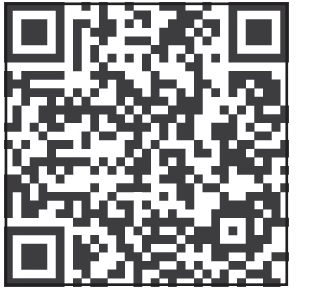




Cabinet reviews outcomes of Senegalese Pres official visit Page 5



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Qatar reassures public amid base movements

'Safety remains top priority'

DOHA, Jan 14, (Agencies): Qatar's International Media Office (IMO) confirmed Wednesday that the country continues to take all necessary measures to ensure the safety and security of its citizens and residents, emphasizing that this remains a top priority.

In a statement, the Media Office said in response to media reports about the departure of certain personnel from Al-Udeid Air Base, noting that such actions are part of precautionary measures amid ongoing regional tensions. The office stressed that any new developments will be communicated through official channels.

Established under Amiri Decree No. 12 of 2023, the International Media Office is responsible for clarifying facts, highlighting Qatar's achievements and priorities, and strengthening relationships with regional and international media. The office also provides support and guidance to government agencies and communicates Qatar's policies, official positions, and initiatives to the global community.

Earlier reports cite a US official saying that some personnel at a key US military base in Qatar have been advised to evacuate by Wednesday evening. The decision came as a senior official in Iran brought up an earlier Iranian attack there.

Continued on Page 5



Thick suspended dust blankets roads as motorists braved harsh conditions Wednesday.

Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

2-5°C cold spell

Kuwait faces 5 days of freezing weather

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (KUNA): The acting Director of the Meteorological Department Dhirar Al-Ali stated that the country experienced cloudy weather on Wednesday with suspended dust, which resulted in reduced horizontal visibility.

Al-Ali explained to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that weather maps and numerical models indicate the country will be affected by an extension of a high-pressure system accompanied by a very cold and dry air mass, with light to moderate northwesterly winds ranging from 10 to 35 kilometers per hour, for the next five days.

The cold winds will be accompanied by a noticeable drop in temperatures to below three degrees Celsius, particularly in agricultural and desert areas, with the possibility of frost forming in those regions.

Continued on Page 5

Tehran alleges foreign interference in January violence

Iran envoy links protests to economic hardship

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Kuwait Mohammad Toutounchi says the developments and unrest witnessed in Iran in late December 2025 and early January 2026 were primarily driven by economic and living conditions.

During a press conference held with Kuwait media representatives, Ambassador Toutounchi explained that the rise in foreign currency exchange rates and the resulting decline in citizens' purchasing power were the main reasons behind the unrest.

The protest gatherings, which began on Sunday, December 28, were motivated purely by economic demands. They were initially peaceful and orderly, with participants seeking to express their concerns in a calm manner without disrupting public order.

Ambassador Toutounchi emphasized that the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, through all its authorities and institutions, is closely monitoring and responding to these legal and peaceful demands, and working to address them within the framework of the law.

He affirmed that organizing peaceful gatherings is a legitimate right guaranteed by the Constitution and national legislation, and that Iran neither opposes such activities in principle nor in practice, adding that the country has



Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Kuwait Mohammad Toutounchi addresses Kuwait media representatives during a press conference.

established the necessary legal framework for these activities, in line with both its national laws and international human rights obligations.

The ambassador stressed the importance of distinguishing between legitimate peaceful protests and acts of rioting or violence.

He explained that the state is committed to protecting citizens' right to peaceful expression, but it also has a legal and security responsibility to maintain public order and safeguard lives and property. The rights of millions of

peaceful Iranians cannot be undermined or restricted by the violent actions of a small group of lawless individuals.

Ambassador Toutounchi outlined the progression of events in four distinct phases.

Phase 1 (December 28-31) - Peaceful protests and government response

During this initial phase, limited, peaceful protests focused on living conditions took place, primarily in markets and involving labor unions. The government engaged in direct dialogue with union representatives and economic

figures, addressed several demands, and introduced economic reforms to its agenda, successfully de-escalating the situation.

Phase 2 (January 1-7) - Shift to unarmed violence

During this period, some demonstrations began exhibiting unarmed violence. Security forces responded with the utmost restraint to prevent escalation, keeping the events under control.

Continued on Page 5

KIPIC and KNPC streamline operations together

Kuwait refineries net 64 million tons output

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The net production of Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) and Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) refineries during the past year reached

64,262,000 metric tons (excluding losses) for the fiscal year ending last March.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) is working on reducing losses in refining operations at the Al-Zour Refinery.

According to informed sources,

the refinery's total production capacity during the last fiscal year reached 26,005,000 tons, with losses totaling 1,085,000 tons, resulting in a net production of 24,262,000 tons, in addition to waste.

Continued on Page 5

Sahel adds 'Remove Tenants' feature for contract disputes

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has launched the "Residence Notification" service to monitor rental contracts through the Sahel app, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

PACI explained that property owners receive an immediate notification

whenever a new rental contract is registered for their property. If the owner does not approve the contract, they can use the "Remove Tenants" service available on Sahel or visit PACI in person.

Continued on Page 5



10 Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef's son marries daughter of Hosnam Fawzi Al-Kharafi in grand ceremony



9 Zain Kuwait sponsors second Int'l Dasman Diabetes Summit

8 ALSAYER leads as strategic partner of the International AI Conference on Public Relations and Customer Service

Kuwait airport bustles

New Year travel peaks with 173,982 travelers

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Acting Deputy Director General for Aviation Safety, Air Transport, and Civil Aviation Security Abdullah Al-Rajhi stated that total passenger traffic at Kuwait International Airport during the New Year holiday from January 1 to January 3, 2026, reached 173,982 passengers, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He explained that the total aircraft movements during the same period amounted to 1,082 flights, including 540 departures and 542 arrivals.

Al-Rajhi provided a breakdown of passenger traffic by terminal at Kuwait International Airport as follows:

Terminal 1: 72,427 passengers

Terminal 4: 54,330 passengers

Terminal 5: 47,225 passengers

He noted that the most popular travel destinations during the New Year holiday were Dubai, Cairo, Jeddah, Doha, and Istanbul.

Day by Day

WHENEVER life's hardships befall a person, he consoles himself by saying that tomorrow will be better and more beautiful. However, he soon discovers that yesterday was kinder and more merciful. Thus, as Imam Al-Shafi'i said, let the days do as they will, and rest in peace.

Entrust creation to the Creator, for destiny has an inevitable end. Praise be to God for what He has granted us in the past and for what He will grant us in the future. The universe has a Creator who governs it.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



KUNA photo

Chairman of Kuwait's Public Authority for Civil Aviation Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Sabah met on Tuesday with Algerian Ambassador to Kuwait Omar Belhadj on ways and means to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of civil aviation. During the meeting, they discussed opportunities of sharing expertise and developing relations in a way that contributes to bolstering the air transport system and facilitating the movement of travelers between both countries.

Prayer Timings

Fajr	05:20	Asr	14:51
Sunrise ..	06:44	Maghrib ..	17:11
Zohr	11:57	Isha	18:32

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Rather cold with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-35 km/h.

By Night: Cold to very cold

Weather

with light to moderate freshening at times over coastal areas northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 10-42 km/h with a chance for frost forming over agricultural and desert areas.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	20	15
Kuwait Airport	22	14
Abdaly	21	11
Bubyan	16	12
Jahra	22	15
Failaka Island	17	13

Amir offers condolences to Saudi King on ‘royal’ demise

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolence to the King of Saudi Arabia, Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, on the passing of the mother of Prince Shaqran bin Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir expressed his heartfelt sympathy and wished solace and patience for the family.

Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolence to the King of Saudi Arabia, Salman bin Ab-

dulaziz Al Saud, on the passing of the mother of Prince Shaqran bin Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince expressed his heartfelt sympathy and wished solace and patience for the family.

Prime Minister

His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolence to the King of Saudi Arabia, Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, on the passing of the mother of Prince Shaqran bin Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

KFF conducts drill at Jahra Hospital

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) recently carried out a fire drill at Jahra Hospital as part of its annual plan to strengthen field preparedness and improve coordination with important

institutions, particularly healthcare facilities.

Director of Public Relations and Media at KFF Brigadier General Mohammed Al-Gharib explained that the exercise was organized by the Jahra Fire Station, and it simulated a fire that had to be extinguished, and the rescue of individuals “trapped” inside the facility.

Kuwait, Senegal discuss means to boost ties

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (KUNA): The President of the Republic of Senegal, Bassirou Diomaye Faye and his accompanying delegation left the country Wednesday after an official visit, during which he held official talks with His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The Senegalese President was accompanied at the airport by Advisor at His Highness the Prime Minister’s Diwan and Chief of the accompanying mission of honor Sheikh Dr. Basel Humoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah.

Bilateral talks

Senegal’s President Bassirou Diomaye Faye held talks on Tuesday with a number of Kuwaiti officials on the sidelines of his state visit, all of which aim to push forward bilateral relations.

The Kuwaiti officials to have met the Senegalese leader included His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah and Managing Director of Kuwait Investment Authority Sheikh Saud Salem Al-Sabah.

Earlier today, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received the Senegalese President amid an official ceremony to mark the latter’s state visit to Kuwait.

Relations boost

Kuwait’s Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, and Acting Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Sabeeh Al-Mukhaizeem, and Senegalese Minister of Finance Cheikh Diba discussed means of boosting and developing economic relations between the two countries.

The meeting, which came within the framework of the official visit by Senegalese President Bassirou Diomaye Faye to Kuwait, reviewed the standing cooperation aspects and means of backing and developing them



KUNA photo

The President of the Republic of Senegal, Bassirou Diomaye Faye was seen off at the airport by the Advisor at His Highness the Prime Minister’s Diwan and Chief of the accompanying mission of honor Sheikh Dr. Basel Humoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah.

in varied fields, Kuwait’s Finance Ministry said in a press release.

Featuring a number of Kuwaiti officials and the accompanying delegation members, the meeting also focused on sharing views on mechanisms on upgrading mutual collaboration in the upcoming period, it added.



Kuwaiti, British senior commanders meet before the drill.

Mol photo

Kuwait launches military drill ‘Desert Warrior 9’ with UK

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The joint exercise “Desert Warrior 9” began Wednesday morning, conducted by the Land Forces represented by the 26th Mechanized Brigade, with participation from the

British military contingent. The exercise will continue until February 11, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

“Desert Warrior 9” is part of the Kuwaiti Army’s scheduled military training and exercises

with allied and friendly nations. The exercise aims to enhance performance and efficiency through joint training and operations, unify military concepts, and strengthen military cooperation.



KUNA photo

Kuwait's Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and his Italian peer Guido Crosetto after signing the deal.

Italy, Kuwait ink accord to enhance military relations

ROME, Jan 14, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and his Italian peer Guido Crosetto have inked a military agreement as part of efforts to enhance collaboration and coordination, and share expertise in different fields.

The deal was signed during Sheikh Abdullah’s visit to Italy where he met with his Italian peer, Kuwait’s Ministry of Defense said in a press release on Tuesday.

The step also seeks to develop joint action system between the two countries’ armed forces, it added.

Upon arrival in Rome, Sheikh Abdullah was given an official military reception.

It elaborated that both sides discussed issues of common interest, mainly the ones related to regional and international developments, and international endeavors toward achieving stability and security.

The meeting reviewed the Kuwait-Italy relations, and focused on horizons of close cooperation in defensive and military fields, along means of bolstering the strategic partnership of both sides, it stated.

Deep-rooted relations between Kuwait and Italy are based on firm bases of constructive cooperation and long-standing strategic partnership in varied fields, the statement said, citing Sheikh Abdullah.

He referred to reciprocal eagerness to continue military and defensive collaboration between the two friendly countries in a manner that meets common aspirations.

Sheikh Abdullah visited Italy’s memorial which immortalizes the sacrifices of the country’s armed forces, and was briefed on the memorial’s facilities and historic contents.

The signing ceremony featured some military officials and commanders from both sides.

AOU and NCCAL launch e-gaming industry meet

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (KUNA): The forum titled “Towards a Promising Cultural Future for the Electronic Gaming Industry in Kuwait” launched Wednesday, organized by the Arab Open University over two days in cooperation with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL).

Speaking at the opening, Arab Open University President Dr. Salah Al-Hammadi said the forum aligns with Kuwait Vision 2035 by supporting the knowledge economy, empowering youth, and promoting innovation and sustainability, noting the university’s three academic programs related to the sector in design, programming, and e-sports to prepare qualified national talent.

Assistant Secretary-General for the Culture Sector at NCCAL Aisha Al-Mahmoud said the forum reflects a strategic partnership with the university, adding that the council is working with partners to support Kuwaiti youth in moving from technology consumption to production.

Dean of the College of Computer Studies at the university Dr. Issa Al-Harbi said the electronic games industry is witnessing rapid growth as an influential economic, cultural, and scientific sector, highlighting its role in skills development, problem-solving, and planning.

Founder and Director of the sector’s programs at NCCAL Omayma Al-Saad said the global electronic games industry generated revenues of about USD 197 billion in 2025, with revenues in the Middle East and North Africa reaching USD 7.1 billion.

The forum discusses the future of electronic games and their scientific, cultural, and economic importance, as well as their role in education, engineering, digital marketing, and skills development.

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Charity details sought: The Central Agency for Remedying Illegal Residents’ Status (CARIRS) has directed all registered charitable organizations to provide detailed information on the assistance they offer to illegal residents, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The Department of Charitable Societies and Foundations in the Ministry of Social Affairs circulated a memo to the boards of directors of all registered charities, requiring them to compile a comprehensive list of all types of aid, including both in-kind and monetary support, along with the total financial cost, provided to illegal residents.



Dr. Al-Hammadi

‘Special people part of society’

New PADA strategy in offing

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: **Director General of the Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA) Dr. Dalal Al-Othman affirmed the authority’s commitment to promoting social and institutional inclusion for people with disabilities, in line with New Kuwait 2035 vision.**

In a speech at the signing of an agreement with the Namaa Charitable Society to support and empower people with disabilities, Dr. Al-Othman highlighted that PADA supports all initiatives that contribute to this goal, along with implementing the provisions of Law No. 8/2010 on the rights of people with disabilities.

She explained that PADA is preparing and overseeing a comprehensive action plan covering all programs related to the care and rehabilitation of people with disabilities, in coordi-

nation with relevant state agencies. The plan aims to ensure equal opportunities, prevent discrimination based on disability, build capacities, enhance skills, and promote the integration of people with disabilities into society.

Efforts are ongoing to strengthen collaboration with civil society organizations and charitable entities to improve services for people with disabilities, provide in-kind support, and develop PADA’s facilities.

Dr. Al-Othman said, “The cooperation agreement has been signed, and we hope to successfully implement all its provisions”.

Meanwhile, CEO of Namaa Charitable Society Saad Al-Otaibi emphasized that the agreement reflects the organization’s strong belief in the importance of coordinating efforts between charitable organizations and government agencies to ensure sustainable impact and achieve the best outcomes for those in need.

He stressed that Namaa Charitable Society considers supporting people with disabilities both a humanitarian and developmental priority, noting that the agreement provides a structured framework for directing resources and expertise toward developing facilities and enhancing the quality of services offered.

Al-Otaibi said the partnership reflects Namaa Charity’s commitment to actively implementing the concept of social responsibility through meaningful initiatives that empower people with disabilities and promote their integration into society.



Dr. Al-Othman

Other Voices

The President fans and the ‘logic of the jungle’

By Ahmad alsarraf

IT IS universally acknowledged that the United States, which has been known as the protector of freedoms and the torchbearer of democracy, has also been, since the end of World War II, the most interventionist nation in the affairs of other countries, both in times of peace and war, covertly and overtly.

Since 1945, the United States has intervened militarily or through orchestrated coups, in addition to its atomic bombing of Japan. Its interventions include Korea (1950–1953), Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and the Dominican Republic (1965), Lebanon (1958 and thereafter), Grenada (1983), Panama (1989), Kuwait (1991), Iraq (2003), Somalia (1991), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995), Serbia and Kosovo (1999), and Afghanistan (2001–2021). The U.S. also attacked Libya in 1986 and Syria in 2014, and targeted Yemen, Pakistan, Somalia, Mali, and other countries with airstrikes and drone attacks under the pretext of combating terrorism.

Among the most notable countries that experienced coups or regime changes with direct or indirect U.S. support are Iran, Guatemala, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Nicaragua, and Haiti. This included actions under “Operation Condor,” which backed right-wing military regimes in Latin America during the 1970s.

All of these interventions were carried out under the pretext of combating communism or protecting U.S. national interests.

Of all these military actions, the li-

eration of Kuwait in 1991 stands out as exceptional and perhaps the most ethical in the history of American interventions. Every step taken to liberate Kuwait was conducted with an international mandate from the United Nations Security Council with the aim of restoring the sovereignty of an occupied state rather than overthrowing an elected government.

This account is not an expression of sympathy for tyrants; rather, it rejects the moral oversimplification that reduces history and ignores context and facts.

It was therefore strange that some dubious figures, known for their peculiar political leanings, welcomed the abduction of Venezuelan dictator Maduro from his bed along with his wife, who were taken to face trial in America under its terms, and most likely to sentence him politically to decades in prison.

According to this supportive view, what Trump did meant he stood with the Venezuelan people. Those who hold this view revealed the shallowness of their understanding and their audacity by comparing what happened in Venezuela to the liberation of Kuwait.

Maduro’s downfall did not occur under an international mandate. No reputable nation openly expressed approval of the operation, which stunned the world. Some dictators reportedly began to worry, fearing they could be next on the list of those plotting to seize Greenland by force and annex Canada.

The events in Venezuela were not a military invasion in the classic sense, but rather a cyberwar that exposes the vulnerability of any nation that acts independently. It was a war in which the CIA played a decisive role.

Therefore, the presence of democracy in a country does not necessarily mean its government’s ethics or foreign policy are exemplary.

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email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

MoSA to Kuwaitize 1,000 non-supervisory co-op jobs

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Assistant Undersecretary for Financial and Administrative Affairs and Co-operative Affairs at the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Sayed Issa announced the launch of practical steps to implement the Kuwaitization policy in non-supervisory positions within cooperative societies, following the successful completion of the second phase of localizing supervisory roles, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a press statement, Dr. Issa explained that the initiative is expected to create around 1,000 new job opportunities for citizens in various positions such as supply center staff, market managers,

warehouse managers, wholesale managers, branch managers, and other roles within the cooperative sector.

The ministry is coordinating with the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) to identify the required specializations for citizens seeking non-supervisory positions, including necessary qualifications, certifications, salary scales, benefits, and other conditions, in preparation for opening applications.

The ministry is also working on amending regulations governing cooperative work and its organizational structure to support this approach.

Dr. Issa highlighted the ministry’s commitment to enhancing support for Kuwaiti nationals and strengthening Kuwaitization within the sector.

He highlighted that cooperative societies account for more than 70 percent of the country’s food retail market, operating through 76 cooperative societies with annual sales approaching one billion dinars.

Dr. Issa said the network of food supply centers includes 92 branches, which reflects the sector’s vital role in supporting the national economy and providing employment opportunities for citizens.

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



Sadat to the Shah of Iran, ‘Egypt does not beg for charity’

IN 1969, President Anwar Sadat traveled to Rabat to attend the Islamic Conference summit, which was held in the aftermath of the Al-Aqsa Mosque fire.

At the time, Sadat was the Vice President of Egypt, and was assigned the mission by President Jamal Abdel Nasser after suffering a heart attack.

He had two tasks - the first, a public one, was to deliver Egypt’s address at the summit, and the second, a secret one, was to establish peace with the Shah of Iran, based on an initiative by King Faisal bin Abdulaziz. Egyptian-Iranian relations had been suspended since 1960, amid intense disagreements between Nasser and the Shah. However, after Egypt’s defeat in the Six-Day War, also known as the Naksa, King Faisal led mediation efforts to restore ties between the two nations.

As soon as Sadat arrived in Morocco, he contacted King Hassan II and requested a meeting with the Shah in the king’s room, considering it a neutral location. An hour later, King Hassan II informed Sadat that the Shah had refused, stating, “Egypt should come to us.”

The Shah argued that Sadat was the Vice President, not the Head of State, and that protocol required the Vice President to visit the Shah rather than the other way around. Sadat, however, refused to go to the Shah.

During his speech at the conference, the Shah offered financial and diplomatic assistance to Egypt on the condition that it had learned from its defeat.

Sadat stood up, interrupting the Shah, and declared loudly, “Egypt does not beg for any favors. Arab honor forbids it. The Egyptian people and their government bear the burden of defeat and the responsibility for future victory, if needed.”

