dairy and sugar categories. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization’s (FAO) Food Price Index, global food prices increased by 3.4% y-o-y during September-2025, although the index remained 19.6% below its peak level recorded in March 2022. The overall decrease was largely propelled by declines in the cereal, dairy, sugar, and vegetable oil indices, which collectively outweighed an increase in the meat index. The FAO Cereal Price Index averaged 105.0 points in September-2025, representing a 7.5% y-o-y decline, as world wheat prices fell for the third consecutive month, mainly due to subdued international demand and confirmation of large harvests in the Russian Federation and other key producing countries in Europe and Northern America. Similarly, the FAO Sugar Price Index averaged 99.4 points, declining 4.1% month-on-month during September-2025 and 21.3% y-o-y. This drop was prompted by higher-than-expected sugar production in Brazil, resulting from large crushing volumes and an increased allocation of sugarcane for sugar production in key southern growing regions. Moreover, additional downward pressure on sugar prices stemmed from positive harvest expectations in India and Thailand, where ample monsoon rains were witnessed. In contrast, the FAO Meat Price Index averaged 127.8 points during September-2025, recording 6.6% y-o-y growth and 0.7% month-on-month growth. The index’s increase was underpinned by higher world bovine and ovine meat prices, while pig and poultry meat quotations remained broadly stable.

FED and ECB Rate Cut Expectations

The US Federal Reserve implemented an interest rate cut at the end of October-2025, its second reduction during 2025. The Fed lowered its benchmark interest rate by 0.25% to a target range of 3.75% to 4%. The US central bank’s decision to ease monetary policy is aimed at bolstering economic growth by reducing borrowing costs, thereby spurring consumer spending and business investment. This move follows several indicators pointing to a continued slowdown in hiring within the USA; for instance, the ADP National Employment Report indicated private-sector payrolls contracted by 32,000 in September-2025. The Fed’s rate cut also reflects its confidence in the expectation of falling inflation.

In response, most GCC central banks followed the Fed’s decision by cutting their own rates, with the exception of Kuwait, which held its rates steady. Saudi Arabia, the GCC’s largest economy, lowered its repurchase agreement (repo) rate by 25 basis points to 4.5% and its reverse repo rate also by 25 basis points to 4%. Similarly, the UAE central bank reduced the rate applied to its overnight deposit facility to 3.9% and the central banks of Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain mirrored the Federal Reserve’s action by reducing their respective key policy rates by 25 basis points.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia’s inflation witnessed a 2.2% y-o-y increase during September-2025, according to data from the Kingdom’s General Authority for Statistics (GASTAT). In terms of month-on-month performance, Saudi Arabia’s CPI registered a slight 0.1% decline during September-2025 compared to August-2025. The Personal Goods & Services group witnessed the biggest y-o-y growth during September-2025 with a 7.7% uptick, followed by the Housing, Water, Electricity, and Gas (WEG) group with 5.2% growth during the month, and the Recreation & Culture group with 2.7% growth during the month; this was mainly driven by a 6.7% increase in actual rents paid by tenants for primary residences. The Food and Beverages group recorded a 1.1% y-o-y increase during September-2025, driven by 0.6% growth in the prices of fresh, chilled, or frozen meat. On the other hand, two out of the twelve groups of the Kingdom’s CPI witnessed month-on-month declines, including the Transport Group, which witnessed a 0.4% month-on-month decline mainly due to a fall in passenger transport during September-2025. On the other hand, the prices of the Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and other fuels group increased by 0.4%, the food and beverages division by 0.1%, the personal care, social protection, and other goods and services division by 0.4% month-on-month, while the Education Services group improved a marginal 0.3% month-on-month.

UAE

Dubai’s CPI increased by 2.9% y-o-y in September-2025, rising from 2.4% in August-2025. The Housing, Water, Electricity, and Gas group, the most heavily weighted CPI component, posted a strong 5.8% y-o-y increase, exerting significant upward pressure on the headline inflation figure. The Recreation and Culture group rose by 4.2% y-o-y, a sharp jump from the -1.8% rate recorded in August-2025, while the Education group remained stable at 2.5%. The Food and Beverages group experienced marginal growth of 0.2%, and the Hotels & Restaurants group rose by 0.8% during the same period. However, the Transport group, the second-largest weighted category, continued its downward trend, falling 0.9% y-o-y in September-2025, following a 3.5% drop in August-2025, thereby exerting a moderate influence on overall inflation.

According to the latest Regional Economic Outlook Report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the UAE’s inflation is forecast to average 1.6% in 2025, down from 1.7% in 2024. Inflation is projected to increase slightly to 2.0% in 2026, reflecting an environment of continued price

stability.

Bahrain

Bahrain’s inflation witnessed minimal changes in September-2025, with the CPI remaining unchanged y-o-y, closing at 101.7 points. On a monthly basis, however, the CPI rose by 0.5%, rendering Bahrain the second lowest-inflation country in the GCC for the month. The subdued annual inflation was primarily attributed to price declines in five of the twelve CPI categories. Notably, Clothing and Footwear fell by 0.8%, Recreation & Culture dropped by a marginal 0.3%, and Health declined by 0.9%. Conversely, Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages increased by 1.6% m-o-m but dropped 0.6% y-o-y during September-2025. Among the few groups that saw price increases, Education rose by 2.8% y-o-y. Looking ahead, the IMF projects Bahrain’s average inflation rate will remain the second lowest in the GCC at just 0.3% in 2025, after Qatar, which has a forecast of 0.1% inflation for 2025.

Oman

Oman recorded a moderate 1.1% y-o-y increase in its CPI for September-2025, slightly up from 0.5% in August-2025. The low inflation environment reflects widespread price stability across consumer categories. According to Oman’s National Centre for Statistics and Information, the largest increases were noted in Miscellaneous Goods & Services (7.7%), followed by Transport (4.4%) and Restaurants (2.6%). Meanwhile, the Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages index declined by 0.5%, mainly driven by an 8.1% drop in vegetable prices and a 3.8% fall in seafood prices. Oman continues to maintain one of the lowest inflation rates in the region, supported by prudent fiscal policy and a rise in non-oil exports. On a month-on-month basis, Oman’s CPI decreased by 0.3% in June 2025 compared to May.

Qatar

Qatar’s CPI rose moderately by 1.1% y-o-y in September-2025, reaching 109.4 points and marking the highest inflation rate since August-2024. This moderate inflationary growth resulted from price declines in five of the eleven CPI subgroups, which effectively offset price gains in five of the remaining six categories. The Food & Beverages group rose by 1.4% y-o-y, while the Housing, Water, Electricity, and Gas group recorded a marginal 0.2% decrease. Conversely, the Communication group posted a similarly moderate 0.6% y-o-y increase, while Education saw a moderate 2.5% gain. Tobacco prices remained unchanged. On a monthly basis, Qatar’s CPI edged up by just 0.9% in September-2025. In terms of month-on-month performance, Qatar’s inflation rate improved by 0.9% during September-2025. Qatar’s Recreation and Culture group reported the largest month-on-month group uptick of 3.8% during September-2025, followed by Education (+2%). Historically, Qatar’s month-on-month inflation has averaged 0.09% between 2009 and 2024, with a record high of 1.59% in December 2023 and a record low of -2.6% in January-2022. The highest monthly rise in March-2025 was recorded in the Clothing and Footwear group (0.8%), while Housing, Water & Electricity rose by 0.3%.

Grocery chains offer deals as holiday meal costs climb

Bird flu cuts turkey supply, prices surge ahead of Thanksgiving

CHELSEA, Nov 24, (AP): Old Brick Farm, where Larry Doll raises chickens, turkeys and ducks, was fortunate this Thanksgiving season.

Doll’s small farm west of Detroit had no cases of bird flu, despite an ongoing outbreak that killed more than 2 million U.S. turkeys in the last three months alone. He also avoided another disease, avian metapneumovirus, which causes turkeys to lay fewer eggs.

“I try to keep the operation as clean as possible, and not bringing other animals in from other farms helps mitigate that risk as well,” said Doll, whose farm has been in his family for five generations.

But Doll still saw the impact as those diseases shrank the U.S. turkey flock to a 40-year low this year. The hatchery where he gets his turkey chicks had fewer available this year. He plans to order another 100 hatchlings soon, even though they won’t arrive until July.

“If you don’t get your order in early, you’re not going to get it,” he said.

The shrinking population is expected to cause wholesale turkey prices to rise 44% this year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Despite the increase, many stores are offering discounted or even free turkeys to soften the potential blow to Thanksgiving meal budgets. But even if the bird is cheaper than last year, the ingredients to prepare the rest of the holiday feast may not be. Tariffs on imported steel, for example, have increased prices for canned goods.

As of Nov. 17, a basket of 11 Thanksgiving staples - including a 10-pound frozen turkey, 10 Russet potatoes, a box of stuffing and cans of corn, green beans and cranberry sauce - cost \$58.81, or 4.1% more than last year, according to Datasembly, a market research company that surveys weekly prices at 150,000 U.S. stores. That’s higher than the average price increase for food eaten at home, which rose 2.7% in September, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Datasembly showed a 2% decline in the retail price of a 10-pound turkey as of Nov. 17. Pricing out Thanksgiving meals isn’t an exact science, and the firm’s tally differed from other estimates.

The American Farm Bureau Federation, which uses volunteer shoppers in all 50 states to survey prices, reported that Thanksgiving dinner for 10 would cost \$55.16 this year, or 5% less than last year. The Wells Fargo Agri-Food Institute, using NielsenIQ data from September, estimated that feeding 10 people on Thursday using store-brand products would cost \$80 this year, which is 2% to 3% lower than last year’s estimate.

Grocery chains are also offering deals to attract shoppers. Discount grocer Aldi



Frozen turkeys are on display at a Meijer store Friday, Nov. 21, 2025, in Canton Township, Mich. (AP)

is advertising a \$40 meal for 10 with 21 items. Kroger said shoppers could feed 10 people for under \$50 with its menu of store-brand products.

Earlier this month, President Donald Trump touted Walmart’s Thanksgiving meal basket, which he said was 25% cheaper than last year. But that was because Walmart included a different assortment and fewer products overall this year.

“We’re seeing some promotions being implemented in an effort to draw customers into the store,” David Ortega, a professor of food economics and policy at Michigan State University, said.

That’s despite a sharp increase in wholesale turkey prices since August. In the second week of November, frozen 8-16 pound hens were averaging \$1.77 per pound, up 81% from the same period last year, according to Mark Jordan, the executive director of Leap Market Analytics, which closely follows the poultry and livestock markets.

Avian viruses are the main culprit. But another reason for turkey’s higher wholesale prices has been an increase in consumer demand as other meats have gotten more expensive, Jordan said. Beef prices were up 14% in September compared to last year, for example.

“For a big chunk of the population, they look at steak cuts and say, ‘I can’t or I don’t want to pay \$30 a pound,’” Jordan said.

That’s the case for Paul Nadeau, a retired consultant from Austin, Texas, who plans to smoke a turkey this week. Nadeau said he usually smokes a brisket over Thanksgiving weekend, but the beef brisket he buys would now cost more than \$100. Turkey prices are also up at his local H-E-B supermarket, he said, but not by as much.

“I don’t know of anything that’s down in price since last year except for eggs,” Nadeau said.

Trump’s tariffs on imported steel and aluminum are also raising prices. Farok Contractor, a distinguished professor of management and global business at the Rutgers Business School, said customers are paying 10 cents to 40 cents more per can when companies pass on the full cost of tariffs.

Tariffs may be partly to blame for the increased cost of jellied cranberry sauce, which was up 38% from last year in Datasembly’s survey. But weather was also a factor. U.S. cranberry production is expected to be down 9% this year, hurt by drought conditions in Massachusetts, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

In Illinois, where most of the country’s canning pumpkins are grown, dry weather actually helped pumpkins avoid diseases that are more prevalent in wet conditions, said Raghela Scavuzzo, an associate director of food systems development at the Illinois Farm Bureau and the executive director of the Illinois Specialty Growers Association. Datasembly found that a 30-ounce can of pumpkin pie mix cost 5% less than last year.

Back at Old Brick Farm, which has been in his family since 1864, Doll walked among his turkeys the week before Thanksgiving, patting their heads as they waddled between their warm barn and an open pasture. In a few days, he planned to deliver them to an Amish butcher.

Doll sold all 92 turkeys he raised this year, with customers paying \$6.50 per pound for what many tell him is the best turkey they’ve ever tasted. He enjoys a little profit, he said, and the good feeling of supplying a holiday meal.

“I just love it, to think that, you know, not only are we providing them food, but the centerpiece of their Thanksgiving dinner,” he said.

G20 Summit in South Africa ends with US boycott, marking historic absence

Trump Administration skips G20 handover

JOHANNESBURG, Nov 24, (AP): The Group of 20 summit in South Africa ended Sunday with the glaring absence of the United States - the next country to lead the bloc - after the Trump administration boycotted the two days of talks involving leaders of the world’s richest and top developing economies.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa declared the summit in Johannesburg closed by banging a wooden gavel on a block like a judge would, in a G20 tradition. The gavel would normally be handed over to the leader of the next country to hold the rotating presidency, but no U.S. official was there to receive it.

The world’s biggest economy boycotted a summit meant to bring rich and developing nations together over President Donald Trump’s claims that South Africa is violently persecuting its Afrikaner white minority.

