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KUWAIT AMIR SIGNS G.C.C. UNIFIED EXCISE TAX PACT



Amir's vision takes shape with space center launch

No tricks, just taxes

Accord pushes economic unity

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah signed Decree-Law No. 140 of 2026, approving the Unified Excise Tax Agreement for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and its amendment annex.

The decree-law approves the agreement, signed in Riyadh on November 27, 2016, and the amendment annex, signed on June 1, 2025.

Having reviewed the Constitution, the Amiri Order issued on May 10, 2024, Law No. 44 of 1981 approving the Charter of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Law No. 5 of 2003 approving the Unified Economic Agreement between the GCC states, and upon the proposal of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, following the approval of the Council of Ministers, the decree law was approved.

All ministers, each within their respective jurisdiction, shall implement this decree-law, which will come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

The GCC Unified Excise Tax Agreement seeks to strengthen economic ties among member states through common legislation and closer coordination in economic and financial matters, according to its explanatory memorandum.

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Opinion



Your Excellency, the Prime Minister and Minister of Justice, there is something wrong

■ **Ahmed Al-Jarallah**
Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

YOUR Excellency, Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Yousef Al-Sumait, what I am writing today may not fall within your jurisdiction, but those in the ministry and the courts are more aware than anyone else about the negative repercussions of the issue I will address in the following paragraphs.

The Ministry of Justice is currently responsible for proposing laws, as well as monitoring the issuance and enforcement of judgments. Defending these laws is among the duties of the Minister of Justice. Therefore, I am bringing to your attention an outdated piece of legislation that has remained in effect for decades, contains provisions that cause injustice to citizens and businesses, and creates additional obstacles for business owners and companies.

The Commercial Law imposes a penalty for late payment of court-ordered amounts, consisting of an additional seven percent that increases annually, even though commercial and civil cases can remain pending for extended periods, sometimes for as long as ten years.

This situation leads to delays in payment, causing the debt to increase as interest accumulates. In some cases, a debtor may owe KD 10,000, but the amount can rise to approximately KD 20,000.

This type of interest is imposed only in Kuwaiti courts and is not found in any other country. As a result, merchants and debtors may become unable to pay, finding themselves trapped in a vicious cycle that ultimately leads to the bankruptcy of many debtors.

This situation is unjust to the debtor and benefits the creditor.

The imposition of this interest can also be viewed, from another perspective, as being contrary to the law and the Constitution.

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Finance steps up state property oversight

Kuwait bans illegal workers at chalets

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): The Ministry of Finance affirmed that it was prohibited to employ or accommodate workers violating residency and labor laws at the ministry's chalet sites under any name or capacity, noting that it would launch inspection and monitoring campaigns to detect any violations in this regard.

The ministry, represented by the State Properties General Department, said in a statement on Monday that the move stemmed from its responsibilities to preserve state property, protect its rights and strengthen oversight over its use.

State property sites allocated for use must be utilized in accordance with their designated purpose and the applicable conditions and regulations and must not be used to employ or accommodate workers in violation of residency and labour laws, the statement added.

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Day by Day

I WONDER how the government can claim to be generating revenue from traders who went bankrupt as a result of the Souk Al-Manakh crisis.

Such revenue is unlikely ever to materialize, given that most of those affected by the crisis have already passed away. Yet the government continues to impose an annual penalty of 15 percent on those who fail to make their payments. But who, exactly, does the government expect to pay this penalty?

The government should simply drop these claims, especially since most of the debtors, and even their children, have passed away.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



Ministry of Defense photo
Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, accompanied by Chief of the General Staff Lt. Gen. Khaled Al-Shuraiaan, tours several military sites on Tuesday.

Defense Minister tours military sites

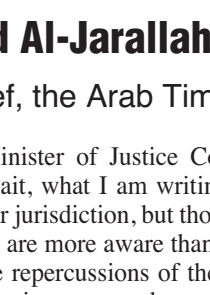
Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, accompanied by Chief of the General Staff Lt. Gen. Khaled Al-Shuraiaan, toured several military sites on Tuesday.

The General Staff of the Army said in a statement that the visit reflected the minister's keenness to monitor conditions at military facilities, assess personnel needs and ensure the smooth running of work.

Sheikh Abdullah praised army personnel for their dedicated efforts and continued commitment to carrying out their military duties. (KUNA)

UN boosts youth leadership

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): UN Resident Coordinator in Kuwait Ghada Al-Taher on Monday stressed the importance of empowering young people and enhancing their active participation in addressing global challenges and contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).


Al-Taher

In a speech delivered on Monday marking the launch of the fifth season of the Young Ambassadors Programme, Al-Taher also said that helping young people will lead to shaping a more sustainable future, describing youth as essential partners in driving change and shaping decisions that will define the future of societies.

The programme with its fifth season reflects a shared belief in the importance of providing youngsters with opportunities to understand global issues, engage with them, and contribute to shaping their future, Al-Taher said.

She noted the programme brings concepts of diplomacy, leadership, and the Sustainable Development Goals closer to youngsters' daily lives by providing a platform for learning, exchanging ideas, and participating in field activities.

This strengthens youth's role in their communities and in making decisions that will determine the next years' policies, she stated

Al-Taher added that the programme is aligned with the United Nations Youth Strategy (Youth2030) and the Pact for the Future, both of which affirm the necessity of involving young people in decision-making and strengthening their participation as partners, leaders, and agents of change, while taking the interests of future generations into account.

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6 Arab Times Editor-in-Chief hosts Polish ambassador



8 ABK's Dr. Nawaf Al-Shuraiaan named among Kuwait's GC Elite Leaders 2026



10 NBK Wealth's annual insights forum explores investment trends and global market shifts

Kuwait shares UAE grief after 11 lives lost in crash

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed the country's solidarity with the United Arab Emirates following a tragic traffic accident in Ras Al-Khaimah that claimed several lives.

In a statement Tuesday, the ministry extended Kuwait's sincere condolences to the UAE leadership, government and people, as well as the families of the victims, praying to Allah Almighty to bestow mercy upon the deceased and grant their families patience and solace.

Continued on Page 5

Fog alert as humidity grips Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): Acting Director of the Meteorological Department Dhirar Al-Ali says Kuwait will experience humid weather accompanied by fog beginning Tuesday evening and continuing into the early hours of Wednesday morning.

Speaking to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Al-Ali explained that the country is being affected by an extension of a high-pressure system accompanied by a humid air mass, resulting in increased relative humidity and light winds. These conditions are contributing to atmospheric stability.

Fog is expected to develop from Tuesday evening through the early morning hours of Wednesday, reducing horizontal visibility to less than 1,000

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Photo by Rezk Tawfiq
Kuwait City's skyline appears hazy Tuesday as humid conditions prevail ahead of expected overnight fog.



Amiri Diwan photos

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and senior officials at the inauguration of Kuwait National Space Research Center at Sabah Al-Salem University City.

Kuwait enters new era of space research, lays groundwork for exploration

Amir's vision takes shape with space center launch







His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah during the inauguration ceremony of Kuwait National Space Research Center at Sabah Al-Salem University City.

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah inaugurated on Tuesday the Kuwait National Space Research Center at Sabah Al-Salem University City.

Established in response to His Highness's vision outlined in his September 2024 speech, the center marks a step toward establishing a Kuwaiti space agency to oversee space research and activities and coordinate the country's participation in international space programs and initiatives.

His Highness was received upon arrival by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and senior officials.

His Highness the Amir officially opened the center by pressing a button on a commemorative mural before touring its facilities, where he was briefed on space-related models, research activities and operations.

During the visit, National First Kuwaiti Satellite Project Director Dr. Hala Khaled Al-Jassar delivered a welcoming address and presented a visual overview of the center's vision and objectives.

His Highness was also presented with a book entitled "In Orbit, an Eye; on Earth, a Story," documenting the KuwaitSat-1 mission.

His Highness praised the dedication and competence of the Kuwaiti team behind the satellite project, noting the expertise and cooperation demonstrated throughout its various stages.

He said he had followed the project from its early phases through the launch of KuwaitSat-1 and the establishment of the center, expressing firm support for its staff and encouraging them to continue their scientific efforts.

His Highness the Amir expressed hope that the center would help develop national research capabilities and expand space studies in Kuwait, while providing students and researchers with practical training and opportunities to participate in research projects.

He also underlined the importance of spreading knowledge of space sciences and technology and encouraging younger generations to take an interest in the field, wishing the center's staff continued success in serving the country.

Kuwait is advancing its journey into space through the establishment of the Kuwait National Space Research Center, a national initiative backed by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The center, affiliated with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) and hosted by Kuwait University, seeks to establish an integrated institutional framework bringing together scientific research, education and technological innovation.

It aims to achieve regional leadership in space research and harness scientific knowledge to support economic growth, education and innovation, while developing basic and applied research, advancing space-related education and addressing societal challenges.

Its objectives include promoting scientific research, developing technology, building national skills and encouraging private-sector and community participation, thereby creating specialized career opportunities for Kuwaitis and supporting their involvement in the space economy.

The center's research priorities cover space physics, Earth and planetary observation from space, satellite development, sensors and scientific instruments.

These fields combine the study of natural phenomena with the development of technologies to monitor and analyze them for applications serving national needs.

Building national capabilities is a key pillar of the center's work. Training and practical learning initiatives, including the Space Technology Laboratory program, are designed to equip participants with skills spanning the different stages of space projects, from developing concepts and setting requirements to design, testing and operation.



Kuwait's journey into space has deep roots in its development of scientific knowledge and communications infrastructure.

The country joined the International Telecommunication Union in 1959 and took part in international discussions on space radio communications in 1963.

The establishment of the Umm Al-Aish ground station in 1969 marked another milestone in satellite communications and connecting Kuwait to the world.

Kuwait also joined international treaties governing outer space activities, including the Outer Space Treaty in 1973, the Rescue Agreement in 1972, the Liability Convention in 1975, and the Registration Convention and Moon Agreement in 2014.

It became a member of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) in 2021.

Kuwait University has also contributed to developing national expertise through more than two decades of research in cosmic rays, space weather, atmospheric observation and satellite data.

Its Physics Department introduced a bachelor's program in remote sensing in 2003, helping build a foundation for advanced space research and projects.

A major milestone came on January 3, 2023, with the successful launch of Kuwait's first satellite, KuwaitSat-1. Developed through a project led by Kuwait University's Physics Department in cooperation with departments at its College of Engineering and supported by KFAS, the project gave young Kuwaitis practical experience in satellite design, assembly, testing and operation.

Future projects include KuwaitSat-2, hyperspectral imaging, a geomagnetic observation station, and the use of big data and artificial intelligence in research and analysis.

These initiatives are expected to expand local expertise and strengthen cooperation across space science, engineering and data analysis.

Through the new center and its expanding research programs, Kuwait is seeking to turn its space ambitions into scientific knowledge, advanced technologies and national capabilities that contribute to development and prepare future generations for further exploration and achievement.











diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Orphans ... with fathers still alive

"CAN a person become an "orphan" while their father is still alive? Is it enough for children to have a father whose name they carry to truly feel his presence in their lives?" writer on family and psychological affairs **Fahad Al-Rifai** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"These questions may seem unusual, yet they highlight a social reality worth reflecting on. Some children do not lose their fathers to death, but to absence - the absence of a meaningful presence during the very stages of life when they need it most.

This is not about a father who has to work away from home or whose life circumstances force him to be absent. Rather, it is about a father who reduces fatherhood to financial provision alone, believing that providing food, clothing, and education is enough to fulfill his responsibilities, while overlooking the equally important need to nurture his children and provide them with emotional support.



Al-Rifai

In some households, a father may know his children's academic grades yet remain completely unaware of their fears.

He pays their school fees but does not know the names of their friends. He asks about their exam results but never asks what is troubling them or what causes them pain.

Years may pass, and as the children grow older, their relationship with their father remains limited to a cycle of demands, instructions, and warnings.

This brings us to a painful question - Do children need a father who merely provides for them financially, or do they need a father whose presence they can truly feel, especially when life becomes difficult? Fatherhood is not a status automatically bestowed upon a man the moment his child is born, nor is it a role that remains fulfilled without continued effort.

It is a relationship built through shared experiences, strengthened by trust, and nurtured through dialogue, compassion, and setting a good example.

Unfortunately, some fathers do not realize how wide the emotional distance between them and their children has grown until it is too late, when their children no longer share their secrets, seek their advice on important decisions, or turn to them when facing difficulties.

At such moments, a father may wonder, with genuine bewilderment - "Why don't my children talk to me?" Perhaps a more important question would be - "Have they ever felt that talking to you was safe? Or have they always feared that admitting a mistake would only result in a reprimand or an insult?" From the perspective of social psychology, trust within a family is built through repeated, everyday interactions.

A child does not develop a sense of security through promises alone. Rather, that sense of security grows from how parents respond when the child is afraid, how they react when the child makes a mistake, and whether the child feels that their worth is not measured solely by their successes or achievements.

A father's absence is not always physical. He may sit among his children without truly listening to them. He may be present when decisions need to be made, yet absent from the everyday human interactions that foster genuine closeness.

On the other hand, some fathers work long hours or even live far from their families due to circumstances beyond their control, yet still maintain warm and loving relationships with their children.

This is because true presence is not measured solely by the number of hours spent together, but by the quality and consistency of the emotional connection.

In Islam, caring for one's family is regarded as a profound trust and responsibility. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Each of you is a guardian, and each of you is responsible for those under your care." Guardianship is not simply an exercise of authority; it is a responsibility that must be fulfilled. It is not about issuing commands but about setting an example that leaves a lasting impression on a child's heart and character.

This does not mean that mothers are exempt from their responsibilities or that fathers alone bear the full weight of the outcomes of raising children.

A family is a partnership in which both parents play an essential role in shaping their children's character, and providing them with a sense of security and stability.

However, we need to reconsider the traditional image of the father as merely a source of financial support and discipline, while leaving his children's emotions, questions, and problems entirely to the mother.

Children do not need perfect fathers who never make mistakes. They need fathers they can connect with without fear, disagree with without being insulted, and openly share their vulnerabilities with without feeling that they will lose their respect.

Perhaps one of the deepest forms of deprivation is for a child to grow up with every material need met, yet without a single meaningful memory of a sincere, heart-to-heart conversation with their father.

Father, before asking your children what they have achieved in life, ask yourself - What have you left in their hearts? Children may forget how much the things you bought for them cost, but they will never forget how you treated them when they needed you most.

They may inherit a house, wealth, and a family name from you, but the greatest legacy you can leave them is the lasting knowledge that they were loved, heard, and respected.

For there is no pain more profound than that of a child who searches for their father, only to find him standing right there, yet emotionally out of reach."

Also:

"First, I pray to Almighty God to help young people, whether recent graduates or those with intermediate qualifications, as they face increasing difficulties finding jobs that allow them to build stable and independent lives," columnist Eng. **Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Throughout my experience in parliamentary, political, and union work, I have witnessed this problem grow increasingly serious, placing greater burdens on individuals and families who struggle to find suitable employment that matches their qualifications and areas of specialization.

Young people at the beginning of their lives often feel frustrated and helpless when they cannot find work. Meanwhile, many families are unable to support their children financially on an ongoing basis. Young people have essential needs and responsibilities that require a steady monthly income.

Most of these young people actively seek job opportunities. However, either the Civil Service Commission (CSC) fails to provide positions that match their academic qualifications, or the national employment subsidy program for workers in the private sector falls short of covering even their most basic needs.

Not all young people are extravagant or impose unrealistic conditions when accepting jobs. Some may find that the monthly salary does not meet their expectations, while others lack the patience to work their way up and develop their careers. However, this group represents a small percentage compared to the much larger number of young people who are actively seeking employment to make ends meet but face circumstances that prevent them from finding work for various reasons.

Financial security is a key pillar of social stability. Young people have ambitions and aspirations, and they strive to build their futures on solid foundations.