Sadat then turned to the Shah and recited a verse in fluent Persian - “He who earns his fortune through hard work needs no one’s generosity, nor does he accept anyone’s charity.”

The atmosphere grew tense, and the Shah requested the floor, saying to King Hassan, “Is this conference a poetry forum? Had I known there were poets among us, I would have brought some from Iran, for we have many poets.”

Sadat did not remain silent. He continued to criticize Iran for its close ties with Israel and also ridiculed the Shah’s proposals for dealing with the Al-Aqsa Mosque fire.

Realizing at that point that he had escalated the conflict, which was contrary to his primary mission of fostering reconciliation, Sadat decided to de-escalate the

- The Vice President asked King Hassan II to arrange the meeting
- The Shah said, “Egypt should come to us”
- The Shah offered aid to Cairo, provided it learn from its defeat
- Sadat said, “Egyptian people and their government bear the burden of defeat and the responsibility for victory”
- He who earns his fortune through hard work needs no one’s generosity or charity
- The Shah said, “Had I known there were poets among us, I would have brought some from Iran”
- The Shah scolded his foreign minister for not telling him Sadat was a skilled Persian orator and a reciter of classical poetry
- The debate between Sadat and the Shah in Rabat turned into a lasting friendship
- During the October 1973 War, the Shah stood firmly by his friend’s side
- The Iranian financial aid to Egypt reached approximately \$900 million

dispute and ease tensions with the Shah.

Once again, Sadat recited, in Persian, a poem by a renowned Iranian poet that emphasized brotherhood and love among people and praised the Shah’s father.

The Shah was so impressed by the poem and Sadat’s fluent Persian that he applauded him. Later, upon returning to his residence, the Shah summoned his foreign minister and scolded him for failing to inform him that Sadat was a skilled Persian orator and a reciter of classical poetry.

The Shah remarked that Sadat must be an extraordinary man, and instructed his foreign minister to arrange the meeting requested by King Faisal.

The meeting took place a few hours later, first with King

Faisal present, followed by a private meeting between Sadat and the Shah. This marked the beginning of a sincere relationship that continued until the Shah’s death.

On the day of Nasser’s death, the Shah sent his prime minister to Egypt. Officially, the visit was to attend Nasser’s funeral, but its true purpose was a private meeting with Sadat to convey Iran’s full support for him and for Egypt under his leadership, and to express readiness to resume relations at the highest level once the burial was over.

Relations between the two countries were restored, and the friendship between the two leaders deepened. The Shah affectionately referred to Sadat as “My Brother Anwar”, and Sadat called him “My Brother Shah Mohammad.”

When the October 1973 War broke out, the Shah stood firmly by his friend’s side, despite his close ties with Israel.

As Egypt began to suffer from dwindling oil reserves and insufficient stockpiles, Sadat reached out to the Shah, who responded without hesitation. The Shah ordered oil tankers bound for Europe to be diverted to Alexandria, where they could unload their cargo.

He also sent a telegram to Sadat stating, “600,000 tons of oil, which were en route to Europe, are on their way to you. I have ordered them to be sent to Alexandria as the first shipment. I request that you send the Egyptian Minister of Petroleum to Tehran to determine the amount of oil required for subsequent shipments.”

The volume of Iranian financial aid to Egypt later reached approximately \$900 million. The Shah also offered Sadat a contribution for the development of Port Said.

In a historic letter, the Shah wrote, “In the name of my nation, I wish to participate in the construction and revitalization of Port Said as a free zone to serve global trade and industry. Here is \$250 million in aid, which you can repay over an extended period.”

When President Sadat decided to reopen the Suez Canal to generate hard currency for Egypt instead of relying on aid from Arab countries, the Shah of Iran sent heavy equipment to help clear the canal and dispatched his son, Reza, to attend the opening ceremony.

When asked about the secret behind his affection for Sadat, the Shah explained that Sadat was the only person with whom he had truly experienced the meaning of true friendship.

He described Sadat as loyal and steadfast, someone who would never abandon him.

•••••

There is a Kuwaiti proverb - “He who shouts into a deep well, may God help you.”

•••••

When you are faced with a nation that is all silent, and neither hears, sees nor speaks, you can only rely on God.

•••••

Unfortunately, people’s intentions do not match their appearances. You cannot figure out people’s intentions until disaster strikes. Only then do you realize what was being plotted against you.

•••••

If you want to triumph over life, you must triumph over yourself, over your fear, your laziness, your selfishness, your hesitation, and you must triumph over your shortcomings. That is how life is.

•••••

The most dangerous affliction in a person’s life is envy. May God protect us from the envious. Truly, the envious person ends up losing everything.

•••••

It is foolish to dwell excessively on regret over something that has passed and is over. Preserve your dignity, even if it means becoming a prisoner within the walls of your room. Nothing is sweeter than preserving your dignity.



KUNA photo
Hunting for evidence at a crime scene.

Mol Crime Dept conducts exercise on Failaka Island

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (KUNA): The Interior Ministry conducted a field exercise on Failaka Island on Wednesday aimed at searching for evidence in a challenging and remote environment.

The exercise carried out by the Crime Scene Department and the Forensic Medicine Department aimed to enhance the levels of coordination and integration among specialized security sectors, especially in complex field conditions.

The scenario was based on a simulated report of a murder occurring inside a house, where the specialized security teams proceeded to secure the incident site according to established procedures, after which the technical teams conducted a detailed inspection of the evidence and preserved them to the highest scientific and professional standards.

22,479 citations issued, illegals held, cars seized

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance traffic safety and protect lives and property, the General Traffic Department, under the supervision of Head of the Traffic Affairs and Operations Sector Brigadier Abdullah Ahmed Al-Ateeqi, conducted intensive traffic campaigns to ensure compliance with traffic laws, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to statistics from the campaigns, which were held from January 3 to January 9, a total of 22,479 traffic citations were issued. Also, 19 individuals with expired residency permits were arrested, 350 vehicles and 35 motorcycles were impounded, and one person was referred to the Drug Control General Department on suspicion of drug-related offenses.

Security

Furthermore, four individuals without official identification and 55 people wanted by security and judicial authorities for absconding and other offenses were arrested. In addition, 23 vehicles wanted by the courts were impounded, and the necessary legal measures were taken against them.

On the traffic and public services front, the General Traffic Department handled 2,426 traffic reports, responded to 266 collisions resulting in injuries, and 956 collisions without injuries, and carried out all technical and legal procedures in accordance with regulations.

Furthermore, 29 violators were detained, and 22 juveniles were referred to the Juvenile Prosecution Office as part of efforts to enforce the law, protect society, particularly minors, and address traffic violations and dangerous behaviors within the legal framework. Meanwhile, the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) carried out an inspection campaign in the Capital and Hawally Governorates on Tuesday evening, covering Shuwaikh Industrial Area and a number of locations within Hawally, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

‘Include convict in pardons list’

Court endorses rights

By Jaber Al-Hamoud
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: In a landmark decision, the Administrative Court No. 14 of the Court of First Instance overturned the administrative ruling that refrained from including a convicted individual from the 2025 Amiri pardon lists. The court also ordered the administrative body to pay court costs and KD 100 in legal fees.

The ruling was issued during a session presided over by Judge Abdulaziz Al-Khayyat, in a case filed by Lawyer Abdulmohsen Al-Qattan on behalf of the convicted individual, against the Attorney General, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, the Director of the Criminal Execution Prosecution, and the Director of the Criminal Judgments Execution Department, in their official capacities.

In its reasoning, the court noted that the case file showed the Court of Cassation had amended the charges against the plaintiff, making the crime eligible for inclusion in the previous year’s Amiri pardon.

However, the Court of Cassation’s ruling came after the pardon list verification committee had completed its work, preventing the plaintiff’s name from being included in the pardon despite meeting all legal requirements.

The court affirmed that the circumstances should not penalize the convicted individual, particularly given that others in the same case, with identical legal standing, had previously been granted an Amiri pardon.

It emphasized that the administrative body’s refusal to include his name amounted to a negative decision in violation of the law.

The court concluded by overturning this “negative decision” and ordering the administrative body to include the plaintiff’s name in the supplementary list of those granted Amiri pardons, while preserving its authority to approve or reject the pardon in accordance with the law.

The court reaffirmed the principle of equality and equal legal standing among convicts.

Deportation for expat in suicide bid after tiff with Kuwaiti friend

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: An expatriate has been deported for attempting to kill himself following a confrontation with his Kuwaiti friend that had escalated into a physical altercation in Hawally Governorate, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the dispute began as a verbal argument between the two men, who were reportedly friends, and quickly turned physical when the citizen assaulted the expatriate. This incident left the expatriate in severe psychological distress, culminating in a failed suicide attempt.

Emergency responders provided first aid at the scene and referred the case to the local police station. After confirming the details of the fight and the attempted suicide, officials proceeded with the expatriate’s deportation.

□ □ □

Court ruling ends funds row: The Court of Appeals has dismissed an appeal filed by a department in the Ministry of Interior against a previous ruling in favor of one of its employees, thus ending a legal dispute over allegedly misappropriated funds, re-

ports Al-Anba daily.

The case originally stemmed from a claim that the employee failed to report his son reaching the legal age for suspending his social allowance, which the Ministry deemed fraudulent.

The Administrative Circuit of the Court of First Instance had ruled in favor of the employee, stressing that the ministry had failed to provide evidence of intentional wrongdoing and that its own records contained inaccuracies. The court also highlighted that the claim was filed more than five years after the alleged incident, making it time-barred.

During the court session, the employee denied the allegations, arguing that responsibility for monitoring social allowance eligibility rested with the ministry, which possessed all official documents, including civil IDs and birth certificates, and that he should not be held liable for administrative errors.

After reviewing the case, the Court of Appeals upheld the initial ruling, confirming the employee’s innocence and ordering the ministry’s department to pay his legal fees.

3 Asians held for erratic behavior

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Three Asian men were detained by security personnel in Ardiya for behaving erratically.

According to security sources, officers on patrol in Ardiya noticed the men behaving erratically, prompting their immediate detention. They have been referred to the relevant authorities for investigations.

□ □ □

4 hurt in mishap: Four individuals sustained injuries in a vehicle rollover accident that occurred on Wednesday morning on Sabah Al-Ahmad Road, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Firefighters from Al-Kout Fire Station rushed to the location as soon as they received information about the accident. The injured were handed over to the relevant authorities for further assistance, and necessary procedures were carried out.

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Global benchmark for information security

MoF achieves ISO 27001 certification

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Ministry of Finance announced that it has achieved ISO/IEC 27001:2022 certification for its Information Security Management System, which is the leading international standard for information security and data protection.

According to a press release issued by the ministry, this achievement reflects the culmination of coordinated institutional efforts that successfully met the requirements and standards of this global system for the Tax Compliance and Planning Department and the Automated Information Center Management Department. Both departments collaborated to implement policies and technical procedures in full compliance with ISO standards, ensuring business continuity at the highest levels of cybersecurity.

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance, Aseel Sulaiman Al-Munaifi, highlighted that obtaining this international certification underscores the ministry's commitment to the highest standards of digital governance and data protection, while strengthening the cybersecurity framework within government financial operations.

She affirmed that this achievement represents a major step in the secure digital transformation process, enhancing transparency in financial services and providing a safe environment for efficient and reliable service delivery.



MoF ISO 27001 Certificate

Al-Munaifi explained that the Ministry of Finance received the certification from ROYALCERT, an internationally accredited body and member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). The awarding body confirmed that the ministry demonstrated an advanced level of readiness and compliance with the provisions of the ISO/IEC 27001 standard, which enhances stakeholders' confidence and highlights the ministry's commitment to fostering a culture of cybersecurity while adhering to global best practices.

Implementing the ISO/IEC 27001 standard strengthens the institutional framework for information protection, particularly regarding the

exchange of data for tax purposes under the FATCA and Common Reporting Standards (CRS) agreements. It ensures that information shared with local and international entities is handled with the highest levels of confidentiality and security, thereby reinforcing the trust of international partners.

Al-Munaifi affirmed that this achievement marks the culmination of a comprehensive journey toward digital innovation, ensuring the delivery of more efficient and transparent financial services while enhancing Kuwait's reputation in information governance and security at both regional and international levels.

It is worth noting that Kuwait is among the leading Gulf countries in adopting information security standards, and the Ministry of Finance is considered a pioneer in implementing ISO standards due to the sensitive nature of its work with financial and tax data and the exchange of information at both regional and international levels.

Certification Details:

- Issuing Authority: ROYALCERT
- Standard: ISO/IEC 27001:2022
- Certification Holder: Ministry of Finance - Tax Compliance and Planning Department and Automated Information Center
- Certification Duration: Three years (2026 to 2029)
- International Accreditations: IAF-MLA UAF



Officials and staff of the Ministry of Finance pose with their ISO/IEC 27001:2022 certification, marking a milestone in Kuwait's digital transformation and commitment to international standards in information security and data protection.



Part of the coordination meeting of the National Standing Committee for the Preparation of Reports and Follow-up on Recommendations Related to Human Rights.

Kuwait begins prep for 4th nat'l ICESCR report

Geneva presentation set for Oct

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (KUNA): The National Standing Committee for the Preparation of Reports and Follow-up to Human Rights-Related Recommendations held a meeting on Wednesday to coordinate the preparation of the fourth national report of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

Assistant Foreign Minister for



KUNA photos
Ambassador Sheikha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs

Al-Sabah told KUNA that the meeting reviewed the plan for preparing the report and responding to international recommendations in this regard.

She stated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, will organize a training course next February to work on the development of those recommendations.

The State of Kuwait is scheduled to present its fourth report in Geneva next October, as a part of its continued work to improve human rights.

Kuwait engages in UNCITRAL talks

NEW YORK, Jan 14, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait affirmed on Tuesday keenness to partake in United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) meetings to keep abreast of the latest global trade-related legislations.

Counselor Ruqaya Sharar, representing Kuwait's Fatwa and Legislation Department, told KUNA that the UNCI-

TRAL Working Group III meetings focus on Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) reforms.

Sharar noted that Kuwait aims to develop mechanisms for settling investor-state disputes to foster transparency and fortify investor confidence. Such efforts are also designed to cultivate a predictable and sophisticated legal climate for foreign investments.



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah meets with Acting Secretary-General of the General Secretariat of Awqaf Eng. Jenan Al-Zamel and her accompanying delegation to discuss enhancing cooperation and supporting community initiatives.

Farwaniya Governor meets Awqaf Secretary-General to bolster co-op

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received on Tuesday morning the acting Secretary-General of the General Secretariat of Awqaf, Eng. Jenan Al-Zamel, who was accompanied by the Director of the Secretary-General's Office and the Director of Public Relations at the General Secretariat of Awqaf, Wael Mubarak Al-Shatti.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the two parties discussed during the meeting several topics of mutual interest and ways to enhance cooperation and coordination between the Farwaniya Governorate and the General Secretariat of Awqaf, contributing to supporting community initiatives

and strengthening the role of endowments in serving society.

The governor emphasized the importance of integrated efforts between government agencies and endowment institutions.

He praised the vital role played by the General Secretariat of Awqaf in supporting community development and consolidating the values of social solidarity.

Eng. Jenan Al-Zamel expressed her sincere gratitude and appreciation to the governor for the warm welcome, commending his role and efforts in supporting institutional cooperation and strengthening partnerships with government agencies, which serve the public interest and reflect his commitment to serving the community.

Staff transfers available online until Jan 15

MoE opens 3 new schools in Al-Mutlaa

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 13: Ministry of Education announced the opening of three new schools in Al-Mutlaa, part of the Jahra Educational Zone, starting in the second semester of the current academic year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This is in line with the directives of Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, and the ministry's comprehensive strategy to keep pace with urban expansion and enhance educational facilities. The opening of the new schools aims to balance student distribution, improve the efficiency of the learning environment, and provide comprehensive educational services.

Minister Al-Tabtabaei issued three



Al-Tabtabaei

ministerial decrees for establishing Al-Durra Kindergarten, Saleh Rashid Nasser Boursli Primary School for Boys, and Lamis bint Amr Primary School for Girls in Al-Mutlaa. The Jahra Educational Zone will update and reissue the student registration and admission bulletin to reflect these changes.

The decrees also mandate the provision of all necessary technical equipment, furniture, and educational supplies for the new schools in coordination with the relevant authorities.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education announced the launch of the online transfer application for teaching staff wishing to serve at the three new schools in Al-Mutlaa.

The application period will be open from Monday, January 12 to Thursday, January 15 on the Ministry of Education's website. Transfer decisions will be finalized and issued before the start of the second semester of the current academic year.

Egyptian Consulate in Kuwait closed Jan 18 for Isra and Mi'raj observance

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Consulate of the Arab Republic of Egypt announced that it will be closed on Sunday, the 18th, in observance of Isra and Mi'raj, reports Al-Anba daily.

It affirmed that work will resume on Monday, January 19, by appointment only, to be booked through the consu-

late's mobile application.

The consulate stressed that it may be contacted on 90029100 or via WhatsApp at 98563003 only in cases of emergencies or deaths.

It expressed its sincere appreciation and utmost respect to the members of the Egyptian community.



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Ministry of Foreign Affairs photo
The Minister of Foreign Affairs meets with the Senegalese Minister of Integration and Foreign Affairs.

Kuwaiti and Senegalese FMs explore ways to boost co-op

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met Tuesday with visiting Senegalese Minister of African Integration, Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad Cheikh Niang.

During the meeting, both ministers discussed ways to promote and develop bilateral relations between

both friendly countries across various fields, the latest regional and international developments and issues of mutual interest.

The Senegalese minister is part of President of the Republic of Senegal Bassirou Diomaye Faye's accompanying delegation during his ongoing visit to Kuwait.

MEWRE aims to complete smart electricity meter by end of 2026

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy is working on completing the installation of smart electricity meters in all sector facilities by the end of this year with the aim of enhancing the metering system and improving energy consumption management, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to informed sources, Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, acting Minister of Finance, and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem, as well as the Undersecretary of Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy Dr. Adel Al-Zamil, are committed to completing the smart meter project by the end of 2026.

The Customer Service Department has successfully completed approxi-

mately 45 percent of the project.

The complete installation of smart meters will deliver environmental and strategic benefits for both the ministry and the country. The meters will serve as a fundamental component in building smart cities, modernizing infrastructure in line with New Kuwait 2035 vision, reducing overall energy consumption, and directly contributing to lower carbon emissions and environmental protection.

The smart meter installation project will eliminate reliance on estimated readings, as these meters can accurately record actual consumption and transmit the data directly to the service provider. They also allow real-time tracking of energy usage through mobile apps or home displays, helping users identify the most energy-intensive devices and reduce waste.

Partnership drives inclusion, expands access

PADA, Namaa sign pact to boost disability services

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (KUNA): The Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA), signed a cooperation agreement on Wednesday with Namaa Charity, affiliated with the Social Reform Society (SRS), to enhance joint efforts and improve facilities and services provided to persons with disabilities.

Director General of the Public Authority for Disability Affairs Dr. Dalal Al-Othman told KUNA that the agreement aligns with the authority's commitment to promoting social and institutional inclusion, supporting initiatives for persons with disabilities, and advancing development plan policies in line with Kuwait Vision



KUNA photo
Director General of PADA and Namaa Charity CEO during their signing of an agreement to support and empower people with disabilities.

2035.

She added that the partnership aims

to improve service quality, develop facilities, support beneficiaries, and ensure equal opportunities, while activating Law No. 8 of 2010 on the rights of persons with disabilities.

Namaa Charity CEO Saad Al-Otaibi said the agreement strengthens integration between charitable organizations and government entities to ensure sustainable impact and optimal outcomes.

He noted that the partnership will help direct resources and expertise toward developing facilities, enhancing services, supporting equipment and medical supplies, implementing activities, and raising community awareness, reflecting a practical commitment to social responsibility.

methods used in these incidents bore the hallmarks of terrorism, similar to tactics employed by extremist organizations.

Ambassador Toutouchi affirmed that Iranian authorities would continue addressing these acts according to the law, ensuring the security and stability of the country and protecting the rights of its citizens.

In response to continued US threats of military action against Iran, he stated that the inflammatory rhetoric from certain parties represents a clear example of resorting to violence, and constitutes a blatant violation of international laws and conventions, particularly coming from countries that are United Nations members.

Warning that such statements highlight the ongoing international indifference toward these violations, Ambassador Toutouchi stressed that permitting these statements to circulate and treating them as normal poses a direct threat to international peace and security.