The White House said it intended in a last-minute decision for an official from its embassy in South Africa to attend the G20 handover. But South Africa refused that, saying it was an insult for Ramaphosa to hand over to a junior embassy official. In the end, no U.S. delegation was accredited for the summit, according to the South African Foreign Ministry.

South Africa said the handover would happen later, possibly at its foreign ministry. Trump has said the U.S. will hold next year’s summit at his golf club in Doral, Florida.

“This gavel of this G20 summit formally closes this summit and now moves on to the next president of the G20, which is the United States, where we shall see each other again next year,” Rama-

phosa said as he closed the summit, making no reference to the U.S. absence in his speech.

The first G20 summit in Africa also broke with tradition on Saturday by issuing a leaders’ declaration on the opening day of the talks, when declarations usually come at the end of the summit.

The declaration was significant in that it came in the face of opposition from the U.S., which has for months been critical of a South African agenda for the group that largely focused on climate change and global wealth inequality - focuses the Trump administration derided. Argentina said it also opposed the declaration after Argentine President Javier Milei - a Trump ally - also skipped the summit.

Other G20 nations, including China, Russia, France, Germany, the U.K., Japan and Canada, backed the declaration, which called for more global attention on issues that specifically affect poor countries, such as the need for financial help for their recovery efforts after climate-related disasters, finding ways to ease their debt levels and supporting their transition to climate-friendly green energy sources.

“South Africa has used this presidency to place the priorities of Africa and the Global South firmly at the heart of the G20 agenda,” Ramaphosa said.

After his speech, Ramaphosa was hugged and congratulated by other leaders for hosting a summit largely overshadowed by the U.S. boycott, and he was heard in a hot-mic moment that was not meant to be broadcast saying: “It was not easy.”

South Africa championed its G20 declaration as a victory for the summit and for international cooperation in the face of the Trump administration’s “America First” foreign policy. However, G20 declarations are general agreements by member countries that aren’t binding, and their long-term impact has been questioned.

Also, while the declaration included many of

South Africa’s priorities, some concrete proposals didn’t make the document. There was no mention of a new international panel on wealth inequality, similar to the United Nations-appointed Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which South Africa and others had called for.

The G20 was formed in 1999 in response to the Asian financial crisis and is made up of 19 rich and developing economies, the European Union and the African Union, but some have questioned its effectiveness in helping solve the most prominent global crises, like the Russia-Ukraine war and tensions in the Middle East.

The 122-point Johannesburg declaration made just one reference to Ukraine in a general call for an end to global conflicts and the summit appeared to have made no difference to the nearly four-year war, even as leaders or high-level delegations from all the major European nations, the EU and Russia sat in the same room for the G20 gathering.

“Meeting for the first time on the African continent marks an important milestone,” French President Emmanuel Macron said, but added the bloc was “struggling to have a common standard on geopolitical crises.”

Still, some praised the summit as a significant symbolic moment for the G20.

“This is the first ever meeting of world leaders in history where the inequality emergency was put at the center of the agenda,” said Max Lawson of Oxfam, the international nonprofit that works to alleviate global poverty.

“The importance of addressing development priorities from the African perspective cannot be overemphasized,” said Namibia President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, whose southern African country of 3 million people was one of more than 20 smaller nations invited as guests to attend the summit alongside the G20 members.

Small tea businesses suffer

Tea prices rise amid tariff impact

NEW YORK, Nov 24, (AP): A tax on tea once sparked rebellion. This time, it’s just causing headaches.

Importers of the prized leaves have watched costs climb, orders stall and margins shrink under the weight of President Donald Trump’s tariffs. Now, even after Trump has given them a reprieve, tea traders say it won’t immediately undo the damage.

“It took a while to work its way through the system, these tariffs, and it will take a while for it to work its way out of the system,” says Bruce Richardson, a celebrated tea master, tea historian and purveyor of teas at his shop, Elmwood Inn Fine Teas, in Danville, Kentucky. “That tariffed tea is still working its way out of our warehouses.”

While a handful of bigger firms are behind the biggest supermarket brands, the premium tea market is largely the work of smaller businesses, from family farms to specialty importers to a web of little tea shops, tea rooms and tea cafes across the U.S. Amid an onslaught of tariffs, they have become showcases for the levies’ effects.

On their shelves, selection has narrowed, with some teas now missing because they’re no longer viable products to stock with steep levies on top. In their warehouses, managers are consumed with uncertainty and operational headaches, including calculating what a blend really costs, with ingredients from multiple countries on a roller coaster of tariffs. And in backrooms where the wafting scent of fresh tea permeates, owners have been forced to put off job postings, raises, advertising and other investments so they can have cash available to pay duties when their containers arrive at U.S. ports.

“If I were to add up all the money I’ve spent on tariffs that weren’t there a year ago, it could equal a new employee,” says Hartley Johnson, who owns the Mark T. Wendell Tea Company in Acton, Massachusetts.

Johnson’s prices used to stay static for a year or longer. He ate the tariff costs before being forced to respond. His most popular tea, a smoky Taiwanese one called Hu-Kwa, has steadily risen from \$26 to \$46 a pound. He knows some customers are reconsidering.

“Where is that tipping point?” Johnson asks. “I’m kind of finding that tipping point is happening now.”

Though Trump backed off some tariffs on

agricultural products last week, many in the tea trade are wary of celebrating too soon and caution tea drinkers shouldn’t either. Much of next year’s supply has already been imported and tariffed and the full impact of those duties may not have fully spilled downhill.

Meantime, other tariff-driven price hikes persist. All sorts of other products tea businesses import, from teapots to infusers, remain subject to levies, and costs for some American-made items, like tins for packaging, have spiked because they rely on foreign materials.

“The canisters, the bamboo boxes, the matcha whisks, everything that we import, everything that we sell has been affected by tariffs,” says Gilbert Tsang, owner of MEM Tea Imports in Wakefield, Massachusetts.

Though globally, tea reigns supreme, imbibed more than anything but water, it has long been overshadowed by coffee in the U.S. Still, tea is entwined in American history from the very beginning, even before colonists angry with tariffs dumped tons of it in Boston Harbor.

Boston may run on Dunkin’ today, but it was born on tea.

The 1773 revolt that became known as the Boston Tea Party rose out of the British Parliament’s implementation of tea tariffs on colonists, who rejected taxation without representation in government. After an independent United States was born, one of the new government’s first major acts, the Tariff Act of 1789, ironically set in law import taxes on a range of products including tea. In time, though, trade policy came to include carve-outs for many products Americans rely on but don’t produce.

For more than 150 years, most tea has passed through U.S. ports with little to no duties.

That began to change in Trump’s first term with his hardline approach to China. But nothing compared to what came with his return to the White House.

In July, the most recent month for which the U.S. International Trade Commission has tallied tariff numbers, tea was taxed at an average rate of over 12%, a huge increase from a year earlier when it was just under one-tenth of a percent. In that single month, American businesses and consumers paid more than \$6 million in tea import taxes, amassing in just 31 days more tariffs than any previous full year on record.

Battery limits, airspace rules challenge eVTOL expansion

Takeoff of China’s flying taxis hits turbulence

HONG KONG, Nov 24, (AP): An unmanned, oval-shaped craft from flying taxi maker EHang hovers, whirring noisily like a mini-helicopter over a riverside innovation zone on the outskirts of the southern Chinese business hub of Guangzhou, part of a trial of a mini-flying taxi that once might have been found only in sci-fi films.

In nearby Shenzhen, food-delivery drones already are part of daily life and a novelty attraction for tourists, even if such services cost more. In the waterfront park surrounded by high-rises, Polish tourist Karolina Trzcianska and her friends ordered bubble tea and lemon tea by phone, just to give it a try. Their drinks arrived via a drone buzzing through the drizzle about 30 minutes later.

“This is the first time I’m seeing something like this, so it was super fun to see the food being delivered by the drone,” she said.

Such businesses are growing quickly with support from the government, though the take off of the so-called “low-altitude economy” faces obstacles such as strict airspace controls and battery limitations.

Activities in airspace below 1,000 meters (about 3,280 feet) accounted for business turnover worth 506 billion yuan (\$70 billion) in 2023, about 0.4% of China’s economy. By 2035, it’s expected to hit 3.5 trillion yuan (about \$490 billion), said Zhang Xiaolan, a researcher at the State Information Center, a think tank affiliated with China’s main planning agency.

Guangdong province, home to drone giant DJI with an estimated 70% of the global commercial drone market, leads in development of the low-altitude economy, followed by wealthy eastern coastal provinces Jiangsu and Zhejiang, near Shanghai, according to a report by a research unit of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Peking University, and other institutions.

Other big players in Guangdong include EHang, logistics company SF Express’s drone arm Phoenix Wings, and automaker XPENG’s flying car unit ARIDGE.

In October, Guangdong announced it plans to speed up construction of flight service stations and platforms to facilitate airspace operations and will support locally issued discount vouchers for low-altitude tourism.

Its technology and financial hub Shenzhen has

launched a 15-million-yuan (\$2.1 million) award for companies that earn certifications required for passenger eVTOLs, short for “electric vertical take-off and landing” vehicles that lift off the ground like helicopters, among other incentives.

China’s Civil Aviation Administration has granted certificates allowing EHang to offer commercial passenger services with its pilotless eVTOL, a low-altitude aircraft that can reach speeds of 130 kph (81 mph) with a maximum range of 30 kilometers (19 miles).

EHang hasn’t launched commercial routes, but its vice president, He Tianxing, says it aims to start with aerial sightseeing services. The company has been building takeoff and landing sites in 20 Chinese cities over the past two years. He expects aircraft of various companies will be flying multiple routes, possibly after five years.

He envisions eventual citywide networks using the rooftops of malls, schools and parks as terminals.

“It can’t just be a research product, nor an engineer’s toy,” he said.

The biggest challenge for developing eVTOL aircraft is maintaining longer flights and overcoming battery capacity limitations, said Guo Liming, co-founder of Shenzhen-based Skyevtol, whose single-seat manned eVTOL aircraft, priced at around \$100,000, can only fly 20 to 30 minutes before it must be charged.

It also has not all been smooth skies.

In September, two XPENG’s eVTOL aircraft collided after a rehearsal for an exhibition and one of them caught fire while landing. The company said no one was hurt, but another expo canceled flying demonstrations a week later.

Undeterred, XPENG has continued to showcase its flying cars, including a six-wheeled ground vehicle with a detachable eVTOL aircraft. Having invested over \$600 million, the company said it has more than 7,000 global orders for its “Land Aircraft Carrier” and has begun preparing for mass production.

A trial run of sightseeing flights in Dunhuang, a key ancient Silk Road destination famous for its Buddhist caves and dunes, is planned for next July.

It’s unclear how quickly such aircraft might begin carrying paid passengers regularly. Some

companies elsewhere have burned through their funding before reaching the commercial launch stage. In Germany, air taxi makers Lilium and Volocopter filed for bankruptcy, though the latter was later bought by Diamond Aircraft Group, a subsidiary of a Chinese firm.

After years of commercialization, drone applications are not that widespread in China.

Even though the country leads in drone technology and manufacturing, policy constraints including limited airspace access, may mean overseas markets are more promising, said Frank Zhou, managing director at GBA Low Altitude Technology Co., which provides technological software to clients.

“Perhaps for some Southeast Asian countries, if I introduce these applications to them, their demand could explode,” he said.

Less than one-third of China’s low-altitude airspace was accessible for general aviation use in 2023 and there were problems with uneven distribution and a lack of internet connectivity, Zhang, the State Information Center researcher, said in a report. The number of registered general aviation aerodromes in China, excluding private airports, was just about a tenth of those in the U.S., she said.

Chinese policymakers are gradually working to close the gap. The military generally commands use of most Chinese airspace but has pledged to simplify approval procedures and shorten review times in Shenzhen and five other provinces.

Proposed revisions of the civil aviation law include a chapter on development and promotion of civilian activities, addressing low-altitude airspace allocation and supervision.

It’s still early days, said Gary Ng, a senior economist at Natixis Corporate and Investment Banking.

He expects progress toward commercialization to materialize around 2030, with passenger-carrying eVTOLs for tourism or industrial purposes starting before flying taxi services. Some of the aerial products could become key exports, he said.

China is a latecomer to the industry but now leads in developing small drones and low-altitude airspace investments, said Chen Wen-hua, director at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University’s Research Centre for Low Altitude Economy.

EU urges US to cut steel tariffs

Brussels organizes first US-EU trade meeting in two months

BRUSSELS, Nov 24, (KUNA): EU trade ministers were holding on Monday their first direct meeting in two months with US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer in Brussels on Monday to discuss the outstanding issues in the tariff agreement reached last July.

According to the European Commission, the meeting aims to revive the negotiations, focusing on files that remain contentious, foremost among them the tariffs imposed on steel, aluminum, and products containing steel components, in addition to tariffs on food and beverages, including alcohol.

The EU Commission announced that Lutnick and Greer will participate in a working lunch with the 27 EU trade ministers. The two US officials are also holding talks with several EU commissioners, including the commissioners for trade, defense, and technology, to discuss the ongoing crisis of semiconductor supplies from China and its impact on economic partnerships.

The European Union had reached an agreement with US President Donald Trump last July to avoid the imposition of 50 percent tariffs by settling on a base tariff of 15 percent on most EU exports to the United States.