Over the past twenty years, circumstances have changed significantly, particularly with rapid technological advancements. These changes have introduced new challenges in all sectors. As a result, job opportunities are becoming increasingly limited day by day.



Al-Kharafi

Countries always develop plans for the future and anticipate the challenges that may arise from continuous development. They make use of their available resources to prevent social unrest by preparing to employ young talent and addressing potential problems before they arise.

This is precisely why research centers, government agencies, and planning ministries exist. Sadly, a wealthy country like Kuwait has numerous resources and opportunities that could be better utilized through effective long-term planning.

Despite its relatively small population of citizens, Kuwait continues to face a shortage of job opportunities for its young people.

Most young people are waiting for employment opportunities in the public sector, while the fund established to support young entrepreneurs has encountered numerous challenges. Many beneficiaries have faced difficulties, either as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic or the regional circumstances that followed.

Today, many young people are desperate to escape this predicament, yet they see no way out, particularly those who have spent a year, two years, or even longer searching for job opportunities without success.

Sadly, many parents are expressing growing concern about this situation, especially those with more than one unemployed child. Government institutions and planning agencies must realize that solutions are available. They should make better use of the country's young talent by creating job opportunities that match their qualifications and areas of specialization.

According to official statistics, the youth unemployment rate last year reached nearly 12 percent. This is a significant figure, particularly considering that young people make up approximately 35 percent of Kuwait's population."

– Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

Governor Sheikh Athbi chairs coordination meeting

Farwaniya reviews plans to ease traffic congestion

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah chaired a coordination meeting at the headquarters of Farwaniya Governorate , reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Present at the meeting were Assistant Director of the Farwaniya Governorate Traffic Department Lieutenant Colonel Faisal Meshal Al-Saeed, Assistant Director of the Traffic Engineering Department Lieutenant Colonel Mohammad Riad, Head of Patrols for Farwaniya Governorate Major Farhan Abdullah Al-Basman and Eng. Abdullah Hussein Al-Mutairi from the Traffic Engineering Department.

Members of the Farwaniya Governorate Council, including retired Lieutenant General Ali Abdulhadi Al-Shanfa and Saad Abdullah Al-Hadba, also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, participants deliberated on the traffic situation throughout the governorate, proposed solutions to overcome obstacles to the implementation of traffic projects, measures to reduce congestion and improve road network efficiency, ease traffic movement and enhance road safety.



Farwaniya Governorate photo

Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah chairs a coordination meeting at the headquarters of Farwaniya Governorate.

The governor stressed the importance of strengthening coordination among the relevant authorities, following up observations and proposals, taking the necessary measures to accelerate the completion of traffic projects, and ensuring that they meet the needs of the governorate and serve the interest of the public.

Islamic Affairs Ministry and CSC work to streamline procedures

Three brothers sentenced to life for cannabis cultivation

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and **Agencies**

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs Dr. Sulaiman Al-Suwailem recently chaired the coordination meeting with the joint task force consisting of the representatives of the ministry and the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

In a press statement, the ministry revealed that the meeting focused on opportunities to strengthen cooperation between the two institutions, and unify efforts to address administrative and organizational issues within their respective areas of responsibility.

It indicated that discussions covered several issues concerning workplace organization and procedures, particularly the need to improve practices in accordance with operational requirements, applicable regulations and guidelines.

It affirmed that the meeting falls within the responsibilities of the joint task force to monitor issues requiring coordination between the ministry and CSC, and ensure that procedures are completed efficiently in accordance with the respective mandates of the two entities.

❑ ❑ ❑

Investigations expose family-run operation: The Criminal Court sentenced three brothers to life imprisonment after finding them guilty of cultivating and trafficking cannabis in Kuwait, reports Al-Anba daily.

The defendants were arrested following investigations by officers from the Drug Control General Department, who uncovered their illegal activities before referring them to the competent authorities for prosecution.

❑ ❑ ❑

Changing account raises suspicion: Security officers have detained a Kuwaiti man born in 1985 after he changed his account of how his companion sustained serious injuries that left him in the intensive care unit at Jaber Hospital, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the man initially told authorities that he had found his companion, a Kuwaiti born in 1984, lying on the ground near a police station with blood covering his face.

However, during questioning, he changed his account, claiming that his companion had thrown himself out of the vehicle while it was moving.

The injured man was rushed to Jaber Hospital and admitted to the intensive care unit. Security officers are awaiting an improvement in his condition to obtain his statement and establish the circumstances surrounding the incident.

A check of the detained man's records revealed that he was already wanted under an arrest and apprehension order. He was subsequently taken into custody, and a case was registered to complete the investigation and determine what happened.

❑ ❑ ❑

Kuwaiti arrested for intoxication: A report about a suspected intoxicated individual led to the arrest of a Kuwaiti man found under the influence inside his vehicle in an area within Ahmadi Governorate, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, an Emergency Police patrol responded to the report and found a vehicle parked in an open dirt lot along one of the roads. A Kuwaiti man was inside the vehicle and appeared to be in an abnormal state.

Officers examined the man's condition and confirmed that he was intoxicated. He was subsequently arrested and referred to the relevant authorities for the necessary legal procedures.

❑ ❑ ❑

Legal deadline leads to dismissal: The Court of Appeals upheld a ruling that dismissed a lawsuit filed against a Kuwaiti citizen accused of constructing a fourth floor on his private residence without a building permit, ruling that the case was time-barred because more than five years had elapsed since the construction was completed, reports Al-Anba daily.

The property owner had previously been convicted in absentia and fined, with an order requiring him to demolish the fourth floor, after being accused of exceeding the permitted building area.

Lawyer Nasser Al-Ajmi challenged the ruling, arguing that the case was time-barred under the relevant law, as more than five years had passed since the construction took place.

He said the ruling had become final and legally binding because the relevant authority had failed to appeal it before the Court of Cassation within the legally prescribed period.

Anti-drug operations lead to arrest of four Asians

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Drug Control General Department at the Interior Ministry, under the leadership of Brigadier General Mohammad Qabazard and his assistant, Brigadier General Sheikh Hamad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, has intensified its operations against drug traffickers.

Recently, four Asians were apprehended in three separate incidents, with various quantities of narcotic and psychotropic substances in their possession, intended for trafficking and personal use.

The confiscated items included three kilograms of shabu, 250 grams of hashish, 109 A4 sheets saturated with narcotic substances and three weighing scales.

The total weight of the seized narcotics reached 3.25 kilograms, excluding the chemical-infused papers.

In one case, authorities received a tip-off regarding a Nepalese involved in drug trafficking. An elaborate sting operation was set up, during which the authorities arranged to purchase shabu from the suspect, who was arrested during the handover.

It was discovered that he is part of a network responsible for drug distribution and marketing, and his accomplice was arrested at his home.

Kuwait, IOM explore ways to strengthen partnership

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Ministry of Interior Undersecretary Major General Abdulwahab Al-Wuhaib held talks with Head of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Mission in Kuwait Laila Toumeh on strengthening coordination between the ministry and the organization about migration issues, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The meeting also touched on the collaborative efforts and opportunities to broaden and enhance partnership between the two entities.

In a press statement, the ministry revealed that the meeting coincided with the new head of the IOM mission taking up her post. Both sides discussed prospects for expanding their cooperation to support the ministry's work on migration matters and advance their common priorities.

The ministry added that it remains committed to developing partnerships with international organizations and enhancing coordination on issues of mutual interest.





Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies discusses cooperation and exchange of expertise in the field of combating corruption with a delegation from an international academy.



Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies discusses cooperation and exchange of expertise in the field of combating corruption with a delegation from an international academy.



KUNA photos

Deputy Director of the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies for the Relations, Communications and Research Sector, Senior Advisor Dr. Ahmed Al-Muqallad, with the Dean of the IACA Academy, Drago Kos.

Kuwait IJLS, IACA discuss cooperation, exchange of anti-corruption expertise

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): The Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies (IJLS) discussed on Monday areas of cooperation with the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) and focused on anti-corruption issues, promoting institutional communication and exchanging expertise.

Discussions came during a visit organized by the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha).

Deputy Director of the Institute for Relations, Communications and Research Senior Counselor Dr. Ahmad Al-Muqallad told KUNA that combating corruption is a shared institutional and societal responsibility.

He highlighted attention given by Kuwait's legislature to combating corruption in all its forms and manifestations through establishing a legislative framework aimed at protecting public funds and promoting integrity, transparency, and accountability.

He also pointed to Kuwait's commitments under the relevant international conventions and treaties it has ratified.

The Institute plays a complementary role in this framework by preparing and qualifying judicial and legal personnel, enhancing their knowledge of relevant national legislation and international conventions, and strengthening their ability to apply their provisions, he noted.

These efforts support national initiatives aimed at preventing and combating corruption and upholding the rule of law.

In a similar statement to KUNA, Nazaha Deputy Chairman Dr. Majed Al-Daihani said that the Academy delegation's visit to Kuwait aims to explore areas of cooperation with Nazaha and other relevant Kuwaiti entities concerning international legal frameworks, the use of modern technology and artificial intelligence tools, and the promotion of digital oversight in combating corruption.

Nazaha, IACA explore AI tools and digital oversight to fight corruption

Legislative reforms discussed

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): The Chairperson of Kuwait's Anti-Corruption Authority, Nazaha, Dr. Rana Al-Fares discussed with the Dean of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) Drago Kos ways to benefit from the academy's specialized international expertise and technical and support to enhance the effectiveness of its mandates and institutional capabilities in line with the best international standards and practices.

Nazaha said in a statement to KUNA that Al-Fares affirmed during the meeting that work was underway to review and develop the authority's founding Law No. 2 of 2016 and its amendments, as part of a strategic direction aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of the national anti-corruption system and modernizing legislative and institutional frameworks to keep pace with emerging developments and challenges in this field.

Nazaha was keen to take advantages of specialized international expertise and comparative legislative experiences of countries that have made tangible progress in combating corruption, while taking into account the provisions of the Constitution and the distinctive legal and institutional framework of Kuwait, Al-Fares said.

She praised the support provided by the academy, affirming that benefiting from its technical and academic expertise would represent a valuable addition to national efforts to develop the legislative and institutional framework for combating corruption.



KUNA photo

Dr. Rana Al-Fares, President of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (Nazaha), with Drago Kos, Dean of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA).

According to the statement, Nazaha Vice Chairman Dr. Majed Al-Daihani said that benefiting from specialized international expertise constituted one of the key pillars of the project to review and develop the authority's founding law.

He explained that the academy's support provided an opportunity to gain from its technical and academic expertise and examine comparative legislation and successful international practices, supporting efforts to prepare comprehensive legislative proposals that enhance the authority's effectiveness in carrying out its mandates.

The discussions covered several priority areas, including exchanging international expertise in enhancing the effectiveness of anti-corruption bodies, developing mandates and legislative and institutional frameworks, and getting value from scientific methodologies for measuring corruption and evaluating the effectiveness of policies and institutions concerned with combating it, statement added.

The two sides also focused on opportunities to employ modern technologies and artificial intelligence tools in data analysis, monitoring corruption indicators and risks, and strengthening digital oversight systems, in addition to expanding the participation of national personnel in the academy's specialized training and academic programs, the statement added.

The tour follows an earlier visit by a Nazaha delegation headed by Dr. Rana Al-Fares to the academy's headquarters in Laxenburg, Austria, on the sidelines of Kuwait's participation in the special session of the Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, held in Vienna in November 2026.

Kuwait joined the agreement establishing the academy as an international organization pursuant to Decree No. 325 of 2014 and has maintained active participation in the work of its Assembly of Parties.

Nazaha previously hosted the academy's third regional course for the Middle East in December 2017 as part of Kuwait's support for regional and international cooperation in combating corruption, exchanging expertise and building capacities.

KUNA wins two awards at FANA General Assembly

ABU DHABI, Nov 24, (KUNA): Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) won the Best Report and Best Photo awards at the 52nd General Assembly of the Federation of Arab News Agencies (FANA), which opened in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday.

KUNA journalist Shahad Kamal won Best Report for her story, "Kuwait's Diwaniyas: A Deep-Rooted Social Legacy Etched in Global Heritage," while photographer Abdullah Al-Muhareb received Best Photo for his image, "Kuwait's Flag Embracing the Sky."

KUNA's report scored nine out of 10 in the assembly's evaluation, tying with a report by Morocco's Maghreb Arab Press, which also won the 2026 Best Report award.

The awards were received by KUNA Acting Director General and FANA Vice-President Mohammad Al-Mana'i, who is attending the assembly hosted by the UAE National Media Office.

The conference aims to support joint Arab media work, strengthen professional cooperation and coordination among Arab news agencies, and promote the exchange of expertise in news reporting. (end)

The 52nd General Assembly of the Federation of Arab News Agencies (FANA) opened in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday, with Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) taking part, represented by its Acting Director General Mohammad Al-Mannai, who also serves as FANA Vice President.

Hosted by the UAE National Media Authority, the meeting brings together heads of member agencies to discuss the federation's 2026-2030 roadmap, training programs, editorial standards and ways to strengthen cooperation among Arab news agencies.

The agenda also includes electing FANA's president, two vice presidents and four General Secretariat members for the next two years, reviewing decisions of the 51st General Assembly held in Kuwait in October 2024, and discussing the FANA Quality Media Award.

Delegates will also consider a guide to editorial standards for Arab media in foreign languages, the 2025-2026 Best Report and Best Photo awards, and stronger cooperation with European news agencies and the Arab League.

Planned training activities for 2027 include a seminar for Arab women journalists, an investigative journalism workshop and a session on artificial intelligence in media.

The assembly will also discuss specialized coverage of economic, cultural, health, environmental and women's affairs.

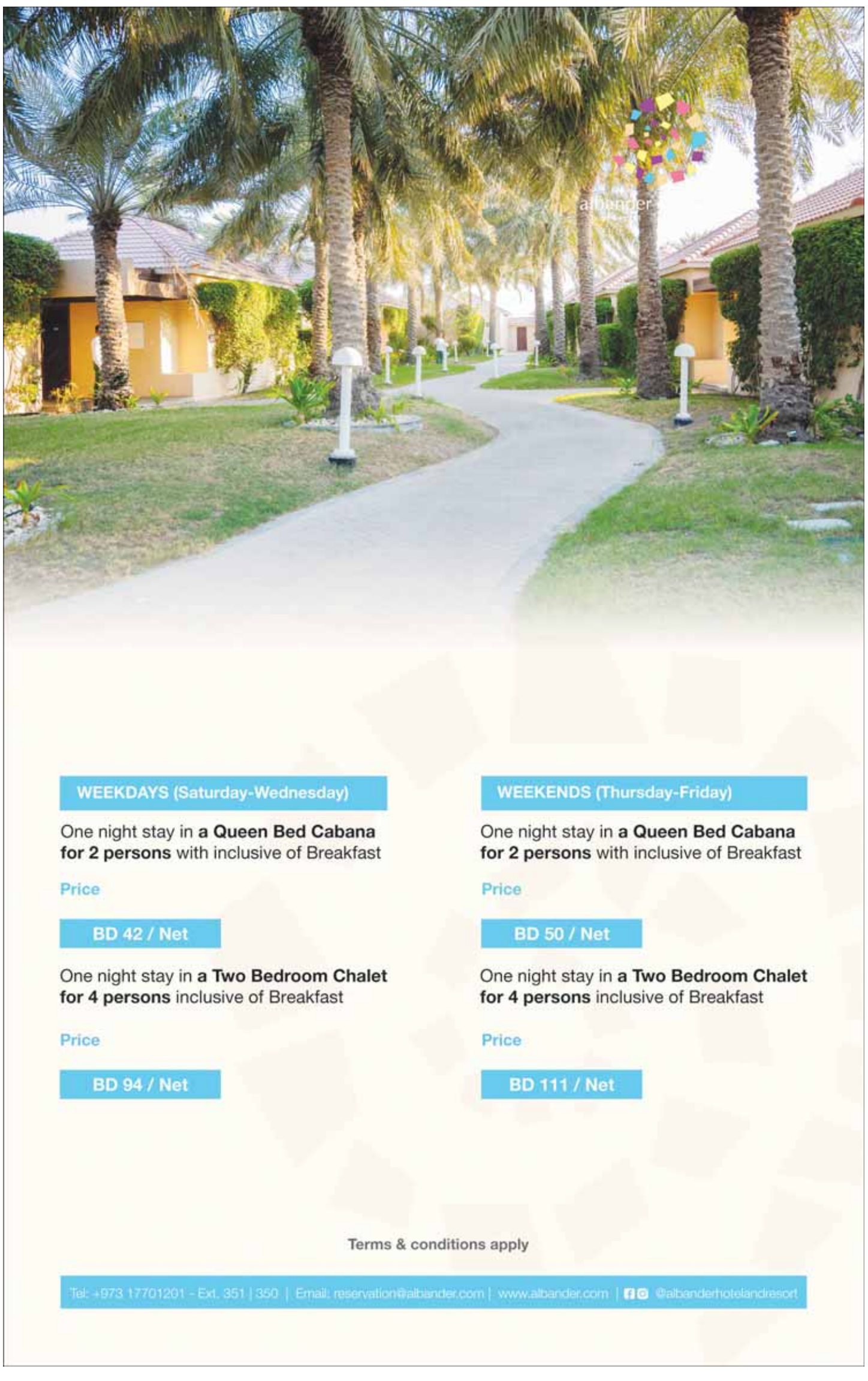


KUNA wins the Best Report & Best Photo awards at the 52nd General Assembly of the Federation of Arab News Agencies in Abu Dhabi.