He emphasized that the Islamic Republic of Iran, in accordance with the UN Charter, will respond firmly and appropriately to any aggression while making clear that Iran does not seek to create tension or escalate the crisis.

Ambassador Toutouchi highlighted that Iranian policy is based on resolving disputes through diplomatic means and upholding the principle of mutual respect among nations.

He stressed that Tehran does not depend on any single party, but prioritizes the Iranian people and their resilience, while also utilizing the capabilities and cooperation of its friends and allies.

The ambassador noted that Iran has recently proven its ability to remain steadfast despite challenges, and he expressed hope that all countries will take clear stances regarding the hostile statements issued by the US president and the Israeli prime minister, viewing these statements as harmful to regional stability.

Regarding the possibility of Iran targeting US interests in neighboring countries in the event of military action, Ambassador Toutouchi stated that Iran trusts the wisdom of regional leaders and their ability to make balanced decisions.

Cabinet reviews outcomes of Senegalese Pres official visit

Nationality report approved, Sahl app reaches 3 million users



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

money laundering and counter-terrorism financing system, emphasizing legislative reforms, operational improvements, and international cooperation.

Minister of State for Communications Omar Al-Omar presented the 2025 performance report of the "Sahl" unified government services application, highlighting over three million users, more than 52 million online transactions, and the addition of 59 new government services, reflecting Kuwait's continued progress in digital transformation.

The cabinet also reviewed a presentation by Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel on the "Qayd" national system for online submission of financial statements and adoption of the XBRL standard, aimed at enhancing governance, transparency, and the quality of national financial data.

The system's optional application started January 1, 2026, with mandatory adoption set for January 2027.

Furthermore, the cabinet touched on the Public Services Committee report on challenges faced by

Kuwait's governorates, noting proposed solutions and assigning government agencies to cooperate with governors to address obstacles.

The cabinet approved the Supreme Committee report on Kuwaiti nationality, covering cases of revocation and loss of nationality in accordance with Decree-Law No. 15 of 1959 and its amendments.

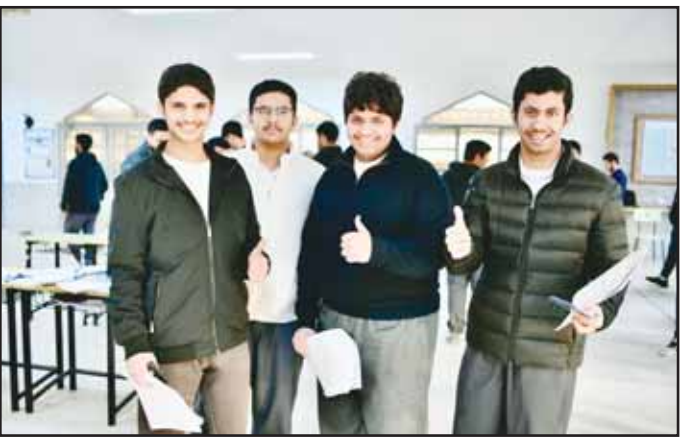
The cabinet reviewed other agenda items, approving several, while referring others to specialized ministerial committees for further study and reporting.

MoE wraps up Grade 12 Science exams

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Ministry of Education concluded the first-semester final exams for Grade 12 Science students on Wednesday, in an atmosphere of discipline and organization at the examination centers, under careful educational and administrative supervision, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Science section students sat for the Chemistry exam, while the Arts section students took the Modern and Contemporary World History exam. The Arts section students will complete their exams on Thursday, with the Statistics exam.

The first-semester final exams began on January 4, with 33,476 students from both sections participating.



Ministry of Education photo
The final exams for the twelfth grade science stream concluded amidst a calm and organized atmosphere.

Continued from Page 1

Qatar reassures

The official, who spoke to The Associated Press on Wednesday on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive plans, described the move at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar as a precautionary measure. The official wouldn't go into any further details about the move, including whether the evacuation was optional or mandatory, if it affected troops or civilian personnel, or the number of those advised to leave, citing the need for operational security.

The Pentagon declined to comment on questions about the move. The State Department had no immediate comment on the potential for any security alerts to be issued for American diplomats or other civilians in Qatar. In June, the embassy had issued a brief shelter-in-place advisory to U.S. citizens in Doha but stopped short of evacuating diplomats or advising Americans to leave the country.

The precautionary measure comes as anti-government protests in nearby Iran continue and President Donald Trump has said that he is willing to conduct military operations in the country if the government continues to retaliate against the protesters.

Kuwait faces

Maximum temperatures during this period will range between 14 and 16 degrees Celsius, while minimum temperatures will range between 2 and 5 degrees Celsius, making the weather generally cool to cold during the day and cold to very cold at night.

Al-Ali urged motorists on highways to exercise caution due to reduced horizontal visibility on some roads.

He also warned asthma and allergy patients to wear masks when going outside because of rising dust levels, especially with increased humidity.

Al-Ali stressed the importance of following weather bulletins through the department's official website, application, and social media platforms to stay informed about the latest weather developments.

Iran envoy

Phase 3 (January 8-10) - Armed infiltration and alleged foreign interference

This phase involved the infiltration of armed and terrorist elements who reportedly used firearms against security forces and civilians. The objective was to increase casualties and provoke foreign intervention. Evidence, including audio recordings, suggested these actions were directed from outside the country.

Implicating the United States and Israel, the ambassador described this period as an extension of the "12-Day War" and affirmed that Iran would pursue those responsible through international and judicial channels.

Phase 4 (January 10 onwards) - Restoration of order

From January 10, the majority of Iranians reportedly called for an end to the unrest. Security forces intervened to restore order, arresting armed individuals and seizing weapons.

Ambassador Toutouchi said the results of ongoing investigations and confessions would be announced later. According to opinion polls cited by the ambassador, over 80 percent of citizens wanted the unrest to end, and more than 70 percent believed foreign parties were responsible.

Continued Western Support

Despite a decline in the level of violence, Ambassador Toutouchi noted that Western backing for the disturbances continued.

He pointed to American media outlets and research centers publishing editorials and reports advocating for expanded economic, political, and security pressures on Iran, as well as support for the protests through various means.

The ambassador explained that field investigations and confessions from participants had uncovered serious incidents, including murder, arson, and widespread destruction of public and private property, attacks on mosques, government centers, ambulances, and fire trucks, as well as the seizure of more than 1,300 weapons and evidence of payments made in exchange for carrying out acts of sabotage. The

He noted that the positions of these countries in recent weeks have generally reflected a commitment to maintaining regional stability and expressed confidence that this reasoned and restrained approach will continue.

Regarding coordination with regional states, the ambassador said the Iranian foreign minister has held discussions with several counterparts over the past two days, indicating that these contacts will continue in the coming period to help reduce tensions and contain potential crises in the region.

Ambassador Toutouchi disclosed significant findings from investigations into recent incidents, including confessions that revealed acts of murder, arson, widespread destruction of public and private property, and attacks on mosques, government buildings, ambulances, and fire trucks.

He explained that authorities seized more than 1,300 weapons and uncovered evidence of payments made for acts of sabotage. The methods used in these incidents resemble those of extremist organizations and bear the hallmarks of terrorism. The Iranian government will continue to deal with these actions within the framework of the law to protect national security, stability, and the rights of its citizens.

Ambassador Toutouchi discussed the possibility of European Union mediation to bridge the divide, emphasizing a prominent feature of the current situation, which is the diminished influence of Europe in addressing regional and international issues, indicating that this decline has negatively affected the routes toward political resolutions.

He stressed that the sanctions targeting Iran are primarily tools of political pressure rather than measures motivated by humanitarian considerations.

Ambassador Toutouchi noted that the true nature of these policies has become increasingly clear to the international community.

He attributed much of the recent unrest in Iran to the economic sanctions, which have severely affected the value of the Iranian currency.

Ambassador Toutouchi explained that the Iranian government, in order to mitigate the effects of the collapsing currency and improve living

conditions, has implemented several measures. These include supplying food baskets, controlling the import of essential goods using the official exchange rate, and paying citizens the exchange rate difference in cash. These steps have contributed to stabilizing the exchange rate but the current economic situation requires difficult decisions.

Regarding foreign policy, Ambassador Toutouchi confirmed that consultations are ongoing with several regional countries for a potential mediating role.

He also affirmed that Iran is open to dialogue with the United States, provided such discussions are serious and based on Washington's commitment to recognizing the rights of the Iranian state.

In conclusion, the ambassador highlighted the screening of a documentary film, which was attended by foreign officials and diplomats, detailing the operations of specific terrorist groups and organizations. He emphasized that the film demonstrates the significant degree of foreign interference and the ongoing efforts to destabilize the country.

Kuwait refineries

The Al-Zour Refinery's strategy for reducing losses involves eliminating natural gas from the flare gas unit at the liquefied natural gas import facility and replacing it with nitrogen gas, which also helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Plans to minimize losses and waste include continuous and immediate maintenance and cleaning of all production lines and pipelines related to the refinery's crude oil supply.

An official document revealed the quantities of refined products produced by the Al-Zour refinery in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025.

Low-sulfur fuel oil ranked first among the refinery's products, at 12,167,000 metric tons.

Gas oil and diesel came second at approximately 5,473,000 metric tons.

Kerosene and jet fuel ranked third at 3,352,000 metric tons, followed by naphtha in fourth place at around

2,710,000 metric tons.

Granulated sulfur ranked fifth at 732,000 metric tons, while liquefied gas came seventh at approximately 1,166,000 metric tons.

Other miscellaneous products totaled about 318,000 metric tons, bringing the refinery's net production to 24,918,000 metric tons.

Regarding the integration of Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) under the Kuwait National Petroleum Corporation (KNPC), the sources said the main focus is on unifying tender and bidding regulations to streamline procedures.

They confirmed that joint coordination is progressing positively, with full cooperation from middle management on both sides.

The sources highlighted ongoing coordination and follow-up in various departments, particularly the Contracts and Warehousing departments, adding that integrated teams and internal committees have been established by both companies to define shared responsibilities.

They revealed that KIPIC's total workforce currently stands at 1,431 employees, including 1,384 Kuwaitis, reflecting a Kuwaitization rate of 96.72 percent.

Sahel adds

In other news, Ministry of Interior, represented by the General Directorate of Information Systems and in coordination with the General Investigations Department, announced the launch of three new online services via the unified government e-services app, Sahel, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

These services include issuing "To Whom It May Concern" certificates regarding complaints referred to the Technical Office, scheduling meetings with the Director of the Technical Office to discuss complaints and cases under review, and sending notifications via Sahel to applicants summoned to the Technical Office.

The ministry stated that the new services were launched to enhance procedural efficiency, save time and effort, and improve the quality of services provided.



A person is detained by federal agents in Minneapolis, Jan. 13, 2026, near the scene where Renee Good was fatally shot by an ICE officer last week. (AP)

Justice Department sees no basis for civil rights probe

Prosecutors quit as immigration raids fuel unrest

MINNEAPOLIS, Jan 14, (AP): Federal officers dropped tear gas and sprayed eye irritant at activists Tuesday during another day of confrontations in Minneapolis, while students miles away walked out of a suburban school to protest the Trump administration’s bold immigration sweeps.

Meanwhile, the fallout from the fatal shooting of a Minneapolis woman by an immigration agent reached the local U.S. Attorney’s Office: At least five prosecutors have resigned amid controversy over how the U.S. Justice Department is handling the investigation, according to people familiar with the matter.

Separately, a Justice Department official said Wednesday there’s no basis for a criminal civil rights investigation. An FBI probe of Renee Good’s death is ongoing.

Strife between federal agents and the public continues to boil, six days since Good was shot in the head while driving off in her Honda Pilot. At one scene, gas clouds filled a Minneapolis street near where she died. A man scrubbed his eyes with snow and screamed for help after agents in a Jeep sprayed an orange irritant and drove off.

It’s common for people to boo, taunt and blow orange whistles when they spot heavily armed immigration agents passing through in unmarked vehicles or walking the streets, all part of a grassroots effort to warn the neighborhood and remind the government that they’re watching.

“Who doesn’t have a whistle?” a man with a bag of them yelled.

Brita Anderson, who lives nearby and came to support neighborhood friends, said she was “incensed” to see

agents in tactical gear and gas masks, and wondered about their purpose.

“It felt like the only reason they’d come here is to harass people,” Anderson said.

In Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, students protesting the immigration enforcement operation walked out of school, as students in other communities have done this week.

Later, a large crowd gathered outside a hotel in Minneapolis banging drums and blowing whistles as officers wearing helmets and carrying batons stood guard just inside. Meanwhile, confrontations erupted between protesters and officers guarding the federal building being used as a base for the Twin Cities crackdown.

The departures in the U.S. Attorney’s Office include First Assistant U.S. Attorney Joe Thompson, who had been leading the sprawling prosecution of public fraud schemes in the state, according to people who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity to discuss personnel matters.

With the Department of Homeland Security pledging to send more than 2,000 immigration officers into Minnesota, the state, joined by Minneapolis and St. Paul, sued President Donald Trump’s administration Monday to halt or limit the surge.

The lawsuit says Homeland Security is violating the First Amendment and other constitutional protections by focusing on a progressive state that favors Democrats and welcomes immigrants.

“What we are seeing is thousands - plural - thousands of federal agents coming into our city. And, yeah,

they’re having a tremendous impact on day-to-day life,” Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey said.

A judge set a status conference for Wednesday.

Elsewhere, a demonstrator was hit in the face with a projectile fired by a federal officer at close range during a Southern California protest, leaving him bloodied and with serious injuries, according to video and accounts from fellow protesters and family on Tuesday.

The Friday gathering outside the federal immigration building in the city of Santa Ana was in response to the shooting death of Renee Good in Minneapolis by a federal agent, which has kicked off a wave of protests around the country.

Hundreds of people had marched in the streets in Santa Ana until a smaller group was left outside the federal building by evening, shouting expletives through megaphones about Immigration and Customs Enforcement, video showed. At one point, they burned what appeared to be an American flag on the steps of the building while shouting “Justice for Renee Good.”

The demonstrators came up onto the plaza, where a handful of agents stood in riot gear and held crowd-control gear. At one point, officials forcefully move a demonstrator back down onto the steps, and the group continues to chant as the agents appear to urge them to move back. Later, an orange cone can be seen rolling up onto the plaza, and officers begin firing munitions as they walk toward the crowd. It is not clear if the cones were thrown and by whom.

UK expected to approve a ‘mega’ Chinese Embassy in London

LONDON, Jan 14, (AP): Britain’s government is expected to approve a “mega” Chinese Embassy close to London’s financial district after years of controversy and political wrangling over the potential security risks it poses to the U.K.

Lawmakers from across the spectrum have urged planning officials to reject China’s application for the new embassy. Critics fear the proposed new building, on a huge site close to London’s financial district and crucial data cables, will be used as a base for espionage. Others say the supersized embassy - set to be the biggest Chinese Embassy in Europe - will pose a heightened threat of surveillance and intimidation to Chinese dissidents in exile.

The decision was initially slated for October, but it was repeatedly postponed after multiple allegations of Chinese spying and political interference piled pressure on the British government.

British media have reported that the decision to approve the embassy will come this week, ahead of Prime Minister Keir Starmer’s expected trip to China. The closely watched visit would be the first made by a British prime minister since 2018.

A final decision on the embassy is expected by Jan. 20, the deadline set by the government.

Here’s a look at why the embassy has been the focus of protests and Sino-British tensions for years:

The proposed embassy at Royal Mint Court - the former site of the U.K.’s coin maker, near the Tower of London - will cover about 20,000 square meters (215,278 square feet) and replace several Chinese official buildings across London.

Critics say the new site sits too close to underground fiber optic cables carrying sensitive financial information between London’s two main financial districts.



Protesters hold umbrellas, placards, and flags as they demonstrate against the proposed building of a new Chinese embassy, and to mark the 11th year of the Umbrella Revolution in Hong Kong, in London, Sunday, Sept. 28, 2025. (AP)

Conservative Party lawmaker Alicia Kearns said that risks handing over access to data that would give China’s government “a launchpad for economic warfare against our nation.” She cited news reports that the building complex would include 208 secret basement rooms close to the data cables.

Dissidents have also been among hundreds of people who have protested the plans, saying a mega-embassy housing large numbers of officials would further China’s repression of activists abroad.

Lawmakers from the governing Labour Party who oppose the plan say concerns include “the recent track record of Chinese espionage cases, interference activities and issuing of bounties against U.K.-based Hong Kongers.”

The site was bought by China’s government for 225 million pounds (\$301 million) in 2018, but plans for the embassy have been delayed since.

Local officials rejected the initial application over concerns that the embassy would attract many large protests, affecting the safety of residents and tourists. China resubmitted its proposals after the Labour government took power last year.

Bronwen Maddox, director of the London think tank Chatham House, said she believed Britain’s government should approve the proposed mega-embassy “given that MI5 and MI6 (U.K. intelligence agencies) have said they are not worried about the city cables underneath it.”

“I guess that you could see why there is cause for concern, but what I think the government should be much tougher on is what exactly is China going to do with that embassy, never mind the building; what about the people in it? Why does it need so many? What are they going to do?”

China has complained about the seven-year delay in approving the project, saying the U.K. was “constantly complicating and politicizing the matter.”

Greenlanders defy Trump's Arctic claim

US VP to meet Danish, Greenlandic officials

NUUK, Greenland, Jan 14, (AP): Along the narrow, snow-covered main street in Greenland’s capital, international journalists and camera crews stop passersby every few meters (feet) asking them for their thoughts on a crisis which Denmark’s prime minister has warned could potentially trigger the end of NATO.

Greenland is at the center of a geopolitical storm as U.S. President Donald Trump is insisting he wants to own the island - and the residents of its capital Nuuk say it is not for sale. Trump said he wants to control Greenland at any cost and the White House has not ruled out taking the island by force.

U.S. Vice President JD Vance will meet Denmark’s foreign minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen and his Greenlandic counterpart Vivian Motzfeldt in Washington on Wednesday to discuss the Arctic island, which is a semiautonomous territory of the United States’ NATO ally Denmark.

Ahead of the meeting, France’s foreign minister denounced what he described as U.S. “blackmail” over Greenland in the latest sign of irritation among America’s allies.

Tuuta Mikaelsen, a 22-year-old student, told The Associated Press in Nuuk that she hoped American officials would get the message to “back off.”

Greenland’s Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen told a news conference in the Danish capital Copenhagen on Tuesday that, “if we have to choose between the United States and Denmark here and now, we choose Denmark. We choose NATO. We choose the Kingdom of Denmark. We choose the EU.”

Asked later Tuesday about Nielsen’s comments, Trump replied: “I disagree with him. I don’t know who he is. I don’t know anything about him. But, that’s going to be a big problem for



him.”

Greenland is strategically important because as climate change causes the ice to melt, it opens up the possibility of shorter trade routes to Asia. That also could make it easier to extract and transport untapped deposits of critical minerals which are needed for computers and phones.

Trump also said he wants the island to expand America’s security and has cited what he says is the threat from Russian and Chinese ships as a reason to control it.

But both experts and Greenlanders question that claim.

“The only Chinese I see is when I go to the fast food market,” Lars Vintner, a heating engineer told AP. He said he frequently goes sailing and hunting and has never seen Russian or Chinese ships.

His friend, Hans Nørgaard, agreed, adding “what has come out of the mouth of Donald Trump about all these ships is just fantasy.”

Denmark has said the U.S. - which already has a military presence - can boost its bases on Greenland. For that reason, “security is just a cover,” Vintner said, suggesting Trump actually wants to own the island to make money from its untapped natural resources.

Nørgaard told AP he filed a police complaint in Nuuk against Trump’s “aggressive” behavior because, he said, American officials are threatening the people of Greenland and NATO. He suggested Trump was using the ships as a pretext to further American expansion.

“Donald Trump would like to have Greenland, (Russian President Vladimir) Putin would like Ukraine and (Chinese President) Xi Jinping would like to have Taiwan,” Nørgaard said.

Obituary

Former Cyprus president dies at 94

NICOSIA, Jan 14, (AP): Former Cypriot President George Vassiliou, a successful businessman who helped to energize his divided island’s economy and set it on the road to European Union membership, has died. He was 94.

Vassiliou died Wednesday after being hospitalized on Jan. 6 for a respiratory infection. Cyprus President Nikos Christodoulides praised Vassiliou as a leader who became synonymous with the country’s economic prosperity, social progress and push toward modernization.

“Cyprus has lost a universal citizen who broadened our homeland’s international imprint,” Christodoulides said in a written statement.