However, Washington has recently expressed dissatisfaction with what it sees as the EU’s slow implementation of the agreement, which still requires approval by the European Parliament, a process that could extend until next February.

The main outstanding issues include the continued 50 percent tariffs on steel and aluminum, additional tariffs on metal products, and taxes on certain food and beverage items.

Also:

BRUSSELS: EU Trade Commissioner Maros Sefcovic affirmed on Monday that reducing the tariffs imposed by the U.S. on steel and its derivatives is a “pressing priority” for the EU.

Speaking to reporters ahead of a meeting between EU trade ministers, US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer, Sefcovic said both sides still face “a great deal of work” to complete the implementation of the agreement reached last July.

He said the EU “seeks to lower the high tariffs and address global overcapacity in coordination with Washington”, stressing that the Brussels meeting is “devoted to reviewing progress, not launching a new round of negotiations.”

He explained that the US added 407 new items last August to the list of “metal derivative products” subject to a 50 percent tariff, which hampers the implementation of the agreement stipulating a 15 percent baseline tariff on most EU exports to the United States.

For his part, Danish Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen, whose country holds the rotating EU presidency, said the meeting is “an opportunity to stabilise trade relations between Europe and the United States” and to discuss “shared challenges in the global trade system, including relations with China.”

Both sides hope that today’s meeting will help prepare the ground for formally resuming negotiations next week, amid the EU’s insistence on tariff reductions and Washington’s push to revisit Europe’s digital and environmental rules.

Biggest opening ever for a Broadway musical adaptation

New ‘Wicked’ even more popular than the first, soars to \$226m debut

LOS ANGELES, Nov 24, (AP): Universal Pictures’ two-part “Wicked” gamble continues to defy gravity at the box office. Just a year after part one brought droves of audiences to movie theaters around the country, even more people bought opening weekend tickets to see the epic conclusion, “Wicked: For Good.” According to studio estimates on Sunday, “Wicked: For Good” earned \$150 million from North American theaters in its first days in theaters and \$226 million globally.

Not only is it the biggest opening ever for a Broadway musical adaptation, unseating the record set by the first film’s \$112 million launch, it’s also the second biggest debut of the year behind “A Minecraft Movie’s” \$162 million.

“The results are just fantastic,” said Jim Orr, who heads domestic distribution for Universal. “Some films can deliver a false positive when tickets go on sale early but these results speak for themselves.”

Universal began rolling out “Wicked: For Good” in theaters earlier this week, with previews on Monday (\$6.1 million from 1,050 theaters) and Wednesday (\$6.5 million from 2,300



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Jonathan Bailey, (left), and Ariana Grande in a scene from ‘Wicked: For Good.’ (AP)

theaters). By Friday it was playing in 4,115 North American locations and had raked in \$68.6 million. IMAX showings accounted for \$15.5 million, or 11%, of its domestic haul - a November record for the company.

IMAX CEO Rich Gelfond said in a statement that the strong market share shows, “our momentum carries into demos and genres beyond our traditional core, including families.”

As with the first film, women pow-

ered opening weekend, making up around 71% of ticket buyers according to PostTrak exit polls. Critics were somewhat mixed on the final chapter, but audiences weren’t: An overwhelming 83% of audiences said it was one they would “definitely recommend” to friends. As far as foot traffic is concerned, the box office tracker EntTelligence estimates that about 2 million more people came out for “Wicked: For Good’s” first weekend than for “Wicked’s.”

Jon M. Chu directed both “Wicked” films, starring Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande. The first film made over \$758.7 million worldwide and received 10 Oscar nominations (winning two, for costume and production design). The question is how high “Wicked: For Good” can soar. Combined, the two films cost around \$300 million to produce, not including marketing and promotion costs.

“The first film paved the way,” Orr said. “It’s really become a cultural event I think audiences are going to be flocking to theaters for quite some time to come.”

Two other films also opened in wide release this weekend, but further down on the charts behind a buffet of hold-

vers. Searchlight Pictures opened its Brendan Fraser film “Rental Family” in 1,925 theaters where it earned \$3.3 million. The Finnish action film “Sisu: Road to Revenge,” a Sony release, also played in 2,222 theaters. It earned an estimated \$2.6 million.

Second place went to “Now You See Me: Now You Don’t” with \$9.1 million in its second weekend, followed by “Predator: Badlands” with \$6.3 million in weekend three. “The Running Man” followed in fourth place with \$5.8 million, down 65% from its debut last weekend.

Although this weekend the box office was more of a winner takes all scenario, “Wicked: For Good’s” success is vitally important for the exhibition industry as a whole as it enters the final weeks of the year.

“It sets up a very strong final home-stretch of the year,” said Paul Dergarabedian, Comscore’s head of marketplace trends.

After the slow fall season, the Thanksgiving blockbusters could not arrive soon enough. Early next week, “Zootopia 2” enters the mix and is also expected to drive big crowds to the cineplex over the holiday break.

Thanksgiving is often one of the

biggest moviegoing frames of the year, Dergarabedian said, and both “Wicked 2” and “Zootopia 2” will benefit. Last year “Wicked,” “Moana 2” and “Gladiator II” helped power a record five-day frame.

The running domestic box office is currently hovering around \$7.5 billion, according to Comscore. Before the pandemic, the annual box office would regularly hit \$11 billion, but the post-pandemic goal has lessened to \$9 billion. The big question now is whether titles like “Wicked: For Good,” “Zootopia 2” and “Avatar: Fire and Ash” can push the industry over that threshold.

With final domestic figures being released Monday, this list factors in the estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore:

1. “Wicked: For Good,” \$150 million;
2. “Now You See Me: Now You Don’t,” \$9.1 million;
3. “Predator: Badlands,” \$6.3 million;
4. “The Running Man,” \$5.8 million;
5. “Rental Family,” \$3.3 million;
6. “Sisu: Road to Revenge,” \$2.6 million;
7. “Regretting You,” \$1.5 million;
8. “Nuremberg,” \$1.2 million;
9. “Black Phone 2,” \$1 million and 10. “Sarah’s Oil,” \$711,542.

Obituary

Jamaican music icon

Reggae giant and actor Jimmy Cliff dies at 81

NEW YORK, Nov 24, (AP): Jimmy Cliff, the charismatic reggae pioneer and actor who preached joy, defiance and resilience in such classics as “Many Rivers to Cross,” “You Can Get it If You Really Want” and “Vietnam” and starred in the landmark movie “The Harder They Come,” has died at 81.

His family posted a message Monday on his social media sites that he died from a “seizure followed by pneumonia.” Additional information was not immediately available.

“To all his fans around the world, please know that your support was his strength throughout his whole career,” the announcement reads in part. “He really appreciated each and every fan for their love.”

Cliff was a native Jamaican with a spirited tenor and a gift for catchphrases and topical lyrics who joined Kingston’s emerging music scene in his teens and helped lead a movement in the 1960s that included such future stars as Bob Marley, Toots Hibbert and Peter Tosh. By the early 1970s, he had accepted director Perry Henzell’s offer to star in a film about an aspiring reggae musician, Ivanhoe “Ivan” Martin, who turns to crime when his career stalls. Henzell named the movie “The Harder They Come” after suggesting the title as a possible song for Cliff.

“Ivanhoe was a real-life character for Jamaicans,” Cliff told Variety in 2022, upon the film’s 50th anniversary. “When I was a little boy, I used to hear about him as being a bad man. A real bad man. No one in Jamaica, at that time, had guns. But he had guns and shot a policeman, so he was someone to be feared. However, being a hero was the manner in which Perry wanted to make his name - an anti-hero in the way that Hollywood turns its bad guys into heroes.”

“The Harder They Come,” delayed for some two years because of sporadic funding, was the first major commercial release to come out of Jamaica. It sold few tickets in its initial run, despite praise from Roger Ebert and other critics. But it now stands as a cultural touchstone, with a soundtrack widely cited as among the greatest ever and as a turning point in reggae’s worldwide rise.

For a brief time, Cliff rivaled Marley as the genre’s most prominent artist. On an album that included Toots and the Maytals, the Slickers and Desmond Dekker, Cliff was the featured artist on four out of 11 songs, all well placed in the reggae canon.

“Sitting in Limbo” was a moody,

but hopeful take on a life in restless motion. “You Can Get it If You Really Want” and the title song were calls for action and vows of final payments: “The harder they come, the harder they fall, one and all.” Cliff otherwise lets out a weary cry on “Many Rivers to Cross,” a gospel-style testament that he wrote after confronting racism in England in the 1960s.

“It was a very frustrating time. I came to England with very big hopes, and I saw my hopes fading,” he told Rolling Stone in 2012.

Cliff’s career peaked with “The Harder They Come,” but, after a break in the late 1970s, he worked steadily for decades, whether session work with the Rolling Stones or collaborations with Wyckle Jean, Sting and Annie Lennox among others. Meanwhile, his early music lived on. The Sandinistas in Nicaragua used “You Can Get it If You Really Want” as a campaign theme and Bruce Springsteen helped expand Cliff’s U.S. audience with his live cover of the reggae star’s “Trapped,” featured on the million-selling charity album from 1985, “We Are the World.” Others performing his songs included John Lennon, Cher and UB40.

Cliff was nominated for seven Grammys and won twice for best reggae album: in 1986 for “Cliff Hanger” and in 2012 for the well-named “Rebirth,” widely regarded as his best work in years. His other albums included the Grammy-nominated “The Power and the Glory,” “Humanitarian” and the 2022 release “Refugees.” He also performed on Steve Van Zandt’s protest anthem, “Sun City,” and acted in the Robin Williams comedy “Club Paradise,” for which he contributed a handful of songs to the soundtrack and sang with Elvis Costello on the rocker “Seven Day Weekend.”

In 2010, Cliff was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

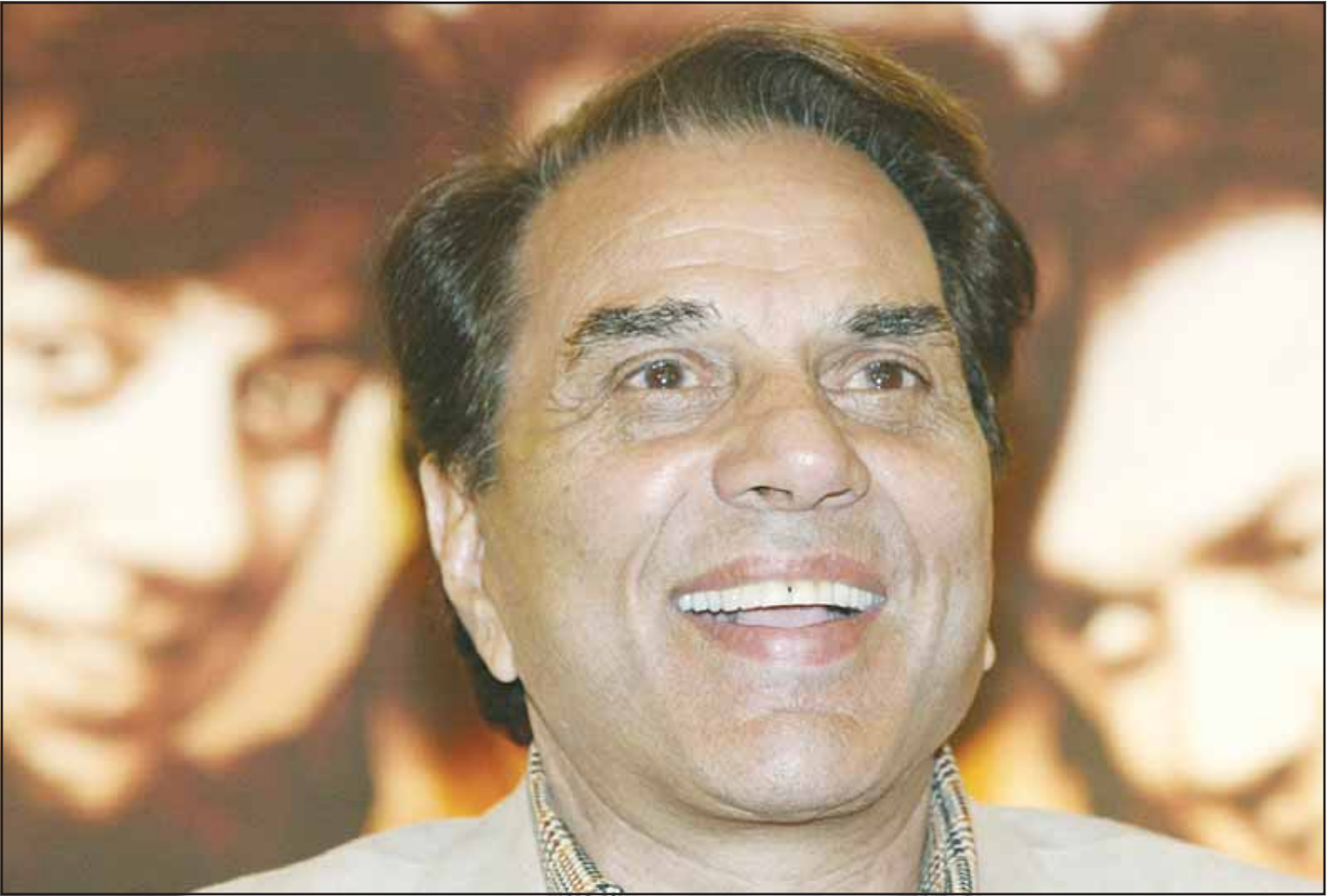
He was born James Chambers in suburban Saint James and, like Ivan Martin in “The Harder They Come,” moved to Kingston in his youth to become a musician. In the early 1960s, Jamaica was gaining its independence from Britain and the early sounds of reggae - first called ska and rocksteady - were catching on. Calling himself Jimmy Cliff, he had a handful of local hits, including “King of Kings” and “Miss Jamaica,” and, after overcoming the kinds of barriers that upended Martin, was called on to help represent his country at the 1964 World’s Fair in New York City.