KUNA photos

A group photo of the participants at the 52nd General Assembly of the Federation of Arab News Agencies (FANA) in Abu Dhabi.



Kuwait moves to activate Advanced Unified Military Command

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (Agencies): Kuwait hosted on Tuesday a coordination meeting of the Advanced Unified Military Command to finalize arrangements for establishing and activating the advanced command in the country.

The General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army said in a statement that the meeting, running from November 24 to 26, is part of efforts to strengthen Gulf military cooperation.

Finalizing the arrangements will help develop joint military mechanisms, enhance defense coordination and promote field integration among the armed forces of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, it added.

In other news, the Saud Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute launched a training program on Sunday aimed at preparing national leaders and personnel to manage crises and strengthening the readiness of government agencies to respond to emergencies, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The program, titled "Basic Crisis Management and Leadership – Level 1," is being conducted in cooperation with the "Aman" Team and the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP).

Representatives from various government agencies are taking part in the program, which covers important areas such as planning, emergency preparedness, risk assessment, and information management and dissemination.

Continued from Page 1

Your Excellency,

Interest is considered usury, yet its imposition contradicts laws prohibiting usury.

Article 110 of the Commercial Code states, "If the debtor is late in paying a known sum of money in a commercial transaction, the court shall obligate the debtor to pay legal interest of seven percent annually as compensation for the delay from the due date."

How can this provision be reconciled with laws prohibiting usury?

In many cases, payment delays result from lengthy legal proceedings. In other cases, debtors may fail to retain certain documents for various reasons, leading to the accumulation of debt.

Expediting commercial and civil cases would prevent debtors from incurring interest on amounts owed to creditors, which would benefit all parties.

Your Excellency, Minister of Justice, resolving this issue has become an obligation for all concerned. The world has changed, and what may have been suitable in the 1960s and 1970s is no longer valid today.

The demands and financial commitments of daily life have increased, particularly in light of the developments the region has witnessed since 1990 and the hardships imposed on citizens.

Amending this law has therefore become an urgent necessity.

Some debts have been outstanding for 10 or even 15 years, while interest continues to accumulate. This situation has nothing to do with justice, unless the intention is to worsen the debtor's financial hardship rather than allow them to lead a normal life. As the saying goes - "Debt causes worry at night and humiliation by day."

I am bringing this matter before His Highness the Prime Minister as well as His Excellency the Minister of Justice, requesting that civilians be exempted from paying interest that places additional burdens on their lives.

Fog alert

meters in some areas, particularly along the coastal regions.

Maximum temperatures will range between 29°C and 31°C, while minimum temperatures are expected to range between 12°C and 14°C.

He urged citizens and residents to follow the latest weather bulletins through the Meteorological Department's official website, mobile application, and social media accounts to stay informed of any weather developments.

No tricks,

The memorandum accompanying Decree-Law No. 140 of 2026, approving the agreement and its amendment annex, said the pact builds on the GCC Charter and the GCC Economic Agreement, ratified under Law No. 5 of 2003, which calls for stronger cooperation among member states in various fields.

It added that the agreement represents another step toward economic unity through common legal frameworks and continued coordination among GCC countries.

The agreement consists of nine chapters and 29 articles, in addition to an annex amending certain provisions.

The first chapter covers definitions, general provisions and the agreement's scope of application, while the second addresses the imposition of excise tax, taxable goods, tax rates, payment dates and cases in which payment may be suspended.

Chapter Three identifies the person liable for paying the tax under Article 7 and sets out the place and mechanism of tax collection under Article 8.

Chapter Four establishes the general rules governing refunds of excise tax already paid under Article 9, while Chapter Five specifies cases in which excise goods are exempt from tax under Article 10.

Chapter Six, covering Articles 11 to 18, sets out compliance requirements, Article 11 requires importers and exporters to comply with the GCC Unified Customs Law and its procedures, insofar as they do not conflict with the agreement.

Articles 12 and 13 establish licensing and registration rules for tax purposes, Article 14 requires registered persons liable for tax to maintain and retain accounting records and books for the prescribed period, while Article 15 sets out requirements for filing tax returns and the relevant exemptions.

Articles 16, 17 and 18 address tax payment rules, inspection and oversight, and the application of distinctive marks to excise goods.

Chapter Seven regulates information exchange and cooperation among tax authorities in member states, Article 19 requires such information to remain confidential, while Article 20 calls on member states to establish an electronic service system to facilitate tax compliance.

Article 21 sets out the framework for cooperation among member states and the adoption of administrative cooperation measures.

Chapter Eight addresses administrative penalties for violations of the agreement under Article 22.

Article 23 defines tax evasion and allows each member state to identify additional cases of tax evasion and determine the applicable penalties.

Article 24 sets out the conditions and procedures for filing objections and appeals, as well as the right to refer disputes to competent local courts in each member state.

The ninth and final chapter, covering Articles 25 to 29, lays down concluding provisions concerning interpretation of the agreement, dispute settlement, amendments and procedures for its entry into force.

UN boosts

Participants will embark on a six-month experience featuring workshops, field visits, and opportunities to work with mentors from embassies and international organizations, culminating in the development of their ideas into a final project, she said.

For her part, Canadian Ambassador to Kuwait Tara Scheurwater stressed the programme's importance in preparing a new generation of aware, active, and responsible young leaders, strengthening their leadership skills, and broadening their understanding of international issues, enabling them to contribute to positive change in their communities and around the world.

Scheurwater said that the programme had established itself over the previous four seasons as an important platform for engaging young people, promoting international cooperation, and developing leadership skills.

She explained that the promgramme brings together students from across Kuwait who share an interest in international affairs and a desire to make a positive contribution to their communities.

She added that the six-month programme combines training, mentorship, and practical experience, allowing students to gain first-hand insight into diplomatic work and international cooperation through training opportunities at embassies and international organizations, as well as interaction with diplomats and professionals.

It also includes educational activities designed to strengthen communication, negotiation, cooperation, and conflict-resolution skills.

The ambassador expressed her appreciation to Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator for their continued support and partnership.

She also praised the British Embassy's pioneering role and commitment to the programme, and welcomed the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates as a new partner in its fifth season.

Furthermore, British Deputy Ambassador to Kuwait Stuart Summers said that the programme is important to empower young people to engage with global issues, strengthen their leadership skills, and transform their ideas into tangible initiatives and achievements that benefit their communities.

Summers noted the initiative began as a simple idea that developed year after year into an important platform for young people, thanks to the partnership between the British Embassy, the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, and the Canadian Embassy, with the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates recently joining the partnership.

He pointed out that several programme alumni had continued their journeys after completing their participation, whether by pursuing further education, launching their own initiatives, or taking on active roles in their communities.

He appreciated Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, partners, host entities, and participating embassies for their cooperation and contributions to the success of the programme.

Meanwhile, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Kuwait Dr. Matar Al Neyadi confirmed that engaging and empowering youth is a key pillar of the UAE's diplomatic efforts, stemming from its belief in the need for providing them with opportunities to learn, connect, discover their potential, and harness their capabilities to bring about positive change in their communities.

Al Neyadi stated diplomacy is not limited to strengthening relations between governments but also extends to building bridges of communication between peoples and providing young people with opportunities to gain experience and develop their capabilities.

He also commended the partnership with the embassies of Canada and the United Kingdom, as well as the United Nations in Kuwait, in implementing the programme.

The UAE Embassy witnessed the initiative's real value during its second season, when it hosted a Kuwaiti student to learn about the nature of work at a diplomatic mission, particularly the preparations for the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28), held in 2023, he pointed out.

He noted that maintaining contact with students to this day reflects the importance of turning youth empowerment experiences into lasting relationships and genuine opportunities for growth and development.

Assistant Deputy Foreign Minister for International Organizations Counselor Abdulmohsen Al-Mansour stressed the importance of investing in, and empowering, young people as essential development partners and a driving force for innovation and addressing future challenges. He underscored Kuwait's commitment to enhancing their contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in line with Kuwait Vision 2035.

Al Mansour said the initiative represents an outstanding model of partnership between the State of Kuwait, the United Nations, and brotherly and friendly countries.

It aims to develop young people's capabilities and encourage their engagement in international issues of shared concern.

He also commended the efforts of the United Nations Office and the embassies of the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and Canada in organizing the programme.

Kuwait bans

The ministry added that it would conduct field monitoring and inspection campaigns, in coordination with the concerned authorities, at state property sites to verify, detect and document any violations in this regard, and take the necessary measures within its jurisdiction in coordination with the relevant authorities.

It urged all beneficiaries to review the status of workers present at the ministry's chalet sites, adhere to the designated purpose of the sites, cooperate with monitoring and inspection teams, and enable them to carry out their duties.

The ministry affirmed that it would continue its oversight role in preserving state property, ensuring its proper use and enforcing the laws and regulations governing it against everyone without exception, in a manner that safeguards the state's rights and serves the public interest.

Kuwait shares

The UAE Ministry of Interior reported, Tuesday, that 11 people died in a collision between a passenger bus and a truck in the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah.

In a statement, the ministry said upon receiving the report specialized teams moved to the accident site and began, in cooperation with ambulance and civil defense teams and relevant authorities, rescue and medical operations, in addition to securing the site and organizing traffic.

It added that investigations were still underway to determine the cause of the crash, with findings to be announced once the inquiry is complete.

The ministry extended its sincere condolences to the families of the victims and urged the public to rely on official sources and refrain from circulating rumors or unverified information about the accident.



Prayer Timings

Fajr	04:57	Asr	14:30
Sunrise	06:20	Maghrib	16:50
Zohr	11:35	Isha	18:13

UN envoy lauds Kuwait role

'Kuwait remains key to Yemen's peace efforts'

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): UN Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg said Kuwait is an important partner in efforts to achieve peace in Yemen, citing its longstanding tradition of quiet diplomacy and its role in hosting Yemeni peace talks in 2016.

Speaking at a lecture at the Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute on Tuesday, Grundberg said sustainable peace in Yemen cannot be achieved through military force alone, but requires an inclusive, Yemeni-led political process supported by effective regional diplomacy and sustained international efforts.



Grundberg

He added that these efforts must go hand in hand with de-escalation and economic stabilization, noting the Yemeni conflict requires a multidimensional approach that takes into account its political, economic and security aspects.

The UN envoy said the 2022 truce in Yemen demonstrated the positive impact of de-escalation on people's lives by reducing violence, reopening roads, reuniting families and creating greater room for diplomatic efforts.

He pointed out that Yemen's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita had declined by around 60 percent since the outbreak of the conflict, highlighting the scale of its economic consequences for the country and its people.

Grundberg underlined the importance of continued mediation efforts to facilitate dialogue, build confidence and identify realistic pathways toward a settlement, stressing regional partners maintain their engagement in supporting peace efforts and use their influence to encourage de-escalation and advance the political process, alongside efforts to support economic stability.

On international guarantees for implementing peace agreements, he said ensuring the parties' compliance remained a genuine and difficult challenge, stressing that agreements must include clear, specific and measurable commitments, with each party's responsibilities precisely defined.

Grundberg warned that ambiguous wording, even when intended to facilitate reaching an agreement, could lead to differing interpretations, unclear responsibilities and implementation difficulties.

He explained that establishing a clear sequence for implementing agreement provisions was crucial to their success. The parties must agree in advance on the order of steps and ensure consistency, as poor sequencing could heighten tensions and potentially lead to renewed fighting.

He also stressed that a unified and cohesive international position was essential to providing effective support for the peace process, highlighting the importance of the Security Council and the international community backing the United Nations and relevant parties in implementing existing agreements.



KUNA photo

UN Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg gives a lecture at the Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute on Tuesday.



Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah meets Polish Ambassador to Kuwait Michał Cholewa and Second Secretary at the Polish Embassy Agata Karcz-Cholewa at his office on Tuesday. Arab Times Managing Editor Marlon Aquino Malinao also attended the meeting.

Al-Jarallah backs stronger Kuwait-Poland media ties

Arab Times Editor-in-Chief hosts Polish ambassador

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah held a meeting with Ambassador of Poland to Kuwait Michał Cholewa and Second Secretary at the Polish Embassy Agata Karcz-Cholewa at his office on Tuesday.

Managing Editor of the Arab Times Marlon Aquino Malinao also attended the meeting.

They discussed prospects for media cooperation and the important contribution that the press can make toward strengthening bilateral ties.

Both parties underscored the importance of exchanging journalistic expertise to ensure accurate coverage of issues of mutual concern, in addition to the promotion of dialogue and deeper understanding between the two countries.

Al-Jarallah stressed that a professional and responsible media environment in all platforms plays a vital role in establishing stronger ties between nations and their communities.

He described journalism as an indispensable tool for influencing public opinion, stimulating meaningful debate, and advancing constructive initiatives that serve common objectives.



Photos by Samer Shqair

Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah with Polish Ambassador to Kuwait Michał Cholewa.

He commended the Polish Embassy's efforts to develop media partnerships, noting its continuous interaction with Kuwaiti journalists, which contributes to better coordination and understanding of issues concerning both countries.

The two sides affirmed the steady advancement of relations between Kuwait and Poland, as well as the promising opportunities for expanding cooperation. They agreed that the press plays an instrumental role in showcasing these prospects, overcoming cultural differences, and encouraging greater appreciation of each country's heritage, traditions and economic landscape.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Cholewa thanked Al-Jarallah for his warm welcome and hospitality, while praising the professionalism, credibility and influence of Kuwaiti media.

He reaffirmed the embassy's determination to strengthen media ties and broaden cooperation with Kuwaiti press institutions, with the aim of solidifying bilateral relations and depicting the positive nature of connections between the two countries and their citizens.

At the end of the meeting, both parties stressed the need to maintain regular dialogue and arrange reciprocal visits among media institutions in Kuwait and Poland in order to consolidate existing ties and identify more opportunities for future cooperation.

Other Voices

Moser's book and Tucker's statements

By Ahmad alsarraf

ISRAEL's actions in Gaza have created a significant rift between Israeli Jews, particularly American Jews, and prominent intellectuals within their communities.

The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to South African human rights judge Navi Pillay dealt a major blow to Israel's international reputation. Pillay has been an outspoken critic of Israel's actions, its policy failures, and the racism of its leaders.