When he became president in 1988, Vassiliou lifted hopes that a peace deal with the island’s breakaway Turkish Cypriots was possible after more than a decade of off-again, on-again talks. He swiftly relaunched stalled reunifi-



Democratic Presidential Candidate Bill Clinton, left, meets with President George Vassiliou of Cyprus at New York’s Waldorf-Astoria hotel, Aug. 9, 1992. (AP)

cation negotiations with Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş, but they ended at an impasse that continues today.

Cyprus was split into an internationally recognized Greek-speaking south and a Turkish-speaking north in 1974, when Turkey invaded the island after a coup aimed at uniting it with Greece. A Turkish

Cypriot declaration of independence nine years later was recognized only by Turkey.

During an interview in 1989, one year into his five-year term as president, Vassiliou said: “The only dangerous thing for the Cyprus issue is to remain ... in a vacuum, forgotten and with no one taking any interest.”

But Vassiliou succeeded on many other fronts, using his skills as a successful entrepreneur to modernize and expand his country’s economy, even though he had been raised by parents who were pro-communist.

Vassiliou was born in Cyprus in 1931 to two doctors who were activists and volunteered their services to the communist forces during the civil war that engulfed Greece in the immediate aftermath of World War II.

With the defeat of the communists in Greece in 1949, the Vassiliou family moved to Hungary and later Uzbekistan.

America

Former Arizona AG Brnovich dies: Mark Brnovich, Arizona’s top law enforcement officer when the state became the epicenter of efforts by President Donald Trump and his allies to find proof that the 2020 election was marred by fraud, has died. He was 59.

Brnovich died after having a heart attack Monday, Katie Conner, a representative of the family, said Tuesday.

Colleagues and friends of Brnovich praised him for his work in public service that included stints as a judge, a prosecutor, lawyer and the director of the Arizona Department of Gaming. Former Republican Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey said Brnovich’s passion for the law, justice and victims were hallmarks of his career.

“For those of us blessed to call him a friend, his humor, positivity, and happy warrior spirit were infectious. May he rest in peace,” Ducey said on the social platform X. (AP)

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Health subsidy extension gets nod: In a remarkable rebuke of Republican leadership, the House passed legislation Thursday that would extend expired health care subsidies for those who get coverage through the Affordable Care Act as 17 renegade GOP lawmakers joined every Democrat in support.

The tally, 230-196, signified growing political concern over Americans’ health care costs. Forcing the issue to a vote came about after a handful of Republicans signed on to a so-called “discharge petition” to unlock debate, bypassing objections from House Speaker Mike Johnson. The bill now goes to the Senate, where pressure is building for a bipartisan compromise.

Together, the rare political coalitions are rushing to resolve the standoff over the enhanced tax credits that were put in place during the COVID-19 crisis but expired late

last year after no agreement was reached during the government shutdown. (AP)

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NY governor unveils agenda: New York Gov. Kathy Hochul used her annual State of the State address Tuesday to unveil a reelection year agenda aimed at bridging divides in the Democratic Party - moving to harness liberal anger at President Donald Trump and excitement over Mayor Zohran Mamdani, while also tending to moderates anxious about public safety and antisemitism.

Speaking to a packed crowd at The Egg, a striking domed theater near the state’s ornate Capitol building, Hochul announced a slate of affordability proposals, including a plan to expand pre-kindergarten programs statewide.

She also castigated the president’s immigration crackdown, saying protecting New Yorkers “also means standing up to ICE agents who abuse their power.” (AP)



New York Gov. Kathy Hochul delivers the 2026 State of the State address, Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2026, in Albany, N.Y. (AP)

Crane collapse sparks inferno, kills 32 in Thai rail disaster



Rescuers work amidst wreckage after a construction crane fell onto a passenger train in Nakhon Ratchasima province, Thailand, Wednesday, Jan.14, 2026. (AP)

NAKHON RATCHASIMA, Thailand, Jan 14, (AP): A construction crane fell onto a moving passenger train, causing a fiery derailment Wednesday that killed at least 32 people and injured scores in northeastern Thailand.

The derailment occurred on part of a planned high-speed rail project that will eventually connect China with much of Southeast Asia.

Anuphong Suksonnit, the governor of Nakhon Ratchasima province, where the accident took place, said four passengers among the 171 believed to have been on board the train were still missing. Searchers were still looking through the wreckage about eight hours after the morning crash. The crane, which was being used to build an elevated part of the railway, fell as the train was traveling from Bangkok to Ubon Ratchathani province, authorities said.

Photos published in Thai media showed plumes of white then dark smoke above the scene, and construction equipment hanging down from girders between two concrete support pillars.

Rescue workers stood on top of overturned railway carriages, some of them with gaping holes torn on their sides, video from public broadcaster ThaiPBS showed. What appeared to be sections of the crane were scattered along the track. Transport Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn said he has ordered an investigation.

In August 2024, a railway tunnel on the planned route, also in Nakhon Ratchasima, collapsed, killing three workers. Days of heavy rainfall were believed to have been a factor in the collapse.

The elevated segment that collapsed is a part of a Thai-Chinese high-speed railway project linking the national capital Bangkok to the northeastern province of Nong Khai, bordering Laos. The two-stage rail project has a total investment cost of more than 520 billion baht (\$16.8 billion) and is associated with an ambitious plan to connect China with Southeast Asia under Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative.

Anan Phonimdaeng, acting governor of the State Railway of Thailand, said the project's contractor is Italian-Thai Development, with a Chinese company responsible for design and construction supervision.

He said authorities will examine the responsibilities of both parties, and the Railway Department plans to take legal action against the contractor as a first step. Damage to the train was estimated to be more than 100 million baht (\$3.2 million), while construction equipment suffered limited damage, said Anan.

Martial law bid 'self-coup'

Prosecutors seek death for ousted South Korean leader

SEOUL, Jan 14, (AP): An independent counsel demanded the death sentence for former South Korean President **Yoon Suk Yeol** on rebellion charges in connection with his short-lived imposition of martial law in December 2024.

Yoon, who was removed from office last April and is in jail, faces eight trials over various criminal charges related to his martial law debacle and other scandals that flared during his time in office. Charges that he directed a rebellion are the most significant ones.

Independent counsel Cho Eun-suk's team requested the Seoul Central District Court to sentence Yoon to death, describing his decree as "anti-state activities" and "a self-coup." Cho's team alleged that Yoon aimed to prolong his rule by neutralizing the constitutional structure of state governance systems.

Speaking at the same court room later, Yoon slammed investigations on his rebellion charges, saying they've been "frenzied" and that they have involved "manipulation" and "distortion."

Yoon, a conservative, also reiterated that his decree was a desperate attempt to raise public awareness about what he considered the danger of the liberal opposition Democratic Party, which used its legislative majority to obstruct his agenda. He said the exercise of the president's emergency powers cannot be punished as rebellion.

The court is expected to deliver a verdict in February. Experts say the court will likely sentence Yoon to life in prison. South Korea hasn't executed anyone since 1997, and local courts rarely issue the death penalty in recent



Yoon

years.

Yoon is the first South Korean president who has faced a potential death penalty after leaving office, since former military strongman Chun Doo-hwan in 1996 was sentenced to death for various crimes. Chun's death sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment, and he was eventually pardoned and released.

Yoon's decree, the first of its kind in more than 40 years, brought armed troops into Seoul streets to encircle the National Assembly and enter election offices. No major injuries were reported. But the incident evoked traumatic memories of dictatorships in the 1970s and 1980s, when military-backed rulers used martial law and other emergency decrees to station soldiers and armored vehicles in public places to suppress pro-democracy protests.

On the night of Yoon's martial law declaration, thousands of people gathered at the National Assembly to object to the decree and demand his resignation. Enough lawmakers, including members of Yoon's ruling party, managed to enter an assembly hall to vote down the decree.

Observers described Yoon's action as political suicide, marking a spectacular downfall for the former star prosecutor who won South Korea's presidency in 2022, a year after entering politics. The National Assembly impeached him and sent the case to the Constitutional Court, which ruled to dismiss him as president.

Yoon's decree and ensuing power vacuum plunged South Korea into political turmoil, halted the country's high-level diplomacy and rattled its financial markets.

Lee Jae Myung, a former Democratic Party leader who led Yoon's impeachment bid, became president in a snap election last June. After taking office, Lee appointed three independent counsels to delve into allegations involving Yoon, his wife and associates.

Death behind bars exposes political detentions

US confirms release of Americans held in Venezuela

WASHINGTON, Jan 14, (AP): Multiple Americans who were detained in Venezuela have been released, the Trump administration said Tuesday.

"We welcome the release of detained Americans in Venezuela," the State Department said. "This is an important step in the right direction by the interim authorities."

The State Department did not provide the exact numbers of those released. But a person familiar with the matter, who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe non-public details, said four Americans were released as a group Tuesday and one was quietly released Monday.

The releases come after the U.S. captured Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in a stunning nighttime raid earlier this month.

The head of Venezuela's national assembly, Jorge Rodríguez, said last week that a "significant number" of Venezuelan and foreigners imprisoned in the country would be released as a gesture to "seek peace" following the military operation that deposed Maduro.

As of Tuesday evening, the Venezuela human rights group Foro Penal had confirmed 56 prisoners it said were detained for political reasons had been freed. The group criticized the lack of government transparency over the releases. Venezuela's government negated the organization's count, and reported a far higher figure of 400 Tuesday afternoon.

But the government did not provide evidence of the releases or a time range in which they were carried out, nor did it identify those freed, making it impossible to determine whether those freed were behind bars for political or other reasons.

Though Washington and Caracas have long had a fraught and limited relationship, prisoner releases have been a rare source of connection, with the two countries in engaging in a series of swaps of detained citizens.

In July, Venezuela released 10 jailed



Activists and relatives of political prisoners in Venezuela hold up signs that read in Spanish: 'Close the torture centers,' back, and 'Free all political prisoners,' during a protest at the Navy School of Mechanics (ESMA), used as torture center during Argentina's military dictatorship, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2026. (AP)

U.S. citizens and permanent residents in exchange for getting home scores of migrants deported by the United States to El Salvador under the Trump administration's immigration crackdown.

Bloomberg News first reported the releases.

In other news, freedom came too late for Edilson Torres.

The police officer was buried Tuesday in his humble, rural hometown following his death in a Venezuelan prison, where he was held incommunicado since being detained in December on what his family said were politically motivated accusations.

Torres, 51, died of a heart attack Saturday, just as his family awaited the government's promised release of prisoners following the U.S. capture of then-President Nicolás Maduro. The loss left his family reeling.

Now scores of families - who once hesitated to approach advocacy groups - are coming forward to register their loved ones as "political prisoners" in the hope that they might have a more optimistic future than Torres.

Foro Penal, which tracks and advocates for Venezuelan prisoners, has received a "flood of messages" from families since last week, said Alfredo Romero, director of the nongovernmental organization.

"They didn't report it out of fear, and now they're doing it because, in a

way, they feel that there is this possibility that their families will be freed," Romero said. "They see it as hope, but more importantly, as an opportunity."

The head of Venezuela's national assembly, Jorge Rodríguez, said last week that a "significant number" of Venezuelan and foreigners imprisoned in the country would be released as a gesture to "seek peace" following the operation that captured Maduro in the early hours of Jan. 3. The U.S. and Venezuela's opposition have long demanded the widespread release of detained opposition figures, activists and journalists, whom they claim are used as a political tool by the ruling party.

Uganda opposition chief campaigns in flak jacket, helmet

MUKONO, Uganda, Jan 14, (AP): The Ugandan opposition leader known as Bobi Wine campaigned in the town of Mukono wearing a flak jacket and helmet as soldiers filled the streets of the country's capital Kampala ahead of a presidential vote.

The safety gear seen in a photo captured Friday by photojournalist Hajarrah Nalwadda offers no protection from the stinging clouds of tear gas that often follow Wine on the campaign trail at rallies where security forces are a constant presence.

Wine, a musician-turned-politician whose real name is Kyagulanyi Ssentamu, is challenging President Yoweri Museveni, who is seeking a seventh term in the Jan. 15 election.

Museveni has ruled Uganda since 1986 by repeatedly rewriting the rules to stay in power. Term and age limits have been scrapped and rivals jailed or sidelined.

In a New Year's Eve address, the president said he recommended security forces use tear gas to break up crowds of what he called "the criminal opposition." Wine faced similar setbacks when he first ran for president in 2021. He often was roughed up by the police, clothes ripped from his body, and dozens of his supporters were jailed.

Ugandans are set to vote Thursday in an election that is likely to extend the rule of the long-term president while raising concerns about transparency, hereditary rule, military interference and an opposition strategy to prevent vote tampering at polling stations.

Analysts say Museveni will almost certainly retain power, but at 81 he has become even more reliant on the nation's security forces to enforce his authority. His son and presumptive heir, Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, is the top commander of the military, which Wine accuses of interfering in the electoral process.



Uganda opposition presidential candidate Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu, known as Bobi Wine, addresses supporters during his final campaign rally in Kampala, Uganda, Jan. 12, 2026. (AP)

Subcontinent

India, France deepen strategic ties: India and France on Tuesday discussed ways of deepening cooperation in several areas as part of the 38th India-France Strategic Dialogue in New Delhi.

A statement from the Indian External Affairs Ministry said that during the Strategic Dialogue, India and France reiterated their commitment to the strategic partnership.

"The two countries discussed ongoing bilateral initiatives spanning the domains of security, defence, technology, space, and civil nuclear cooperation," the statement said.

Both sides also explored opportunities for joint development and collaboration in the spirit of Make in India and self-reliant India, and discussed the evolving geopolitical situation and regional and international issues of common concern, it added. Preparations for the forthcoming visit to India of French President Emmanuel Macron were also reviewed, according to the statement.

"Both sides underscored the importance of closer cooperation to address challenges in the global security environment, with the aim of advancing peace and stability," the statement added. (KUNA)

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India coalmine collapse kills 3: At least three persons died and a few others were injured when an open-cast coalmine collapsed in India's eastern state of West Bengal, confirmed a local government official on Tuesday.

The incident was reported from near the state's Asansol city.

Dead bodies of the deceased had been recovered from the coalmine, and those injured were admitted to a local hospital, where their condition was said to be stable. (Xinhua)

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Crackdown on illegal fishing: Sri Lanka's Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources announced, on Wednesday, that fishermen who illegally cross foreign maritime boundaries or deliberately disable their Vessel's Monitoring System units will face a six-month fishing ban.

The regulation, which takes effect on Feb. 1, will apply to the skipper and the full crew of any vessel found violating these rules, officials said.

Ministry of Fisheries said the measure is intended to

safeguard sustainability in internationally recognized fishing zones and ensure compliance with global maritime standards.

Fishery sector employs around 2.4 million people directly and indirectly, official data showed. Sri Lanka's total marine fish catch amounted to 415,490 metric tons. (Xinhua)

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Pakistan forces kill 4 terrorists: Pakistan's security forces killed four terrorists during an intelligence-based operation in the country's southwest Balochistan province, the military said on Tuesday.

The operation was carried out on Jan. 12 in Kalat district following reports about the presence of terrorists, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistani military, said in a statement.

The statement said security personnel engaged the suspected hideout, leading to an exchange of fire in which four terrorists were killed.

Weapons and ammunition were recovered from the site, the ISPR said, adding that the militants were allegedly involved in multiple attacks in the area. (Xinhua)

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A Hindu woman, right, puts vermilion on another's forehead after taking a ritual bath in the Hooghly River on the auspicious occasion of Makar Sankranti, a festival dedicated to the Hindu Sun god, Surya, in Kolkata, India, Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2026. (AP)



Kuwait crude prices edge higher

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti crude oil rose up 42 cents to USD 60.59 per barrel (pb) on Tuesday, compared to USD 60.17 pb the previous day, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC)

on Wednesday.

In global markets, Brent crude futures climbed USD 1.60 to USD 65.47 pb, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures rose USD 1.65 to USD 61.15 pb.

Business

CEO Khalil hails liquidity milestone, investor confidence boost

Markaz shares elevated to Boursa Kuwait Main 50 Market

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Kuwait Financial Centre “Markaz” announced that Boursa Kuwait has reclassified the company’s shares from the Main Market to the Main 50 Market, following the fulfillment of the required liquidity level criteria in accordance with Boursa Kuwait regulations. The Main 50 Market represents the top 50 most liquid companies within the Main Market.

This reclassification underscores Markaz’s solid liquidity levels, sustained market activity, and position among publicly



Ali Khalil, Markaz CEO

listed companies, reinforcing its visibility and appeal to a broader base of institutional and individual investors.

Commenting on the reclassification, Mr. Ali Khalil, Markaz CEO, stated: “We are pleased that Markaz’s shares have been included in the Main 50 Market following the increase in trading liquidity. This reflects growing investor interest and confidence in the company’s fundamentals, liquidity, and long-term strategy. This milestone supports our continued focus on sustainable growth, disciplined investment

and capital management, and delivering long-term value to our shareholders. Markaz is one of Kuwait’s earliest listed investment companies. Since its listing in 1997, it has consistently supported the orderly growth and development of Kuwait’s capital markets.”

The reclassification has no impact on Markaz’s operational or financial performance, nor on its continued commitment to meeting disclosure and regulatory requirements. The company’s operations continue as normal.

Markaz remains focused on strengthening its market position, enhancing transparency, and adhering to the highest standards of corporate governance, while continuing to expand its asset management and investment banking activities in Kuwait and across the region.

Conducting valuations for over 23,400 properties

KIB’s Real Estate Appraisal Department reinforces market leadership with notable 2025 achievements

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: As part of its commitment to delivering professional real estate appraisal services in line with the highest standards, the Real Estate Appraisal Department at Kuwait International Bank (KIB) continued to strengthen its position as one of the leading specialized departments in this vital sector. In 2025, the department achieved notable milestones that reflected the depth of its expertise and the high caliber of its team.

Over the past year, the department valued more than 23,400 properties of various types, including residential, commercial, investment, and industrial assets. This was achieved through an extensive network of engagements with government entities and institutions, local banks, private-sector companies, and individual clients, underscoring the high level of trust placed in the department and its specialized services.

The Real Estate Department also continued to develop the KIB Aqari platform, which it launched in 2023 as the first fully integrated digital banking platform enabling end-to-end real estate appraisal services through digital channels. The platform contributes to streamlining procedures and accelerating request processing, in line with best modern practices in the banking and real estate sectors.

The Real Estate Appraisal Department



KIB’s Eng. Ali Al-Shakhss

ment at KIB is committed to preparing accurate property reports that comply with international standards and best practices by applying the three internationally recognized appraisal approaches: the cost approach, the income capitalization approach, and the sales comparison approach. The values derived from these methods are carefully analyzed, with appropriate weighting assigned to the most relevant approach based on the property type to determine

the final fair market value that reflects the price at which the property could be sold in a balanced market under normal supply and demand conditions within a reasonable marketing period. Additional appraisal methods are also applied for properties of a specialized nature.

These reports include detailed cost breakdowns, income analyses, and supporting photographs and information to ensure the highest levels of transparency and credibility. This distinguished performance is underpinned by more than fifty years of experience in real estate appraisal, supported by a highly qualified team of engineers and experts with deep expertise, ensuring the delivery of accurate and reliable services that meet the needs of a wide range of sectors.

In this context, Eng. Ali Al-Shakhss, Executive Manager –Real Estate Appraisal Department at KIB, stated: “The achievements delivered by the Real Estate Appraisal Department in 2025 reflect our ongoing commitment to providing accurate and reliable appraisal services based on global professional standards and advanced digital technologies. Through the continued development of the KIB Aqari platform and the enhancement of our team’s capabilities, we aim to support decision-makers and contribute to the stability of the real estate market, in line with the Bank’s strategic focus on sustainable

development.”

On the corporate responsibility front, the department continues its commitment to implementing its Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) framework by organizing real estate forums, workshops, and training programs in collaboration with Kuwait University and other stakeholders in the real estate appraisal sector. This reflects its ongoing role in supporting knowledge development and contributing to sustainable academic engagement.

The department’s achievements throughout 2025 also included the preparation of economic feasibility studies for various projects and the calculation of discounted cash flows in collaboration with the Real Estate Advisory Department, the assessment of completion ratios for real estate projects, and the introduction of an estimated construction cost calculator tailored to the private residential sector. These initiatives support decision-makers and facilitate more effective financial planning for construction.

It is worth noting that the Real Estate Appraisal Department at KIB continues to enhance its services and strengthen its professional capabilities in line with the evolving requirements of the real estate market, while supporting sustainable development in the State of Kuwait.

