



Page 16 **cricket**



2060 LOW-CARBON STRATEGY BASED ON ECONOMIC PILLARS Kuwait climate pledge echoes at COP28

50 oil companies to combat methane

DUBAI, Dec 2, (Agencies): Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah stressed Friday Kuwait's commitment regarding climate change goals.

Speaking to KUNA during a visit to Kuwait's pavilion in the Conference of Parties (COP28) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Sheikh Salem said Kuwait has clear commitments in reaching carbon neutrality in the oil sector by 2050 and all sectors of the State by 2060.

He expressed his honor representing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; who during COP27 hosted by Egypt's Sharm El-Sheikh had shed light on the aforementioned goals. "We are moving to achieve these goals and we are on the right track," the Kuwaiti top diplomat noted.

Attended by more than 70,000 persons from 198 countries, COP28 will last until December 12.

Kuwait is participating with the pavilion including several representatives of agencies concerned with environment and climate issues, as well as development and sustainability.

Kuwait lends utmost significance to climate change on a State level, said His Highness the Amir's Representative Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Friday.

Stressing the country's involvement in global efforts to limit impacts of climate change, the Kuwaiti top diplomat pointed to programs and plans put in action to address the environmental matter, including low-carbon emission strategies in oil, transportation, industrial and agricul-



KUNA photo
Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (left) at the COP28 U.N. Climate Summit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

tural sectors.

He told the Conference of Parties (COP28) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change that such plans aim at achieving sustainable growth through a circular carbon economy.

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Health stable: Amiri Diwan

Kuwait prosecution warns against false reports on HH Amir's health

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2, (KUNA): The Public Prosecution warned Saturday that it would take firm legal measures against any individual, group, platform or media outlet reporting or publishing "false" news about the health of His Highness the Amir or the arrangements of the Ruling House.

In a statement, the Prosecution said that it carefully followed; and with grave concern, what has been covered by media and some individuals on all types of networks and outlets, detecting "false" reports about His

Highness's health and the aforementioned arrangements. Should they be taken, the measures will be in line with Article 167 of the Constitution, it noted.

Meanwhile, the health condition of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah remains stable, said the Amiri Diwan on Saturday.

In a statement, Amiri Diwan Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah also prayed to Almighty Allah to bestow good health and swift recovery upon His Highness the Amir.

Kuwait pushes legal framework for 'global financial hub' status

— Details Page 8 —

Call for accountability

'Delays' in combating fake degrees unacceptable: MP

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: MP Hamad Al-Elyan has forwarded queries to Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Adel Al-Manea about Law No. 78/2019 regarding fake academic certificates.

He wants to know why the executive regulations for the law have yet to be issued although more than four years have passed since the law was ratified and published in Kuwait Gazette. He pointed out that the law is one way of addressing the fake academic certificates issue, considering it prohibits the accreditation of non-equivalent certificates. He asked if the law is suspended, the negative consequences on the labor market if the response is in the affirmative, and steps taken to push for the issuance of the executive regulations for the law.

MP Hassan Jawhar asked Minister of Justice and State Minister for Housing Affairs Faleh Al-Raqaba about the target date for issuing the executive regulations of Law No. 118/2023 on housing and establishment of new residential areas. He said the law was published in Kuwait Gazette on Aug 27, 2023 and Article 39 of the law stipulates the issuance of the executive regulations within three months upon the official publication. He inquired if the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) has specified the locations for the new residential areas as per the law, details about the specified places, and target completion date for each residential area.

Deadline

Jawhar also asked if the Higher Election Commission was formed as per Article Two of Law No. 120/2023, indicating that the law specified the deadline for the issuance of the executive -- within six months after the official publication. He added the law was published more than three months ago, adding that Article Two mandates the minister to form the Higher Election Commission board consisting of five Kuwaiti judges at the Court of Appeals or the Court of Cassation. He cited Article 66 of the law, mandating the Higher Election Commission to issue the executive regulations within six months after the official publication. He wants to know if the board was formed as per Article Two as a prelude to the enforcement of Article 66, which mandates the commission to issue the executive regulations. He then emphasized the importance of the Election Law in the implementation of political reform and in conducting fair elections.