Ahmad alsarraf

Netanyahu and his Foreign Minister, Gideon Sa'ar, compared the reaction to Pillay's award to that of Hitler and his Propaganda Minister, Joseph Goebbels, following the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to German journalist Carl von Ossietzky in 1935.

The political climate prevailing in Israel today can be likened to the atmosphere cultivated under Hitler through the propaganda machinery led by Goebbels.

Therefore, it is not difficult to see that Israeli society, despite its military victories, is experiencing greater isolation than ever before. Among American and European Jews, anti-Zionist views have become increasingly acceptable and commonplace, with books expressing such perspectives being published and their circulation becoming increasingly difficult to prevent or challenge.

I previously discussed "Anti-Zionism," a book by American Jewish scholar Benjamin Moser that sparked a wave of controversy. Although it introduced no new arguments, its publication at this particular moment, and in New York, the heart of Zionism, made it especially noteworthy.

* * *

In an interview with renowned journalist Tucker Carlson, the host asked him about US President Donald Trump's motives for launching a war against Iran.

Carlson replied that he knew the president well and had met him dozens of times at the White House, most recently shortly before the war began.

He revealed that he had visited several countries in the region, with the exception of Iran, and had realized that war was imminent during Netanyahu's visit to the White House.

He said he understood perfectly well why Netanyahu was there - to push for war.

According to Carlson, Trump was under immense pressure and fully aware of the potential scale of the conflict, including the possibility that the entire Gulf region could be brought to a standstill. Trump had previously expressed his opposition to the Iraq War and did not want to repeat that experience.

Carlson said he had told Trump that the US ambassador in Tel Aviv had explicitly called for reshaping the Middle East in a way that would allow Israel to annex parts of Arab countries. This had nothing to do with Iran's nuclear program.

He revealed that he had told Trump that the war Israel was pushing for had three objectives.

The first objective was to establish Israeli regional hegemony by eliminating Iran, whose very existence limits Israel's freedom of action.

The second was to weaken the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, which Israel views as its rivals, and turn them into something resembling the "Switzerland of the Middle East", which would work against Israel's interests.

The third objective was to remove the United States from the Middle East by targeting or destroying its military bases.

Carlson added that Trump looked at him and said, "Yes, you are right, but in the end, we are all going to die anyway, so it doesn't matter."

Carlson said he then asked Trump, "But what about our children and grandchildren? What about our country?"

Such a response reflects a nihilistic mindset that no leader, or indeed any human being, should embrace.

Israel, like other colonial powers, seeks to exert control over its surrounding region. The United States has pursued similar objectives, as demonstrated during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

China resents the presence of American forces near its sphere of influence, while Russia launched its war against Ukraine for similar reasons. No country wants its adversaries stationed on its doorstep.

* * *

The conclusion that some Zionists among us refuse to acknowledge, or are perhaps trying to obscure, is that the danger posed by Israel is no less than that posed by Iran, and may even be greater.

❑ ❑ ❑

Email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Kuwait-Brazil relations deepen

Trade ties poised to grow

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): Brazilian Ambassador to Kuwait Rodrigo de Araujo Gabsch emphasized on Monday that relations between the two countries were witnessing firm progress across various fields, particularly trade, food security, energy, investment, and political dialogue.

The ambassador made the statement during a speech he delivered at a reception hosted by the Brazilian Embassy to mark the 204th anniversary of Brazil's independence, in the presence of Assistant Foreign Minister for the Americas Affairs Abdulaziz Al-Qadfan, along with a number of officials and heads of accredited diplomatic missions in Kuwait.

Gabsch pointed to promising opportunities to expand cooperation and strengthen the partnership between the two countries.

He added that the nearly six-decade-old Kuwaiti-Brazilian relations are founded on solid principles of mutual respect, trust, and shared interests.

The year of 2026 had witnessed positive developments in bilateral cooperation, including Kuwaiti investments in Brazil, the continued commitment of Brazilian companies to meeting the needs of the Kuwaiti market despite logistical challenges, as well as the conclusion of new bilateral agreements aimed at further strengthening cooperation between the two sides, he stated.

Brazil looks forward to diversifying trade exchanges and strengthening economic and social relations with Kuwait, he said, underlining the need for the standing partnership between the two countries in some areas like food security, energy and investment.

In addition, he commended the solidarity and friendship between the two countries, recalling Brazilian Foreign Minister's expression of support for Kuwait earlier this year amid regional developments and conflicts.

He affirmed that sports, particularly football, represent a historic bridge of communication between the Kuwaiti and Brazilian peoples.



Photos by Rezk Tawfiq

Some photos during a reception hosted by the Brazilian Embassy to mark the 204th anniversary of Brazil's independence.

He remembered the contributions of Brazilian coach Mario Zagallo who led Kuwait's national football team during the 1970s, as well as the continued presence of Brazilian players and coaches in Kuwaiti sports.

He further highlighted Brazil's readiness to host the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup, the first time the tournament will be held in South America, with national teams from around the world competing across eight Brazilian cities.

Gabsch said that Brazil continues to strengthen its role in supporting multilateral cooperation, upholding international law, and evolving international institutions, stressing the importance of dialogue and international partnerships in addressing global challenges.

Concluding the speech, Gabsch appreciated the Kuwaiti government and people for the friendship and warm hospitality, voicing hope for the continued prosperity and strengthening of Kuwaiti-Brazilian relations in a manner that serves the interests of both countries and their friendly peoples.

Vance, Rubio meet with Qatari PM as uncertainty mounts over Trump's intentions on Iran

Houthi attack on Riyadh financial tower injures 11

RIYADH, Nov 24, (Agencies): Saudi Civil Defense announced on Tuesday that 11 people were injured after a tower at the Financial Center in Riyadh came under an attack it attributed to the Houthi militia.

The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) quoted the Civil Defense spokesperson as saying the injured included two Saudi citizens, two Indian nationals, three Nepalese nationals and four Egyptians.

The relevant authorities immediately responded to the incident, implementing approved emergency procedures and taking the necessary measures to protect lives and property, the spokesperson added.

Meanwhile, US Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio met separately Monday with the prime minister of Qatar, the Gulf country that has played a key role in efforts to revive stalled negotiations on ending the US conflict with Iran.

Vance held talks with Qatar's prime minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, at the White House, according to a person familiar with the meeting. The person, who spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the discussions, would not give details of the meeting.

The vice president's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The development comes after President Donald Trump told Vance that the administration did not need a deal with Iran and instructed him to focus on fraud and crime in Democratic-led cities following the Republican Party's wipeout in this month's midterm elections. The vice president, who had been the chief negotiator on a brief ceasefire agreement, has blamed voter unhappiness with the Iran war for the Republican losses.

Trump has left much of the world guessing about his next moves in the nearly nine-month-old conflict, with fears growing among U.S. allies in the region about the possible resumption of all-out war.

Even as both sides carry out sporadic bursts of military action, Trump has said he does not see the need to resume major operations. But the U.S. has maintained a naval blockade on Iranian shipping in the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial waterway for the global energy trade.



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, (right), greets Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani in the Treaty Room at the State Department on Nov 23 in Washington. (AP)

Trump said at a news conference Friday at the White House that Tehran wants an agreement to end hostilities but not one that is "acceptable" to him, insisting that "we want to make a real deal, not a fake deal."

Mediators have been pushing proposals that would aim to lift disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz in exchange for limited sanctions relief for Iran and paving the way for a resumption in broader negotiations to include Tehran's nuclear program.

Qatar's prime minister was visiting Washington for a biannual meeting of the U.S.-Qatar Strategic Dialogue with Rubio. The dialogue encompasses a broad range of regional security issues, including Iran, as well as relations between Washington and Doha.

The State Department said after the meeting that Rubio had "expressed appreciation for Qatar's global mediation efforts and stressed the importance of continued close coordination to deter threats and promote stability and security across the Middle East."

A joint statement said the strategic dialogue involved discussions of "shared policy priorities" ranging from the Middle East to Africa and Latin America, but it did not reveal any new policy directions or priorities.

"We're working together to advance shared economic and security priorities and strengthen our partnership to promote a more stable and secure Middle East," Rubio posted on X.

Trump also met with Qatar's prime minister earlier this month at the White House, and afterward the president declared that the Iran war "militarily is effectively over."

Also:

WASHINGTON: Director of National Intelligence **Jay Clayton** said it was "entirely appropriate" for President **Donald Trump** to call Russian leader **Vladimir Putin** his friend.

Clayton defended comments that Democrats have characterized as a betrayal of American values after Trump met with Putin and Chinese President **Xi Jinping** for rare three-way talks. The summit last week in **China** seemed to be more symbolism than substance, but Trump and his top aides have described it as a historic gathering of the three countries with the largest nuclear arsenals.

Trump raised eyebrows with his warm greeting of Putin and repeated references to him as his "friend," which continued on Saturday, when the Republican president posted an image on Truth Social of him shaking hands with a smiling Putin under the caption, "My Friend."

"In that circle - in that circle of that conversation, using the term 'friend' is entirely appropriate," Clayton said on ABC's "This Week."

He had a similar assessment on CNN's "State of the Union," where he said it was "historic" and "remarkable" for Trump to meet with the presidents of the other leading nuclear powers.

North Korea reviews Switzerland relations

Several Russian aircraft flew into defense zone: S.Korea

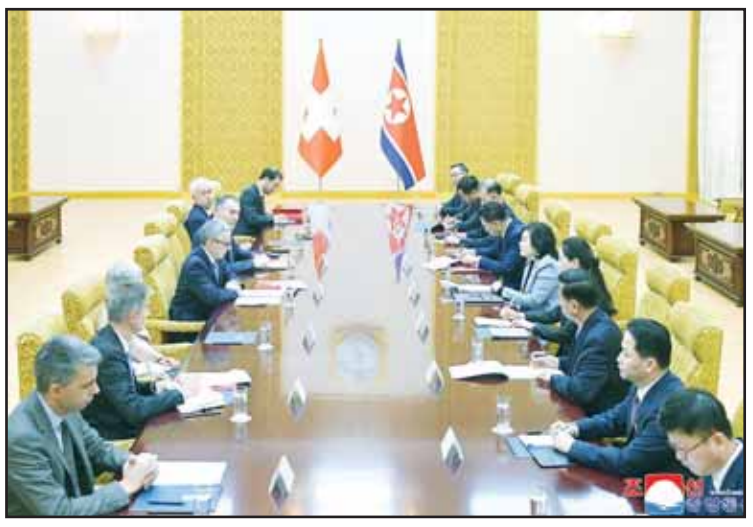
SEOUL, South Korea, Nov 24, (AP): Several Russian aircraft flew inside South Korea's air defense identification zone Tuesday over waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan, Seoul's military said, correcting earlier statements that the planes had violated the country's territorial airspace. An alert for an eastern island was quickly lifted.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff's statement revised earlier announcements by the Ministry of the Interior and Safety and the local provincial government that said foreign airplanes had violated South Korean airspace and that they were suspected to be Russian or North Korean.

The Safety Ministry ordered Ulleung Island residents to take shelter in underground facilities or buildings around 7:52 a.m., but lifted the order three minutes later, saying the aircraft had left the danger area.

The Joint Chiefs said the country scrambled fighter jets in preparation for contingencies before the Russian aircraft withdrew. It did not immediately say how many Russian planes it detected or what types of aircraft they were.

There were no immediate reports of accidents or major disruptions on the island, which has a population of around 9,000. Ulleung suffered a major scare in 2022, when North Korea fired more than 20 missiles into the sea amid heightened inter-Korean tensions. One missile headed toward the island, triggering air raid sirens and prompting residents to evacuate.



In this photo provided on Oct 31, 2026, by the North Korean government, Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis holds a talk with North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui at Pyongyang Assembly Hall in Pyongyang.

The incident came a week after South Korea scrambled fighter jets to repel several Russian military aircraft that it said temporarily entered the country's air-defense zone over waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan last Monday.

Japan the same day protested to Moscow after saying that two suspected Russian aircraft had entered the country's airspace off its southwestern coast.

Also:

SEOUL, South Korea: North Korea threatened Tuesday to close a Swiss diplomatic office that opened in **Pyongyang** last month, condemning Switzerland for imposing sanctions on a youth camp in eastern **North Korea** over its alleged role in the transfer of children from Russia-occupied areas of **Ukraine**.

Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, described the Swiss sanctions on the Songdowon International Children's Camp in the coastal city of Wonsan as an "open hostile act" and a "serious infringement" of the North's sovereignty, according to a statement carried by state media.

Kim Yo Jong, one of Pyongyang's top foreign policy officials, said the camp supported "legitimate" cooperation between North Korea and Russia. She didn't directly address Western accusations that some Ukrainian children abducted by Russian forces were sent there to be reeducated.

North Korea has closely aligned with Russia over the war in Ukraine, sending thousands of troops and large shipments of weapons in recent years to support Russian President Vladimir Putin's full-scale invasion, possibly in exchange for economic assistance and military technology transfers.

Strengthened ties with Moscow and Beijing have been key drivers of Kim Jong Un's increasingly assertive foreign policy as he positions North Korea as part of a united front against the United States.

Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis traveled to North Korea in late October as Switzerland opened a diplomatic office in Pyongyang and held talks with senior North Korean officials, including Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui, on "promoting dialogue and cooperation," North Korean state media said at the time.

Zelenskyy hails Ukraine's attack on Russian warship

KYIV, Ukraine, Nov 24, (AP): Ukraine carried out an attack on a Russian warship moored at a port in Libya, President **Volodymyr Zelenskyy** said Monday, claiming that maritime drones sank the navy vessel in a surprise assault the previous day.



Zelenskyy

Ukrainian forces deployed seven drones in the operation that struck the Russian navy corvette in the Mediterranean, according to Zelenskyy. The ship, the Merkury, was one of Russia's newest vessels, commissioned a year after Moscow launched the 2022 full-scale invasion of its neighbor, he said in a post on X.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov declined to comment on the attack, saying that Russia's Defense Ministry would provide more information "if deemed to be appropriate."

The operation, conducted some 2,400 kilometers (1,500 miles) from the front line in Ukraine, was the latest daring long-range assault by Kyiv's forces.

Ukraine has at times embarrassed Moscow during the war with attacks such as Operation Spiderweb in June 2025, when drones launched from trucks hit over 40 aircraft parked at air bases across Russia. Along the roughly 1,250-kilometer (almost 800-mile) front line snaking through eastern and southern Ukraine, Kyiv's drones and ground robots are helping hold back Russia's bigger army.

At the same time, Russia's missiles and drones have devastated Ukraine's power grid ahead of winter and damaged civilian buildings.

A Russian strike on a five-story apartment block in a village near Kyiv killed 11 people, regional police said Monday. A 7-year-old child and a 79-year-old woman were pulled alive from the rubble after the Sunday morning attack, rescue services said.

Three people were killed Monday in a Russian strike on a hospital in the city of Zaporizhzhia in southern Ukraine, the regional military administration said. Two other people were killed when Russian forces struck a vehicle that bore markings indicating it was evacuating residents from the eastern city of Kramatorsk, authorities said.

Also on Monday, the European Commission proposed a new round of sanctions to keep economic pressure on Moscow, targeting dozens of Russian banks, cracking down on crypto platforms and slapping bans on sports teams and athletes competing under the country's flag.

Climate talks end without overarching UN agreement

ANTALYA, Turkey, Nov 24, (AP): United Nations climate talks fizzled out Sunday without reaching an overarching agreement because of disputes over whether to mention the fossil fuels that cause global warming.

Expectations had already been low heading into the two-week negotiations in Turkey, but impasses over explicitly including fossil fuels and other issues, including money, proved irreconcilable. Nations' negotiators, activists and even organizers used the word "disappointing" to characterize the discussions.



Guterres

Though the talks, called COP31, failed to reach a main agreement, known as a cover decision, the meeting had already made progress on smaller issues. The two-week session ended Sunday night, after running more than 50 hours overtime at the resort town of Antalya.