Main market, Main 50 Index gain

Boursa Kuwait closes mixed as general index dips slightly

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Wednesday’s trading session on a slightly negative note, with the general index falling 6.91 points, or 0.08 percent, to close at 8,811.87 points. Trading activity totaled 229 million shares across 17,906 cash transactions, with a total value of KD 68.2 million (approximately USD 208 million).

The main market index, however, posted gains, adding 8.61 points, or 0.11 percent, to finish at 8,143.81 points.

This came as 100.2 million shares changed hands through 8,600 transactions worth KD 20.5

million (around USD 62.5 million).

On the other hand, the premier market index declined by 11.04 points, or 0.12 percent, closing at 9,413.11 points. Trading volume in this segment reached 128.7 million shares across 9,306 transactions, valued at KD 47.7 million (approximately USD 145.4 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index advanced 33.71 points, or 0.39 percent, to settle at 8,651.43 points. Trading activity for this index recorded 70.07 million shares through 5,473 cash transactions with a total value of KD 13.9 million (about USD 42.3 million).

Guide promotes ethical practices

Real Estate Union launches first Sharia-compliant guide

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Union of Real Estate Institute for Private Training has released its first knowledge guide, titled “A Guide to Sharia-Compliant Principles for Real Estate Management.”

It is aimed to strengthen and disseminate specialized knowledge in the real estate sector and to develop national talent by promoting best practices.

Its core objective is to reinforce adherence to Sharia values and ensure responsible real estate management, with all professional activities fully aligned with the principles and objectives of Islamic law.

The guide carefully outlines significant Sharia-compliant principles and jurisprudential rules relevant to real estate management. Its content is based on the Quran, Sunnah, and scholarly Islamic opinions, while also incorporating the best contemporary practices in the field.

The Institute emphasizes that the guide fulfills its mission to educate and support all stakeholders in the real estate sector including owners, managers, developers, and professionals, by enabling them to operate according to sound Sharia principles. This effort is seen as vital for the sector’s growth, stability, and for building trust both locally and regionally.

The publication is organized into four sections:

- “Principles of Contracting in Islamic Law”
- “Real Estate Management Contracts and Their Sharia-Compliant Regulations”
- “Sharia-Compliant Regulations for Contractual Relations with Tenants”
- “Sharia-Compliant Regulations for Real Estate Transactions”

The guide marks the first in a planned series of scholarly and training publications from the Institute. This initiative reflects the belief that knowledge is a cornerstone for developing the real estate market and ensuring professional sustainability. The guide is available for download on the Real Estate Union website.

According to the guide, real estate management is a key aspect of real estate investment. It includes a range of activities and tools, such as buying, selling, developing, and reselling properties, as well as leasing and operating them.

Importantly, real estate management is not limited to generating rental income or profit from resale, but it also aims to preserve the overall value of the property.

A real estate management contract is defined as a formal legal

agreement that governs the relationship between the parties, protects their rights, and ensures the effective management of the property.

The parties involved are:

The First Party - The owner of one or more residential, commercial, or investment properties. This may be a natural person or a legal entity, such as a government institution, private business, endowment, or other organization.

The Second Party - The property manager, typically a real estate management company.

Sharia-compliant guidelines for real estate auctions

1. All procedures in real estate auction contracts, including written documentation, organization, and administrative or legal regulations, must comply with the provisions of Islamic Sharia.

2. There is no Sharia objection to the auction organizer requesting a deposit from participants. The organizer must return the deposit to any participant whose bid is unsuccessful, while the deposit is deducted from the final price for the winning bidder.

3. Collecting an entry fee for the terms and conditions booklet is permissible under Sharia, provided it does not exceed the booklet’s actual cost, as it is considered payment for the booklet itself.

4. Bidding wars are prohibited. This refers to artificially inflating the price of an item by someone who has no intention of purchasing it, often with the seller’s complicity, making both parties accountable for sin.

5. Conflicts of interest must be avoided. A real estate broker may not sell a property at auction and then attempt to purchase it for themselves, a partner, or a parent or subsidiary company.

6. Bidders may not collude to withdraw from bidding to manipulate the price and acquire a property at a lower value.

7. It is permissible for two or more parties to agree to withdraw from bidding so that one can win, provided they do not hold significant influence in the market.

Six Sharia principles governing financial transactions

1. The default ruling in all transactions is permissibility.

2. In contracts, the intention and meaning take precedence over literal wording.

3. It is forbidden to acquire people’s wealth unjustly.

4. No harm shall be inflicted nor reciprocated.

5. Transactions should prioritize ease and facilitation, not severity or hardship.

6. Customs and traditions are to be respected, provided they do not contradict Islamic law.

ALSAYER leads as strategic partner of the International AI Conference on Public Relations and Customer Service

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: As the strategic partner, ALSAYER Group reinforced its leadership in innovation, service excellence, and responsible technology adoption through its participation in the International Conference on Artificial Intelligence in Public Relations and Customer Service, organized by the Kuwait Public Relations Association on 11 January 2026 at the Kuwait National Library, held under the patronage of H.E. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, Minister of Information and Culture.

The conference delivered valuable insights to public and private sector stakeholders, supporting the adoption of global best practices in public relations and customer service. These outcomes contribute to enhanced customer experiences, effective AI integration, and alignment with Kuwait Vision 2035, particularly in strengthening the link between innovation, communication, and service quality.

Eng. Ibrahim Al-Fouzani, Senior Business Director of Toyota Service Division at ALSAYER, highlighted the importance of keeping pace with rapid technological advancement, noting that adopting advanced public relations and customer service practices is essential to maintaining strong, trusted relationships between customers and organizations.



H.E. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, Minister of Information and Culture, presents an appreciation award during the conference, recognizing contributions to advancing AI-driven public relations and customer service in Kuwait.

Eng. Nehad Haj Ali, Group Manager of Corporate Excellence at ALSAYER Group, emphasized that successful AI integration depends on skilled profes-

sionals and continuous development. He affirmed the Group’s commitment to adopting artificial intelligence responsibly, ethically, and efficiently to ensure meaningful and sustainable outcomes.

The conference agenda addressed key topics shaping the future of public relations and digital customer service in Kuwait, including digital communication strategies, innovation and entrepreneurship, cybersecurity, professional ethics, and data privacy. It also explored the expanding role of artificial intelligence in driving service excellence and advancing the objectives of Kuwait Vision 2035.

In addition, the conference featured specialized training sessions that enabled participants to apply AI concepts in practical contexts. These sessions focused on AI-supported decision-making, cybersecurity reinforcement, digital crisis management, and innovative customer service solutions through digital transformation. Through its strategic partnership, ALSAYER Group reinforced its commitment to knowledge exchange, talent development, and raising service standards, positioning the conference as a leading platform for advancing AI-driven public relations and customer service in Kuwait.



ALSAYER Group leaders participate in the conference sessions, reinforcing the Group’s commitment to innovation, responsible AI adoption, and service excellence aligned with Kuwait Vision 2035.



Panelists from the public and private sectors take part in a high-level discussion on artificial intelligence, digital communication, and customer service excellence during the conference.

Through KFHOnline

KFH: Diverse money transfer services in collaboration with Western Union

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continues to lead the way in delivering advanced digital banking solutions, offering customers a wide range of local and international money transfer services through KFHOnline mobile application, in cooperation with Western Union’s global network.

This partnership enables KFH customers to make fast and secure money transfers, whether in cash, directly to bank accounts, or to digital wallets in various countries. Users can easily select beneficiaries and access Western Union’s extensive worldwide network.

These services reflect KFH’s commitment to genuine digital transformation in the banking sector, allowing customers to carry out financial transactions seamlessly through clear and efficient electronic steps, while maintaining the highest security standards. The result is greater

efficiency and an enhanced digital experience that meets customers’ expectations. Western Union operates one of the world’s largest and most trusted money transfer networks, with retail locations in more than 200 countries and territories. Customers can also make payments to billions of bank accounts and millions of digital wallets and cards globally.

Through these services, KFH further enhances the customer experience by providing fast, safe, and convenient transfers that meet diverse financial needs. The partnership also strengthens KFH’s digital capabilities and reaffirms its commitment to offering comprehensive financial solutions, a commitment clearly reflected in the growing customer demand for this service.

KFH’s strong performance in e-banking is evident in the wide range of services available through the KFHOnline app. These services include the instant issuance of virtual

cards, opening additional accounts without a branch visit, card activation and deactivation, creating deposits, adding beneficiaries, and conducting account balance and transaction inquiries. Furthermore, the app facilitates chequebook requests, gold trading (buying and selling), financing requests, managing children’s accounts, WAMD instant payment service, and sending and receiving money through KFH Pay, alongside other advanced digital banking services.

KFH also provides innovative services such as Live FX Pricing for real-time currency exchange rates, instant transfers to KFH-Turkey through the RippleNet network, and digital wallet compatibility with Garmin, Fitbit, and Samsung smart devices. Additionally, customers can instantly issue bank cards via self-service kiosks available in KFH branches.



Supporting digital transformation and public-private partnerships under Kuwait Vision 2035

Burgan Bank concludes its digital skills training program for Mol employees

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Burgan Bank hosted a graduation ceremony for 29 Ministry of Interior (MoI) employees to celebrate their completion of the three-month specialized training program on digital skills, tailored and delivered by Burgan Bank. The ceremony was held at the Bank's head office in the presence of Burgan Bank management and Ministry of Interior's officials.

The program comes as part of Burgan Bank's unwavering efforts to support digital transformation and develop human capital by equipping national calibers with the digital skills essential for advancing in today's digitally driven markets. Furthermore, it underscores the Bank's commitment to sustainable development and its social responsibility toward the vital government sectors in line with its ongoing support for Kuwait Vision 2035.

On this occasion, Mr. Fadel Abdulla, Chief Executive Officer-Kuwait at Burgan Bank, stated: "The Bank is proud to see the graduation of this cohort of Ministry of Interior's employees following an intensive training program. The program outcome, which shows in the graduates' capstone projects, reflects a high level of commitment and engagement." He further explained that the program exemplifies an effective model of collaboration between the public and private sectors in developing the digital skills of national talent, benefiting society and contributing to enhanced transaction security and information protection."

Mr. Fadel further added, "The digital transformation is a fundamental pillar for enhancing institutional efficiency and raising the level of preparedness in the face of the rapidly



Brigadier General Anwar Al-Yatama, Mr. Fadel Abdulla, Mr. Naqib Amin, along with several Ministry of Interior officials.



Burgan Bank leaders and several Ministry of Interior officials with the graduates.

evolving technological challenges. Transferring Burgan Bank's expertise in digital transformation and cybersecurity to MOI employees contributes to supporting national efforts aimed at protecting data and

strengthening the fight against financial crimes, including fraud."

For his part, Brigadier General Anwar Al-Yatama, Head of the Human Resources and IT Sector at the Ministry of Interior, said: "The Ministry



Brigadier General Anwar Al-Yatama presenting a certificate to one of the graduates in the presence of Burgan Bank leadership.

of Interior extends its sincere appreciation to Burgan Bank for its valued support and effective collaboration in organizing this training program, which forms part of the Ministry's ongoing efforts to develop human

capital and enhance technical capabilities. Such initiatives contribute to strengthening institutional performance, enabling the adoption of advanced technical practices across various areas of work. The Ministry

also reaffirms its commitments to providing a comprehensive training environment that ensures maximum value and learning outcomes for all participants."

The ceremony featured the program's capstone projects, which exhibited graduates' ability to translate learning input into practical applications that tackle current challenges and contribute to supporting efforts for curbing financial crime. The project showcases also demonstrated the program's impact on fostering innovation and analytical thinking.

The training program covered several cornerstone topics including IT skills, analytical thinking, digital solutions development, and best practices for designing secure applications. The program was delivered in an engaging, hands-on style that caters to participants' varying learning needs and preferences and enhances the program's practical outcome.

This program aligns with the Central Bank of Kuwait's (CBK) "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) banking awareness campaign, which aims to raise financial and banking awareness, promote cybersecurity and fraud prevention concepts, and establish a culture of safe use of digital services, thereby contributing to the protection of individuals and institutions.

It is worth noting that Burgan Bank is dedicated to upholding its commitment to investing in numerous educational programs in cooperation with various vital sectors in the country, in addition to supporting and developing national competencies, which contributes to strengthening the digital economy and supporting the strategic directions of the State of Kuwait.



Anwar Al-Yatama

Strengthening value retail presence

LOT launches second Kuwait store

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: LOT – The Value Shop continues its growth journey in Kuwait with the successful grand opening of its second outlet on, January 14, 2026, located at The Walk Mall Commercial Complex Salmiya spanning an impressive 2200 Square meters. Building on the strong response to its first store, LOT brings its signature value-driven shopping experience to even more customers across the country.

The Store was officially inaugurated by Mr Ashraf Ali M.A., Executive Director of LuLu Group International, along with Mueeb Rahman, Buying Director; Sreejith, Director – Kuwait Region; and Sakeer Hussain, Regional Director – Kuwait. The launch was attended by senior members of LuLu management and prominent social media influencers, who toured the store and shared their experiences across digital platforms.

The new store features a thoughtfully curated mix of categories designed to meet everyday lifestyle needs. Shoppers can explore a diverse selection of Fashion apparel, Footwear, Toys, Ladies' accessories, Household essentials, Stationery, Jewellery, Home décor, and Travel

accessories—all under one roof. Each section reflects LOT's commitment to combining practicality, trend relevance, and exceptional value.

To mark the opening, LOT will also introduce fresh Winter Seasonal collections for men, women, and children, offering contemporary styles at prices that redefine value retail in Kuwait.

Renowned for delivering exceptional products at unbeatable prices, LOT – The Value Shop has quickly established itself as a preferred destination for smart shoppers. Staying true to its promise of affordability, a large assortment of items at the new outlet will be available at prices below KD 1,900, making quality shopping accessible to families, individuals, and bargain hunters alike.

With its second outlet, LOT – The Value Shop reinforces its mission to deliver "More products below 1,900KD," strengthening its position as a go-to destination for everyday savings and joyful discoveries. As the brand expands, customers can look forward to more convenient locations, greater variety, and the same trusted value that defines LOT.



Photos during the event.

Global experts advancing smart diabetes care

Zain Kuwait sponsors second Int'l Dasman Diabetes Summit

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Zain Kuwait sponsored the second International Dasman Diabetes Summit (IDDS 2026), organized by Dasman Diabetes Institute, a center of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS). This support reflects Zain's commitment to advancing preventive healthcare, scientific research, and innovation, and to contributing to a more efficient and sustainable healthcare ecosystem by leveraging digital solutions and modern technologies in service of the community.

Zain participated in the summit, held at Waldorf Astoria Kuwait and joined by H.E. the Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi, Acting Director General of Dasman Diabetes Institute, Dr. Faisal Hamed Al-Rifai, Zain Kuwait's Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer Waleed Al-Khashti, along with a distinguished group of global specialists and experts.

This step comes as an extension of the MoU recently signed between Zain and Dasman Diabetes Institute, aimed at strengthening cooperation in innovation, science, and technology related to diabetes, and supporting national efforts to enhance quality of life and reduce health risks through advanced digital solutions.

IDDS 2026 served as a specialized international scientific platform focused on advanced diabetes care, highlighting diabetic foot management and innovative treatments, while also addressing prevention, a deeper understanding of disease mechanisms, early intervention strategies, and the management of complex complications. The program featured leading experts, researchers,

and specialists from around the world.

This step reflects the practical translation of the MoU's outcomes, which include the implementation of a pilot project to develop digital solutions for people living with diabetes through smart devices for measuring vital indicators and supporting preventive care.

It also includes developing a secure digital health platform for data management and analytics under the full supervision of Dasman Diabetes Institute and in line with the highest privacy standards, as well as strengthening joint scientific research with academic entities and in collaboration with global partners, supported by Zain's technological capabilities.

This initiative aligns with Zain's broader efforts to accelerate purpose-driven digital transformation across vital sectors, led by healthcare and community wellbeing, through advanced connectivity solutions, secure digital platforms, and scalable services that enable smarter service models and strengthen societal awareness.

Zain continues to expand its ecosystem of strategic partnerships with leading national entities to deliver innovations that respond to evolving community needs. By leveraging next-generation network capabilities, data-driven solutions, and its growing portfolio of digital and enterprise services, Zain reaffirms its commitment to supporting the digital transformation journey and strengthening its role as a trusted partner for sustainable, high-impact initiatives that benefit individuals, society, and the economy alike.

ABK announces official closure on the occasion of Al-Isra' Wal Mi'raj

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) extends its greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, as well as the government, people, and residents of Kuwait on the occasion of Al-Isra' Wal Mi'raj.

On this occasion, the Bank will be closed on Sunday, 18 January 2026 and



will resume operations on Monday, 19 January 2026.

During this time, ABK's digital

branch in Al Khiran Mall will be functional to service customers from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The Bank has also confirmed its full operational readiness to serve customers 24/7 via its various digital platforms. This includes Online Banking via eahli.com, the ABK mobile app, as well as the Bank's call center Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 and its ATM network.

2025 US home sales stuck at 30-year low as mortgage rates

WASHINGTON, Jan 14: The U.S. housing market slump dragged into its fourth year in 2025 as sales remained stuck at a 30-year low with rising home prices and elevated mortgage rates keeping many prospective home shoppers out of the market.

Sales of previously occupied U.S. homes totaled 4.06 million last year, flat versus 2024, when sales sank to the lowest level since 1995, the National Association of Realtors said Wednesday. Sales have declined on annual basis every year since 2022.

The median national home price for all of last year rose 1.7% to \$414,400, the NAR said.

Sales have been stuck at around a 4-million annual pace now going back to 2023. That's well short of the 5.2-million annual pace that's historically been the norm.

"2025 was another tough year for homebuyers, marked by record-high home prices and historically low home sales," said Lawrence Yun, NAR's chief economist. "However, in the fourth quarter, conditions began improving, with lower mortgage rates and slower home price growth."



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled as a witness to the marriage ceremony of Sheikh Abdullah.



His Highness the Crown Prince, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed, Bahraini Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Al Khalifa, Sheikh Dhiyab Al Nahyan, and the Omani Interior and Foreign Ministers Hamoud Al Busaidi and Bader Al Busaidi.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef’s son marries daughter of Hossam Fawzi Al-Kharafi in grand ceremony

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: A grand ceremony was held recently to celebrate the marriage of Sheikh Abdullah, son of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, to the daughter of Mr. Hossam Fawzi Al-Kharafi.

The ceremony was held at the Diwan of Sheikh Abdulaziz Saud Al-Sabah and his brothers, and drew a large and prominent

gathering. Among the high-profile guests were His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah, and His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf, along with senior members of the ruling family.

The ceremony also welcomed a number of sheikhs, ministers, dignitaries, and dip-

lomats from brotherly and friendly nations, in addition to a large number of citizens.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef and the groom, Sheikh Abdullah, personally received well-wishers and expressed their appreciation for joining them in the joyous occasion.

The Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers extend its sincere congratulations and best wishes for happiness and prosperity to the newlyweds and the First Deputy



The groom Sheikh Abdullah Fahad Al-Yousef



Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali congratulating.



His Highness Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Al-Sabah and Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem offer their blessings.



Marzouq Al-Ghanim, Sheikh Salem Al-Abdulaziz, Sheikh Ahmed Al-Khaled, and the Omani Ambassador, Dr. Saleh Al-Kharousi.



Sheikh Meshaal Al-Jarrah congratulating.



Sheikh Azzam Al-Sabah extending their congratulations.



Saudi Ambassador Amir Sultan bin Saad congratulating.



Sheikh Mubarak Al-Faisal Al-Saud and his son Sheikh Ahmed Al-Mubarak.



Sheikh Ali Al-Yousef and his sons, Sheikhs Mubarak, Sabah, Yousef Ali Al-Yousef, and Yousef Mubarak Ali Al-Yousef.



Sheikh Mubarak Al-Jaber and Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf.



Ahmed Al-Shaya and Mohammed Al-Shaya extending their congratulations.



Bahraini Ambassador Salah Al-Maliki offering congratulations.



Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah offering congratulations.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed, Sheikh Duaij Jaber Al-Ali, and the guests offer their congratulations.



His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed as a witness to the wedding ceremony.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Al-Abdallah and His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Al-Nawaf.



Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef and the groom, Sheikh Abdullah, perform the Ardah dance.



Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Thani congratulating.



His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Al-Nawaf and Sheikh Khalid Al-Abdallah.



Deputy Editor-in-Chief Suleiman Al-Jarallah offers congratulations.



Sheikh Talal Al-Fahad and Sheikh Ahmed Al-Yousef.