MP Shuaib Shaaban asked Al-Raqaba about the criteria for appointing senior officials at Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha), conditions for the renewal of their term, entity tasked to assess their performance, procedures followed for the appointment of the secretary general and assistant secretary general at the authority, copies of decisions regarding their appointment issued in fiscal 2022/2023, if the Board of Trustees approved their appointment as per the law, rationale behind the decision of the chairman of Nazaha to change the conditions for appointing senior officials and cancelled the condition of ensuring the efficiency of nominated officials, and results of the interview of nominated officials in fiscal 2022/2023.

He cited the final court ruling to cancel the decision of an assistant secretary general to appoint an official, steps taken regarding the court decision, if the official in question was reappointed in violation

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has cabled Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud expressing condolences on demise of Prince Mamdouh Abdulaziz Al-Saud, praying to his soul and expressing solace to his family.

Kuwait Crown Prince concedes with Saudi King on Prince death.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has cabled Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud expressing condolences on demise of Prince Mamdouh Abdulaziz Al-Saud, praying to his soul. (KUNA)

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DUBAI: Representative of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held talks with UK Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs David Cameron on the bilateral ties and regional issues.

During the meeting, held on the fringes of the Conference of Parties (COP28) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in the UAE city of Dubai on Friday afternoon, Sheikh Salem congratulated Lord Cameron on taking up the post on November 13. (KUNA)

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MANILA: China has executed two Filipinos for drug trafficking despite high-level Philippine government appeals to commute their death sentences to life in prison, the Philippine government said Saturday.

The Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila did not identify the two Filipinos, citing the wishes of their families for privacy. It added that it did not announce the Nov. 24 executions until the Philippine government was formally notified by China.

No other details were immediately given by Chinese or Philippine authorities about the executions and the drug trafficking cases. (AP)



Palestinians mourn their relatives killed in the Israeli bombardment of the Gaza Strip, in the hospital in Khan Younis, Dec. 2, 2023. (AP)

Gaza toll 15,200

Kuwait condemns Israeli aggression

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2, (Agencies): The Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry on Saturday voiced emphatic condemnation and denunciation of the Israeli occupation forces' resumed aggression on the Gaza Strip. The ministry, in a press release, reiterated Kuwait's call on the international community to shoulder its responsibilities and back all efforts to halt this aggression that has claimed, and is still claiming, the lives of innocent people.

The Israeli occupation's continued violations of international law and international humanitarian law should be faced by a deterrence mechanism whereby the perpetrators of war crimes would be held accountable, it warned.

In this context, the ministry underlined that this continued approach would undermine the peace process and the two-state solution.

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'One Hundred and One Nights' event paves economic path

Tourism and real estate catalysts for growth

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2, (KUNA): As preparations are in full swing for Kuwait Festival for Tourism and Entertainment due in January as part of Kuwait's vision to become a financial, economic and cultural hub, several concepts come to the surface, aiming at boosting non-oil revenues, given the paramount significance of tourism.

The festival to be held under the slogan "Kuwait: One Hundred and One Nights", is chiefly intended to transform Kuwait into a distinctive financial, economic, and cultural center.

The country's tourism sector should be developed and promoted with a view to raising its revenues that could contribute to bolstering the national economy and boosting Kuwait's non-oil resources.

Comparatively, the real estate sector, with all its various domains and infrastructure as a whole, has an integrated connection with the tourism

sector, thus serving an all-out vision meant to transfer Kuwait into a touristic destination by means of roping in Gulf tourists.

The organizers rely upon well-trained young Kuwaitis to organize such festivals and events through offering governmental services and cultural tours, and holding sports activities and exhibitions in a way that would prop up tourism in the country.

Kuwait abounds in fully equipped venues for hosting touristic activities, including parks, cultural and sports centers, museums and utilities.

In this regard, Chairman of the Union Real Estate Company Ibrahim Al-Awadhi, speaking to KUNA, said tourism is closely connected with the real estate market, and that's why they absolutely affect each other.