“(Reggae) is a pure music. It was born of the poorer class of people,” he told Spin in 2022. “It came from the need for recognition, identity and respect.”



Jamaican musician, singer and actor Jimmy Cliff performs during the Timbre Rock and Roots concert on Friday March 22, 2013 in Singapore. (AP)

Obituary



Bollywood actor and Indian lawmaker Dharmendra reacts during a promotional press conference of his latest film ‘Apne’ in Calcutta, India, Monday, June 25, 2007. (AP)

Iconic actor’s death marks end of an era: PM Modi

Dharmendra, Indian cinema’s ‘He-Man,’ dies at 89

NEW DELHI, Nov 24, (AP): Dharmendra, one of Indian cinema’s most popular stars whose versatile performances made him a defining screen presence of 1970s and 1980s Bollywood films, died Monday. He was 89.

The actor, who would have turned 90 on Dec. 8, had been in and out of a hospital in the financial capital, Mumbai, over the past few weeks.

A senior police official who had spoken to Dharmendra’s doctor confirmed the death on condition of anonymity. Prime Minister Narendra Modi offered his condolences, saying the actor’s death marks the end of an era in Indian cinema.

“He was an iconic film personality, a phenomenal actor who brought charm and depth to every role he played. The manner in which he played diverse roles struck a chord with countless people,” Modi said on social media platform X.

Often called Bollywood’s “He-Man,” Dharmendra combined the old-school heroism of an action star with the tenderness of a romantic lead, making him one of India’s most iconic actors. Though most of his fame came from roles in which he embodied the archetype of a larger-than-life hero - upright, patriotic and fearless - his charming performances in romantic hits equally made him popular with the masses.

Dharmendra’s performance in “Sholay” (1975) - Bollywood’s take on the Spaghetti Western and regarded as one of India’s greatest films - earned him enduring popularity. His roles in other Hindi-language hits, from the romantic comedy “Chupke Chupke” (1975) to the action drama “Mera Gaon Mera Desh” (1971), made him one of the most rec-



Bollywood actor Shabana Azmi, (center), arrives at a cremation center to pay homage to Dharmendra. (AP)

ognizable film faces from that era.

His role in Bollywood classic “Sholay,” where he played an affable character alongside Amitabh Bachchan, his co-actor in the film, cemented his status as a superstar. The duo’s on-screen partnership also became one of Bollywood’s most iconic pairings.

His on-screen chemistry with actress Hema Malini, whom he later married, became one of Bollywood’s most popular collaborations, as the pair acted together in more than two dozen films. But their union was rooted in scandal. Dharmendra had married Prakash Kaur before his film debut, and went on to have four children with her, includ-

ing two who would follow in his acting footsteps - Sunny Deol and Bobby Deol.

Despite his marriage to Malini in 1980, he reportedly never divorced Kaur and continued to live with her. According to local media reports, he briefly converted to Islam before marrying Malini as Indian law disallows Hindus to marry twice, especially if their spouse is alive.

Dharmendra and Malini had two daughters, including Bollywood actor Esha Deol. His nephew, Abhay Deol, also joined the industry.

Later in his career, Dharmendra moved to more character-driven roles, frequently portraying paternal figures in the 1990s and 2000s in a career that continued through 2025. He was last seen in war biopic film “Ikkis.”

“I never thought I would come this far,” he said in a 2021 interview with Indian news website Rediff.

Born Dharmendra Kewal Krishan Deol in India’s northern state of Punjab in 1935, he grew up in a farming family and moved to Mumbai in the late 1950s, making his Bollywood debut in 1960. Over a career spanning six decades, he acted in more than 300 films.

In 2012, Dharmendra was awarded the Padma Bhushan, India’s third-highest civilian honor, in recognition of his contribution to Indian cinema. He also briefly turned to politics, serving as a Bharatiya Janata Party lawmaker in Parliament from 2004 to 2009, though his political stint was short-lived.

Dharmendra is survived by his wives, children and grandchildren.

‘Second life starts when you realize you have one’

Glover reveals he had a stroke, heart surgery last year

LOS ANGELES, Nov 24, (AP): Donald Glover is opening up about a recent health scare that forced him to cancel his tour last year.

At the time, he described it as an “ailment,” but Glover said Saturday night at a performance that a doctor told him he’d had a stroke.

Glover, who performs under the moniker Childish Gambino, shared the information on stage at Tyler, the Creator’s Camp Flog Gnaw festival in Los Angeles. His remarks



Donald Glover performs during the BET Awards on Sunday, June 30, 2024, at the Peacock Theater, in Los Angeles. (AP)

were shared widely on social media.

“You guys voted for a ‘where have I been monologue,’” Glover, 42, said. “I had a really bad pain in my head in Louisiana and I did the show anyway. I couldn’t really see well, so when we went to Houston, I went to the hospital and the doctor was like, ‘You had a stroke.’”

Glover said he felt like he was letting everyone down, lamenting that he still hasn’t been to Ireland.

He also revealed that “they found a hole” in his heart and he had to have two surgeries.

“They say everybody has two lives and the second life starts when you realize you have one,” Glover said. “You got one life, guys, and I gotta be honest, the life I’ve lived with you guys has been such a blessing.”

His representatives did not immediately respond to request for comment.



The Aga Khan Music Awards recognized musicians preserving traditional heritages and shaping the future of global music. (AP)

Trailblazing artists from across the globe honoured at The Aga Khan Music Awards

The world’s music industry came together to celebrate eleven ground-breaking artists being honoured as this year’s winners of the Aga Khan Music Awards in a ceremony on Saturday night at the Southbank Centre, London.

The winners - from Morocco, Bahrain, Türkiye, Iran, Lebanon, India, Mali, Palestine, Greece, Pakistan and Senegal - represent a wide range of musical heritages and their evolutions, exceptional contributions to the wellbeing of communities, and, in some cases, the last remaining master musicians of their traditions.

Among this year’s laureates are the legendary khyal maestro Ustad Nas-eeruddin Saami and distinguished qawwals the Warsi Brothers, who both

trace their heritage to Amir Khusrau - the esteemed Sufi poet, musician, and visionary polymath who profoundly shaped the cultural history of South Asia; Bahrain’s Qalali Folk Band, which has been preserving the cultural memory of the nation’s pearl divers for over 100 years; Palestinian oud player and vocalist Kamilya Jubran, a trailblazer in contemporary Arabic music; and Iranian composer Sabha Aminikia, founder of the Flying Carpet Festival, which brings moments of joy to children living in conflict zones.

The laureates, selected by an independent seven-member jury from a pool of over 400 nominees, share a prize fund of \$500,000. The Awards ceremony headlined a four-day festival celebrating music from the Great East, and marked the first time the Aga Khan Music Awards have taken

place in the United Kingdom.

His Highness the Aga Khan said:

“I am honoured to carry forward a vision deeply rooted in my father’s belief in the power of music to bridge cultures and uplift the human spirit. The Aga Khan Music Awards reflect values that lie at the heart of the Aga Khan Development Network: pluralism, intercultural dialogue and the spiritual connection that communities around the world find in music. In many of the regions we serve, music is an integral part of daily life, woven into the rhythms of prayer, celebration, memory and identity. We continue to support artists and traditions that speak not only to heritage, but also to hope.” (AP)

Heritage



Musicians perform at the Hegra heritage site in AlUla, Saudi Arabia, Nov. 20. Saudi Arabia on Thursday launched the Ancient Kingdoms Festival 2025 in the historic city of AlUla. (Xinhua)

Saudi Arabia launches Ancient Kingdoms Festival 2025

Saudi Arabia on Thursday launched the Ancient Kingdoms Festival 2025 in the historic city of AlUla.

Running from Nov. 20 to Dec. 6, the event honors the civilizations that once thrived in AlUla through immersive storytelling and experiences. It is one of the five flagship festivals of the AlUla Moments calendar, which introduces a diverse lineup of festivals and events designed to unlock AlUla’s stories, reveal its hidden layers, and celebrate both local and global cultures.

Held under this year’s theme “Journeys Through Time,” the festival transforms AlUla into a living open-air museum, where heritage activities, cultural performances, and artistic creations bring the stories of ancient civilizations to life, offering visitors an immersive experience that bridges day and night.

In his welcome address, Abdulrahman Al-Suhaibani, vice president of culture at the Royal Commission for AlUla, called the historic city one of the “complex and often unexpected legacies of ancient North-West Ara-

bia.”

“Through this festival, and the activations we deliver year-round, we aim to share this rich history and make it accessible and engaging for everybody, standing as a source of knowledge, inspiration, delight, and enrichment,” AlSuhaibani said.

AlUla is located 1,100 km from Riyadh, in northwestern Saudi Arabia. The most well-known and recognised site in AlUla is Hegra, Saudi Arabia’s first UNESCO World Heritage Site. (Xinhua)

Singer bridges genres with ‘King of Hearts’

Lake brings message of hope through his music

NEW YORK, Nov 24, (AP): Fifteen miles south of Sin City, Brandon Lake is seated backstage at a packed arena in Henderson, Nevada. In a matter of hours, he will perform an energetic, “family-friendly” show, as he tells The Associated Press, for thousands of people. He’s on the road with his latest album, 2025’s “King of Hearts,” a Christian music release that spans genre - pop, rock, country, hip-hop - a mixture not always associated with worship music.

Its eclecticism is one of the many reasons why his music is connecting. The album peaked at No. 7 on the all-genre Billboard 200 chart, an undeniable feat for a contemporary Christian music (CCM) release, and earned Lake his first Top 40 hit: “Hard Fought ...” with country singer Jelly Roll.

“It’s the marriage of awesome production with an awesome message. A message of hope,” says Lake. “There is strength that can be found, and hope that can be found, in the midst of the hell that you are walking through. And then you pair that with like an awesome sound and it’s like, who’s not going to love that?”

Earlier this month, Lake was nominated for three Grammys at the 2026 award show in February; he already has five trophies to his name and a total 15 career-nods. “Being recognized, that is to me, that’s recognizing the millions of people’s lives that have been impacted by this music and the message,” he says of the nominations. “It’s definitely a pinch-me moment.”

This year, he was nominated for his first Country Music Association Award as well: for musical event of the year, for “Hard Fought Hallelujah.” It’s not a Christian category - he found himself competing against secular artists. (Lake did not win: The category was announced ahead of the CMAs on Wednesday.) “I think it is a crossover moment and I pray that it is. I’m trying to cross over, into any and every space that God will allow that is authentic to who I am,” Lake says. “I grew up on country music; I grew up on Christian music. ... And if you listen to my music, it is very diverse, you know? Quote-unquote Christian music, worship music ... it doesn’t really make sense having a genre, because it’s what we do with our lives. It’s not a sound.”



Brandon Lake poses for a portrait Tuesday, Nov. 18, in Nashville, Tenn. (AP)

It’s a contemporary approach that reflects modern listening habits, too. Holly Zabka, president of Provident, a Sony subsidiary dedicated to Christian music, uses her daughter as an example to explain the trend. “She doesn’t define her musical taste by genre. I think that’s what we’re seeing. She’ll go from a Luke Combs song to a Brandon Lake song to Harry Styles, that’s how she listens. She’s a fan of everything. And I think that’s where Christian music is finding its footing as well. It can exist alongside every other genre.”

Lake is at the forefront of a new musical movement in the U.S., where Christian artists are growing in popularity. According to a midyear report from Luminare, the industry data and analytics company, streams of new music - recordings released in the last 18 months - are slightly down from the same time last year, except in the case of Christian/gospel music. Jaime Marconette, Luminare’s vice president of music insights and industry relations, attributed the genre’s growth to “younger, streaming-forward fan-base,” which is 60% female and 30% millennial. Artists like Lake, Forrest Frank and Elevation Worship are leading the charge.

“I pray it’s just the beginning, and I pray that

it takes over,” Lake says. “And not the genre of Christian music, but songs - whatever genre they are - that carry the message of the gospel.”

He’s also got a few theories on the music’s growing popularity. “The reason why people are turning their ear towards those kinds of songs right now is because that’s what they were made for,” he explained. “Music doesn’t just have to be entertainment. They can have a spiritual experience. They can be educated on who they were made to be. They can receive hope and life and faith. ... I love all kinds of music, but if you have a song that carries that kind of message, it’s just super charged, you know? It does something deeper.”

That is especially crucial, Lake says, in a divided world. “I think people are waking up - especially the state of our world and all the craziness that’s going on - everyone’s like, ‘We need to choose love.’ Well, the greatest demonstration of love is the gospel.”

In September, Lake performed at a memorial service for the late conservative personality Charlie Kirk, who was shot and killed at a Utah college event. His death was one of an escalating number of attacks on political figures, from the assassination of Democratic state lawmaker Melissa Hortman and her husband, Mark Hortman, in Minnesota to last summer’s shooting of Donald Trump, that have roiled the nation.