This all happened as global warming accelerates with ever-worsening heat waves, floods, storms and droughts. The UN said it is now inevitable that the world will soon blow past the warming threshold established by the 2015 Paris climate agreement. And there is also a global energy shock due to the war in Iran. On top of that, a strong El Niño amplifies human-caused warming and causes more weather disasters.

"I am deeply disappointed that COP31 has ended without consensus on an overarching outcome," United Nations Secretary-General **Antonio Guterres** said. "Temperatures keep shattering records. Climate extremes keep intensifying. Emissions remain far too high. And every delay makes our task harder and more costly."

Upset youth representative Oumnia Anfer told the negotiators "you have let us down."

Any pact approved at the talks requires near-unanimous consensus. Several countries and the 27-nation European Union said they could not accept the final proposal from the joint Turkish-Australian leadership, which didn't mention fossil fuels. A considerably larger number of nations accepted the decision, often reluctantly, saying consensus on something was more important, though it ultimately failed. Russia and Saudi Arabia sought to keep fossil fuels out of the document.

"It's unconscionable that we would have a climate act that makes no reference to fossil fuels," Darragh O'Brien, Ireland's climate minister, said on behalf of the EU at the climate talks.

Previously, fossil fuels went unmentioned in COP final decisions for more than 25 years, said Alden Meyer, with the think tank E3G. Then, three years ago in the oil-rich United Arab Emirates, a groundbreaking agreement called for "transitioning away from fossil fuels" but since then there's been no explicit mention of fossil fuels. The Turkish-Australian proposal recalled the Dubai agreement in its entirety, but that wasn't enough for many nations and environmental groups.



The scene after an explosion at a hotpot eatery in Hanoi, Vietnam on Nov 24. (AP)

Vietnam blast kills 6

An explosion at a hot pot eatery in Vietnam's capital on Tuesday, suspected to have been caused by a gas leak, killed six people, injured more than a dozen others and damaged nearby houses.

VnExpress, an online news outlet, said that the early morning blast in Hanoi shattered windows, cracked walls and tore metal shutters from their frames, while corrugated roofs and awnings collapsed. The report said that the explosion damaged nearby houses and shook neighboring apartment buildings, with debris scattered across the street. (AP)

Lat/Am

Colombia bomb attack injures 19: At least 19 people were wounded in a bomb attack near government headquarters in the central Colombian department of Meta, the National Police said Monday night.

In a statement, the police said no fatalities had been reported so far, adding that preliminary information suggested the explosion in downtown Villavicencio, the departmental capital, may have been caused by a car bomb. Several nearby buildings were also damaged. (Xinhua)

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'3 Salvadoran soldiers died in Haiti': Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele identified three soldiers from the Central American country killed while on a mission fighting gangs in Haiti and pledged that troops who want to leave the troubled Caribbean country could do so immediately without facing reprisals. (Xinhua)

China's Shenzhou-24 mission to conduct over 90 in-orbit scientific experiments

JIUQUAN, Nov 24, (Xinhua): A total of more than 90 scientific experiments and technology tests are planned for the Shenzhou-24 mission, the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) announced on Tuesday.

The mission's main objectives are to complete an in-orbit crew rotation with the Shenzhou-23 crew, maintain routine station operations, conduct space science and application work, and carry out maintenance, public outreach and payload tests, said Zhang Jingbo, spokesperson for the CMSA, at a press conference.

The experiments and tests will cover space life sciences, space material science, microgravity fluid physics and combustion science, fundamental physics, space medicine and new space technologies.

In space life sciences, researchers will build vascular chips and multi-type organ chips to explore how the space environment affects major physiological processes such as vascular aging, aiming to develop new strategies for preventing and treating age-related vascular diseases.

In space material science, the mission will focus on the in-orbit preparation and performance control of ultra-high-temperature niobium-silicon intermetallic compounds and calcium-silicon multicomponent bioactive glass, as well as scientific studies on materials including single-crystal silicon and perovskite.



Chinese astronauts Tang Hongbo (center), Wu Yi (right) and Pakistani astronaut Muhammad Zeeshan Ali, for the upcoming Shenzhou-24 spaceflight mission, meet the press at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China, Nov 24. (Xinhua)

Ousted Hasina plans to return to Bangladesh from exile on Dec 16

DHAKA, Bangladesh, Nov 24, (AP): Ousted Bangladeshi Prime Minister **Sheikh Hasina** plans to return home from exile in India on Dec. 16, the day the country celebrates as Victory Day when it won independence after a war with Pakistan.



Hasina

Hasina went into exile in India on Aug. 5, 2024, after a student-led mass uprising forced her to end her 15-year rule. She was sentenced to death in absentia for crimes against humanity involving the uprising in which hundreds of protesters were killed. Hasina rejected the verdict and has said she is ready to fight the case once she is back.

Abu Abdullah M Saleh, press secretary to Bangladeshi Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, told The Associated Press that the government would stick to its position on Hasina's extradition as a convict.

"My government's stand is very clear. She has been convicted in a tribunal. We have sought her extradition," he said by phone. It is expected that Hasina would be arrested upon her return and sent to jail.

A prosecutor had earlier said Hasina would not be able to appeal her death sentence as she missed the required deadline, and that there would be no legal basis to stop her execution. In Bangladesh, presidential clemency is allowed, but Hasina has never sought that in earlier statements and has rejected the verdict outright.

In the statement Tuesday announcing the planned date of her return, she urged current Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to arrange her return on the national airline.

"Since Sheikh Hasina was flown to India on a Bangladesh aircraft on August 5th, 2024, she now calls upon the government to arrange for her air transport from Delhi back to Dhaka," spokesperson Syed Mozammel Ali said in the statement.

Business

Kuwaiti crude oil down 34 cents to $80.40 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went down 34 cents to reach USD 80.40 per barrel (pb) in Monday's trading, from USD 80.74 pb last Friday, according to Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Tuesday.

In global markets, Brent crude went down by USD 3.20 to USD 89.37 pb, while US West Texas Intermediate went by USD 3.24 to USD 80.17 pb.

Recognition honors legal leadership and contributions to bank

ABK's Dr. Nawaf Al-Shuraiaan named among Kuwait's GC Elite Leaders 2026



Al-Shuraiaan presented with certificate of recognition at Kuwait's GC Elite Leaders.


Dr. Nawaf Al-Shuraiaan, General Counsel - Head of Legal Division at ABK


Al-Shuraiaan among prominent figures in the front row at at Kuwait's GC Elite Leaders.

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced that Dr. Nawaf Al-Shuraiaan, General Counsel - Head of Legal Division, has been named among the GC Elite Leaders Kuwait 2026. The list recognizes leading general counsel and senior in-house legal leaders in Kuwait for their professional excellence and contributions to advancing legal practice within their organizations.

The recognition honors Al-Shuraiaan's career, which spans judicial experience, legal practice and corporate legal work. It also acknowledges his contributions to developing ABK's legal function, improving its efficiency and the quality of its services, and strengthening institutional processes in support of the Bank's objectives and long-term sustainability.

Al-Shuraiaan was honored at a ceremony in Kuwait attended by general counsel and in-house legal leaders from across the country's economic and banking sectors.

Commenting on the recognition, Al-Shuraiaan expressed his pride in the honor, saying it acknowledges his extensive judicial and legal experience while reflecting the expertise and collective efforts of ABK's Legal division. He attributed its achievements to teamwork and the supportive environment the Bank provides, which encourages development, innovation and collaboration across divisions.

"Being named among the GC Elite Leaders Kuwait 2026 is a professional honor we are proud of and an incentive to continue developing institutional legal practice," Al-Shuraiaan said. "We believe the Legal division's role extends beyond providing advice and resolving disputes. It is a partner in supporting institutional decisions, developing legal solutions, protecting the interests of the Bank, its shareholders and its customers, and securing the Bank's rights effectively."

He added that ABK's Legal division takes a proactive approach, working closely with the Bank's various divisions to provide practical legal solutions that balance legal requirements with banking and investment considerations. This approach helps improve operational efficiency and support banking innovation while upholding the highest standards of professionalism and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Al-Shuraiaan said the recognition brings an added professional responsibility to advance legal practice in Kuwait. He emphasized the importance of developing talent, strengthening capabilities, sharing knowledge and keeping pace with legislative, regulatory and technological changes in the banking sector. These efforts reinforce the Legal division's role in supporting sustainable growth and strengthening confidence in the Bank's institutional practices.

He thanked the organizers and those involved in the recognition for highlighting legal talent and its professional contributions. He also praised their efforts to raise the profile of in-house legal leaders and showcase their role in developing institutional practice, noting that such initiatives encourage professional excellence, the exchange of expertise and the advancement of legal practice.

The recognition is part of a wider effort to highlight distinguished in-house legal leaders and their growing role in improving legal performance, supporting strategic decisions and creating institutional value. It reflects the increasing importance of legal divisions in modern financial and business organizations.

Title recognizes company's excellence in Microsoft-powered innovation

ZainTECH named Microsoft's Partner of the Year in Kuwait



Mohamad Harb, GM of ZainTECH Kuwait, receives the Microsoft award.



ZainTECH Microsoft Partner of the Year 2026 Award

- Recognizing excellence in cloud transformation, AI readiness, data and operational agility, while building on its Microsoft Frontier Partner designation
- As Zain Group's ICT arm, ZainTECH plays a pivotal role in accelerating Kuwait's digital transformation through innovative, secure, and future-ready technology solutions

DUBAI, Nov 24: ZainTECH, the digital solutions arm of Zain Group, has been recognized as Microsoft Kuwait Country Partner of the Year at the 2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards recently held in San Francisco. The prestigious title highlights ZainTECH's excellence in empowering innovation, advancing digital transformation, and effectively implementing customer solutions powered by Microsoft technology.

The Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards acknowledge partners that demonstrate outstanding innovation and deliver impactful customer outcomes through Microsoft Cloud, AI, services, and devices. This year's winners and finalists were selected from more than 4,500 nominations submitted worldwide across multiple categories and geographies. ZainTECH received the Kuwait country award in recognition of its contribution to delivering innovative, secure, and future-ready solutions and services that address the evolving technology needs of organizations in the market.

The recognition also highlights ZainTECH's work in accelerating enterprise-wide hybrid cloud transformation, AI readiness, and operational agility in Kuwait. By combining Microsoft technologies and ZainTECH's managed services capabilities, specialized expertise in supporting organizations in modernizing their technology environments, preparing for AI adoption and building more agile and efficient operations.

Commenting on the achievement, Andrew Hanna, CEO of ZainTECH, said: "The strength of our collaboration with Microsoft and the value we create for organizations in Kuwait is playing a contributory strategic role in advancing the country's digital transformation ambitions. As cloud, AI, and data become increasingly central to business strategy, organizations need more than technology implementation. They need the expertise to integrate these capabilities securely, build operational resilience, and create the foundations for sustainable growth. That is where we focus our efforts: on shaping what comes next for our customers, and to making it happen today.By enabling organizations to become Digital, Intelligent, and Resilient, we advance our promise: "What's next is now""

"Congratulations to the recipients of the 2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards", said Nicole Dezen, Chief Partner Officer and Corporate Vice President at Microsoft. "This year's honorees are harnessing the power of Microsoft Cloud and AI to deliver transformative solutions, accelerate customer success, and expand what's possible. Their ingenuity and impact inspire us, demonstrating what can be achieved when bold vision and technology come together to empower organizations around the world."

Ms Dezen added, "This integrated approach enables organizations to address interconnected priorities, whether modernizing infrastructure, unlocking greater value from enterprise data, adopting AI responsibly, strengthening cybersecurity or improving workforce productivity. By combining Microsoft's technologies with its regional delivery expertise, ZainTECH works to ensure that technology investments are aligned with business objectives, operational requirements and the specific regulatory environments in which customers operate."

Building on ZainTECH's recognition as a Microsoft Frontier Partner

The Kuwait award builds on ZainTECH's recognition as a Microsoft Frontier Partner, further reflecting the company's continued advancement within the Microsoft ecosystem. Together, these recognitions underscore the depth of the partnership and ZainTECH's commitment to delivering solutions that move beyond individual technology implementations to address broader organizational priorities.

The recognition further reinforces ZainTECH's commitment to advancing its digital, intelligent and resilient framework, bringing together cloud, data and AI innovation with secure, dependable technology foundations. As organizations look to turn today's technology opportunities into lasting business value, ZainTECH continues to enable them to move forward with confidence, making the next stage of their ambitions possible today.

ZainTECH's Microsoft capabilities span cloud infrastructure and services, data platforms and AI, cybersecurity, modern workplace solutions, and business applications. Through its expertise across the Microsoft ecosystem, the company supports organizations throughout their technology journeys, from consulting, assessment and architecture to migration, implementation, managed services and continuous optimization.

The 2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year awards were announced ahead of Microsoft Ignite, held in San Francisco from 17–20 November 2026. Additional details on the awards are available on the Microsoft Partner blog. The complete list of categories, winners and finalists can be found here.

Digital wallet expands financial inclusion

Al Mulla Group officially launches RATEB in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Al Mulla Group, a leading diversified business group headquartered in Kuwait, announced today the official launch of RATEB, a digital wallet designed to simplify salary payments, facilitate everyday financial transactions, and expand access to financial services across Kuwait.

The launch marks an important milestone in Al Mulla Group's strategy to diversify its financial services portfolio, leverage digital technologies to offer a secure, accessible digital platform for employers, domestic workers, and individuals, and address the evolving financial needs of underserved community segments.

Simplifying Payments and Expanding Financial Access

RATEB provides a regulated digital alternative to traditional cash-based transactions, offering greater convenience, transparency, and security for employers and workers. Key features include:

- Instant salary payments: Employers can transfer salaries, bonuses and leave allowances directly to workers' digital wallets through KNET, without requiring workers to hold a traditional bank account.
- Seamless registration and payment management: Users can register within minutes using a valid Kuwait Civil ID and an active mobile number. Employers can pay multiple workers in a single transaction, receive instant notifications and access timestamped digital payment receipts.
- Greater financial independence: Workers can manage their earnings, transfer funds to other users using mobile numbers, access online remittance services at competitive rates, and withdraw cash without a card at designated RATEB ATMs.
- Security and regulatory oversight: The application incorporates biometric authentication, operates under the supervision of the Central Bank of Kuwait, and safeguards customer funds with a licensed local Islamic bank.

A Strategic Expansion of Al Mulla Group's Financial Services Portfolio

Commenting on the launch, Talal A. Al Mulla, Group Chief Executive Officer of Al Mulla Group, said:

"The launch of RATEB reflects our commitment to building a more inclusive, accessible and digitally enabled financial services ecosystem. We see a significant opportunity to leverage technology to address the everyday financial needs of individuals and businesses, particularly those who have traditionally had limited access to conventional banking services.

"By bringing together our established expertise in financial services and innovative fintech solutions, we are further strengthening our capabilities and positioning the Group to respond to the changing needs of the markets and communities we serve. RATEB represents a natural extension of our financial services portfolio and our long-term commitment to creating sustainable value."

Esam R. Al Dakheel, Chief Executive Officer of My Rateb, added:

"Our objective is to make every day financial transactions simpler, safer and more accessible. RATEB addresses the practical challenges associated with cash-based salary payments while giving workers greater control over their earnings and providing employers with a convenient and transparent payment solution.

"With the support of Al Mulla Group and within the regulatory framework of the Central Bank of Kuwait, we look forward to expanding our reach and contributing meaningfully to the advancement of financial inclusion in Kuwait."





Top and above: Talal A. Al Mulla, Group Chief Executive Officer of Al Mulla Group, with other senior officials at the official launch ceremony of RATEB.

PM sacks senior officials

Iraq moves to curb oil smuggling, orders digital pipeline monitoring

BAGHDAD, Nov. 24, (Xinhua): Iraqi Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces Ali al-Zaidi dismissed and suspended multiple senior officials on Tuesday following an investigation into oil smuggling at the state-run North Oil Company (NOC).