Tourism is also linked to services bearing on property activities that offer

services pertinent to the tourism sector such as hotels and hotel apartments, he said.

Growing touristic activities and festivals would unquestionably lead to drawing tourists and visitors to Kuwait, given that tourism contributes to promoting the commercial sector, Al-Awadhi pointed out.

He underlined that any State approach to reactivate a specific sector would certainly lead to promoting the property, entertainment and touristic sectors.

No but, once the sectors of tourism and entertainment is developed, local companies would seek to create job opportunities, innovative visions, products and projects, especially as the tourism sector has really become a very big source of revenues for neighboring countries, he opined.

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US Congress moves to block Iran's access to \$6b from prisoner swap

WASHINGTON, Dec 2, (AP): The House passed a bipartisan measure Thursday that would block Iran from ever accessing the \$6 billion recently transferred by the U.S. in a prisoner swap, a step Republicans pushed in response to the nation's alleged role in the deadly attacks last month by Hamas on Israel.

The measure - titled the No Funds for Iranian Terrorism Act - passed 307-119 as Republicans sought to hold the Biden administration accountable for what they call their complicity in funding Iranian-backed terrorism in

the Middle East.

"With such instability in the region, the last thing we need to do is to give access to \$6 billion to be diverted to more Iranian-sponsored terrorism," Rep. Michael McCaul, the Republican chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said during a debate.

U.S. officials have rebuffed this criticism, noting that not a single dollar has yet to be made available to Iran and insisting that when it is, it can only be used for humanitarian needs.

Republican critics like McCaul say

that despite the money being restricted to aid, it is fungible, and could free up other funds for Tehran to provide support to Hamas like they believe it did before it attacked Israel in early October.

The U.S. and Iran reached the tentative agreement in August that eventually saw the release of five detained Americans in Tehran and an unknown number of Iranians imprisoned in the U.S. after billions of dollars in frozen Iranian assets were transferred from banks in South Korea to Qatar.

Continued on Page 5

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	05:01	Asr	14:30
Sunrise ..	06:25	Maghrib ..	16:49
Zohr	11:37	Isha	18:11

Local

BIOMETRIC/FINGERPRINT APPOINTMENT: <https://meta.e.gov.kw/En/>

Bilateral trade amounts to KD 38 million: UAE envoy

Deputy PM praises depth of Kuwaiti-Emirati relations at all levels

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled praised the depth of the Kuwaiti-Emirati relations at all levels.

He highlighted the strength of relations between the two countries under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, and the President of the UAE Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled expressed his sincere congratulations to the leadership, government and people of the UAE, and praised the progress and prosperity it is witnessing in all fields.

Meanwhile, the Speaker of the National Assembly Ahmad Al-Sa'adoun stressed that celebrating the National Day of UAE is a good occasion that makes a person feel happy when attending.

In his speech during the celebration of the UAE National Day, he said, "The UAE and all the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council feel we are all one unit. After the occupation of Kuwait, we lost a country, but we lost part of a country. Our country is an extension starting from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and ending with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council."

Furthermore, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Al-Mishaal praised the strong fraternal relations and deep-rooted historical ties that unite Kuwait and the Emirates, and the two countries' keenness to develop at all levels.

In a statement issued during his participation in the celebration, Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Al-Mishaal expressed his sincere congratulations and appreciation to the leadership, government and people of the UAE on this dear occasion and his sincere wishes for continued progress, elevation and prosperity, under the wise leadership.

In addition, the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the State of Kuwait Matar Al-Neyadi praised the deep-rooted historical relations, the bonds of brotherhood, and the common destiny that links the two brotherly countries.

In a press statement on the occasion of his country's National Day, Al-Neyadi said the relations between the two brotherly countries are old and well-established, and they derive their strength from their wise leaderships.

Al-Neyadi highlighted the camaraderie between the people of the two countries and the continuous cooperation and coordination in various fields.

He said the large attendance witnessed at the embassy's ceremony annually on the occasion of his country's National Day is evidence of the love of Kuwait and its people for the Emirates and its people.