“I didn’t know him at all. And so, the invitation really came out of nowhere,” Lake said of his decision to perform at the ceremony. Lake said his team told him that the Kirk family “listened to my music and, you know, it was a soundtrack of their faith,” and when Lake’s wife urged him to perform, there was no hesitancy.

“We quickly said we are not going there to make a political statement. And there will be so much politics represented in the room,” he continued. “We are going to minister to a widow.”

“While the world was turning to violence, we watched a lot of millions of people turn to worship and chose to sing praise to God,” he said. “Even though there was politics represented, the gospel was shared so many times. And it was like God was weaving in and out. ... It was just such an incredible honor.”

Education

‘AI limits deep learning’

AI learning falls short of traditional web search

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

By Shiri Melumad

University of Pennsylvania

Since the release of ChatGPT in late 2022, millions of people have started using large language models to access knowledge. And it’s easy to understand their appeal: Ask a question, get a polished synthesis and move on - it feels like effortless learning.

However, a new paper I co-authored offers experimental evidence that this ease may come at a cost: When people rely on large language models to summarize information on a topic for them, they tend to develop shallower knowledge about it compared to learning through a standard Google search.

Co-author Jin Ho Yun and I, both professors of marketing, reported this finding in a paper based on seven studies with more than 10,000 participants. Most of the studies used the same basic paradigm: Participants were asked to learn about a topic - such as how to grow a vegetable garden - and were randomly assigned to do so by using either an LLM like ChatGPT or the “old-fashioned way,” by navigating links using a standard Google search.

No restrictions were put on how they used the tools; they could search on Google as long as they wanted and could continue to prompt ChatGPT if they felt they wanted more information. Once they completed their research, they were then asked to write advice to a friend on the topic based on what they learned.

Advice

The data revealed a consistent pattern: People who learned about a topic through an LLM versus web search felt that they learned less, invested less effort in subsequently writing their advice, and ultimately wrote advice that was shorter, less factual and more generic. In turn, when this advice was presented to an independent sample of readers, who were unaware of which tool had been used to learn about the topic, they found the advice to be less informative, less helpful, and they were less likely to adopt it.

We found these differences to be robust across a variety of contexts. For example, one possible reason LLM users wrote briefer and more generic advice is simply that the LLM results exposed users to less eclectic information than the Google results. To control for this possibility, we conducted an experiment where participants were exposed to an identical set of facts in the results of their Google and ChatGPT searches. Likewise, in another experiment we held constant the search platform - Google - and varied whether participants learned from standard Google results or Google’s AI Overview

feature.

The findings confirmed that, even when holding the facts and platform constant, learning from synthesized LLM responses led to shallower knowledge compared to gathering, interpreting and synthesizing information for oneself via standard web links.

Why did the use of LLMs appear to diminish learning? One of the most fundamental principles of skill development is that people learn best when they are actively engaged with the material they are trying to learn.

When we learn about a topic through Google search, we face much more “friction”: We must navigate different web links, read informational sources, and interpret and synthesize them ourselves.

Process

While more challenging, this friction leads to the development of a deeper, more original mental representation of the topic at hand. But with LLMs, this entire process is done on the user’s behalf, transforming learning from a more active to passive process.

To be clear, we do not believe the solution to these issues is to avoid using LLMs, especially given the undeniable benefits they offer in many contexts. Rather, our message is that people simply need to become smarter or more strategic users of LLMs - which starts by understanding the domains wherein LLMs are beneficial versus harmful to their goals.

Need a quick, factual answer to a question? Feel free to use your favorite AI co-pilot. But if your aim is to develop deep and generalizable knowledge in an area, relying on LLM syntheses alone will be less helpful.

As part of my research on the psychology of new technology and new media, I am also interested in whether it’s possible to make LLM learning a more active process. In another experiment we tested this by having participants engage with a specialized GPT model that offered real-time web links alongside its synthesized responses. There, however, we found that once participants received an LLM summary, they weren’t motivated to dig deeper into the original sources. The result was that the participants still developed shallower knowledge compared to those who used standard Google.

Building on this, in my future research I plan to study generative AI tools that impose healthy frictions for learning tasks - specifically, examining which types of guardrails or speed bumps most successfully motivate users to actively learn more beyond easy, synthesized answers. Such tools would seem particularly critical in secondary education, where a major challenge for educators is how best to equip students to develop foundational reading, writing and math skills while also preparing for a real world where LLMs are likely to be an integral part of their daily lives. (AP)

Malaysia to ban social media for children under 16 in 2026

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia, Nov 24, (AP): Malaysia plans to ban social media accounts for people under 16 starting in 2026, joining Australia and a growing number of countries pushing tighter digital age limits for children.

Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil said Sunday the Cabinet approved the move as part of a broader effort to shield young people from online harm like cyberbullying, scams and sexual exploitation. He said the government is studying approaches taken by Australia and other countries, and the potential use of electronic checks with identity cards or passports to verify users’ ages. He did not say when exactly the ban will be enforced.

“I believe that if the government, regulatory bodies, and parents all play their roles, we can ensure that the Internet in Malaysia is not only fast, widespread and affordable but most importantly, safe, especially for children and families,” he said.

Since January, major social media and messaging platforms with at least 8 million users in Malaysia are required to obtain a licence as part of a broader tightening of state oversight over digital platforms. Licensed platforms must implement age verification, content-safety measures and transparency rules, reflecting the government’s push for a safer digital space.

Researchers uncover how the brain reads events in order

Blood-brain barrier can slow tumor growth by limiting nutrients

MELBOURNE, Nov. 24, (Xinhua): Scientists have uncovered how the brain’s protective barrier can slow the growth of brain tumors by controlling their access to nutrients, pointing to potential new targets for therapy.

The study has found how the glial cells that form the brain’s protective barrier can act as “gatekeepers” and slow down the growth of some brain tumors, according to a statement of Australia’s Peter MacCallum Cancer Center on Monday.

Cancer cells need constant nutrients, such as sugars for energy, amino acids to build proteins, and fats for structure and support, to grow, making them vulnerable when nutrients are scarce, said the study highlighting how the tumor environment shapes cancer growth.

Published in PLoS (Public Library of Science) Biology, the study found that a brain tumor’s response to nutrient restriction is controlled by the blood-brain barrier -- a layer of glial cells that protects the brain and regulates the flow of nutrients.

The surrounding glial cells which act like gatekeepers “influence how many nutrients reach the tumor, and this directly affects how the cancer behaves under nutrient-poor conditions,” said Peter Mac Professor Louise Cheng, who led the study.

Cheng’s team, in collaboration with scientists from Japan and Britain, discovered that a key protein called Path, which transports amino acids into the brain, behaves differently in healthy and tumor-affected glial cells.

Healthy glial cells increase Path levels when nutrients are low, but tumor-affected glial cells decrease Path levels, disrupting their function and slowing tumor growth by limiting the tumor’s ability to divide, according to Cheng.

“This tells us that Path is a critical switch,” she said, adding its levels at the blood-brain barrier determine how sensitive tumors are to changes in nutrient availability.

□ □ □

Researchers from Tianjin University in north China, working with international collaborators, have uncovered a mechanism that helps explain how the brain handles information that unfolds over time.

The study, published on Saturday in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, suggests that two forms of change at synapses, the tiny junctions where neurons communicate, work together to enable the brain to treat events arriving in sequence as if they were laid out side by side.

In everyday terms, neurons talk to one another using brief electrical spikes that pass across chemical synapses. Such synapses can change how strongly they pass signals over both long and short timescales. Long-term plasticity produces lasting adjustments and is linked to learning and memory, while short-term plasticity makes rapid, temporary tweaks based on very recent activity.

The research team, led by Yu Qiang, a professor at Tianjin University, found that long-term changes can tune short-

term dynamics, enabling neurons to read a series of spikes over time as a pattern in space -- much like turning a melody into a snapshot.

This time-into-space transformation can help neural circuits store more information and better resist noise without having to build larger networks -- though it may require the circuits to fire more when extra capacity is needed, according to the study.

The findings are grounded in computational models that match recent electrophysiological measurements from the neocortex of mice and humans, adding confidence that the mechanism reflects how brains really work.

“This study is like discovering the brain’s ‘collaboration code’ for information processing,” Yu said. “It not only clarifies the underlying logic of how the brain handles information but also supports the development of interpretable and generalizable next generation AI methods, thus marking further progress at the intersection of brain inspired intelligence and artificial intelligence.”



Kartavya Path, the ceremonial boulevard, is seen enveloped in smog in New Delhi, India, Tuesday, Nov. 18. (AP)

People struggle to breathe in toxic smog

New Delhi grapples with lingering pollution

NEW DELHI, Nov. 24, (Agencies): The air quality in Delhi and its surrounding areas turned hazardous on Monday, with a thick blanket of smog engulfing several areas in the Indian capital city.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board, many areas, particularly in the eastern parts of Delhi and the adjoining areas, witnessed an Air Quality Index (AQI) of around 450, which was considered “severe” in terms of air pollution standards.

Over the past couple of days, the overall air quality has been poor in Delhi and its adjoining areas, causing some people to experience difficulty in breathing. The number of patients suffering from respiratory ailments increased manifold at several government-run hospitals, local media reported.

As a precautionary measure, authorities in Delhi issued health advisories directing the locals not to indulge in outdoor physical activities unless very necessary.

For nearly two months, thick layers of toxic smog have enveloped New Delhi, where residents say all they want is their right to breathe clean air.

The acrid smell is not just making their lives miserable - the surging pollution is worsening a public health crisis. Government efforts to fix the National Capital Region, which includes New Delhi and is home to over 46 million people, have not worked.

Indian representatives may well be at the global climate talks in Brazil, where envoys are trying to find ways to reduce carbon pollution, but that has not given this city any tangible hope.

Interventions such as temporarily shutting down polluters and reducing movement of cars and vehicles through New Delhi - as well as more controversial methods like cloud seeding - have made little difference.

In the winter months, smog affects every aspect of daily life in one of the world’s most polluted cities.

Mornings start like those in other major cities - municipal workers clean streets, commuting workers wait at bus stops and the health conscious exercise alone or in groups at lush neighborhood parks.

But health officials advise people to limit outdoor activity when the pollution is high, saying the risks of breathing the dirty air outweigh the benefits.

Many residents now say they forgo morning walks altogether and stay indoors to avoid coughing fits.

By the midmorning rush hour, cars and other vehicles jam the main roads, their exhaust fumes adding to the gray cloud hanging over the city.

City officials have tried spraying the roads with water cannons to get the dust to settle, but it’s only effective in the short term and only used in central locations.

New Delhi residents have taken to the streets recently, mostly on weekend afternoons, to protest government inaction against increasing pollution.

Protesters usually wear gas masks and hold banners reading: “Help us breathe.”

The end of the workday sees another rush hour, with reduced visibility adding to the dangers of commuting back home.

As the day winds down, people shop at markets or stroll though the iconic Delhi center that’s home to monuments like the India Gate.

But even a casual stroll brings awareness of the smog, which often obscures buildings a short distance away.



A health worker gives oral polio vaccine drops to a child during a vaccination campaign in Kabul, Afghanistan, Nov. 24. (Xinhua)

HIV surges in Fiji drug users

Afghanistan launches polio vaccination drive for kids

KABUL, Nov. 24, (Xinhua): Afghanistan’s Ministry of Public Health launched the fourth sub-national polio vaccination campaign of 2025 on Monday in a bid to guard around 7.4 million children against paralysis.

The four-day initiative, running through Thursday, will administer oral polio vaccine drops across 17 of the country’s 34 provinces, according to a statement from the ministry.

“It is crucial for all community influencers, including religious scholars, elders, and parents, to support polio vaccination teams nationwide,” said Minister of Public Health Mawlawi Noor Jalal Jalali.

Afghanistan has reported at least nine polio cases this year, with the most recent detected in southern Uruzgan province in early October.

Along with neighboring Pakistan, Afghanistan is one of only two countries in the world where wild poliovirus transmission persists.

“We will spare no effort and sustain these campaigns alongside complementary health services until polio is fully eliminated,” Jalali added.

□ □ □

HIV: A Fijian health official warned that the surge in HIV infections, particularly among young people who inject drugs, has escalated into a national crisis.

Assistant Minister for Health and Medical Services Penioni Ravunawa said on Monday that the situation has gone beyond the country’s current technical and professional capacity.

He made the remarks at the opening of the National Needle and Syringe Program Implementation Workshop, according to Fiji Broadcasting Corporation.

Ravunawa said it has become a national security challenge for Fiji’s future, urging participants to approach the workshop with urgency.

Decades of global evidence have shown that needle and syringe programs save lives, he noted.

Ravunawa warned that delaying action will result in more infections and preventable deaths.

According to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Fiji has recorded some of its highest annual HIV numbers in recent years, with infections increasingly detected among young people and key at-risk groups.

‘Compassion’

Slovenians reject assisted dying

LJUBLJANA, Slovenia, Nov 24, (AP): Slovenians on Sunday rejected in a referendum a law that allowed terminally ill patients to end their lives, according to preliminary results released by the election authorities.

The near-complete count showed that around 53% voted against the law while around 46% supported it. The no-votes also represented more than 20% of 1.7 million eligible voters in Slovenia, which is requested by the election rules.

Turnout was nearly 41%, the State Electoral Commission said.

“Compassion has won,” declared Ales Primc, a conservative activist who led the campaign against assisted dying.