Sheikh Fahad Al-Jaber and Sheikh Mubarak Fahad Al-Salem.



Sheikh Mubarak Al-Abdallah congratulating.



Sheikh Ali Abdulaziz Al-Malik offers his blessings.



Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali and Sheikh Fawaz Saud Al-Nasser.



Sheikh Dr. Ahmed Al-Nasser and his son Sheikh Mohammed congratulating.



Congratulations from Sheikh Mubarak Salem Al Ali.



Sheikh Mubarak Al-Fahad, Ahmed Ezzat Jaafar, and Bassam Al-Qassas.



Brigadier General Nasser Abu Salib congratulates.



Saud Al-Farhan and his son Abdulaziz offer their congratulations.



In this photo released on the official website of Prime Minister's Office of Japan, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, (right), and South Korean President Lee Jae Myung play drums together after their talks in Nara, western Japan Tuesday, Jan. 13. (AP)

Japan and South Korea leaders jam to K-pop hits at a summit

TOKYO, Jan 14, (AP): The Japanese and South Korean leaders agreed to deepen cooperation between their countries before they let loose with their own surprise cultural exchange in a surprise jam session drumming to K-pop hits.

The musical performance between Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and South Korean President Lee Jae Myung followed Tuesday's summit in Japan's ancient capital of Nara, also Takaichi's hometown.

Wearing personalized athletic jackets, they sat side by side and drummed to hits such as BTS' "Dynamite" and Kpop Demon Hunters' "Golden" in a short video posted by Takaichi's office Wednesday.

The jam session was a surprise by Takaichi, a heavy metal fan and an avid drummer in her college days.

"Playing the drums has been my longtime dream," Lee said on X, thanking Takaichi's hospitality for arranging the jam session.

"Like we respected our differences and harmonized our rhythms, I hope that Korea and Japan would deepen cooperation and move closer to each other step by step," Lee said.

Takaichi, in a video, complimented Lee as a fast learner, saying he learned to play the drums in just a few minutes.

"In order to develop Japan-South Korea relations in a forward-looking way and stably, we will continue our close communication between the two governments including by proactively carrying out our 'shuttle diplomacy,'" Takaichi said in a message on X.

'No signs of foul play or apparent cause of death'

Musician John Forté found dead at 50 in his home

NEW YORK, Jan 14, (AP): John Forté, the Grammy-nominated musician known for his work with the Fugees and the Refugee Camp All-Stars among others, has died at age 50. He was found dead Monday afternoon in his home in Chilmark, Massachusetts, according to police.

Chilmark Police Chief Sean Slavin said in a statement that there were no signs of foul play or "readily apparent cause of death." The case is being investigated by the state medical examiner's office, according to Slavin.

A native of New York City, Forté was a musical prodigy who broke through in his early 20s as a contributor to the Fugees' Grammy-winning "The Score" and to



John Forte appears at the Fall 2013 Nanette Lepore Runway Show in New York on Feb. 13, 2013. (AP)

Wyclef Jean's Grammy-nominated "The Carnival." A multi-instrumentalist and rapper, he also released such solo albums as "Poly Sci" and "I John," with contributors including Carly Simon, whose son, Ben Taylor, was a close friend of Forté's.

In 2000, he was arrested at Newark International Airport and charged with possession of liquid cocaine and drug trafficking. Forté was sentenced to 14 years in prison, but the sentence was commuted after seven years by President George W. Bush. Simon was among many public figures who advocated for his release.

Survivors include his wife, the photographer Lara Fuller, and two children.

Film



This image released by Sony Pictures shows Ralph Fiennes in a scene from '28 Years Later: The Bone Temple.' (AP)

Fiennes, dancing zombies shine in '28 Years Later' sequel

'Bone Temple,' a triumphant zombie movie

LOS ANGELES, Jan 14, (AP): You know what zombie movies never seem to have enough of? Dancing. They've got gore and screaming and lots of guttural snarling, but no boogie. That all changes with "28 Years Later: The Bone Temple" and the dancing here is to - naturally off-kilter - 1980s heroes Duran Duran.

The fourth entry in an ever-more engrossing franchise is absolutely bonkers - and a triumph. It mixes dark, queasy disembowelment and laugh-out-loud humor in a way that both subverts the genre and leads a way out of it, too.

Nia DaCosta directs from a returning Alex Garland script and it starts right where 2025's "28 Years Later" - directed by Danny Boyle - left off. If this is your first encounter with the series, you don't necessarily need to go back to 2002's "28 Days Later" but at least to last year's entry.

Garland's script crackles with jokes about Britain's National Health Service and "Teletubbies" as it sets up an ultimate showdown between good and evil across a flower-and-meadow countryside. DaCosta is fabulous, leaning into the dark and the light with assurance, nailing the twisted tone and celebrating the weirdness.

We pick up immediately after Alfie Williams' Spike is rescued from a gang of zombies - excuse me, a gang of infected - by another gang of predators led by Sir Jimmy Crystal, whom we first met as an 8-year-old orphan in the last movie. He's all grown up and become a sadistic satanist, which happens sometimes without good adulthood.

Jimmy - played by a diabolical Jack O'Connell in a tracksuit and gold chains, like a low-level Mafia lieutenant from "The Sopranos" - leads a

band of young psychopaths, as deadly to both virus survivors as the snarling, semi-human infected. They don't blond wigs and each is named Jimmy. There's a whiff of "A Clockwork Orange" about them - menacing, prone to ultraviolence, gleeful in destruction. "Does that sound like normal screaming, Jimmy?" one asks. Spike, bless his heart, doesn't belong here.

Sir Jimmy's opposite number is also out there, the scientist-doctor Dr. Ian Kelson, who hopes to find a cure for the virus. He's a humanist, with a huge heart and open arms, even if he does construct tall pillars out of the bleached bones of the dead. That sounds bad, but he does it to memorialize them, an in memoriam segment made out of calcium.

Magnificent

Kelson is played by a returning Ralph Fiennes, who is magnificent, totally committed, even going full Monty. There's no winking in anything he does, just pure soul. People are people, no matter how damaged, he believes. "There's just us," he says. Bright orange due to the iodine he paints on his skin to ward off the virus, Kelson is alone in his bone temple, which, with a few tea lights, really pulls the look together. In perhaps a twist no one was expecting, Kelson gingerly reaches out to an infected Alpha - played by former MMA fighter Chi Lewis-Parry - who seems to enjoy being drugged by the doctor's blowgun. It turns out they both like a hit or two of morphine and looking up at the sky, all blissed out. Or dancing.

That's when Duran Duran comes in, supplying "Ordinary World," "Girls on Film" and "Rio"

to a sight rare in zombie movies: Two whacked-out guys - one an eye-bulging monster who rips heads off with the spines still attached, the other a skinny Englishman who starred in "The English Patient" - swaying hand-in-hand to pop synth. (My money was on "Save a Prayer," but it's OK.)

There's plenty of good music in "28 Years Later: The Bone Temple," including Radiohead's "Everything in Its Right Place" and one of the most gloriously unhinged uses of Iron Maiden's "The Number of the Beast" ever conceived. If the previous film had a Fellini-esque vibe, this one has punky, anarchic feel.

Who will emerge victorious on this blighted island? Sir Jimmy or Dr. Kelson? And have you noticed that the hallmark of every zombie movie - the constant running away from the snarling undead - has been quietly replaced by examinations of cults and mortality, the long-term effects of trauma and what it means to be human? Call it almost post-zombie.

There's a fifth movie in this franchise in the works, with some clues that this nightmarish world may yet produce a happy ending. But they're getting better and better and, as insane as it sounds, it's going to be sad to see it go. Long may the zombies dance. Perhaps we should take advice from the great poets of our time, Duran Duran: "I will learn to survive."

"28 Years Later: The Bone Temple," a Sony Pictures release in theaters Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for strong bloody violence, gore, graphic nudity, language throughout and brief drug use. Running time: 109 minutes. Three and half stars out of four.

'One Battle After Another' wins

Panahi, Coogler deliver stirring speeches at NBRs

NEW YORK, Jan 14, (AP): An emotional plea by Iranian filmmaker **Jafar Panahi** and moving words from Ryan Coogler on the violence in Minneapolis stirred a National Board of Review Awards ceremony Tuesday in which Paul Thomas Anderson's "One Battle After Another" was again crowned the best film of the year.

Coming two days after Sunday's Golden Globes, the annual, untelevised New York gala, held in the cavernous midtown banquet all Cipriani 42nd Street and hosted by Willie Geist, played out as a more intimate and frank-spoken alternative.

The winners themselves were already announced, so the night was always going to belong to "One Battle After Another." The National Board of review, a group that is made up of film enthusiasts and dates to 1909, not only named it 2025's best film but awarded the best actor prize to Leonardo DiCaprio, best director to Anderson, best supporting actor to Benicio Del Toro and breakthrough performer to Chase Infiniti.

Yet in an ongoing parade of awards for "One Battle After Another," its night at the NBRs still stood out. The surprise presenter of the movie's best film award was Martin Scorsese, who praised "the audacity" of Anderson's narratives and the accomplishment of his latest.

"Like all great films, it can't really be com-

pared to anything else," Scorsese said. "It stands alone. It's a great American film."

Anderson, trying to take in the wealth of honors, attempted to describe what "One Battle After Another," his father-daughter tale of revolution, might represent. His answer came in pointing out his own daughter, sitting at his table. "I don't know what our movie is about, but I do know it's about loving your kids," Anderson said.

For many of the honorees, the world outside the starry banquet weighed heavily. Coogler's speech was among the night's most poignant. The "Sinners" director was honored for his screenplay for the vampire thriller and was introduced by the film's star, longtime collaborator Michael B. Jordan.

Both were honored 13 years earlier by the board for their first movie together, "Fruitvale Station." Recalling that film, based on the true story of the 2009 killing of Oscar Grant by a Bay Area Rapid Transit police officer in Oakland, California, Coogler turned to the recent fatal shooting of Renee Nicole Good by an immigration enforcement agent in Minneapolis.

"I was young and naive, and I thought the movie was going to change the world and make it so you didn't see people executed by civil service on camera anymore," Coogler said. "I was proven wrong again and again. And it's tough to be here and not think about Minnesota."

"I can't be here and not think about Renee," Coogler added.

Still, the ceremony's most powerful words came from Panahi, the dissident Iranian filmmaker who for nearly two decades worked clandestinely in his native country while being placed under house arrest and jailed. Panahi's latest, "It Was Just an Accident," was awarded best international film.

The movie, inspired by Panahi's own imprisonment, is a revenge drama about stopping the cycle of violence and oppression in Iran. On Tuesday the death toll from a nationwide crackdown on demonstrators in that country surpassed 2,500, according to activists.

"As we stand here, the state of Iran is gunning down protesters and a savage massacre continues blatantly on the streets of Iran," Panahi said. "Today the real scene is not on screens but on the streets of Iran. The Islamic Republic has caused a bloodbath to delay its collapse."

"This is no longer a metaphor," he continued. "This is not a story. This is not a film. This is a reality written with bullets day after day."

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Actor **Kiefer Sutherland** was arrested on suspicion of criminal threats early Monday morning after Los Angeles police say he assaulted a ride-hail driver.

Just after midnight, officers responded to a call reporting an assault at an intersection just south of Hollywood Hills. The Los Angeles Police Department said they determined Sutherland entered a ride-hail vehicle, physically assaulted the driver and "made criminal threats toward the victim." The driver did not require medical treatment, police said.

Sutherland was arrested and released from jail a few hours later on a \$50,000 bond, according to jail records. His first court appearance is scheduled for Feb. 2. (AP)



Sutherland

is returning "one final time" for the Feb. 1 show, for which he will also serve as an executive producer. Only singer Andy Williams, who hosted the Grammys seven times in the 1970s has hosted more often.

Noah himself is a four-time Grammy nominee, and is up this year in the best audio book, narration, and storytelling recording category for "Into The Uncut Grass," a children's story.

Kendrick Lamar, Lady Gaga and Jack Antonoff are among the leading nominees for the 68th annual Grammys, to air live on CBS and Paramount+ from the Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles. (AP)



NEW YORK: Chris Cuomo is returning to SiriusXM, putting him on the air with morning and evening talk shows.

He will host a two-hour weekday show centered on listener calls on the satellite radio company's P.O.T.U.S. channel, starting Jan. 20 at 7 a.m. Eastern. Guests on his first few shows include Democratic Maryland Gov. Wes Moore, Republican Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, sportscaster Bob Costas and political consultant James Carville, the company said Tuesday.

Cuomo previously hosted a show at the network but quit in 2021, shortly after he was fired from CNN when it was revealed that he assisted his brother, former Democratic New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, in fighting accusations of sexual harassment. (AP)

NEW YORK: Trevor Noah will be hosting the Grammy Awards for the sixth consecutive year, but this time, it's being billed as a farewell gig.

The Recording Academy announced Tuesday that the South African comedian

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HIGHLANDER
(2023, 2024 & 2025)



LC300/LC300H
(2025)



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(2024 & 2025)

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REMEDY

Owners of affected vehicles will be contacted by Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Est. Co. W.L.L. and are asked to make an appointment to inspect and reprogram the Park Assist ECU, once the remedy is available, without any charge to the customer.

CONTACT

MOHAMED NASER AL-SAYER & SONS EST. CO.W.L.L.
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This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42,43,44,45,46,47 and48)of no.(27/2015) issuing the executive by laws no.(39/2014)on Consumer Protection



'Health taxes powerful tool to fight disease globally'

WHO calls on countries to strengthen taxes on high-sugar drinks

GENEVA, Jan 14, (Agencies): The World Health Organization (WHO) on Tuesday urged governments to significantly increase taxes on sugary drinks and alcoholic beverages.

WHO warned that weak tax systems keep harmful products cheap, even as health systems face rising costs from preventable noncommunicable diseases and funding shortfalls.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in Geneva that health taxes are among the most effective tools to promote health and prevent disease. Increasing taxes on products like tobacco, sugary drinks, and alcohol can ease the burden on health systems and generate funds for essential services.

In a separate statement, WHO highlighted that the global market for sugary drinks and alcoholic beverages generates billions in profit, while governments capture only a small por-

tion through health-related taxes. Societies, however, bear the long-term health and economic costs.

At least 116 countries tax sugary drinks, primarily carbonated beverages, but other high-sugar products, including fruit juices, sweetened milk drinks, and ready-to-drink coffees and teas, often go untaxed. Meanwhile, alcohol remains affordable in most countries despite taxation in 167 nations, with 12 countries banning it entirely.

WHO called on countries to raise taxes under its new "3 by 35" initiative, aiming to make tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks less affordable by 2035 to protect public health.

Sugary drinks and alcoholic beverages are increasingly affordable due to low taxes in most countries, fueling obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancers, and injuries, particularly among children and young adults, the organization said.

The WHO released two global reports, urging governments to strengthen taxation of sugar-sweetened beverages and alcohol. The reports show that current taxes are insufficient, leaving harmful products widely accessible and placing economic strain on health systems.

"Health taxes are one of the most powerful tools we have to promote health and prevent disease," Tedros said. "By taxing products like tobacco, sugary drinks, and alcohol, governments can reduce harmful consumption and raise revenues for essential services."

According to WHO, global profits from sugar-sweetened beverages and alcohol reach tens of billions of dollars. Yet governments capture only a fraction of these profits, while long-term health and economic consequences fall on society. The Global Report on the Use of Sugar-sweetened Bev-

erage Taxes 2025 shows that 116 countries levy taxes on sugary drinks, mainly carbonated soft drinks. Many high-sugar products, including 100% fruit juices, sweetened milk-based drinks, and ready-to-drink coffees and teas, remain untaxed.

The Global Report on the Use of Alcohol Taxes 2025 indicates that 167 countries tax alcoholic beverages, while 12 countries enforce full bans. Despite health risks, alcohol prices have remained stable or dropped in most nations since 2022 due to insufficient tax increases, and at least 25 countries, mostly in Europe, still do not tax wine.

The reports analyze 2024 data and urge governments to reform taxes as part of the "3 by 35" initiative, progressively making tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks less affordable by 2035 to protect public health.

Pakistan confirms new polio case

Two Nipah virus cases found in India

NEW DELHI, Jan 14, (Xinhua): Two cases of Nipah virus were detected among healthcare workers in India's eastern state of West Bengal, confirmed a local official on Tuesday.

Both the victims, a male and a female, were in critical condition, and the local hospitals were gearing up to tackle any surge in cases in the coming days, according to an online report by the Indian Express.

The West Bengal government has sounded an alert across all the state's healthcare facilities as officials are tracing everyone the infected nurses came in contact with, according to the report.

This was after nearly two decades when the Nipah virus had returned to the state, said other local media reports.

Meanwhile, West Bengal's Health Secretary Narayan Swaroop Nigam reassured the public that the state was fully prepared with a robust protocol already in place.

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A polio virus was detected in a child in Pakistan's north-west Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the health ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

According to the Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the National Institute of Health under the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, the poliovirus was detected in a 4-month-old girl from North Waziristan district of the province.

The total number of polio cases in Pakistan in 2025 has reached 31, including 20 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, nine from southern Sindh province, and one each from eastern Punjab and northern Gilgit-Baltistan region.

While the overall trend shows a decline in positive detections of poliovirus compared to 2024, reflecting the impact of high-quality vaccination campaigns conducted in 2025, virus circulation persists in certain high-risk areas, said the health ministry, adding that these detections underscore the continued need for robust, targeted efforts to interrupt transmission.

Pakistan has planned to conduct nationwide polio campaigns this year that are designed to rapidly boost children's immunity and enhance protection as part of Pakistan's ongoing efforts to eradicate polio, according to the ministry.



A Long March-8A carrier rocket carrying a new group of internet satellites blasts off from the Hainan commercial spacecraft launch site in south China's Hainan Province, Jan. 13. (Xinhua)

China's Long March-8A rocket launches new satellite group

China launched a Long March-8A carrier rocket on Tuesday in the southern island province of Hainan, sending a new group of internet satellites into space.

The rocket lifted off at 11:25 p.m. (Beijing Time) from the Hainan commercial spacecraft launch site. It successfully placed the payloads, the 18th group of low-orbit internet satellites, into preset orbit.

Meanwhile, China on Tuesday sent the Yaogan-50 01 remote sensing satellite into space.

Launched at 10:16 p.m. (Beijing Time) aboard a modified version of the Long March-6 rocket, the satellite has entered planned orbit, according to the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center.

It will be used for national land surveys, crop yield estimation, and disaster prevention and mitigation.

The launch was the 624th flight mission undertaken by the Long March rocket series and marked China's first successful orbital launch of 2026. (Xinhua)

Academia pushes interdisciplinary researchers out

Research institutions tout the value of scholarship that crosses disciplines

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

□ □ □

By Bruce Weinberg, The Ohio State University; Enrico Berkes, University of Maryland, Baltimore County; Monica Marion, Indiana University, and Stascaronia Milojević, Indiana University

The most exciting landmark scientific achievements don't happen without researchers sharing and collaborating with others outside their field. When people first landed on the Moon in 1969, Neil Armstrong's first footsteps marked the realization of a century-long vision that integrated a variety of scientific fields. Landing on the Moon required expertise in electrical, mechanical, chemical and computer engineering, as well as astronomy and physics.

Similarly, the advances in genetics that have made the biotechnology revolution possible involved contributions from disciplines as far ranging as biology, mathematics and statistics, chemistry and computer science.

Today, some of the biggest challenges that scientists face are interdisciplinary in nature - from studying the effects of climate change to managing generative artificial intelligence.

Climate change isn't only an environmental problem, just like the impact of AI isn't solely technological. Scientists in a variety of disciplines can independently come up with ways to examine these issues, but as research has shown, the most effective approaches often integrate multiple fields.

Our own interdisciplinary team of researchers in economics and informatics - itself an interdisciplinary field focused on technology, information and people - explored the career hurdles that many interdisciplinary researchers face in a study published in July 2024. We studied how these challenges affect their careers and the production of interdisciplinary research.

Government and private funders alike have introduced programs to support interdisciplinary work. Universities foster interdisciplinary research through joint appointments, hiring multiple faculty at once, centers that span disciplines, and graduate programs that join different fields.

With these efforts, you might expect a high demand and exceptional career outcomes for interdisciplinary researchers. However, this does not appear to be the case. The American academic system is still very much dominated by disciplines and academic departments. A researcher whose work doesn't fit neatly into a category can easily fall through the cracks.

The structure of distinct disciplines and departments is deeply embedded in universities. Many researchers have trouble finding a journal willing to publish interdisciplinary papers or a department willing to offer interdisciplinary classes. Students interested in this work have difficulty finding mentors.