Describing it as a "mutual and unsurprising feeling", Al-Neyadi indicated that this popular feeling is agreed upon, sponsored and strengthened by the wise leadership in both brotherly countries.

Regarding trade exchange between the two countries, he stated that the volume of bilateral trade as of the end of last year amounted to about KD 38 million (about USD 123.4 million), adding that the data for the current year were positive and indicated an increase in this aspect.

Regarding cooperation in the field of education, Al-Neyadi revealed that more than 1,500 Kuwaiti students are receiving their university education in Emirati colleges and universities.

He said he hopes this number of Kuwaiti students will increase, especially since the UAE pays great attention to the field of education, adding that three new universities were recently opened for Kuwaiti students to study medicine.

Al-Neyadi affirmed the fruitful cooperation between Kuwait and the Emirates in the health sector, adding, "The Emirates has become an important destination for treatment. We are proud of the qualitative medical services provided by the health sector in the Emirates. We are also proud of the fruitful cooperation between the health authorities in the two brotherly countries in the field of organ transplantation".

Regarding the field of tourism, he said more than 300,000 Kuwaiti citizens have visited the UAE this year, "which confirms that it is a popular destination for Kuwaitis."

Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Mild with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speed of 08-30 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.
By Night: Rather cold to cold

and partly cloudy with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speed of 08-28 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	23	16

Kuwait Airport	22	13
Abdaly	23	09
Jahra	23	13
Salmiyah	22	17
Nuwaisib	23	14
Wafra	23	12

UAE marks 52nd Nat'l Day amid pioneering achievements

By Salem Al-Methen

ABU DHABI, Dec 2, (KUNA): The United Arab Emirates (UAE) celebrates the 52nd anniversary of its National Day on Saturday, an occasion that bears a lot of pride and achievements made over five decades.

The UAE is seen as a pioneering model of development and progress at economic, social and cultural levels, in addition to its continuous innovation and development, seeking to achieve its 2021 vision regarding a sustainable environment in terms of air quality, preservation of water resources, increased dependence on clean energy and implementation of green development.

This, in fact, makes this Gulf country, one of the best countries all over the world.

Of the most important accomplishments made in the country over the past years is the UAE Hope Probe, making it the fifth country to travel to space for this mission after the United States, the former Soviet Union, Europe and

India.

The country also continued making progress in several fields like operating the first peaceful nuclear energy reactor in the Arab world, namely the Barakah Peaceful Nuclear Energy Plant, which is the largest source of environmentally friendly base load electricity.

On tourism, the country has worked on enhancing this sector, which has become a main pillar in its national economy. It also launched the national tourism strategy for 2030, with the aim of raising the country's status as the best tourist identity all over the world.

Commenting on this occasion, Kuwait's Ambassador to the UAE Jamal Al-Ghunaim confirmed to KUNA in a statement Friday that this national occasion embodies the unity and cohesion between the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), especially Kuwait and UAE, to strengthen relations in all aspects for the benefit of the two countries and their brotherly peoples.

He expressed his gratitude to the deep-rooted

relations between Kuwait and the UAE, referring to joint efforts made by the two sides to boost them, congratulating the UAE's political leadership and people on the 52nd National Day.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Consul General in Dubai and Northern UAE Ali Al-Thaydi, in a similar statement to KUNA, congratulated the UAE's leadership and people on this day.

He recalled proudly civilized and development achievements made in the UAE at all levels, mainly economy, science and culture, in a way that boosts the country's dignified status internationally and locally.

"We are proud that the National Day celebrations coincide with the UAE's hosting of COP28 conference," he said.

The Consul extolled historical ties and deep-rooted fraternal relations between Kuwait and the UAE that have witnessed prominent stages of excellence that directly contributed to consolidating them and moving them forward.

Ban use of chem arms: Kuwait

Use of chemicals on Palestinians slammed

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2, (KUNA): Defense Ministry Undersecretary Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Mishal Al-Sabah renewed Kuwait's call for prohibiting the use of chemical weapons on a global scale.

This came while the senior official was presiding over Kuwait's delegation to the 28th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, held from November 27 to December 1 in The Hague, a ministry statement noted.