“Slovenia has rejected the government’s health, pension and social reform based on death by poisoning,”

Parliament in the small European Union nation passed the law in July after voters had backed it in a nonbinding referendum last year. Primc and other opponents, however, have forced another vote on the divisive issue after collecting more than 40,000 signatures.

Sunday’s outcome means that the existing law is now suspended. Advocates of assisted dying said they were disappointed but expressed conviction a new legislation will be passed in the future.

Prime Minister Robert Golob said in a press release that while the current bill was rejected the “challenge we are addressing still remains.”

“This is not a political issue, it has always been a matter of dignity, human rights, and individual choice,” he added.

Experts say more policies are needed

Cheaper weight-loss drugs alone can’t solve the US obesity crisis

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

□ □ □

By David B. Sarwer
Temple University

The Trump administration is making a significant effort to reduce the cost of weight loss drugs. Its agreement with pharmaceutical giants, announced Nov. 6, 2025, will reduce the monthly prices of these medications by hundreds of dollars.

For the past 25 years, I have treated people with obesity and have developed and studied treatments for the condition in both adults and adolescents. One major frustration of my work is the fact that evidenced-based treatments for obesity are woefully underused



Boxes for the medications Wegovy and Zepbound are arranged for a photograph in California on Thursday, May 8, 2025. (AP)

approaches. Lifestyle changes, such as consuming fewer calories and increasing physical activity, can help people lose about 5% of their weight in the same period of time. With surgical treatment, now referred to as metabolic and bariatric surgery, patients can achieve a loss of about 30% of their body weight after about 18 months.

Which of these treatment approaches is appropriate for a given person depends on their circumstances and is best discussed with their health care provider. But in my experience, too few health care professionals refer their patients to any of these therapies.

According to a November 2025 poll from the Kaiser Family Foundation, 1 in 8 adults in the US have tried a GLP-1 medication. That may sound like a lot, but given that more than 40% of American adults have obesity, it may not be enough.

In clinical trials, people taking GLP-1 drugs to treat obesity generally maintained their weight loss for a year if they stayed on the medication. However, participants in the trials did not have to pay for the medications. Research suggests that more than half of people using the drugs stop taking them after six months, most often because they can’t afford them.

The federal government’s deal with Eli Lilly and Novo Nordisk aims to address this barrier.

GLP-1 drugs currently cost more than US\$1,000 per month for people unable to get them covered by health insurance - and many insurance plans do not.

According to the Nov. 6 White House announcement, starting in early 2026, certain GLP-1 drugs covered by the agreement will be available for \$350 per month or less through an on-line marketplace the government plans to launch.

Some drugs will be as cheap as \$150, according to the announcement. Companies will also drop the amount that Medicare and Medicaid pay for them, and certain Medicare patients would be able to access them with a \$50 co-pay.

These prices are still in flux, news reports suggest. However, for most Americans, paying even \$150 a month for a single medication remains a budget buster. That’s especially true given that people from lower socioeconomic groups experience higher rates of obesity and often have other related health conditions that require costly medications.

These costs are not temporary. Most patients with obesity and related health problems will likely need to use these medications indefinitely. According to emerging research, people who stop taking them typically regain the weight they lost. Realistically, very few people who take GLP-1 drugs can maintain their weight loss with lifestyle changes alone.

The reduced pricing for GLP-1 drugs is an important first step in increasing affordability and access to these treatments. Given that the food environments people live in make it difficult to make healthy choices, I believe that this move will only meaningfully benefit the health of all Americans if it is combined with other policy changes. (AP)

Growth fueled by policy and demand

Robotics eldercare expands amid aging population challenge in China

SHENYANG, Nov. 24, (Xinhua): Artificial joints fitted closely around Zhang’s legs, tiny motors humming as they learned his strides. With each step, the sensors tracked his movements and the whole frame gently pushed him forward.

In a rehabilitation center in Beijing’s Fengtai District, the 76-year-old, once dependent on a caregiver, lifts his feet, one after the other, walking with the help of a robotic exoskeleton.

“I used to need someone by my side,” he said with a grin. “With the robot training, I can walk myself.”

An eldercare robot for each elderly person has long been the stuff of science fiction, but it is now edging closer to reality as robots are making their way into households to help more and more senior people with daily challenges and inconveniences.

China is witnessing a swift integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics into eldercare services, providing innovative solutions to address the challenges that come with an aging population.

Driven by policy support and rising demand, China’s eldercare robot industry is entering a period of rapid expansion.

This year, new guidelines for elderly care service reforms call for advancing humanoid robots, brain-computer interfaces, and AI technologies to enhance senior care.

Across China, local governments are rolling out a range of new policies. Beijing’s three-year action plan on embodied intelligence encourages the pilot use of intelligent robots in

eldercare institutions, while Jiangsu’s innovation plan calls for the broader adoption of service robots in both household and eldercare environments.

Earlier this year, the International Electrotechnical Commission released a global standard for elderly-care robots. Led by China in its formulation, the standard sets technical benchmarks for product design, manufacturing, testing and certification for such robots.

“Since early last year, we’ve clearly seen demand for eldercare robots picking up,” said Chen Yuxi, industry director of the service robot division at Siasun Robot & Automation Co., Ltd., a leading robotics firm in northeast China’s Shenyang.

By the end of 2024, China’s population aged 60 and above reached 310 million, accounting for roughly 22 percent of its total population.

“Elderly people who are disabled, cognitively impaired or of a very advanced age have certain requirements when it comes to toileting, bathing, eating, getting dressed and moving around both indoors and outdoors. In addition, the demand for technological solutions that provide emotional companionship is also becoming increasingly prominent,” said Sun Liguo, vice president of the Beijing association of senior citizens.

While eldercare robots are still in the early stages of development compared to industrial robots, some users are already beginning to enjoy the convenience these technologies provide.

At a nursing home located in the country’s tech hub Shenzhen, robots are now an integral part of daily life, playing chess with seniors, offering AI-assisted mobixubustion therapy, and providing enhanced mobility assistance.

“We place great emphasis on the application of technology in eldercare,” said Li Xipo, director of the nursing home. “By integrating AI robots, rehabilitation robots, and robotic pets, we aim to improve seniors’ quality of life while creating a testing ground for industry innovation.”

“Eldercare robots represent an untapped market,” said Bi Yalei, secretary-general of the Shenzhen Robots Association. “With pressing issues in senior care, such as mobility assistance, fall prevention, and rehabilitation support, many companies in Shenzhen are actively investing in this sector due to strong demand.”

Despite notable momentum, experts say eldercare robots still face multiple obstacles before they can be deployed on a large scale.



A senior resident interacts with ‘Xia Lan,’ a humanoid robot, at Shenzhen Nursing Home in Shenzhen, south China’s Guangdong Province, March 3, 2025. (Xinhua)

OKC routs Blazers to avenge only loss of season

Lakers outlast Jazz

OKLAHOMA CITY, Nov 24, (AP): Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 37 points in three quarters and the Oklahoma City Thunder beat the Portland Trail Blazers 122-95 on Sunday night to avenge their only loss of the season.

Gilgeous-Alexander made 13 of 18 attempts from the field and all nine of his free throws.

Ajay Mitchell scored 20 points on 8-for-8 shooting as the defending champion Thunder won their ninth straight after a 121-119 loss at Portland on Nov. 5. They improved to an NBA-best 17-1 and are 85-15 since the start of last season.

The Thunder continue to roll, despite injuries. They still are waiting on 2025 All-Star Jalen Williams to return from wrist surgery, and key reserve Aaron Wiggins missed the game with a left thigh strain. Still, Oklahoma City's average scoring margin during its winning streak is 22.3 points, with a 13-point difference being the closest result.

Jerami Grant led Portland with 21 points. Deni Avdija, who led the Trail Blazers with 26 points the first time the teams met, finished with 11 points on 4-for-16 shooting in the rematch.

Lakers 108, Jazz 106

In Salt Lake City, Luka Doncic had 33 points and 11 rebounds and LeBron James scored 17 points in his first road game of the season as the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Utah Jazz.

James, who scored most of his points on fast breaks and strong drives to the hoop, added eight assists and six rebounds in 34 minutes. He had 11 points and 12 assists in a win against the Jazz on Tuesday, in the first game of his 23rd NBA season. James missed training camp and the Lakers' first 14 games due to sciatica.

Lauri Markkanen scored 12 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter and keyed a Jazz comeback. His 3-pointer was the last of a 17-5 run that brought Utah within 107-106. After Doncic made one of two free throws, Keyonte George's contested jumper from the corner glanced off the rim just before the final horn.

George had 27 points and eight assists for the Jazz (5-11), who led Wednesday's game at halftime before falling 140-126. This one was more competitive from tipoff to buzzer.

Celtics 138, Magic 129

In Boston, Jaylen Brown scored 35 points and Josh Minott scored 12 of his 16 points in the second quarter when Boston shot 81.8% as the Celtics beat the short-handed Orlando Magic.

Anfernee Simons added 23 points and Payton Pritchard chipped in with 19 and eight assists for the Celtics, who were coming off a tough home loss to Brooklyn on Friday. Brown also had eight assists.

The Celtics nearly squandered a 26-point, third-quarter lead. But, Brown scored 12 straight points. The Magic whittled away at their deficit and closed within six points in the final minute.

Jett Howard scored a season-high 30 points for the Magic, who were missing three of their top five scorers and had their three-game winning streak snapped. Desmond Bane had 18 points and Franz Wagner 15.

Cavaliers 120, Clippers 105

In Cleveland, Donovan Mitchell scored 37 points and took over when the game got close, leading the Cleveland Cavaliers to victory over the Los Angeles Clippers.

Mitchell helped the Cavs pull away with a flurry of plays late in the third quarter. He finished with five 3-pointers, eight rebounds and six assists.

Evan Mobley had 18 points and 10 rebounds and De'Andre Hunter scored 17 points as Cleveland went 4-2 on a six-game homestand.

Ivica Zubac paced the Clippers with 33 points - two off his career high - and 18 rebounds. James Harden, who had a franchise-record 55 points for Los Angeles in a win



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, right, dribbles next to Portland Trail Blazers forward Toumani Camara, left, during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City. (AP)

at Charlotte on Saturday, missed all eight 3-point shots and finished with 19 points.

Kawhi Leonard scored 20 points in his return to the Clippers' lineup after missing 10 games with a sprained right ankle. LA went 2-8 while Leonard was out.

Raptors 119, Nets 109

In Toronto, Scottie Barnes scored 17 points, Ja'Kobe Walter added a season-high 16 and the Toronto Raptors won for the 11th time in 12 games, beating the Brooklyn Nets.

Brandon Ingram had 14 points and Immanuel Quickley scored eight of his 13 in the fourth quarter to help Toronto extend its winning streak to seven.

Toronto's RJ Barrett scored 16 points before leaving midway through the third because of a sprained right knee. Barrett landed awkwardly after his steal led to a fast break dunk.

Brooklyn's Tyrese Martin scored a season-high 26 points. Michael Porter Jr. had 25 and Noah Clowney added 22.

Nic Claxton had 10 points and 11 rebounds for the Nets. Claxton had his first career triple-double in Friday night in a win at Boston.

Suns 111, Spurs 102

In Phoenix, Dillon Brooks scored 25 points, Devin Booker had 24 and the Phoenix Suns won their third straight and ended the San Antonio's Spurs' three-game streak.

Playing without injured regulars Jalen Green, Grayson Allen and Ryan Dunn, Phoenix, got big contributions from Jordan Goodwin (15 points, 10 rebounds) and center Mark Williams. Collin Gillespie added 15 points.

De'Aaron Fox led San Antonio, playing without the injured Victor Wembanyama, with 26 points. The Spurs won their previous three games, all without Wembanyama, who will be out at least another week with a left calf strain.

Hawks 113, Hornets 110

In Atlanta, Jalen Johnson had 28 points, 11 assists and eight rebounds and the Atlanta Hawks won for the seventh time in nine games with a victory over the Charlotte Hornets.

Nickeil Alexander-Walker had 23 points and five rebounds, and Dyson Daniels added 22 points and nine rebounds for the Hawks. Onyeka Okongwu scored 20 points. The Hornets, who saw their losing streak extended to six games, were led by rookie Kon Knueppel with 28 points. He set a Hornets rookie record with seven made 3-pointers.

The Hornets trailed 112-110 with 11 seconds left. Alexander-Walker stripped Knueppel on a drive to the basket and was immediately fouled. He made 1 of 2 free throws. The Hornets had a chance at a game-tying three-pointer, but Miles Bridges shot an air ball under heavy pressure at the buzzer.

Johnson has eight straight games of at least 15 points, five rebounds and five assists, setting a franchise record.

Scotland eases to 56-0 win as Tonga pays for ill-discipline

England holds off Argentina fightback to seal sweep of November victories



England's Henry Slade goes over to score a try during the Nation's Series rugby union international between England and Argentina at Twickenham, London. (AP)

LONDON, Nov 24, (AP): England completed a sweep of November victories by holding off a second-half fightback from Argentina for a 27-23 win that was inspired by late call-up Max Ojomoh.

The center was drafted in on Friday for just his second appearance for his country after an injury to Fraser Dingwall and took full advantage, starting with scoring a breakaway try in the 10th minute to give England a 10-0 lead at Twickenham.

Ojomoh then sent over a crossfield kick to Immanuel Feyi-Waboso and the winger sprinted over for 17-0.