Al-Zaidi relieved the chairman of the Border Ports Commission, the Kirkuk operations commander, the Kirkuk police commander, and senior officers of the First Energy Police Brigade of their duties, according to a statement by Sabah al-Numan, spokesman for the commander-in-chief of the Iraqi forces.

The NOC director general and his deputies, alongside two directors general at the Ministry of Industry and Minerals, were suspended pending an investigation by the Federal Commission of Integrity, it added.

To curb illicit trade, al-Zaidi ordered the Border Ports Commission to assume control of all border crossings in the semi-autonomous Kurdistan region, and instructed the regional government not to approve crude or petroleum product exports except through the federal Oil Ministry.

Security forces were also ordered to shut down all unofficial border crossings, including those in the Kurdistan region, the statement said.

It added that the government will install electronic meters on all operational oil wells nationwide and establish a digital pipeline monitoring system to prevent future smuggling.

Iraq has recently stepped up its crackdown on oil smuggling to protect public funds. Oil Minister Basim Mohammed Khudhair told the official Iraqi News Agency on Monday that there had been breaches at NOC oil fields, in addition to smuggling activities in other areas.

Saudi Arabia approves state budget for 2027

RIYADH, Nov. 24, (Xinhua): Saudi Arabia's cabinet on Tuesday approved the state budget for 2027, with expenditures of 1.39 trillion Saudi riyals (about 371 billion U.S. dollars), estimated revenues of 1.2 trillion riyals, and a projected deficit of 190.56 billion riyals, the Saudi Press Agency reported.

The budget was approved at a cabinet meeting chaired by Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud in Riyadh.

The crown prince directed ministers and officials to ensure the effective implementation of development and social programs and projects outlined in the budget.

He said the Saudi economy demonstrated resilience in 2026, supported by solid foundations, flexible fiscal policies and proactive long-term planning.

The crown prince added that investments had strengthened the country's infrastructure and logistics capabilities, enabling the kingdom to sustain development and address various crises and challenges.

Program offers participating startups a range of growth & business development services

KFH opens applications for tech business owners to join FinEdge Business Accelerator

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has opened applications for technology entrepreneurs and startups to join the FinEdge Business Accelerator program. Launched to help businesses grow and scale, the program leverages KFH's extensive banking expertise alongside a comprehensive suite of mentoring, training, advisory, and business development services.

Technology entrepreneurs and startups seeking to grow and benefit from KFH's longstanding experience can apply for the FinEdge Business Accelerator via the bank's website (kfh.com). All applications will undergo a thorough evaluation and selection process to identify eligible ventures for the program.

The program offers participating startups a range of growth and business development services, including expert mentorship, access to KFH's Islamic banking expertise, and specialized workshops on product development, marketing, sales, Shariah, legal, and compliance matters. Participants will also receive banking, business, and technology advisory services. Additionally, eligible corporates can access tailored banking solutions, dedicated relationship managers, meeting and working spaces, and a network of specialists to help refine their business models and boost competitiveness.

■ **Al-Ajeel:** We leverage our banking expertise to support businesses and expand their growth opportunities

The program also connects promising ventures with KFH's business sectors and Group subsidiaries, fostering collaboration and allowing startups to leverage the Group's broad market presence and expertise to expand into new markets.

KFH Deputy General Manager Digital Transformation and Innovation, Eng. Tareq Al-Ajeel, said the FinEdge Business Accelerator offers technology entrepreneurs and startup founders a platform to tap into KFH's accumulated banking and commercial expertise. He noted that the program focuses on helping startups refine their products and business models, strengthen their management and commercial capabilities, and prepare for growth and expansion.



Eng. Tareq Al-Ajeel, KFH Deputy General Manager Digital Transformation and Innovation

Al-Ajeel added that through its expertise, capabilities, and extensive network, KFH can help startups identify growth and expansion pathways, address operational and commercial challenges, connect with industry experts and specialists, and explore collaboration and partnership opportunities that contribute to business development.

"The initiative reflects the bank's commitment to supporting entrepreneurship and technology projects, helping transform promising startups into more competitive, sustainable, and scalable businesses. This fosters innovation, drives national economic growth, and reinforces Kuwait's position in technology and fintech," he added.

Al-Ajeel further stated: "The program is part of KFH's ongoing efforts to support the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem, advance digital transformation, and nurture promising technology ventures, empowering them to build mature, sustainable business models that keep pace with rapid developments across the banking and technology sectors."

Empowering youth through data science

Registration opens for the 5th edition of Gulf Bank Datathon



Dr. Haider Al Mehri, AGM of Digital Transformation

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance data science and artificial intelligence capabilities among young people, Gulf Bank has announced the opening of registration for the 5th edition of the Gulf Bank Datathon 2026, which will be held at the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) on December 10 and 12, in collaboration with Coded Academy.

The launch of the fifth Datathon reflects Gulf Bank's strategy to support young talent and develop digital capabilities by providing an educational and competitive platform that brings together individuals interested in data science, artificial intelligence, and digital analytics. The initiative also contributes to strengthening community readiness for the rapidly evolving digital economy.

The Datathon will feature a series of free educational workshops led by industry experts and specialists. Participants will gain hands-on experience in data science, data visualization, digital analytics techniques, and the latest applications of generative artificial intelligence.

On this occasion, Dr. Haider Al Mehri, AGM of Digital Transformation, said: "We are proud to continue organizing the Gulf Bank Datathon for the fifth consecutive year. It has become a leading platform for discovering and developing digital talent in Kuwait. The Datathon reflects our ongoing commitment to fostering innovation, advancing data and AI literacy, and empowering young people and technology enthusiasts with practical skills that meet the demands of the future."

The Datathon is open to all individuals interested in the field of data, including students, graduates, and professionals seeking to enhance their skills or explore new career paths. While prior technical knowledge is considered an advantage, it is not a requirement, as participants will benefit from a comprehensive training program covering all tools and technologies used throughout the competition. Applicants must be 16 years of age or older to participate.

This year's Datathon features two main tracks:

■ Data Science Track: Participants will explore the power of data through predictive modeling, real-world data analysis, and the creation of visualizations that generate insights and support smarter decision-making to address various challenges.

■ Generative AI Track: This track focuses on designing and building AI agents capable of reasoning, planning, using tools, making decisions, and executing tasks to achieve real-world objectives, reflecting the latest global trends in artificial intelligence.

Gulf Bank has allocated attractive cash prizes for winners in both tracks. First-place winners will receive KWD 2,000, while second-place winners will receive KWD 1,000. In addition, two special award categories will be presented in each track, alongside prize draws and giveaways throughout the event.

Through initiatives such as the Datathon, Gulf Bank continues to invest in digital skills development, promote innovation, and foster a data-driven culture, in line with its vision of building a future-ready society and supporting Kuwait's digital transformation journey.

The Bank invites all interested individuals to register and take advantage of this unique educational and competitive opportunity, gain hands-on experience, and network with experts and peers in the fields of data science and artificial intelligence.

To participate in the competition, register through the following link:

https://portal.joincoded.com/program/GBKDT/apply?utm_source=gbk

Acquisition marks major strategic milestone for both companies

Al-Tijaria and Aqarat announce completion of land acquisition for residential development in Georgia

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: The Commercial Real Estate Company (Al-Tijaria) and Kuwait Real Estate Company (Aqarat) announced the completion of the acquisition of approximately 237 acres (959,000 square meters) of land designated for real estate development in the State of Georgia, United States. The acquisition aims to develop an integrated master-planned residential community through their U.S. residential real estate investment platform, Beacon Ridge Capital Management LLC (Beacon Ridge). The investment was executed through an investment portfolio.

The acquisition marks another strategic step in the two companies' U.S. investment journey, strengthening their presence in residential real estate development through large-scale projects positioned to benefit from growth opportunities and increasing demand for housing in promising U.S. markets.

The project includes the development of essential site infrastructure, including internal roads, utility networks, drainage systems, and various land preparation works to deliver residential lots ready for home construction. Beacon Ridge has been entrusted with preparing and developing the project's master plan, which, upon completion, is expected to accommodate more than 1,500 families across a diverse range of housing options catering to different market segments. These include homes for first-time buyers, an exclusive 365-home active-adult community, luxury homes offering direct access to the river, and a dedicated build-to-rent residential community.

To enhance the project's investment viability and establish contractual support for its development phases, Beacon Ridge successfully negotiated an agreement with one of the largest national homebuilders in the United States for the purchase of fully serviced residential lots supporting the development of approximately 600 homes within the project.

Following completion of the land acquisition, the project has progressed to its next development phase, with preparations currently underway to launch infrastructure works. The project management team is engaging with a number of prospective contractors to review and evaluate technical and commercial proposals, ahead of finalizing the necessary arrangements and commencing construction.

The development strategy centers on preparing and delivering fully serviced residential lots to the contracted homebuilder in structured phases, thereby enhancing project management efficiency, mitigating development risks, and establishing a clear foundation for future cash flow generation.



Abdulfatah Marafie, Chairman of Al-Tijaria



Talal Jassim Al-Bahar, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Kuwait Real Estate Company

Strategic Investment and Management

The acquisition builds on the continued growth of the partners' U.S. real estate investment portfolio, which includes investments in the West Palm Beach Residential Portfolio and the 944 Market Street office building in San Francisco.

Beacon Ridge Capital Management manages KUSRE's investment activities in the United States. Beacon Ridge is a U.S.-based asset management firm established through a partnership between Al-Tijaria, Kuwait Real Estate Company, and other strategic investors.

The project reflects the partners' focus on real estate development opportunities underpinned by clear market demand and supported by contractual arrangements with leading U.S. homebuilders. This approach enhances the prospects for disciplined project execution and supports the generation of sustainable long-term returns.

Commenting on the acquisition, Mr. Abdulfatah Marafie, Chairman of Al-Tijaria, stated:

"The completion of this acquisition marks an important milestone in our U.S. investment strategy and reflects our commitment to pursuing high-quality opportunities in the residential real estate development sector. The agreement with one of the largest national homebuilders in the United States, supporting the development of approximately 600 homes, represents a significant step in strengthening the project's investment viability and establishing a contractual foundation for its execution. We look forward to advancing the infrastructure development works, creating sustainable value and enhancing returns for our shareholders."

Mr. Talal Jassim Al-Bahar, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Kuwait Real Estate Company, added:

"Our successful partnership with Al-Tijaria on the 501 First Residences project has encouraged us to continue exploring new investment opportunities in key markets and to build on the success of that experience. This project reflects that direction and represents another step in expanding our U.S. presence through promising real estate development opportunities supported by sound investment fundamentals. With the land acquisition completed and the agreement with a leading U.S. national homebuilder in place, our focus is now on finalizing the arrangements required to launch infrastructure works and move into the execution phase, supporting our investment objectives and creating additional value for our shareholders."

Private sector growth eases

UK manufacturing output hits 27-month high in Nov

LONDON, Nov. 24, (Xinhua): Britain's manufacturing sector logged robust growth in November, with the Flash UK Manufacturing Output Index reaching 54.2, its highest level since August 2024, survey data released by S&P Global showed on Monday.

The strong output growth was driven by a boost to sales from AI data center buildouts, higher defence spending and greater demand in the food and beverage sector, according to survey respondents.

Meanwhile, private sector output growth eased in November amid a loss of momentum in the services economy. The seasonally adjusted Flash UK PMI Composite Output Index fell to 52.3 in November from an eight-month high of 52.9 in October, the S&P Global survey showed.

November saw sustained business growth, said Chris Williamson, chief business economist at S&P Global Market Intelligence. He noted the preliminary flash PMI survey pointed to a 0.6-percent increase in GDP during the fourth quarter.

Business confidence has improved, with optimism about the year ahead returning to levels seen prior to the outbreak of the Middle East conflict in February, indicating that the recent government budget has been generally well received by the business community, he said.

But Williamson also cautioned that employment showed a renewed fall as companies continue to worry over rising costs and seek to boost productivity. The impact of high energy prices was again exacerbated by high staffing costs, he added.

Americans see job market improving

US consumer confidence surges to 103.3 in November as gas prices fall

WASHINGTON, Nov 24, (AP): Americans' confidence in the economy jumped this month as gas prices continued their steady decline and election-related uncertainty ended.

The Conference Board said Tuesday that its consumer confidence index soared to 103.3 this month, from a reading of 91.9 in October. It's the second straight increase after the index fell in September to its lowest level since April 2014, even lower than during the pandemic.

Consumer confidence is closely linked to gas prices, and the Conference Board also said Americans see the job market improving. The increase also reflected steep political divisions, as confidence rose sharply for Democrats and independents, but declined modestly for Republicans.

The improvement could signal a pickup in consumer spending in the months ahead, though Americans have been spending at a solid pace this year even as consumer surveys have been lackluster. Particularly since the pandemic, measures of Americans' economic outlook have been unusually gloomy, and economists say these surveys are less reliable indicators of consumer behavior than they once were.

Still, the increase could be a good sign for retailers as winter holiday shopping gets underway. The National Retail Federation has forecast sales will rise at a healthy clip over the holidays despite stubbornly high inflation, with prices rising faster than average weekly paychecks.

Separately, gas prices have continued to quickly decline, though they remain higher than they usually are at this time of year, when prices typically fall. Prices at the pump fell to $3.61 a gallon on average nationwide Tuesday, according to AAA, down 17 cents from a week ago and sharply below the average of $4.30 a month earlier. Still, prices remain well above the $3.07 that motorists were paying at this time last year.



A shopper looks at a product at a Kohl's store in Dallas, Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2026. (AP)

"Write-in responses in November were slightly less negative than previous months," Fergus McCormick, senior economist at the Conference Board, said. "While consumers continued to express frustration with high prices and rising costs, some comments cited hope for the general economy."

Survey respondents also were more optimistic about the number of jobs available, the survey found. The improvement comes after an unexpectedly positive jobs report for October, when the unemployment rate ticked down to a low 4.1%, from 4.2%, as hiring accelerated.

At the same time, inflation remains elevated, a persistent source of irritation for most Americans and a big factor in Democrats' sweeping victories in the midterm elections earlier this month.

Inflation increased to 4% in October, the government said earlier this month, up from 3.7% in September. The Commerce Department will release a separate inflation measure closely watched by the Federal Reserve on Wednesday. It is also expected to show that inflation remains noticeably above the Fed's 2% annual target.

Global experts discuss shifts in capital allocation & investment strategies across asset classes

NBK Wealth's annual insights forum explores investment trends and global market shifts



Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group CEO of National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) and Faisal Al-Hamad



Al-Saqar, Al-Bahar, Al-Fulaij, Al-Hamad, and Malik Khalifa at the forum.



Faisal Al-Hamad, Group CEO of NBK Wealth and Haitham Al-Khaled

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Against one of the most complex global investment landscapes in recent years, NBK Wealth brought together a distinguished group of leading international investors and strategists at NBK Wealth INSIGHTS 2026, its annual investment forum. Discussions centered on a fundamental question facing investment institutions and investors worldwide: Where will capital flow next?

For decades, investors have relied on the traditional balance between equities and bonds. However, the combination of elevated interest rates, persistent inflation and geopolitical volatility has reshaped the investment landscape, prompting investors to increasingly turn to alternative investments and private assets in pursuit of greater diversification and new sources of returns.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group CEO of National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), emphasized that the rapid pace of global economic change calls for more flexible investment perspectives and greater adaptability to evolving conditions. She also highlighted the importance of access to global expertise and specialized insights in making more effective and sustainable investment decisions.

Among the prominent international decision-makers and investment experts participating in the forum were John Bilton and Dana Haimoff of J.P. Morgan Asset Management, Mike Gontar of InterVest Capital Partners, and Andrew Pettit of Revcap. Participants exchanged insights on global economic developments and investment trends expected to shape financial markets in the years ahead.