During his speech, Sheikh Dr. Abdullah expressed Kuwait's condemnation of the continuation of massacres committed by the Israeli occupation forces and their use of internationally prohibited weapons against the Palestinian people.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Abdullah said, during a ceremony held in the presence of Fernando Arias, Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), that Kuwait provided support and voluntary contribution estimated at EUR 70,000 to the trust fund of the SAB Scientific Advisory Board of OPCW for its efforts and ongoing work to permanently ban the use of chemical weapons.

On the sidelines of the conference, Sheikh Abdullah met Dutch Minister of Defense Kajsa Ollongren, during which they discussed means of developing cooperation between the two countries.



KUNA photo
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jarah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah holds talks with the British Ambassador to Kuwait Belinda Lewis.

Deputy FM receives UK envoy

Kuwaiti Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jarah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Saturday British Ambassador to Kuwait Belinda Lewis. During the meeting, the two sides

discussed bilateral relations between the two friendly countries, and developments in both regional and international arenas as well as topics of common concern. (KUNA)

Cooling water leaks at KNPC fuel units

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2, (KUNA): The Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) announced that cooling water is leaking out of fuel units at the Mina Abdullah Refinery on Saturday morning.

The refinery's teams have begun the process of gradually and safely shutting down the units while

taking all relevant precautionary measures, KNPC said on the social networking site X.

Maintenance workers are working to fix the defect as quickly as possible, and then to gradually restart the units in order to ensure that export operations are not impacted, it stated.

324 violations recorded

24 food outlets shut in November

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: Director of Hawalli Governorate Inspection Department at the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) Abdullah Al-Kandari revealed that the total number of violations recorded in Hawalli in November reached 324, in addition to the issuance of 300 violation arrest reports and closure of 24 food establishments, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily's staff accompanied a number of the authority's inspectors in an inspection tour in Hawalli recently. Al-Kandari later confirmed that this inspection resulted in the closure of two restaurants, a café and a fish shop for committing various violations like non-compliance with public sanitation regulations; as a large number of live insects were found in the establishments.

A decision on the temporary opening of the erring establishments will be issued soon in order to address the violations, then the inspectors will check the establishments again and submit a report in this regard, he disclosed.

He went on to say that in one of the

closed establishments, seven workers were caught handling food without a valid health certificate from the competent authorities; so the inspectors issued arrest reports against the employees and the owner of the establishment.

He explained that the authority takes measures against those proven to have violated the regulations based on the gravity of the violation. For example, if someone opens a food establishment without obtaining a health license; an arrest report is written and then submitted to the Public Prosecution. The establishment is allowed to open only for evacuation purposes. The owner must obtain a license to resume the business, he added.

On non-compliance with public sanitation regulations, Al-Kandari said the erring establishment is shut down and it is allowed to open temporarily to clean the premises, not to engage in business. Then, the authority's inspectors will check the establishment again, ensure that the violation is addressed, submit a report in this regard, and issue an administrative decision to open and continue the business, he revealed.

For grave violations, such as handling food that is not fit for human consumption; reconciliation is not permissible and the case is forwarded to the prosecution, he concluded.



Al-Kandari

Kuwaiti students excel in maths

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: Dr. Adel Al-Mana, the Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, has announced the outstanding achievements of Kuwaiti students Sarah Hussein and Youssef Kankouni at the Arab Championship for Mathematics and Logic Games, hosted at the Arab Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) headquarters in Tunisia, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement Al-Mana expressed his delight, stating, "This remarkable accomplishment underscores the excellence of Kuwaiti students in the field of mathematics and underscores their dedication to sci-

entific competition."

He commended the organizers of the competition for their efforts, emphasizing their commitment to supporting and fostering students, encouraging them to participate in such competitions that contribute to elevating the reputation of the State of Kuwait.

The sixth-grade student, Sarah Hussein, from Asmaa Bint Abi Bakr School in the Hawalli Educational Zone, secured the second position and was awarded the gold medal. Meanwhile, Abdulaziz Kankuni, a sixth-grade student at Abdulaziz Hussein School in the Capital Educational Zone, earned the silver medal.