Argentina, which came from 21-0 down to beat Scotland 33-24 last weekend, powered back through center Justo Piccardo's converted try and three penalties to make it 17-16 and threaten another amazing fightback.

However, Ojomoh burst through a gap and offloaded to Henry Slade for a key try for England in the 66th minute and George Ford slotted over a conversion and penalty to endure there would be no comeback for the Pumas despite Rodrigo Isgro's 80th-minute try and a late onslaught.

England has beaten Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and now Argentina in successive weekends, extending its winning run to 11 tests. Meanwhile, Argentina rugby coach Felipe Contepomi described Tom Curry as a "bully" and accused the England flanker of pushing him during an expletive-filled clash in the tunnel after the teams' match at Twickenham.

The Pumas were incensed by Curry's 75th-minute tackle on Juan Cruz Mallia that forced the fullback to leave the field with a suspected ACL knee injury and meant his side finished the match with 14 men. England held on to win 27-23.

Curry's challenge was punished with a penalty but not referred to the television match official.

Contepomi left the coach's box to protest the challenge and, at the final whistle, a huge scuffle erupted between the teams. It extended to Contepomi's flashpoint with Curry.

Contepomi then went into more detail about the incident.

Scotland profited from four yellow cards to Tonga - one of which was upgraded to a red - to run in eight tries in a 56-0 thrashing in a rugby international at Murrayfield.

Jamie Ritchie, George Turner and Max Williamson all went over while Tonga flanker Semisi Paea was off the field for a dangerous clear-out in the sixth minute. Paea was initially in the sin bin but it changed to a 20-minute red card after a review, ending his involvement in what proved to be a one-sided game.

URGENTLY REQUIRED

A Leading Engineering Consultant firm

• Land Surveyors

- Education: Diploma (Civil/Land Surveying)

- Experience: At least 10-15 years experience in site survey in supervision for affordable major Public Buildings/ approval from Public Authority for Housing Projects in Kuwait.

• Site Electrical Inspectors

- Education: Diploma in Electrical Engineering

- Experience: At least 10-15 years experience in site supervision for affordable housing projects, public buildings, Roads and Infrastructure projects.

• Site Mechanical Inspectors (PL/FF & HVAC)

- Education: Diploma in Mechanical Engineering

- Experience: At least 10-15 years experience in site supervision for affordable Housing projects, Public Buildings Projects.

• Site Safety Inspectors.

- Education: Diploma in Civil/Safety Engineering

- Experience: At least 10-15 years experience in site supervision for affordable housing projects, public buildings, Roads and Infrastructure projects.

• Laboratory Technicians (Civil/Material/Lab Technician)

- Education: Diploma in Civil/Material Lab Testing Course

- Experience: At least 10-15 years experience in site supervision for affordable housing projects, public buildings, Roads & Infrastructure projects.

All the candidates must have transferable residence / visa Status, and their respective positions/fields must be indicated on their Civil IDs.

C.V to be send to :

Mob. : 60750153 - Tel : 22413522

Email : siefeng@yahoo.com

Valimaki becomes Finland's first PGA Tour winner

Thitikul wins another \$4 million payoff and caps big year at Tour Championship



Jeenoo Thitikul of Thailand holds the Bear Trophy and the Rolex Player of the Year Trophy following the final round of the LPGA Tour Championship golf tournament in Naples, Fla. (AP)

NAPLES, Fla., Nov 24, (AP): Jeeno Thitikul of Thailand capped off her best year with the biggest cash prize in women's golf, holding off an early challenge from Pajaree Anannarukarn and closing with a 4-under 68 to win the CME Group Tour Championship by four shots Sunday for another \$4 million payoff.

Thitikul won for the third time this year on the LPGA Tour, and one last birdie on the final hole at Tiburon Golf Club gave her the lowest scoring average in tour history.

This was never really in doubt when Thitikul started with a six-shot lead over Nelly Korda, the American she replaced at No. 1 in the women's world ranking this year.

Anannarukarn made it a game, however, with five birdies in seven holes to pull within two shots going to the back nine. Thitikul birdied the 10th and 13th holes and restored her lead to five shots.

The victory assured her winning LPGA player of the year and the Vare Trophy for the lowest scoring average, the two biggest awards in women's golf.

Sami Valimaki became Finland's first PGA Tour winner on Sunday when he closed with a 4-under 66 for a one-shot victory in the RSM Classic, the final event of the year, which saw hopes rise and fall over the final hour at Sea Island.

Valimaki used putter from below the green on the 16th and then holed an 18-foot par putt. He was steady over the closing holes.

Ricky Castillo shot 28 on the front nine and closed

with a 62, and when he finished, it looked as if that would be enough for him to move from No. 135 inside the top 100 in the FedEx Cup to keep a full PGA Tour card. But then Max McGreevy holed a 30-foot birdie putt on the final hole for a 63, moving him into second place alone.

That bumped Castillo down to No. 102. Lee Hodges missed a 10-foot birdie putt on the last hole that would have moved him into the top 100. By the end of the day, no one moved into the top 100.

Yosuke Tsukada won his first Japan Golf Tour title in nine years when the 40-year-old closed with a 3-under 67 for a five-shot victory in the Dunlop Phoenix.

Cameron John hit 6-iron from a muddy lie to 12 feet for eagle on the par-5 15th hole, sending him to a late rally for a 6-under 66 and a two-shot victory in the Queensland PGA Championship on the PGA Tour of Australasia.

Casey Jarvis closed with a 7-under 65 and defeated Barend Botha in a playoff to win the Vodacom Original of Golf Final on the Sunshine Tour.

Chia Yen Wu shot a 4-under 67 to cap off a three-shot victory in the Daio Paper Elleair Ladies Open on the Japan LPGA.

David Drysdale earned his first victory in 19 years with a 66 to win the Vattanac Legends Championship in Cambodia on the European Legends Tour. Drysdale had failed to win over 576 starts across the European and Legends tour.

Giroud ends league scoring drought as Lille moves to fourth in French league

LILLE, France, Nov 24, (AP): Olivier Giroud scored twice and Lille moved to fourth in the French league with a 4-2 come-from-behind home win over Paris FC.

Willem Geubbels put the visitors ahead in the 11th minute after Vincent Marchetti's initial effort took a deflection and hit the post.

Giroud equalized in the 40th after some good work from Ousmane Sahraoui, who skipped by several defenders. It was Giroud's first league goal since August.

The former France star might have had

another goal just two minutes later, but Kevin Trapp did well to save his effort from point-blank range.

Trapp wasn't given any respite as Lille pushed for more, and Giroud finally got his second from the penalty spot in the 77th. Marchetti had given it away and the Paris midfielder's evening went from bad to worse when his attempted clearance of a corner merely served the ball for Aissa Mandi to score Lille's third in the 80th.

Lohann Doucet pulled one back in the 84th - a minute after going on as a substitute

- to set up a frenetic finale until Marius Broholm sealed the result with another penalty in stoppage time.

Lyon's winless streak stretched to five games across all competitions after failing to beat last-placed Auxerre.

The 0-0 draw could have been worse for the injury and suspension-hit visitors with Dominik Greif saving a penalty from Auxerre's Lassine Sinayoko in the first half.

That was awarded after Sekou Mara had been bundled over in the area by Moussa Niakhaté. Mara had earlier had a goal ruled

out as Auxerre's goalless run stretched to five games. Auxerre's winless run is now at eight games starting with the 2-0 loss at Paris Saint-Germain.

Mara also went close in the second half, while Lyon's Afonso Moreira drew a good save from Donovan Leon in stoppage time.

Romain Del Castillo scored a penalty in the 10th minute of stoppage time - five minutes after he'd had another penalty saved - to give Brest a 3-2 win over Metz for its first victory since September.

Attendees get opportunity to explore and experience a selection of high-performance Mercedes-AMG models

Al Mulla Automobiles hosts Mercedes-AMG Track Days at Kuwait Motor Town



KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Al Mulla Automobiles Co., a member of Al Mulla Group and the sole authorized distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait, successfully hosted the AMG Track Days event on November 14 and 15 at Kuwait Motor Town, offering an exclusive experiential performance-driving platform for AMG owners , brand enthusiasts and invited guests.

Over two adrenaline-filled days, attendees had the opportunity to explore and experience a selection of high-performance Mercedes-AMG models through a variety of on-track activities, including Taxi Rides—where participants rode alongside professional drivers—and Lead & Follow sessions, enabling guests to personally test drive AMG performance vehicles in a controlled and professional track environment. This immersive event highlighted the exceptional engineering, handling, and power that define the AMG brand.

The event featured a selection of standout Mercedes-AMG models celebrated for their power, performance, and engineering precision, including the AMG GT 43, AMG GT 63, AMG GT 4-Door Coupé, AMG GLE 53, AMG GLC 43, and AMG CLA 45. Participants experienced the dynamic character and advanced handling of each model, showcasing distinctive levels of acceleration, control, and track-focused capability across a range of driving styles.



Top and above: Photos from the event

Inside the dedicated AMG hospitality garages, guests enjoyed a premium environment featuring a display of selected AMG models, interactive simulator experiences, boutique and accessories shop, gaming activities, and curated F&B offerings, reinforcing the brand's performance luxury positioning. The event also included music and entertainment to complement the dynamic on-track atmosphere.

With approximately 500 confirmed participants across two days, the event brought together AMG customers, motorsport enthusiasts, and distinguished invitees for an engaging and unforgettable performance-driving experience at Kuwait Motor Town.

Through hosting AMG Track Days, Al Mulla Automobiles continues to demonstrate its commitment to offering exceptional brand experiences and supporting Kuwait's growing automotive lifestyle and motorsport community, while showcasing the innovation, engineering precision, and driving emotion that define Mercedes-AMG.

For more information about Mercedes-Benz Kuwait passenger cars and vehicles, please visit Al Mulla Automobiles Mercedes-Benz showroom in Al Rai, Mercedes-Benz Boutique in The Avenues, WhatsApp or call the customer center at 1887888, follow the account on Instagram @MercedesBenzKuwait, or visit the website at <https://www.mercedes-benz-mena.com/kuwait/en>.

Tournament to be held on December 11 & 12

Warba Bank sponsors Kuwait's first Journalism Football Championship



Musaed Al-Ghareeb and Zaid Al-Sane address the media.



Musaed Al-Ghareeb, Zaid Al-Sane, Ayman Al-Mutairi, and Abdulaziz Darwish pose for a group photo.

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Warba Bank held a press conference announcing the details of Kuwait's first Journalism Football Championship, which will take place under its sponsorship on December 11 and 12. The announcement was made in the presence of Warba Bank officials, journalists and representatives from the Kuwait Electronic Media Union, the tournament's official media partner.

During the conference, Ayman Salem Al-Mutairi, Director Marketing and Corporate Communications at Warba Bank, expressed his appreciation for the attendance of media representatives from print, digital, audio and visual platforms.

He stated: "Warba Bank has ensured meeting with media outlets, print or digital, to announce the launch of the first football championship dedicated to the journalism sector and under the Bank's sponsorship. This initiative reflects the strong connection and long-standing relationship between Warba Bank and the media sector."

Al-Mutairi added that sports events play an important role for the banking sector as it strengthens team spirit and institutional belonging while reflecting the sector's commitment to social responsibility. He emphasized that Warba Bank's sponsorship of this inaugural championship aligns with its dedication to supporting youth and sports initiatives that enrich community life in Kuwait.

He noted that the tournament also serves as a message encouraging journalists to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle, highlighting Warba Bank's belief that sports not only strengthen the body but instill positive values such as teamwork, determination and perseverance.

"Our goal in organizing the first football tournament for Kuwait's journalism sector is to offer participants an exciting, energetic and enjoyable experience," he added.

Al-Mutairi went on to explain: "The tournament will be held at Dasman and specifically in Al-Yousifi fields on December 11 and 12 from 5 pm to 8 pm. Sixteen teams will participate, each consisting

of 10 players, with 7 on the field at a time. The competition will follow a knockout format, with the draw conducted once all teams are finalized. Each newspaper will receive complete team kits and may include professional players, provided that official documentation from the participating newspaper is submitted."

He further clarified that the primary objective of this first-of-its-kind tournament is to offer journalists and their colleagues a recreational opportunity, with prizes awarded to the first and second place teams.

Al-Mutairi extended his sincere appreciation to the strategic partners whose support is essential to the tournament's success, praising their commitment to social responsibility. He also thanked all teams and sponsors involved in organizing the event.

On his part, Zaid Ali Al-Sane, Secretary-General of the Kuwait Electronic Media Union, praised Warba Bank's sponsorship of the tournament, noting that the Bank's ongoing support for social events reflects its distinguished role in public relations.

He added that this first journalism championship, covering both print and digital outlets, marks an important milestone, wishing all participating newspapers the best of luck.

Al-Sane concluded by emphasizing that such recreational tournaments strengthen connections among journalists in Kuwait, enhance their athletic skills, and highlight the role of civil society and the private sector in supporting leisure activities for professionals. He expressed his hope that this initiative would continue and evolve into broader, year-round sports programs.

Warba Bank has achieved significant success in a short period, establishing itself as a leader in Islamic banking services and ranking among the local banks with the largest number of shareholders, bringing it closer to all segments of society. This achievement reaffirms the Bank's position as a trusted financial partner that delivers high-value products and services through innovation and social responsibility, in line with its vision "Let's Own Tomorrow."