The complex interplay between inflation, interest rates, energy markets and geopolitical tensions was a central focus of the forum. During the session titled "Macro Outlook and Multi-Asset Positioning," John Bilton of J.P. Morgan Asset Management examined how these factors are increasingly moving in tandem, prompting investors to reassess traditional asset allocation approaches and build portfolios capable of adapting to different economic scenarios.

The forum also highlighted one of the most significant shifts taking place in global markets: the narrowing divide between public and private markets. During the session titled "Public and Private Assets Convergence," Dana Haimoff of J.P. Morgan Asset Management discussed how private investments are becoming an increasingly important component of wealth management strategies, supported by the evolution of investment structures and tools that have enabled a broader range of investors to access this asset class.

The main panel discussion, titled "Where the Next Dollar Goes," explored some of the most pressing questions facing investors today, including the trade-off between maintaining liquidity and committing capital to long-term investments, the pricing of risk in private markets, and the trends shaping global capital flows.

Speakers agreed that the current investment environment calls for greater selectivity and discipline, emphasizing asset quality and the ability to generate sustainable long-term returns rather than relying on short-term gains.

In his closing remarks, Faisal Al-Hamad, Group CEO of NBK Wealth, emphasized that the current investment landscape is distinguished by a rapid transformation in the nature of investment opportunities themselves. He noted that investors increasingly need a balanced approach that combines exposure to growth opportunities in public markets with carefully considered allocations to private investments.

Al-Hamad added that NBK Wealth continues to leverage its global expertise and strategic partnerships to provide clients with sophisticated investment insights and integrated solutions, helping them build more diversified and resilient portfolios aligned with evolving global economic conditions and their long-term objectives.

According to Al-Hamad, the discussions underscored that the future of investing will not depend on selecting a single asset class, but rather on the ability to combine multiple sources of returns while managing risks effectively in an increasingly complex and uncertain world.

Highlighting the importance of international collaboration, Al-Hamad reaffirmed NBK Wealth's commitment to connecting clients with leading global investment expertise and opportunities through strategic partnerships with prominent international financial institutions. As global markets become increasingly complex, specialized investment insights and long-term planning are becoming even more essential. He added that the forum provided a platform for dialogue and knowledge exchange on the key trends expected to drive global capital flows in the coming years, helping clients make more informed and adaptable investment decisions amid rapidly changing market conditions.

Al-Hamad:

- Navigating an increasingly interconnected economic and geopolitical landscape requires greater flexibility and adaptability in investment strategies
- Evolving global market dynamics are prompting investors to reassess traditional asset allocation models and portfolio construction strategies
- Long-term investment success will increasingly depend on balancing growth opportunities with disciplined risk management
- NBK Wealth remains committed to connecting clients with world-class investment expertise and opportunities across global markets
- Our strategic international partnerships strengthen our ability to deliver innovative, tailored investment solutions that address clients' evolving needs
- Structural shifts in global markets are prompting investors to reconsider traditional asset allocation strategies



Faisal Al-Hamad, Group CEO of NBK Wealth, delivers his speech to the audience during the forum.



Insights from a panel discussion at the NBK Wealth INSIGHTS 2026 forum.



Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group CEO of National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) takes the floor to address the forum.

The Conversation

California raised fast-food wages to $20. Here's what happened next

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

❑ ❑ ❑

By Liam Sigaud
West Virginia University

Even before the 2026 midterm elections delivered a clear message about cost-of-living concerns, many states had been raising their minimum wage on their own as one way to increase workers' purchasing power. And some have taken a more targeted approach, setting wage floors for specific industries.

As the example of California shows, however, these initiatives can produce mixed results.

In April 2024, California began requiring fast-food chains with at least 60 locations nationwide to pay a minimum wage of US$20 an hour, $4 above the statewide minimum at the time. The governor's office estimated that more than 500,000 workers would be covered by this mandate.

As a researcher of health and labor markets, I joined with economists David Neumark, Gary Wagner and Vitor Melo to run a study measuring the impact on California's fast-food industry - specifically, whether restaurants employed fewer workers because of the ensuing higher labor costs.

We found that the answer depends on which establishments you look at.

For the state as a whole, the law didn't affect employment in any statistically detectable way, we concluded. But smaller chains did take a hit, with employment falling by roughly 20%, while the number of locations dropped by about 10%. New openings fell by 17%-20%, and closures rose by 9%-21%.

This employment decline comes almost entirely from fast-food chains ceasing to operate in California, rather than from staffing cuts at the locations that remain.

The impact of minimum wage hikes holds importance far beyond the fast-food sector. Their proponents point to the fact that the federal minimum wage of $7.25 an hour has stayed unchanged since 2009 and argue that states and municipalities need to take action on their own.

Los Angeles is phasing in a $30 wage for hotel and airport workers, while California's healthcare workers just received another scheduled increase. Vermont lawmakers have proposed a $20 fast-food wage of their own.

In addition, a total of 16 states will raise their minimum wages across the board on Jan. 1, 2027.

The question of whether and how minimum wages affect employment still provokes a vigorous debate among economists.

In California's case, some researchers have found that lifting the minimum wage caused small declines in employment compared with other states; others contend that the effect on jobs is essentially zero.

More broadly, some researchers have found that minimum wage hikes cost jobs. But the time horizon matters, and effects tend to get larger in the long run.

Our study didn't try to settle that disagreement. Instead, we wanted to find out how employers did adjust, and whether large and small chains responded differently. What happens when higher minimum wages raise one sector's costs and prices while its closest substitutes - such as sit-down restaurants - keep paying the lower statewide minimum wage?

We relied on a database that recorded every business location in the country by name, along with the number of employed workers, each year. That let us directly identify the chains that were subject to California's law, count each chains' national footprint to apply the 60-location rule, and track outcomes from 2019 through 2025: total employment, employment at locations that stayed open, the number of locations, and openings and closures.

We also compared California with other states and separately compared each chain's California restaurants with the same chain's restaurants elsewhere. Finally, we divided the covered chains into two groups: The 20 largest, which account for about 60% of covered jobs, and the 261 smaller ones.

For the state as a whole, we found that employment at covered restaurants was basically unchanged, and employment at restaurants that stayed open didn't change. Among the 20 largest chains, there was no detectable effect at all for any of the measures we tracked over this period.

But the smaller chains tell a different story, recording substantial declines in employment, locations and openings, while closures rose.

How to reconcile the flat statewide numbers with the sharp effects on smaller chains? The largest chains employ most of the workers affected by the new minimum wage rule, so the statewide total is dominated by them. And the reduced entry and higher exit among smaller chains may have eased competitive pressure on the largest ones.

A final point: The biggest chains tend to be the most automated, relying more on equipment such as self-serve kiosks that can reduce the number of workers needed. That may help explain the muted employment response among these larger businesses.

First, we caution that the absence of a clear short-run effect on total employment doesn't prove that the policy won't cause bigger job losses over time as companies adapt to the new law. We also can't answer what happened to the workers at the most affected restaurants or what happened to prices at those establishments, although other research suggests they rose by 3% to 4%.

That said, the law was implemented barely 2½ years ago, and some of the larger effects that economists might expect - such as the closure of labor-intensive restaurants or fewer openings - are already apparent among smaller chains.

Second, it's important to remember that California's fast-food minimum wage applies only to chains with 60 or more locations. So the smaller chains in that range likely lack the scale, automation and pricing power of the national brands and are most sensitive to the new wage floor. Indeed, the law appears to have shifted California's fast-food market toward its largest chains, a pattern that other researchers documented in a similar study that looked at Germany's national minimum wage.

For the cities and states now weighing wage floors of their own, the California evidence isn't a slam dunk either way. It shows that the costs, broadly speaking, fall first on the smaller chains covered by the law - but whether it meaningfully impacts the largest chains is unclear. (AP)

Fines of up to 5% of global revenue

Australia moves to tighten rules on big tech

MELBOURNE, Australia, Nov 24, (AP): The Australian government clinched a political deal on Tuesday to introduce online safety laws that could expose tech giants to multibillion-dollar fines for failing to prevent foreseeable online harms. The United States warned that the legislation would lead to censorship of lawful speech.

The Digital Duty of Care Bill would require Big Tech to proactively reduce the risk of harm before it occurs, according to an Australian government statement.

The legislation is similar to the European Union's Digital Services Act, passed in 2022, and the United Kingdom's Online Safety Act passed a year later.

The proposed legislation would set minimum safety standards for online services, including games, apps and artificial intelligence chatbots, requiring them to protect Australians from seriously harmful material and conduct, the government said.

"We can't cure the internet, but this is providing some basic safety standards and saying if you build it, you are responsible for its risks," Communications Minister Anika Wells told reporters at Parliament House in Canberra.

Wells announced on Tuesday her center-left Labor Party government had accepted amendments proposed by the minor Greens party to get the legislation through the Senate, where no party holds a majority.

Greens leader David Shoebridge confirmed his party had agreed to support the amended bill.

"Today we are taking power back from a handful of billionaire-owned, largely U.S. corporations and giving it back to Australians who have been paying too high a price for their profits," Shoebridge said in a statement.

The Senate will likely pass the bill on Wednesday and the House of Representatives, where the government holds a majority, would pass it into law before Parliament rises for the year on Thursday.

The Greens' amendments include increasing maximum penalties for breaches from 109 million Australian dollars ($72 million) to 5% of a tech company's global revenue.

U.S. President Donald Trump's administration expressed "serious concerns" in a submission in September to a parliamentary committee examining the draft law. U.S. concerns included how Australia would designate what constitutes "foreseeable harm."

U.S. Ambassador to Australia David Brat said he had conveyed his government's objections to the amended legislation to Wells on Tuesday.

"Vaguely defined 'harms,' backed by penalties of up to 5% of global revenue, will push platforms to censor lawful speech," Brat posted on social media.

"As Australia's largest foreign investor, the U.S. is concerned with regulations that impose disproportionate compliance burdens on American companies relative to competitors," he added.

Wells said of their conversation: "There are points of difference and we're ironing them out."

The conservative opposition Liberal Party shares U.S. concerns that the bill empowers government ministers and the nation's online safety watchdog to judge what was harmful. Opposition lawmakers oppose the legislation.



Australia's Minister for Communications Anika Wells speaks to journalists at a press conference at the Parliament House in Canberra, Australia, Tuesday, Nov. 24, 2026. (AP)

"This bill undermines both the online safety of Australians and our freedom of expression," senior opposition senator Sarah Henderson told reporters.

The Greens' amendments would also give people a legal right to sue social media companies in Australian courts for harms suffered online.

It follows Australian mining magnate Andrew Forrest having to go to U.S. courts to sue Meta over scam ads on its platforms that use his likeness without permission. The case is not yet resolved.

In October, a U.S. judge ordered Meta to pay New Mexico $25 billion after a jury found the company liable for deceiving users about privacy on Facebook, marking the biggest fine ever against the tech giant.

Australia's bill would also let social media users opt out of algorithms that send them content and empower Australia's online safety watchdog to remove apps and websites that fabricate naked images from genuine images of people.

It would also require protections for children against content that promotes eating disorders, hostile ideas about women, pornography, crime or dangerous stunts, or causes serious mental health distress.

Lisa Given, an information sciences expert at RMIT University in Melbourne, described the draft legislation as "very good" and largely in line with European laws.

"It'll be very interesting to see what happens now globally," Given said. "I've always been of the view that if countries can band together and put through similar legislation, collectively we have a better chance of actually pushing Big Tech to make real changes in terms of the design of their systems."

Kuwait swimmers wrap up Arab Championships with 75 medals

Al-Gharib hails Kuwaiti swimmers' medal-winning performance

MANAMA, Nov 24, (KUNA): Kuwait brought its campaign at the fifth Arab Aquatics Championships to a close on the final day with 21 additional medals, taking its overall tally to an impressive 75.

The latest haul comprised three gold, six silver and 12 bronze medals, bringing Kuwait's total to 19 gold, 24 silver and 32 bronze.

Kuwaiti delegation head Humaid Al-Gharib told KUNA late Monday that Omar Al-Khalfan claimed gold in the boys' 200m butterfly (15-16 age category), while Saud Al-Enezi won the 17-18 age category of the same event. Hassan Rajab secured the third gold in the boys' 400m freestyle (15-16 age category).

Kuwait also added six silver medals. Mohammad Al-Otaibi finished second in the men's open 200m butterfly, while Hamoud Al-Hamoud took silver in the 15-16 age category of the 50m freestyle. Al-Enezi claimed another silver in the 17-18 age category of the 400m freestyle, and Khaled Al-Otaibi secured silver in the open 400m freestyle.

The remaining two silver medals came in the 4x100m medley relay events for the men's 13-14 and 15-16 age categories.

Kuwait's 12 bronze medals were earned by Khaled Al-Muthann, Khaled Al-Otaibi, Abdullah Sultan, Jassem Al-Taho, Jassem Al-Mansour, Yassin Al-Attiyah, Yasmeen Al-Subaih, Mohammad Ashkanani and Saud Al-Shammroukh.

The medals came from several events, including the 200m individual medley, 50m freestyle, 400m freestyle, 50m backstroke, and 50m breaststroke in various age categories.

Al-Gharib praised the performances of Kuwait's male and female swimmers, saying the medal haul reflected the efforts of the athletes and the administrative and technical teams supporting them.

Sahab wins Al-Safinat Stud Cup



Al-Nasser honors Khaled bin Shukr in Alaa Al-Roumi's presence.

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Sahab, representing Al-Haila Stable, captured the Khaled Fahad bin Shukr Breeders Cup for mixed Egyptian-bred C4 horses over 1,400 metres, clocking 1:55.76 minutes in the sixth race at the second meeting of the Kuwait Hunting and Equestrian Club.

Under jockey Salem Al-Ajmi and trainer Saleh Al-Ajmi, Sahab produced a winning performance to secure the trophy sponsored by Khaled Fahad bin Shukr, owner of Al-Safinat Stud.

Khaled Fahad bin Shukr and Al-Raya Stud owner Alaa Hamad Al-Roumi presented the trophy to the winners.

Sheikh Sabah Fahad Al-Nasser, Chairman of the Supreme Horse Racing Committee and Secretary-General of the Kuwait Hunting and Equestrian Club, also presented a commemorative shield to breeder Khaled Fahad bin Shukr in recognition of his support for Egyptian-bred Arabian horse racing for the second successive season.

In the other races, Zahi of Al-Hathlain Stable claimed the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Club Cup in the seventh race, held in memory of the late Sheikh Ali Hamoud Al-Salman Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah, the patriarch of Al-Nashama Stable.

Latini of Al-Khathiya Stable won the Kuwait Hunting and Equestrian Club Cup in the fourth race.

Kazma faces uphill battle to keep quarterfinal hopes alive

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kazma will be desperate to get their Gulf Champions League campaign back on track when it hosts Iraq's Erbil at 5:00 pm on Wednesday the fourth round of Group C.

The group's other fixture will see Saudi Arabia's Ettifaq meet UAE side Ajman.

The Orange is rooted to the bottom of the standings without a point after suffering three consecutive defeats against Ettifaq (2-0), Ajman (2-1) and Erbil (6-0).



Players jump for the ball.

Despite its poor start, Kazma still has a mathematical chance of reaching the quarterfinals, with all three of its group rivals sitting on six points. Under the competition format, the top two teams from each of the three groups advance, along with the two best third-placed teams.

Coach Dragan Tadich knows that nothing short of victory would give his side a realistic chance of reviving their campaign. A draw or another defeat would leave their qualification hopes hanging by a thread. The Orange will also be keen to settle the score with Erbil after their heavy loss in the previous meeting.

Kazma has been facing additional difficulties, with defender Fahad Al-Hajri suffering a cruciate ligament tear during last Thursday's friendly against Kuwait Club. The injury is expected to keep him out for the remainder of the season.

The club has also yet to register its two latest foreign recruits, Moroccan Yannis Merah and Nigerian Gabriel Orok, as of yesterday.

The duo was brought in to replace Yemeni Nasser Mohammadou and Brazilian Patrick Robson, whose contracts were terminated following injuries.