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: The management of the Medical Emergency Department organized an open day titled "My Diabetes Life" to raise awareness about diabetes, in coordination with a number of parties inside and outside the Ministry of Health. A total of 88 male and female students from the age group of 9 to 16 years participated in the event.

In a press statement issued on the sidelines of the meeting, Director of the Medical Emergency Department Dr. Ahmad Al-Shatti said the activities during the open day included a marathon for students, and a health exhibition with the participation of 25 entities concerned with prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and provision of services from inside and outside the Ministry of Health.

He stressed that the importance of the event lies in simulating the risk factors or complications that accompany diabetes.

Dr. Al-Shatti explained that diabetes is considered one of the most common diseases in Kuwait, one of the most prominent chronic non-communicable diseases and one of the main causes of death.

Diabetes is a silent killer, and attention must be given to it through proactive periodic check-ups before falling into the diabetes trap. This is due to the fact that entering this stage may affect any organ of the human body, such as the kidney, liver, limbs, feet, nerves, and other organs that may affect the quality of life of a diabetic patient, and sometimes lead to death.

Dr. Al-Shatti stressed the importance of moving instead of inactivity, choosing qualitative and quantitative food, conducting periodic medical check-ups, and avoiding smoking in order to prevent diabetes.

He highlighted that laboratory tests were conducted to measure the level of cumulative blood sugar, blood pressure, and others within the activities and events of the exhibition held on the sidelines of the event.

Dr. Al-Shatti expressed appreciation for the role of the organizing committee in managing the marathon and the exhibition.

‘Ensure accuracy of news’

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: Assistant Undersecretary for Press, Publishing and Publications Affairs at the Ministry of Information Lafi Al-Subaie has stressed the need for various media platforms to ensure the accuracy of news and information prior to publication, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, Al-Subaie revealed that media outlets are prohibited from publishing, broadcasting, rebroadcasting, sending or transmitting any content contravening media laws in Kuwait. He warned that anyone who broadcasts rumors will be dealt with in accordance with the law. He added the ministry is keen on fulfilling its duty to follow up and monitor incorrect news.

He said media outlets have been referred to the Public Prosecution for spreading rumors and the necessary measures have been taken against them. He then urged everyone to be careful and obtain information from official sources only to avoid facing problems.

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: Demonstrating its commitment to fostering financial literacy among diverse segments of society, Gulf Bank continues to support the "Let's Be Aware" banking campaign for the third consecutive year.

The bank actively shares awareness and educational materials through social media, its website, and various other media channels.

Under the supervision of the Central Bank of Kuwait in partnership with the Kuwait Banking Association, the Let's Be Aware "Diraya" campaign seeks to advance financial literacy, increase awareness of the banking sector's role, and assist individuals in optimizing the diverse services offered by banks.

Highlighting the significance of reinforcing security against electronic fraud, Mr. Mohammad Al-Hebeshi, Gulf Bank's Corporate Communications Officer, stressed the importance of employing the second authentication method for electronic devices and applications. He explained that the two-factor authentication adds an extra layer of security, requiring individuals seeking access to an online account to input more than one password, thereby confirming the identity of the account or device owner.

Al-Hebeshi cautioned against the potential risks of neglecting security instructions in banking transactions and advised customers not to disclose account information or respond to messages from unknown sources, as it violates data confidentiality



Al-Hebeshi

and banking protection measures.

Customers were encouraged not to disclose their banking information and to remain vigilant against deceptive tactics employed by fraudsters seeking to obtain their bank data or OTP. Al-Hebeshi recommended refraining from engaging with anonymous emails to avoid becoming a target of fraud. Furthermore, he emphasized the importance of ensuring the safety of websites used for shopping, verifying electronic payment gateways, and avoiding potential fraudulent activities.

Highlighting Gulf Bank's unwavering commitment to supporting the Let's Be Aware "Diraya" campaign, Al-Hebeshi highlighted the widespread distribution of awareness messages across diverse media and social platforms. The primary focus is on educating both customers and the general public about safeguarding their banking data and information.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining robust developments in sustainability at environmental, social and governance levels through diverse sustainability initiatives, strategically selected to benefit the Bank both internally and externally. Gulf Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various parties to achieve it.