Pulisic, Maignan's heroics seal Milan's derby victory over Inter

MILAN, Nov 24, (AP) — Christian Pulisic scored in his first start for more than a month and Mike Maignan saved a penalty as AC Milan beat Inter Milan 1-0 in a thrilling derby.

Milan's win prevented its city rival from going joint top of Serie A.

That left Roma as sole leader after Gian Piero Gasperini's side won 3-1 at Cremonese earlier in the day.

Roma has 27 points, two more than Milan and Napoli and three more than Inter and Bologna.

Maignan was named player of the match, an accolade Pulisic agreed with.

"100%. I just scored an easy goal, he saved us maybe 10 times," Pulisic said. "For me, it's my job, I have to score goals. I was in the right place at the right time."

Pulisic had returned from injury in Milan's last match, coming on in the 70th minute and almost scoring a late winner in the 2-2 draw at Parma.

The United States international had been Milan's best player until his injury and proved he was back to that form when he pounced in the 54th minute. Youssef Fofana stole the ball off Hakan Çalhanoğlu in midfield and sent Alexis Saelemaekers on a rapid counterattack. His effort was saved by Yann Sommer but Pulisic tapped in the rebound.

ARAB TIMES

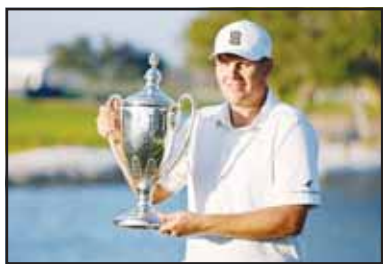
Kuwait's No.1 English Newspaper

For Subscriptions and Complaints

Please Call

51508991

51526559



Sami Valimaki celebrates on the 18th green during the final round of the RSM Classic golf tournament in St. Simons Island, Ga. (AP)

Sports

Arab Cup qualification on the line as Kuwait faces Mauritania in Doha

DOHA, Nov 24: Jassim bin Hamad Stadium at Al-Sadd Club in Doha will host Kuwait as it faces Mauritania at 4:00 p.m. today in the Arab Cup qualifying playoff.

Also in today's playoff fixtures, Palestine takes on Libya at 7:00 p.m., while Syria faces South Sudan at the same time. Tomorrow, the remaining playoff matches will see Bahrain against Djibouti, Oman versus Somalia, Yemen facing Comoros, and Lebanon against Sudan.

Seven teams from the playoff stage will advance to join the nine automatically qualified teams in the group stage: Qatar, Tunisia, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, UAE, Algeria, and Iraq.

Tonight's match serves as the first official test for Kuwait under Portuguese coach Helio Sousa, who joined the team last August on a two-year contract, succeeding Argentine coach Juan Pizzi. Kuwait aims to make its mark in this edition after missing the previous tournament, where they were eliminat-



Helio Sousa leads Kuwait training session.

ed by Bahrain 2-0 in the playoff.

The team's preparations began in September, starting with a 2-2 draw

against Syria, followed by back-to-back losses to Uzbekistan and Morocco B (0-2 and 0-1) in October. A

final training camp was held in Cairo earlier this month, where Kuwait secured a 4-3 victory over Tanzania and drew 2-2 with Gambia.

Sousa named a 23-man squad for the playoffs: Saud Al-Hoshan, Khaled Al-Rashidi, Suleiman Abdulghafour, Hassan Hamdan, Fahad Al-Hajri, Rashid Al-Dosari, Moath Al-Dhafiri, Nasser Khadr, Mohammed Al-Shuraifi, Khaled Sabah, Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi, Nasser Faleh, Athbi Shehab, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Fawaz Ayedh, Sultan Al-Enezi, Reda Hani, Moath Al-Asaim'a, Mohammed Dahham, Eid Al-Rashidi, Youssef Majid, Youssef Nasser, and Shabib Al-Khalidi.

Predicting Sousa's starting lineup is challenging, as he made significant changes to the teams that faced Tanzania and Gambia in friendlies.

Mauritania, coached by Spaniard Aritz López Garai, also hopes to advance despite missing several foreign-based players, relying primarily on talents from their domestic league.

Bouabbas takes podium at MotoSurf World Champ'ship

MACAU, Nov 24: Kuwaiti rider Hassan Bouabbas of the Kuwait Sea Sports Club secured third place in the overall standings of the 2025 MotoSurf World Championship (Stock category) after the series concluded with its fifth and final round in Macau.

The club stated yesterday that the championship, held under the authority of the Union Internationale Motonautique (UIM), featured five rounds and attracted top riders from across the globe. According to the club, the season began in April with the opening round in the UAE, followed by rounds in Turkey, Italy, and Croatia. Bouabbas finished ninth in the final round, which started on November 20.



Kuwaiti rider Hassan Bouabbas celebrates with the national flag.

PAS to launch electronic system for sports club memberships

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Public Authority for Sports (PAS) announced on Monday that the Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi has issued directives to develop a comprehensive electronic system for sports club memberships, in cooperation with the government's Sahel application, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, PAS explained that the system aims to facilitate the registration process for individuals wishing to join sports clubs, and provide them with direct access to data, documents, and requirements related to different membership types through the Sahel app. The system will be officially implemented in the coming period. This step reflects the state's commitment to digital transforma-



Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi

tion and supports its strategy to develop public services, as well as enhancing transparency and governance in the sports sector.

PAS affirmed that the system is in line with the development of existing legislation, regulations, and procedures, improving the efficiency, speed, and quality of services provided to citizens and athletes.

Messi powers Inter Miami into Conference final

CINCINNATI, Nov 24, (AP): Lionel Messi had a goal and three assists and Tadeo Allende scored twice as Inter Miami beat FC Cincinnati 4-0 to advance to the Eastern Conference finals.

Miami will take on the winner of Sunday's other conference semifinal between the Philadelphia Union and New York City FC.

Messi set an MLS playoff record with 12 goal contributions (six goals, six assists).

Cincinnati had the second-best overall record in MLS behind Philadelphia after winning the Supporters Shield last season. Cincinnati lost to the Columbus Crew in last year's conference finals.

Messi had been scoreless in three matches against Cincinnati, but that

streak ended in the 19th minute Sunday when he headed a short cross from Mateo Silvetti, giving Miami a 1-0 lead. Messi, a World Cup champion with Argentina and eight-time Ballon d'Or winner, had his 11th goal in the last seven games.

Nine minutes after scoring, Messi found himself alone with the keeper, but his shot toward the far post sailed wide.

Cincinnati's best scoring chance came in the first half when Ender Echenuque sent a header across the box to Evander, who shot over the bar.

Miami had seven shots on goal to Cincinnati's four.

Miami made it a two-goal lead 10 minutes into the second half when Silvetti beat Cincinnati keeper Roman Celentano

with a shot from the left side of the box.

In the 62nd minute, Messi threaded a pass through the defense to Allende, who made it 3-0. Allende scored again in the 74th minute.

Cincinnati beat Miami 3-0 at home on July 16, and played to a scoreless draw at Fort Lauderdale on July 26. Messi was in the lineup for the first meeting, but not the second.

Maxi Moralez opened the scoring in the 27th minute and New York City FC beat the No. 1 seed Philadelphia Union 1-0 on Sunday night to win the Eastern Conference semifinals.

New York City's Matt Freese had five saves, including a stop of a first-touch shot by Frankie Westfield, off an arcing entry played by Milan Iloski, from point-

blank range in the 74th minute.

Philadelphia, which won the 2025 Supporters Shield, lost at Subaru Park for just the second time this season.

No. 5 seed NYCFC plays third-seeded Miami in the conference finals.

On the counter-attack, Moralez perfectly timed his run onto a ball played ahead by Nicolás Fernández and beat goalkeeper Andre Blake with a rolling shot from the center of the area the slipped inside the left post.

Blake had two saves, which included a diving stop of a shot by Fernández from beyond midfield in the 55th minute. Blake appeared to have injured his hamstring on the play and was replaced by Andrew Rick - finished with a save - in the 60th.

Madrid's winless streak continues with draw at Elche



Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe, left, and Elche's Aleix Febas challenge for the ball during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Elche and Real Madrid in Elche, Spain. (AP)

Bellingham gets late equalizer

MADRID, Nov 24, (AP): Jude Bellingham scored an 87th-minute equalizer for Real Madrid which extended its winless streak to three matches with a 2-2 draw at Elche in the Spanish league.

Madrid needed Bellingham's goal to salvage the away draw after twice coming from behind.

The result moved Madrid one point ahead of Barcelona, which routed Athletic Bilbao 4-0 in its return to the renovated Camp Nou Stadium.

Madrid was coming off a 0-0 draw at Rayo Vallecano in the Spanish league, and a 1-0 loss at Liverpool in the league phase of the Champions League. Xabi Alonso's team had won 13 of its previous 14 matches to start the season.

"The team continues to compete," Alonso said. "The results and our game could be better. We are self-critical but the team's spirit remains good. We must persevere in the face of adversity. This is Real Madrid, we have to live with criticism."

Aleix Febas put Elche ahead in the 53rd and Dean Huijsen leveled for Madrid in the 78th for his first goal with the club. Alvaro Rodríguez put the hosts ahead again in the 84th but Bellingham equalized from inside the area three minutes later.

Madrid forward Vinícius Júnior came on in the second half.

"We had talked about it, as we often do," Alonso said about Vinícius. "He understands. He knew his role and the impact he could have. We had done it before. He's still engaged. Today we are not as happy as we'd like but everyone is energized and eager to get back to a good result and a positive momentum."

Madrid's next game is at Olympiakos on Wednesday in the league phase of the Champions League.

Elche's Víctor Chust was sent off deep into stoppage time.

Sitting in 11th place, Elche hasn't won in six consecutive league matches.

An own-goal by Domingos Duarte in the 82nd gave Atletico Madrid a hard-fought 1-0 win at seventh-placed Getafe.

It was the fifth win in a row for Atletico in all competitions, since a 4-0 loss at Arsenal in the league phase of the Champions League last month. Diego Simeone's team has won five straight in the league.

Veteran midfielder Koke made his 700th appearance for Atletico.

Atletico's Marcos Llorente had to be replaced less than 15 minutes into the match because of an injury.

Ronaldo goes iconic again as Al-Nassr stays top

RIYADH, Nov 24: Al-Nassr maintained its perfect run in the Saudi Pro League with a 4-1 win over Al-Khaleej, scoring twice in each half to reach nine consecutive victories — a streak that matches the all-time best start set by their rivals Al-Hilal.

Al-Hilal had previously recorded nine straight wins from the opening round under Jorge Jesus, who is now Al-Nassr's head coach, during the 2018-2019 season. With this result, Al-Nassr has now equaled that historic mark.

The win keeps Al-Nassr at the top of the table with 27 points, four clear of Al-Hilal, while Al-Khaleej remain sixth with 16 points.

Cristiano Ronaldo delivered the highlight of the match, scoring his team's fourth goal with a brilliantly executed bicycle kick from a Nawaf Boushal cross. The goal took his tally to 10 in nine league matches.



Cristiano Ronaldo scores from the bicycle kick.

It was another reminder of Ronaldo's trademark flair, echoing his unforgettable bicycle kick against Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon in April 2018 while playing for

Real Madrid. He produced a similar moment last November with a spectacular overhead goal against Poland in his national team's 5-1 UEFA Nations League win.

South Africa takes commanding lead over India

GUWAHATI, India, Nov 24, (AP): Marco Jansen took 6-48 in a dominating display to help South Africa to a 314-run lead over India in the second cricket test on Monday.

India was limited to 201 runs in its first-innings response to South Africa's 489 on day three. The Proteas then extended their lead by opting not to enforce the follow-on as Aiden Markram (12) and Ryan Rickelton (13) put on 26-0 in eight overs before stumps.

Jansen's burst was the third-best bowling figures for a South African pacer in India, and the fourth best for a left-arm pacer overall. It combined with Simon Harmer's 3-64 to collapse the top of the Indian order in a heap on either side of tea.

"There is nice pace and bounce in the wicket," Jansen said. "Once we saw the bounce, we wanted to realize it. I think the spinners did a good job early on and I am lucky to cash in. We thought we were going to field for at least two days. I took off steam last evening (after missing a test hundred), and today was about doing a job for my team."

Opener Yashasvi Jaiswal was India's top scorer with 58 runs with Washington Sundar adding 48.

India's Atleast Jaiswal and Lokesh Rahul put up a fight in the first hour of play by adding 65 runs off 129 balls before Keshav Maharaj (1-29) struck in the 22nd over with Rahul caught at slip.

Harmer followed by dismissing Jaiswal in the 33rd over with a delivery that bounced a little more than the opener expected with Jansen taking a low catch at backward point. Sai Sudharsan then never appeared comfortable against spin, and was caught at midwicket two overs later playing a rash stroke to Harmer.

Jansen then struck for the first time before tea with Dhruv Jurel out for an 11-ball duck after being promoted to number four in the absence of injured Shubman Gill.

India slid from 95-1 to 102-4 in the space of 19 deliveries before the tea break. It didn't get any better in the second session as stand-in skipper Rishabh Pant was caught behind almost immediately, leaving India 105-5.

Nitish Reddy (10) was caught at gully, with a bounce from Jansen surprising him as Markram took a stunning one-handed catch. Jadeja was then caught in the cordon for six runs as Jansen's burst of four wickets left India struggling at 122-7.