When interdisciplinary researchers apply for jobs, promotion and tenure, hiring committees made up of members of a single discipline may have difficulty evaluating their work. That issue can put these researchers at a disadvantage, compared to candidates with more traditional backgrounds.

Interdisciplinary centers, institutes and programs are often less permanent structures than departments. Sometimes they're devised as solutions to fill in the cracks between the work done in different departments or to address real-world problems. These centers are a kind of borderlands - they can attract scientists, especially established ones, who want to identify and pivot toward new research problems. But they're not generally designed to support scientists' careers long term.

Our 2024 study focused on biomedical research, which can benefit from an interdisciplinary approach because of the complexity of biological processes and human behavior.

To start, we wanted to understand whether researchers with interdisciplinary training had longer careers publishing their research than those without. The results were stark. (AP)

Weight-loss drugs cleared of suicide warnings by FDA

NEW YORK, Jan 14, (AP): Federal regulators on told drug-makers Novo Nordisk and Eli Lilly to remove label warnings about potential suicidal thoughts and behaviors from their blockbuster weight-loss medications.

The US Food and Drug Administration said a comprehensive review "found no increased" risk related to suicide among users of the GLP-1 drugs for obesity, including Novo Nordisk's Wegovy and Saxenda and Eli Lilly's Zepbound.

A preliminary review in January 2024 showed no link between the drugs and suicidal thought or actions, the FDA said. At that time, however, officials said they could not rule out that "a small risk may exist." The new analysis puts those concerns to rest.



Boxes for the medications Wegovy and Zepbound are arranged for a photograph in California, May 8, 2025. (AP)

Outbreak on the Arizona-Utah line grows

Measles cases surge in the US as South Carolina confirms 124 new infections

NEW YORK, Jan 14, (AP): Health officials in South Carolina confirmed 124 new measles cases since Friday, as the outbreak in the northwestern part of the state balloons following the holidays.

There is a second, separate measles outbreak along the Arizona-Utah border, where 418 people have been infected since August.

Last year was the nation's worst year for measles spread since 1991, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The US confirmed 2,144 cases across 44 states. Three people died, all of them unvaccinated.



A sign is seen outside a clinic with the South Plains Public Health District, Feb. 23, 2025, in Brownfield, Texas. (AP)

Measles is caused by a highly contagious virus that's airborne and spreads easily when an infected person breathes, sneezes or coughs. It is preventable through vaccines and has been considered eliminated from the US since 2000, though the country is at risk of losing that achievement.

Measles first infects the respiratory tract, then spreads throughout the body, causing a high fever, runny nose, cough, red, watery eyes and a rash. Most kids will recover, but infection can lead to dangerous complications such as pneumonia, blindness, brain swelling and death.

The CDC defines an outbreak as three or more related cases.

South Carolina has logged 434 cases as of Tuesday in an outbreak centered in Spartanburg County.

The outbreak has rapidly grown in the last month to one of the worst in the nation. Hundreds of children have been quarantined because of school exposures, some more than once. A person with measles also exposed people at the South Carolina State Museum in Columbia on Friday.

The case count could soon rival an outbreak last year in Texas, where 762 cases were reported and two children died. Experts believe that was likely an undercount.

The outbreak in the border towns of Hildale, Utah and Colorado City, Arizona - an area nicknamed Short Creek - continues to grow.

Arizona health officials added nine new cases Tuesday, for a total of 217 in Mohave County. Utah officials added two cases Tuesday for a total of 201.

Experts in both states have said they are concerned about undercounts.

"We did see our cases slow and then pick back up again after the holidays," said Nicole Witt, of the Arizona Department of Health Services. "We're hopeful we'll see the end of this outbreak soon but, right now, we continue to see the same trickle of cases week over week."

The best way to avoid measles is to get the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine. The first shot is recommended for children between 12 and 15 months old and the second between 4 and 6 years old.

After two doses, the shot is 97% effective against measles and its protection is considered lifelong.

Measles has a harder time spreading through communities with high vaccination rates - above 95% - due to "herd immunity." But childhood vaccination rates have declined nationwide since the pandemic and more parents are claiming religious or personal conscience waivers to exempt their kids from required shots.

New insight into multiple sclerosis

Study uncovers how viral infection may cause MS

HEFEI, Jan. 14, (Xinhua): An international research team has uncovered a critical link between common viral infections and multiple sclerosis (MS), offering new insights into the disease's pathogenesis.

The collaborative study, conducted by researchers from the University of Science and Technology of China and the University of Zurich, was published online on Wednesday in the journal Cell.

MS is a chronic autoimmune disorder in which the immune system attacks the central nervous system. Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) has been identified as a key trigger of MS. EBV is widely prevalent and remains latent in over 90 percent of adults worldwide. While nearly all MS patients have been infected with EBV, the exact mechanism by which the virus initiates the disease has remained unclear.

The study revealed that after EBV infects B cells -- a type of antigen-presenting cell -- viral proteins reprogram the cell's gene expression. This leads to the presentation of myelin basic protein (MBP) peptide fragments on the B cell surface. These fragments are then recognized by immune T cells, which become activated and turn into autoreactive T cells. Over time, these autoreactive T cells enter the central nervous system and attack MBP in brain tissues, ultimately leading to MS.

Researchers added that these findings offer a molecular-level explanation for the development of MS and lay important groundwork for the future development of targeted prevention and treatment strategies.

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Jurassic period

150m-year-old dino nest found

LISBON, Jan 14, (Xinhua): A nest containing dinosaur eggs dating back 150 million years from the Late Jurassic period has been discovered on the cliffs of Santa Cruz beach, near the city of Torres Vedras, approximately 50 km north of Lisbon, the Torres Vedras Natural History Society said on Tuesday.

The Lusa News Agency quoted the Society as saying that the fossils will begin to be studied in the laboratory, but based on the general characteristics of the eggs' shape and the porosity of the shells and researchers believe they were laid by a carnivorous dinosaur.

Researchers were surprised by the small size of the nest and the type of sediment in which it was found, a granular sandstone, which is rare and may indicate that the eggs were laid on a riverbank.

Preliminary observations suggest that the eggs were not accumulated by water flow, as they are arranged in an orderly manner, the researchers added.

Bruno Camilo, director of the Society and a researcher at Instituto Superior Tecnico, said it appeared that almost all of the dinosaur hatchlings appeared to have emerged successfully, as indicated by shell movement from the hatching side back into the eggs, with little lateral dispersion. He added that there might still be traces of embryos inside the block, as a cross-section could not be observed because it was covered by sediment.

Unlike other dinosaur nest fossils that suggest the eggs were laid on the surface, these findings indicate that in this case, the eggs "may have been partially buried."



A visitor tries an exoskeleton robot during the World Smart Industry Expo 2025 in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality on Sept. 7, 2025. (Xinhua)

New guidelines issued

China advances tech-driven care for 'aging population'

BEIJING, Jan 14, (Xinhua): China's central authorities have called for using advanced technologies, including brain-computer interfaces, exoskeleton robots and muscle suits, to assist elderly citizens with declining physical functions, according to guidelines made public Tuesday.

Released by eight central departments including the Ministry of Civil Affairs, the document aims to drive the reform of elderly care services, improve the well-being of senior citizens, and fuel the growth of silver economy.

The drive to bring technology into elderly care is already making a real difference. In east China's Zhejiang Province, Chen, in his sixties, who suffered left-sided hemiplegia following cerebral hemorrhage, regained the ability to pick up a cup with his left hand after undergoing training with non-invasive brain-computer interface technology in the hospital.

The guidelines also encourage the development of the elderly care robotics industry, while urging collaboration to integrate robotics, medical rehabilitation and smart home technologies to address a broad range of senior needs, from daily living assistance and emotional support to social care services.

The policy initiative comes amid a rapidly aging society in China. Data shows that as of the end of 2024, the number of people aged 60 and above in the country had hit 310 million. By 2035, this demographic is projected to exceed 400 million.

Beyond the adoption of new technologies, the guidelines emphasize expanding community-based care services by introducing chain-operated elderly care providers and encouraging household service companies to develop tailored home care solutions that meet the specific needs of seniors as demand continues to grow.

SGA shines with 34 as OKC ends Spurs’ season grip

LeBron just misses historic triple-double, but still defies his age

OKLAHOMA CITY, Jan 14, (AP): Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 34 points, and the defending NBA champion Oklahoma City Thunder beat San Antonio 119-98 on Tuesday night to earn their first win in four tries against the Spurs this season.

Jalen Williams added 20 points and Chet Holmgren chipped in eight points, 10 rebounds and three blocks for Oklahoma City. The Thunder improved to a league-best 34-7 at the midway point of the season - on pace to match last season’s 68-14 regular-season finish.

Stephon Castle scored 20 points and Victor Wembanyama added 17 points and seven rebounds for the Spurs.

San Antonio started the night in second place behind Oklahoma City in the Western Conference standings. The Spurs announced their presence as a title contender with the three wins over the Thunder in a two-week span last month, but now they have lost six of 10.

Oklahoma City started this season with a 24-1 record, then hit a lull that included the three losses to the Spurs. The Thunder have recovered and now have won four straight.

Oklahoma City won without two starters - top rebounder Isaiah Hartenstein and defensive stopper Lu Dort. The Thunder still held the Spurs to 40% shooting from the floor.

Lakers 141, Hawks 116

In Los Angeles, LeBron James needed only one more rebound late in the Los Angeles Lakers’ win over Atlanta to become the oldest NBA player to record a triple-double.

But when the Lakers finally pushed their lead into insurmountable territory, the 41-year-old James gladly stopped just short of history.

After playing in back-to-back games for the first time in his unprecedented 23rd season, James needs every possible minute of rest far more than he needs another career superlative. He committed a take foul with 3:43 left and headed straight to the bench, replaced by his 21-year-old son, Bronny.

James finished with 31 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds in the Lakers’ win over the Atlanta Hawks on Tuesday night. He didn’t quite snare his 123rd triple-double, but this vintage performance demonstrated yet again that James can still reach extraordinary heights, even at this late stage in the



Atlanta Hawks forward Onyeka Okongwu, left, and Los Angeles Lakers guard Luka Doncic reach for a loose ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles. (AP)

longest career in league history.

And even if he pays for that exertion with uncountable hours of daily recovery off the court.

“Oh, I feel it,” James said with a smirk in the Lakers’ locker room. “I feel it right now. I’m ready to get home, get me something to eat and call it quits. I’m feeling it right now, for sure.”

Warriors 119, Trail Blazers 97

In San Francisco, Jimmy Butler scored 16 points, capitalizing on Stephen Curry’s sharp passing night that featured 11 assists, and the Golden State Warriors ran away from the short-handed Portland Trail Blazers.

Curry scored seven points on 2-for-9 shooting and notched his second game of the season with 10 or more assists, the 148th of his career. Butler also had six rebounds and five assists.

De’Anthony Melton scored a season-best 23 points off the bench for his fifth game in the last six reaching

double figures and fourth in a row - and his second 20-point performance. Gui Santos contributed a career-high four steals.

Shaedon Sharpe scored 19 points and Caleb Love 17 and seven assists for the Blazers, who had won all three previous matchups this season but were missing leading scorer Deni Avdija - and his 26.1 points per game - because of lower back soreness and started a pair of two-way players.

Portland lost a second straight after a defeat to New York on Sunday night that ended a five-game winning streak.

Rockets 119, Bulls 113

In Houston, Kevin Durant had 28 points and Alperen Sengun added 23 with 11 assists to lead the Houston Rockets to a win over the Chicago Bulls.

There were 35 lead changes in the game with neither team able to build a cushion until the Rockets did in the

final minutes.

Houston trailed by 1 with about 3 1/2 minutes to go before going on a 7-2 run to make it 110-106. Durant got things going in that stretch with a dunk and Jabari Smith Jr. added a 3-pointer.

A layup by Tre Jones cut the lead to 2 but Smith made a jumper before knocking down a 3 from the top of the key to extend the lead to 115-108 with about 90 seconds remaining.

Kevin Huerter made a layup for Chicago after that but a booming dunk by Durant left Houston up 117-110 with less than a minute to play.

Amen Thompson added 23 points for the Rockets and Smith scored 10 of his 18 points in the fourth quarter to help Houston snap a three-game skid.

Jones had a career-high 34 points for the Bulls, who lost for the fourth time in five games.

Heat 127, Suns 121

In Miami, Bam Adebayo scored 29

points, including three long jumpers in the final minutes, and Norman Powell added 27 as the Miami Heat squandered a 20-point lead before recovering to beat the Phoenix Suns.

Powell hit a 3-pointer with 48 seconds left to put Miami ahead for good, and Andrew Wiggins made a pair of free throws to seal the game after Phoenix’s Dillon Brooks was called for a flagrant foul with 11.5 seconds remaining.

Tyler Herro scored 23 for Miami, which snapped a three-game slide.

Brooks and Grayson Allen each scored 25 for Phoenix, which had won three straight. Devin Booker finished with 24 points, nine rebounds and nine assists for the Suns, while Mark Williams added 18 points and 14 rebounds.

Phoenix was trying to overcome a 20-point deficit for the second time this season; the Suns trailed by 20 to Sacramento on opening night. They’re now

0-11 in games in which they trailed by at least 20 since, but had a chance on Tuesday.

Nuggets 122, Pelicans 116

In New Orleans, Jamal Murray had 35 points and nine assists, Peyton Watson made the tiebreaking jumper with 39 seconds left and the Denver Nuggets beat the New Orleans Pelicans.

Watson finished with 31 points, seven rebounds and five assists in his first game since being chosen the Western Conference player of the week. Tim Hardaway Jr. finished with 18 points.

Trey Murphy III scored 31 points for the Pelicans, who lost for the 11th time in 12 games.

Murphy’s layup tied it at 114 with 1:02 to play. Watson’s basket put Denver back ahead and Aaron Gordon followed with a basket for a four-point lead before Murray’s free throws made it 120-114 with 8.6 seconds to go.

Murray scored 12 points in the fourth quarter, making all three shots, including two 3-pointers, in about eight minutes.

Murray had 11 points in the first quarter before Watson went 6 for 6 for 15 points in the second. But Murphy had 22 points in the first half as New Orleans took a 65-60 lead.

Gordon and Jalen Pickett each scored 16 points for the Nuggets, who won for the fourth time in five games since dropping their first two games of the new year.

Timberwolves 139, Bucks 106

In Milwaukee, Julius Randle scored 29 points and the hot-shooting Minnesota Timberwolves never trailed in blowout of the Milwaukee Bucks.

The Timberwolves won their sixth of seven despite missing top scorer Anthony Edwards due to maintenance on his right foot and leading rebounder Rudy Gobert, who served a one-game suspension for flagrant fouls. Gobert picked up his sixth flagrant foul point Sunday in a 104-103 victory over the San Antonio Spurs.

Coach Chris Finch returned for Minnesota after he missed the Spurs game with an illness.

The Timberwolves made a season-high 22 3-pointers on 43 attempts and shot a season-best 59.8% overall as the Bucks allowed their highest point total of the season.

An illness forced Milwaukee’s Myles Turner to sit out a game for the first time this season. Giannis Antetokounmpo had 25 points, eight rebounds and five assists for the Bucks.

Even at far less than full strength, Minnesota took control from the start. The Timberwolves led 76-45 at the break, the biggest halftime advantage in a road game in franchise history.

Chloe Kim says she’s ‘good to go’ for Oly despite labrum tear in shoulder



In this file photo, gold medalist Chloe Kim of USA in action during the Snowboard Halfpipe competition at the FIS Snowboard, Freestyle and Freeski World Championships in St. Moritz, Switzerland. (AP)

WASHINGTON, Jan 14, (AP): Snowboarder Chloe Kim says she’s “good to go” for the Milan Cortina Olympics despite tearing the labrum in her shoulder during a training run last week in Switzerland.

Now comes a race against the clock to see if she can get ready for a contest that starts in less than a month.

The winner of the last two Olympic gold medals in the halfpipe posted an update to Instagram , saying she wasn’t surprised to learn she had torn her labrum - the lining of the socket that holds the shoulder together. She did not say which shoulder she injured when she fell while getting ready for this weekend’s Laax Open.

“There are two ways to do it, and the way I did it is less severe than the other, so I’m really happy about that,” she said. “Obviously, I’m really disappointed that I can’t snowboard until right before the Olympics, which is going to be hard. I haven’t gotten nearly the amount of reps that I would have liked, but that’s OK.”

The women’s Olympic halfpipe contest starts Feb. 11.

The 25-year-old Kim, who already has qualified for the U.S. team, would be the heavy favorite to win in Italy if she’s completely healthy. She said

she won’t compete this weekend in Laax. She didn’t mention the Winter X Games in Aspen later this month, which are the last big contest before the Olympics.

Kim has only been in one competition this season - last month in Copper Mountain - and while warming up for the final there, she suffered a shoulder injury, as well.

Last week, she posted video of her fall in Switzerland, which showed her skittering across the halfpipe after losing her bearings on the landing of a jump. At that time, she said she dislocated the shoulder and wasn’t in that much pain. An MRI from last Friday revealed the labrum tear.

In her video, Kim said she’ll have to wear a “super-sexy shoulder brace” that is uncomfortable.

“I went through a bunch of different waves of emotions, but honestly, I’m really excited for this week,” she said.

The end of the video flashed to her picking up Cleveland Browns defensive end Myles Garrett, at a train station.

“I’m so grateful to be able to do this even though the lows can get pretty damn low,” Kim wrote on the post that went along with her video. “Excited for a week of exploration!”

‘The league is falling significantly’

Bayern dominance fuels debate over Bundesliga competitiveness

BERLIN, Jan 14, (Xinhua): Bayern Munich’s sustained dominance has reignited debate over the Bundesliga’s global competitiveness and Germany’s standing in international football.

Bundesliga revenues are projected to reach about 300 million euros in the 2025-26 season, according to DPA. By comparison, the Premier League generates roughly 3.3 billion euros and Spain’s La Liga nearly one billion.

Critics point to the 50-plus-one ownership rule as a key obstacle. The regulation requires clubs to retain majority control, limiting outside investment at a time when rival European leagues welcome foreign capital. Germany’s reluctance to stage domestic competitions abroad has also drawn scrutiny, particularly after Spain’s Super Cup final between Barcelona and Real Madrid was played in Saudi Arabia and attracted a global audience.

League association CEO Stefan Merkel described the Bundesliga as “in the role of a challenger” in the international revenue race. Bayern chairman Jan-Christian Dreesen warned the league is falling significantly behind and called for greater international visibility, new markets and openness to competitions such as the FIFA Club World Cup. He said little progress has been made over the past decade.

Others argue Bayern’s national dominance is itself part of the problem, urging a more equitable distribution of revenue to help smaller clubs compete. Bayern has won 12 of the past 13 league titles and is on course for another in 2025-26, leading by 11 points after 16 rounds.

The numbers underline the gap.



Wolfsburg’s Saël Kumbedi and Munich’s Luis Diaz, right, in action during the Bundesliga soccer match between Bayern Munich and VfL Wolfsburg in Munich, Germany. (AP)

Bayern has scored 63 league goals, more than double second-placed Borussia Dortmund’s 29 and third-placed RB Leipzig’s 30. England captain Harry Kane last weekend equaled a 60-year-old record during an 8-1 win over Wolfsburg, by scoring more than 20 league goals in each of his first three Bundesliga seasons. Wingers Luis Diaz and Michael Olise have combined for 38 scoring contributions in 16 matches,

drawing comparisons with former stars Arjen Robben and Franck Ribery.

Coach Vincent Kompany praised the performances but stressed that only titles define greatness. “Robben and Ribery won just about everything,” he said, adding that Bayern’s ambitions extend beyond domestic trophies to international success, including the Champions League. Bayern’s current average of 3.94

goals per game leads all major European leagues.

Former Bayern goalkeeper Oliver Kahn has called the club’s dominance “unhealthy,” urging the league to rethink revenue distribution and talent development. He also warned of a widening gap between the Premier League and La Liga and the rest of Europe, including the Bundesliga, Italy’s Serie A and France’s Ligue .

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Parsons hails incredible China model in Paralympic sports

BUDAPEST, Jan 14, (Xinhua): China has become a global leader in Paralympic sports and in promoting social inclusion through sport, International Paralympic Committee (IPC) president Andrew said.

During a visit to a local therapeutic institution, Parsons stressed that the value of sport lies not only in winning medals, but also in helping people with disabilities regain confidence and integrate into society.