International coaches keep eye on the School Excellence Cup

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Several international coaches attended the opening day's matches of the General Excellence Cup football tournament for secondary school boys, organized by the Kuwait School Sports and Higher Education Federation on Saturday.

The coaches are part of a youth football talent development project launched in cooperation between the Public Authority for Youth and Sports and the Kuwait Football Association.

Their attendance added an international dimension to the competition, underlining the role of school football as an important platform for identifying promising Kuwaiti talent. It also allowed the visiting coaches to evaluate the players' technical abilities and skills.

In the opening-day results, Private Education defeated Hawalli 5-4 on penalties; Farwaniya edged Ahmadi 6-5 in a penalty shootout, while Mubarak Al-Kabeer overcame Jahra 3-1 on penalties.

The School Sports Federation highlighted the role of school tournaments in discovering and nurturing sporting talent, while instilling the values of competition, discipline and teamwork among students.



Players battling for the ball.

It stressed that school sports provide the foundation for developing future generations of athletes who can go on to strengthen Kuwaiti clubs and national teams.

Nasaf Qarshi plays Bahrain's Al Khaldiya

Kuwait Club seeks to draw level with Al Wahda

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kuwait Club will be chasing victory when it hosts UAE side Al Wahda at 7:00 pm at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium in the fifth round of Group A of the AFC Champions League Two.

The other fixture today will see Uzbekistan's Nasaf Qarshi take on Bahrain's Al Khaldiya.

The Whites are second in the group with six points, three behind leaders Al Wahda, while Nasaf Qarshi and Al Khaldiya have four points each.

Kuwait Club has plenty to play for in this encounter. Besides seeking revenge for its 3-2 defeat to Al Wahda in Abu Dhabi, a victory would see it draw level with the UAE side on points and strengthen its bid to reach the knockout stage.

The Whites are also eager to bounce back from their 3-2 loss to Nasaf Qarshi in the previous round, when they squandered a two-goal advantage after the Uzbek side mounted a second-half comeback.



Players preparing for the match.

Coach Firas Al-Khatib knows that victory is crucial to keeping his team's qualification hopes on track, particularly with its final group-stage fixture scheduled away to Al Khaldiya early next month.

A draw or defeat could prove costly, especially if either Al Khaldiya or Nasaf Qarshi wins its match, as Kuwait Club could slip to third place and see their qualification prospects diminish.

Al Wahda, meanwhile, will be looking to secure the first qualification spot and reaffirm its superiority over the Whites.

The UAE outfit currently sits third in its domestic league with 14 points, four behind joint leaderAl Jazira and Sharjah.

Prolific striker Varela scores again as Monza beats Fiorentina

Brentford routs 10-man Everton to mar Moyes' record-breaking night



Brentford's Callum Wilson, left, and Everton's James Tarkowski battle for the ball during the Premier League soccer match between Brentford and Everton in London. (AP)

LONDON, Nov 24, (AP): Keane Lewis-Potter scored with two deflected shots in the first half as Brentford hammered 10-man Everton 4-0 to climb into sixth place in the Premier League.

The double by Lewis-Potter had put Brentford in full control even before Everton captain James Tarkowski was sent off shortly before the halftime break after a VAR review for his high challenge on Yehor Yarmoliuk.

Vitaly Janelt added the third with a 30-meter strike in the 67th before a late goal by Fabio Carvalho rounded off the win for the home side, which moved one point and three places above Everton.

Everton manager David Moyes was marking a club record 593rd game in charge, breaking the mark held by Harry Catterick, but was given little reason to celebrate.

Lewis-Potter's first after 23 minutes took a big deflection up and over Jordan Pickford and his second, through a packed penalty box, also changed direction after hitting Thierno Barry on the way in.

Tarkowski then saw his first red card in 351 Premier League appearances for the veteran defender and the introduction of Jack Grealish at halftime - his first Everton appearance since he was dropped for breaching disciplinary rules a month ago - had little effect.

Moyes promised fans a more solid approach in next weekend's derby at home to Liverpool.

"We didn't play well enough and Brentford did, so we have no complaints and they thoroughly deserved to win," Moyes said. "The performance was way below the standards we've set and the way we've been playing recently. We just didn't play well enough tonight, but hopefully we can put that right."

Monza striker Gustavo Varela took his tally to 11 goals in 11 league appearances by netting twice in a 3-0 win over Fiorentina that snapped the team's four-game losing streak and lifted it out of the Serie A relegation zone.

In Spain, Levante scored late to grab a 1-1 draw at home to Elche in La Liga.

Varela got his first from the penalty spot seconds before halftime and then doubled Monza's lead seven minutes into the second half with a clever backheel.

It was the Portuguese forward's third brace of the season and means he is responsible for more than half of the club's 20 league goals this campaign.

Jay Robinson, the 19-year-old winger on loan from Southampton, completed the scoring on the hour mark.

Monza had lost its last four league games but climbed out of the relegation zone and into 14th.

Fiorentina is a point behind in 16th.

Daniel Requena scored with two minutes remaining to rescue a point for Levante in the Valencia derby with Elche.

Roy Revivo had put the visitors ahead after 62 minutes but Requena equalized with a close-range volley.

The draw means Elche snapped a two-game losing streak, but it remains second from bottom with 11 points from 13 games.

Levante, who has only one win in its last 10 league matches, is one point and four places better off.

Castle helps Spurs stay unbeaten

SACRAMENTO, Calif., Nov 24, (AP): Stephon Castle had 28 points, 11 assists and eight rebounds as the San Antonio Spurs beat the Sacramento Kings 123-107 without Victor Wembanyama and other key starters.

Wembanyama sat out with back tightness after posting 50 points and 18 rebounds Saturday in a 114-91 win over New Orleans. De'Aaron Fox (shin) and Dylan Harper (hip) were also ruled out against Sacramento, yet the Spurs shook off a sluggish start and improved to 8-0 on the road.

Julian Champagnie made six 3-pointers and scored 22 for San Antonio. He added seven rebounds, three assists and a block.

Luke Kornet had 18 points and 11 rebounds, and Devin Vassell finished with 16 points. Domantas Sabonis had 20 points, 12 rebounds and eight assists to lead the Kings before fouling out. He shot 8 for 9 from the field.

Zach LaVine scored 18, and De'Andre Hunter added 15 points, eight assists and seven rebounds. Luka Doncic had 28 points and eight assists, Jake LaRavia added 15 points and 10 rebounds, and the Los Angeles Lakers avenged a surprising home loss to the Jazz five days earlier with a 109-94 victory over Utah.

Matisse Thybulle scored 14 points for the Lakers, who have won 11 of 12 overall despite that 109-97 loss to the Jazz last Wednesday, ending a nine-game winning streak. Los Angeles struggled again in the rematch before breaking open a close game with a 17-5 run to start the fourth quarter. Kyle Filipowski had 21 points and 12 rebounds for the Jazz, who have lost three straight since beating both Los Angeles teams in back-to-back games last week. Utah is 3-16 this season, with more wins in Southern California than in Salt Lake City.

After an impressive 12-2 start to the season while Doncic scored at least 40 points in seven games, the Lakers have stumbled through four home games over the past seven days, laboring each night against unheralded Charlotte, Utah and Sacramento - yet LA still managed to go 3-1.

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Brentford's Callum Wilson shoots on goal during the Premier League soccer match against Everton in London. Brentford won 4-0. (AP)

Sports

Kuwait reviews security, logistical plans for Saudi Super Cup

Sheikh Fahad chairs coordination meeting

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah chaired a coordination meeting on Tuesday to review preparations for hosting the Saudi Football Super Cup in Kuwait next December.

The Ministry of Interior said in a statement that the meeting focused on enhancing coordination among the concerned authorities and finalizing arrangements for the tournament to ensure seamless integration of security, organizational, logistical and media efforts.

Discussions also covered the facilities and services required to welcome participating teams and supporters, as well as measures to ensure the smooth conduct of the matches.

The ministry said the meeting built on previous coordination efforts and reviewed progress in preparations, with particular attention to identifying and removing any obstacles that could delay implementation. The objective is to ensure that venues and supporting services are fully prepared, traffic and organizational arrangements are in place, and the safety of spectators and participants is maintained.

The ministry stressed that all efforts are being coordinated to ensure the tournament is staged in a manner that reflects Kuwait's standing as a host country.

The meeting was attended by Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology and Acting Minister of Information and Culture Omar Al-Omar, Minister of State for Youth and Sports Dr Tareq Al-Jalahma, and Kuwait Football Association President Sheikh Ahmad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Representatives of the ministries of Interior, Health, Finance, and Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy also attended, along with officials from the Kuwait Fire Force, Kuwait Municipality, the Public Authority for Youth and Sports, and private-sector entities involved in hosting the tournament.



Ministry of Interior photo

First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah chairs the coordination meeting.

Sheikh Al-Badr hails Kuwait's medal haul at Arab Aquatics Championships

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kuwait and Asian Aquatics Federation President, Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr praised Kuwait's outstanding performance at the fifth Arab Aquatics Championships in Bahrain 2026, where the national team finished with an impressive haul of 75 medals — 19 gold, 24 silver and 32 bronze.

He said the achievement reflected the athletes' determination and the combined efforts of all those involved in supporting and preparing the national teams.

Sheikh Al-Badr highlighted the technical abilities and fighting spirit displayed by the swimmers, while commending the coaching and administrative staff for their hard work in preparing the team for the championships.

He also acknowledged the support of the Public Authority for Youth and Sports, along with the contributions of other institutions that helped create the right conditions for the team to excel.

Kuwait added 21 medals on the final day, including three gold, six silver and 12 bronze, bringing its successful campaign to a fitting close.

Sheikh Al-Badr praised the athletes' performances and sportsmanship throughout the competition, describing their overall showing as a source of pride.

He concluded by congratulating the swimmers and their technical and administrative teams, expressing hope that they would build on this success, achieve further honours in upcoming competitions and continue to fly Kuwait's flag high on the regional and international sporting stage.



Kuwait and Asian Aquatics Federation President, Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr

Qadsia edges Sulaibikhat for bronze

Kazma reigns supreme in Volleyball Federation Cup



Volleyball Federation President Dr Jaber Al-Merri presents the championship trophy to Kazma.

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

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Kazma claimed the 2025-2026 Volleyball Federation Cup title for the 14th time in its history after defeating Kuwait Club 3-1 in the final at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex.

The Orange produced a strong performance in a closely fought encounter to secure the trophy and bring its campaign to a successful conclusion.

In the third-place playoff, Qadsia edged Sulaibikhat 3-2 to finish third and take the bronze medal.

The awards ceremony was attended by Volleyball Federation President Dr Jaber Al-Merri, Secretary-General Talal Al-Namash, board member Ziad Al-Enezi and Competitions Committee Chairman Aref Al-Subaihi.

Al-Namash congratulated Kazma on their achievement, commending the team's impressive run in the competition.

"I congratulate Kazma on this deserved triumph and extend my congratulations to club president Asaad Al-Banwan, the board members, the administrative and technical staff, led by coach Khaled Al-Bahoua and Saad Yaqoub, and all the players who contributed to this achievement," he said.

He described the title as a major motivation for Kazma to maintain their momentum and pursue further honours in the coming period. He also congratulated Kuwait Club and Qadsia on their performances.

Kazma team manager Khaled Al-Bahoua said he was particularly pleased not only with the title but also with the quality of volleyball displayed by his players in the final.

"The performance was excellent, and Kazma showed its true potential, which was also evident during our preparations at the training camp in Cairo," he said.

Yaqoub described the triumph as an important milestone but stressed that the team's ambitions for the season go well beyond winning a single title.

Salmiya meets Tadamon

Qadsia takes on Fahaheel in Amir Cup quarters

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 24: Qadsia faces Fahaheel today as the 2025-2026 His Highness the Amir Cup quarterfinals resume, with kick-off scheduled for 7:00 pm at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium.

Thursday's programme features two more matches, with Salmiya meeting Tadamon and Arabi taking on Khaitan.

Kuwait Club is already through to the semifinals after defeating Nasr 3-0 in the only quarterfinal played in February, before the competition was suspended due to the regional developments at the time. The Whites will meet the winner of Wednesday's encounter in the last four.

Qadsia and Fahaheel will renew their rivalry for the second time this season, having previously met in the opening round of the Zain Premier League, when the Yellow Castle secured a 2-1 victory.

Qadsia is keen to maintain its positive run and move closer to capturing the prestigious trophy, which has eluded them for several years.

The Yellow Castle has enjoyed a relatively successful season, sitting second in the league standings on 15 points, four behind leader Kuwait Club. It has also booked its place in the AFC Challenge League quarterfinals after finishing top of its group with a maximum nine points.

Mohammed Ibrahim's men reached this stage with a 2-0 victory over Burgan in the preliminary round. The coach is determined to guide his side into the semifinals, reach the final and bring the long-awaited trophy back to the club.



In this file photo, Qadsia and Fahaheel players challenge for the ball during Zain Premier League match.

Qadsia will, however, be without injured striker Hamza Khabba. It still has several attacking options, including Eid Al-Rashidi, Abdulwahab Al-Shallal and Khaled Al-Kharqawi.

Captain Bader Al-Mutawa, Omani duo Abdulrahman Al-Mushaifri and Saleh Al-Rawahi, Moroccan Ayoub Lakhdar and Ivorian Cedric Gbo will also be expected to play key roles.

Fahaheel, on the other hand, has struggled to find consistency this season and currently sits seventh in the league with 10 points.

It suffered a 3-2 defeat to Burgan in the opening round of the Crown Prince Cup group stage on Saturday, following a 2-2 draw with Sulaibikhat in the eighth round of the league earlier this month.

Fahaheel had to battle hard to reach the quarterfinals, narrowly defeating Al-Shabab 3-2 in the preliminary round.

Nevertheless, Coach Martin Sevela has received a timely boost with the return of Brazilian forward Vitor da Silva, who had been sidelined for an extended period. Da Silva made his comeback against Burgan in the Crown Prince Cup and scored both of his team's goals, offering Fahaheel renewed hope ahead of tonight's crucial encounter.

CAS restores Senegal as AFCON champion

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, Nov 24, (AP): Senegal won back the Africa Cup of Nations title in a legal fight on Tuesday after the Court of Arbitration for Sport overturned an earlier ruling which handed the trophy to Morocco.

Senegal won the Africa Cup on the field in a chaotic final in Morocco in January and then lost it in a legal case in March because its players walked off the field in protest in second-half stoppage time.

CAS has now rejected that earlier ruling, citing referee Jean-Jacques Ndala's decision to let the game resume after the protest.

Tournament regulations said a team which refuses to play should be considered to have lost the game, but CAS said those rules were meant only for cases "when a team's conduct leads the referee to call off the game permanently."

Ndala "did not err in law" when he resumed the game, CAS added.

Senegal won the final 1-0 after extra time with chaos on the field and violent clashes in the stands. The result was overturned two months later as a 3-0 default win for Morocco by an appeals panel appointed by the Confederation of African Football (CAF).

Senegal beat AFCON host nation Morocco after a 15-minute delay in play. At 0-0, Senegal's team walked off the field to protest Morocco being awarded a penalty kick in the last minute of regulation time.

Match referee Ndala of Congo eventually allowed the game to restart, Morocco's penalty by Brahim Diaz was saved, and Senegal won in extra time.

The laws of soccer state that referee decisions are final.

In the first legal case in March, CAF appeal judges cited AFCON tournament regulations that if a team "refuses to play or leaves the ground before the regular end of the match without the authorization of the referee, it shall be considered loser and shall be eliminated for good from the current competition."

The CAS judges heard evidence at a one-day hearing last month and the court promised a verdict by the end of November with a full written ruling of its judges setting out reasons for their decision.

CAS verdicts can be challenged at Switzerland's supreme court though only on limited procedural grounds.

The next men's AFCON starts in June co-hosted by Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania.

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