“I think China is a very good example of how to combine sport with inclusion. Sport is truly a tool for social integration in Chinese society. I have visited the country many times and seen it with my own eyes. It is an incredible model to follow,” Parsons told Xinhua.

The IPC president noted that China has consistently topped the medal table at recent Summer Paralympic Games and has made rapid

progress in Winter Paralympic sports since Beijing 2022, emerging as a major force in the Paralympic movement.

“China is a powerhouse in the Paralympic movement, especially in recent editions, and it has also grown strongly in winter sports after Beijing 2022,” Parsons said.

He highlighted China’s training infrastructure, citing high-level training centers in Beijing, Shanghai

and Hangzhou. “The facilities available for athletes with disabilities in China are outstanding, probably among the best in the world,” he added.

Parsons said China’s rapid development has also helped raise the overall standard of Paralympic sports worldwide, encouraging stronger competition and further progress in Winter Paralympic events.

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Event marks major strides in Kuwait's winter sports

Kuwait eyes world-class hosting of ice hockey championship

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Honorary President of the Kuwait Winter Games Club, Sheikh Jaber Bandar Al-Sabah, affirmed that intensive preparations are underway to deliver a professionally organized 2026 Ice Hockey World Championship Division IV, scheduled to be hosted in Kuwait next April.

He noted that the event will reflect the significant progress achieved by winter sports in the country.

During his inspection of the club's

ice rink, which will stage the tournament matches, Sheikh Jaber said the organizing committee is working to meet all technical and organizational standards required by the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF).

He explained that preparations will soon begin on upgrading the arena, along with facilities for players and referees, in full compliance with IIHF regulations. Plans also include setting up a dedicated fan

zone near the venue, featuring entertainment activities and competitions designed to enhance the spectator experience.

Sheikh Jaber highlighted that hosting the championship for the second time underscores Kuwait's growing standing in ice hockey. He expressed his appreciation for the support and patronage of Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi.

He also praised the efforts of the club's board of directors, chaired by Fahid Al-Ajmi, in organizing the event, which will bring together national teams from Singapore, Armenia, Iran, Indonesia, and Malaysia, alongside the host nation Kuwait.

He concluded by thanking the Public Authority for Sport, participating government bodies, and national sponsors for their continued support.



Sheikh Jaber Bandar Al-Sabah, Honorary President of the Kuwait Winter Games Club.

Nartey ends six-year wait, Stuttgart edges Frankfurt



Stuttgart's Deniz Undav and Frankfurt's Oscar Höjlund in action during the Bundesliga soccer match between VfB Stuttgart and Eintracht Frankfurt in Stuttgart, Germany. (AP)

Dortmund routs Bremen

BERLIN, Jan 14, (AP): Six years into his Stuttgart career, Nikolas Nartey finally scored his first goal for the club to seal a thrilling 3-2 win over Eintracht Frankfurt in the Bundesliga on Tuesday.

The Danish midfielder found space between two defenders to direct Joshua Vagnoman's low cross into the net and turned away, shouting in celebration.

Nartey had been with Stuttgart since 2019 but barely played for much of that time. He spent two years on loan before a series of injuries wreaked havoc on his career. He didn't play at all in 2023-24 and had little game time the following year but has become a regular starter this season.

Until Nartey's breakthrough, it had seemed like a first-time scorer of a different sort had salvaged a draw for Frankfurt.

Three minutes into his Bundesliga debut off the bench, new signing Ayoub Amamouni-Echghouyab made it 2-2 to finish



Bremen's Justin Njinmah, right, controls the ball during Dortmund's Waldemar Anton during the German Bundesliga soccer match between Borussia Dortmund and Werder Bremen in Dortmund, Germany. (AP)

off a rapid team move that began with goalkeeper Kaua Santos and went the length of the field. The 21-year-old forward had never before played above the third tier of German soccer.

Frankfurt took the early lead when Rasmus Kristensen scored in the fifth minute, but goals from Ermedin Demirovic and Deniz Undav put Stuttgart ahead 2-1 by halftime. Both teams had plenty

of chances as Santos and Stuttgart's Alexander Nübel made crucial saves.

Stuttgart moves up to third with the win. Frankfurt is seventh, with one win from its last eight games in all competitions.

A day after Borussia Dortmund challenging Bayern for the title is out of his team's reach, Dortmund earned a straightforward 3-0 win

over Werder Bremen.

Defender Nico Schlotterbeck headed second-place Dortmund in front in the 11th before Marcel Sabitzer and Serhou Guirassy scored to make sure of the win.

"That we can't attack Bayern, I think everyone can see that," Kovac said Monday, adding his aim is a top-four finish.

Unbeaten Bayern, which beat Wolfsburg 8-1 last week, can restore an 11-point lead by beating Cologne on Wednesday.

Mainz beat fellow relegation candidate Heidenheim 2-1 for its first Bundesliga win since September. New Mainz coach Urs Fischer is unbeaten in six Bundesliga and Conference League games since he was hired last month. Mainz moves up from last place in the 18-team league to 16th, dropping Heidenheim to last.

Bayer Leverkusen's game at Hamburger SV was postponed at short notice over concerns around the stadium's roof. It's the third game in the Bundesliga to be called off in recent days following heavy snow in northern Germany.

Moltzan claims second place

Shiffrin wins Flachau slalom

FLACHAU, Austria, Jan 14, (AP): Mikaela Shiffrin and American teammate Paula Moltzan finished 1-2 in a World Cup slalom night race Tuesday.

Shiffrin, who has now won six of the seven slaloms in the Olympic season, added to her first-run advantage to finish 0.41 seconds ahead of Moltzan.

Katharina Truppe of Austria finished third before her home fans, 0.65 behind, while Camille Rast - the Swiss racer who recently beat Shiffrin - came fourth, 0.67 behind.

Now there's only one more slalom before the Milan Cortina Winter Games open on Feb. 6.

Shiffrin earned her record-extending 107th World Cup win, 70th in slalom and sixth in Flachau.

Moltzan, who is still seeking her first victory, earned the fourth second-place finish of her career and her third podium result of the season. She



United States' Mikaela Shiffrin celebrates on podium after winning an alpine ski, women's World Cup slalom, in Flachau, Austria. (AP)

also took bronze in giant slalom at last season's world championships.

Ajax signs Ibrahimovic's son on loan from AC Milan

AMSTERDAM, Jan 14, (AP): Maximilian Ibrahimović is moving from one club his father used to play for, and going to another.

The 19-year-old winger, the son of soccer great Zlatan Ibrahimović, joined Ajax on loan from AC Milan on Wednesday.

"It's cool that he also played for Ajax. I am happy that I have the opportunity to play here also and to develop," Maximilian Ibrahimović said.

"I want to write my own story. I am my own person, my own player, I am here to do my own thing. And I am really looking forward to that."

Zlatan Ibrahimović currently serves as senior adviser to Milan's American owners - acting as the key link between them and the club's sporting operations, including player development - and would have had a significant part in his son's move.

Italian media reports said Ajax has paid Milan 3.5 million euros (\$4 million) for the loan until the end of the season, when the Dutch club will have the option to make the deal permanent. "We are very pleased with the arrival of Maximilian," said Marijn Beuker, Ajax's director of football. "He is a talented forward with a good sense of positioning in and around the penalty area, and he has strong goal-oriented finishing."

"He is skillful with his dribbling and, above all, has a great winner's mentality and training attitude."

The Swede has progressed through the youth teams at Milan but has never played for the senior team, although he was part of the squad that traveled to Saudi Arabia for the Italian Super Cup last month.

He has scored five goals in 16 matches for Milan Futuro this season.

"He will initially mainly get his playing minutes with Ajax U23 and will regularly move between Ajax U23 and the first team during the season, so that he can get used to the higher level and the intensity of Ajax 1," Beuker said.

"Maximilian is a player with a lot of potential, and we hope that in time he can become a permanent part of Ajax 1's attack."

Zlatan Ibrahimović played for Ajax from 2001-2005, netting 48 goals in 110 appearances and winning the Dutch league twice as well as the KNVB Cup.

The talismanic forward scored 93 goals in 163 appearances over two spells at Milan, winning two Serie A titles and the Italian Super Cup.

"Ibrahimović is just a name. I am just Maximilian," the younger Ibrahimović said. "If I cared about my name then it would be all wrong, it wouldn't even be fun to play if I would always compare myself. I don't even think I look like him."

Zlatan's other son, the 17-year-old Vincent Ibrahimović, recently signed his first professional contract with Milan.

Bilbao edges past Leonesa in Copa del Rey

Griezmann fires Atletico into quarters

MADRID, Jan 14, (AP): Antoine Griezmann scored with a well-placed free-kick shot to give Atletico Madrid a 1-0 road win over second-division club Deportivo La Coruña and a spot in the quarterfinals of the Copa del Rey.

Griezmann broke the deadlock in the 61st minute, finding the right upper corner with a curling left-foot strike.

"I didn't know where to hit it, whether to the side of the goalkeeper or over him, and instead of shooting hard, I tried to place it over the wall."

It was the fifth goal in the last six matches for the 34-year-old Griezmann.

"Griezmann is a game-changer," Atletico coach Diego Simeone said. "He still has that magic touch of wanting to compete and

help the team."

The result ended a two-game skid for Atletico. Simeone's team was coming off a 2-1 loss to Real Madrid in the semifinals of the Spanish Super Cup in Saudi Arabia and a 1-1 draw at Real Sociedad in the Spanish league.

Atletico sits in fourth place at the halfway point of the Spanish league season, 11 points behind leader Barcelona.

The match was stopped for a few minutes near the 70th minute after Deportivo goalkeeper Germán Parreño sustained a cut on his mouth following a collision with Griezmann. The goalkeeper stayed on the game after team doctors sutured his lips on the field.

In a match between first-division teams, Real Sociedad



eliminated Osasuna 4-3 in a penalty shootout after a 2-2 draw in regulation and extra time.

Osasuna took a two-goal lead - Jon Moncayola scored in the fourth minute and the second

goal came with an own-goal by Mikel Oyarzabal in the 17th - but the hosts rallied with Beñat Turrientes finding the net in the 75th and Igor Zubeldia forcing extra time with a goal two minutes into stoppage time.

Oyarzabal missed a penalty kick in extra time.

Athletic Bilbao, playing with 10 men from the 56th because of a red card to Aitor Paredes, edged past second-division team Cultural Leonesa 4-3, with Unai Gómez scoring the winner by converting a penalty kick late in the first half of extra time.

The teams drew 3-3 in regulation in a game that featured a thrilling first half in which each team scored three times. The hosts led in three occasions but allowed Athletic to equalize every time.

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NEWS



KUNA photo
Medalists celebrate on the podium during the awarding ceremony at the Asian Amateur Skeet Shooting Finals in Doha.

Kuwait secures bronze at Asian Skeet Shooting Finals

DOHA, Jan 14, (KUNA): Kuwait claimed the bronze medal at the Asian Amateur Skeet Shooting Finals in Doha on Wednesday, finishing behind Qatar and gold medalists Kazakhstan. The Kuwaiti team, composed of Ibrahim Al-Harbi, Ahmad Hassan, and

Mohammad Al-Rashidi, advanced to the finals but narrowly missed out on the top spot. The competition features 196 amateur shooters from 17 Asian nations and continues in Qatar until January 21, with participants vying for continental supremacy.

Ceferin takes no pay rise

PSG's \$168M payment tops UEFA prize money list for last season

GENEVA, Jan 14, (AP): Champions League winner Paris Saint-Germain topped the UEFA prize money table getting 144.4 million euros (\$168 million) last season as the competition paid an extra 400 million euros (\$466 million) among Europe's elite clubs in the expanded new format.

The figures were confirmed in UEFA's financial report published for the 2024-25 season, ahead of its annual congress next month in Brussels.

Inter Milan, the beaten finalist, also was second on the money list earning 136.6 million euros (\$159 million) from the UEFA prize fund that shared 2.47 billion euros (\$2.9 billion) among the 36 teams which each first played eight games in a single-standings league.

Seven teams got at least 100 million euros (\$116.5 million) in prize money compared to five that got a nine-figure payment the previous season, when the total fund had been 2.08 billion euros (\$2.42 billion) in the last year of the 32-team, group-stage format.

Aston Villa was the only quarterfinalist last season to get less than 100 million euros, earning a UEFA payment of 83.7 million euros (\$97.5 million). That was partly explained by Villa's lower UEFA ranking returning to the competition after a 41-year gap.

Real Madrid's quarterfinal loss to Arsenal meant it earned less than 102 million euros (\$119 million) from UEFA in the Champions League, which was a drop of 37 million euros (\$43 million) from winning the title in 2024. Madrid got an extra 5 million euros for winning the UEFA Super Cup against Atalanta, which got 4 million euros from that season-opening game.

Inter earned at least twice as much from the Champions League as each of the other four Italian teams in the competition.

Manchester City was the lowest earner of the four English clubs. The reigning English champion got 76 million euros (\$88.5 million) after being eliminated in the knockout playoffs round in February by Real Madrid.

The smallest payment to a Champions League team was Slovan Bratislava getting less than 22 million euros (\$25.6 million). The champion of Slovakia lost all eight league-phase games.

The steep drop in payments from the Champions League to the second-tier Europa League was shown in title-winner Tottenham getting 41 million euros (\$47.8 million). Beaten finalist Manchester United was paid 36 million euros (\$41.9 million) by UEFA last season and will get nothing this time after failing to qualify for any European competition.

The third-tier Conference League paid Chelsea 21.8 million euros (\$25.4 million) for winning the title. Chelsea is now in the Champions League.



PSG's Goncalo Ramos, Senny Mayulu and Marquinhos, from right, celebrate after a penalty shootout to win the French Super Cup soccer match between PSG and Marseille in Kuwait City, Kuwait. (AP)

Kuwait opens campaign against India, Asian Handball Championship begins



Kuwait players hold their final training session before the opener against India.

Saudi Arabia takes on Iran

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The 22nd Asian Men's Handball Championship, which also serves as the qualifiers for the 2027 World Cup in Germany, kicks off today in Kuwait at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex and will continue until January 29. A total of 15 teams are taking part, divided into four groups.

Group A includes Oman, defending champion Qatar, and South Korea. Group B features Bahrain, Jordan, China, and Iraq, while Group C comprises hosts Kuwait alongside the UAE, Hong Kong, and India. Group D includes Japan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Australia.

Four matches headline the opening day. Hong Kong face the UAE at 2:00 pm, followed by Australia versus Japan at 4:00 pm. Kuwait will then meet India at 6:00 pm, before



The 22nd Asian Men's Handball Championship trophy.

Saudi Arabia takes on Iran in the final match of the day at 8:00 pm.

The tournament's technical meeting held at the Safir Hotel, during which officials briefed participating delegations on the competition format and reviewed players' names, squad numbers, and match kits.

Acting President of the Kuwait Handball Federation Shabib Al-Hajri welcomed the participating Asian teams to Kuwait, wishing them a pleasant stay and expressing hope for a strong and competitive championship that reflects the high level of preparation by the continent's elite sides.

Al-Hajri also praised Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, head of the Supreme Organizing Committee, for his continued support and efforts to ensure the tournament is staged successfully. He highlighted Kuwait's ambition to host major regional and international sporting events.

The Supreme Organizing Committee confirmed that a simple opening ceremony will take place at 5:45 pm today at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Hall, featuring artistic perfor-

mances, before concluding with Kuwait's opening match against India.

Kuwait prepared for the championship through participation in the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh last November, followed by a domestic training camp. The team then traveled to Cairo for a training camp that included two friendly matches against Egypt, before completing their preparations in Slovenia and Croatia. During that phase, Kuwait played friendly matches against Algeria, Slovenia, and Georgia, in addition to joint training sessions with Kosovo.

Head coach Aron Kristjánsson expressed confidence ahead of the tournament, noting that the competition will be challenging due to the strength of the participating teams. He stressed that the squad is well prepared and determined to secure one of the four qualification places for the 2027 World Cup in Germany.

Only four nations have claimed the Asian Men's Handball Championship title. South Korea leads the standings with nine titles, followed by Qatar with six, Kuwait with four, and Japan with two.

Newcastle has mountain to climb

Semenyo powers Man City toward League Cup final

LONDON, Jan 14, (AP): New Manchester City signing Antoine Semenyo scored his second goal in as many games as Pep Guardiola's team moved within reach of the English League Cup final with a 2-0 win over Newcastle.

The forward, who joined City from Bournemouth for \$87 million last week, struck the opening goal in the semifinal first leg at St James' Park, with substitute Rayan Cherki scoring the second in time added on.

Semenyo also scored on his debut in the 10-1 rout of Exeter in the FA Cup over the weekend.

"The whole environment here is perfect," he said. "Everyone is confident and wants to achieve the best. I've just come into that, and they've helped me with my confidence, and they've made me feel welcome."

It could have been even better for the Ghana international, who saw a brilliantly taken back-heeled goal ruled out for a marginal offside.

The 26-year-old Semenyo is already looking like a shrewd buy for City after establishing himself as one of the Premier League's top talents for Bournemouth. He scored 10 goals for the Cherries this season.

"He's not just a very good player, but a very good guy, which helps, which fits into the team," City captain Bernardo Silva told ITV Sport. "He's a fantastic guy who wants to play collectively, wants to help, wants to have fun and we are delighted with the way he's started."

Semenyo has added another dimension to City's attack as Guardiola targets four trophies this term.

The League Cup could be the first of those, with City holding a two-



Manchester City's Erling Haaland, foreground, heads the ball past Newcastle's Sven Botman during the English League Cup semifinal first leg soccer match between Newcastle and Manchester City in Newcastle, England. (AP)

goal advantage against holder Newcastle heading into next month's second leg at its Etihad Stadium.

Semenyo converted from close range with a simple finish in the 53rd minute to put City ahead. He looked like he'd scored a far more spectacular second with a backheel volley - but after a lengthy VAR check, it was ruled out because Erling Haaland was in an offside position.

City had to wait until the eighth minute of added time to double the

lead, with Cherki slipping a shot past Newcastle goalkeeper Nick Pope from inside the box.

That goal has left Newcastle with a mountain to climb, it is to keep hold of the trophy it won last year to end a 70-year wait for major domestic silverware.

Eddie Howe's team had its chances, with Yoane Wissa and Bruno Guimaraes both hitting the frame of the goal within seconds of each other in the second half.

City is an eight-time winner of the League Cup, with Guardiola lifting it on four occasions since taking over the club. City last won it in 2021.

City's four-pronged trophy hunt this term follows last season, when it finished empty-handed for the first time in eight years.

Trailing Premier League leader Arsenal by six points, second-place City is also well-positioned in the Champions League and is in the fourth round of the FA Cup.

Manchester United hires Carrick as head coach until end of the season

MANCHESTER, England, Jan 14, (AP): Manchester United has turned to former player Michael Carrick to salvage its imploding season.

Carrick was hired as head coach until the end of the season after Ruben Amorim was fired last week.

The former England midfielder won five Premier League titles and the Champions League during a trophy-laden playing career at Old Trafford. He was also an assistant coach at United and had an unbeaten three-game spell as interim manager when Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was fired in 2021.

On this occasion, Carrick was selected ahead of Solskjaer, who was also interviewed for the role.

"I know what it takes to succeed here; my focus is now on helping the players to reach the standards that we expect at this incredible club, which we know that this group is more than capable of producing," he said.

By appointing Carrick on a temporary basis, United is giving itself time to find a long-term replacement for Amorim, who became the sixth permanent manager or coach to be discarded by the storied club after more than a decade of decline since Alex Ferguson retired in 2013.

It is possible Carrick could put himself in contention if he impresses during the 17 remaining games this season. And while he has only initially been appointed for the short-term, it was notable that United did not describe him as interim when announcing his contract.

Carrick's only full-time managerial experience was at second-tier Middlesbrough from 2022-25, where his reign ended after failing to secure promotion to the Premier League.

Former England assistant Steve Holland will be part of his coaching team at United.



Manchester United's temporary coach Michael Carrick walks off the pitch at the end of the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester United and Arsenal at Old Trafford stadium in Manchester, England. (AP)

Carrick's first two games are tough ones - at home to second-place Manchester City in the league on Saturday and away to first-place Arsenal the following weekend.

In his previous spell at United, he oversaw wins against Arsenal and Villarreal as well as a draw at Chelsea.

His priority is to secure Champions League qualification after defeat to Brighton in the third round of the FA Cup on Sunday put the 20-time English champion on course for another trophyless season after ending up empty-handed last term.

United, which was knocked out of the English League Cup by fourth-tier Grimsby, is seventh in the Premier League, but Carrick said he had "total belief" in the players.