Moderate during day, cold at night

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: The Weather Administration Department has announced that the country is affected by an air pressure extending from the northwest, which leads to stable weather conditions; hence, the temperature is moderate during the day and cold at night, especially in the desert areas, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Head of the Marine Forecasts Unit at the department Yasser Al-Balushi disclosed that the winds are northwesterly to variable, with light to moderate speed ranging from eight to 32 kilometers per hour. The

expected maximum temperature is between 23 and 25 degrees Celsius, while the sea condition will be light to moderate with waves ranging from two to four feet.

He pointed out that the weather at night will be cold, and the winds fluctuate to the northwest with light to moderate speed ranging from eight to 35 kilometers per hour. He said some scattered clouds will appear; while the expected minimum temperature ranges from eight to 12 degrees Celsius and the sea will be light to moderate with waves ranging from two to five feet.

Other Voices

Judged by the way you deal with a ‘trolley cart’

By Ahmad alsarraf

The majority of us behave politely and civilized in developed countries, and we do the opposite in our countries or in societies similar to ours in backwardness, whether with regard to etiquette or principles, or in following traffic rules and regulations, and the requirements for fitness and safety in driving and punctuality, or behaving roughly in restaurants and theaters.

The strange thing is that all of this changes completely within hours, which is the time it takes to move from a backward society to an advanced one, where we often suddenly become kinder to others, and to those who serve us, and generous in using the words “thank you” and “please” and other compliments.

The way we behave with the “shopping cart,” after emptying it, is an indication of our awareness of society’s rights over us. Many people often do not bother to return them to their collection points, but instead leave them in the parking lot.

Therefore, the morals of an individual can be judged by the way he deals with the trolley cart, and in a better way than any psychological test or the opinion of a cleric, especially in the absence of a law prohibiting leaving it anywhere, in addition to the effort it takes to search for a place to place the trolleys, especially after a tiring and arduous day of shopping during extreme temperatures.

Psychologist Tati Silva says that the shopping cart theory makes some valid points, as it comes down to the personality of the individual.

Personality is shaped by genetics and the environment in which one is born, raised and educated, among other things, such as a commitment to honesty, virtue and kindness, which can be observed over time and through different situations.

She said that personality is strongly influenced by the different situations in which we participate, so if a person chooses not to put the shopping cart back in its place, this will reveal his personality, and he is somewhat excused for not having a law that forces him to put it in its place, and this behavior will continue, because it is the individual who needs to determine what is right and what is wrong, bad or good, especially in the absence of social norms or rules that determine the rightness of this behavior or not.

Silva also believes that the shopping cart theory can be expanded to include other behaviors as well, such as throwing garbage, cigarette butts, chewing gum, used face masks or gloves in the wrong places, even laughing sarcastically when someone falls on the ground, or not caring about holding the door for others.

These are considered matters that reveal an individual’s personality, morals, and upbringing. One of us may not perform these actions, because they were never part of our habits. However, this can be changed by expanding self-awareness. An example of a debatable moral dilemma that defines many psychopathic traits is the example of the “sliding truck.”

If we assume that a truck is moving along the road without a driver, and is about to run over and kill five people, and you happen to be standing on a pedestrian bridge and because your body is very light, it is impossible for you to stop the truck, even if you throw yourself under its wheels, then if you push a huge stranger in the path of the truck may be it will inevitably stop the truck, but it will be like sacrificing one man to save the lives of others. If it was ‘you’ would you sacrifice the man?

The answers, published in the journal Cognition, showed that people who answered “yes” scored higher on measures of psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and meaninglessness in life, compared to those who chose not to sacrifice the innocent man.

In conclusion, it is wonderful and logical for us to be human beings committed to etiquette and law, in the presence of others and the law, and more importantly in their absence !



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Trio in illegal fishing

Deportation for vendors

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: Personnel from the Jahra Security Directorate have arrested 15 people for violating the residence and labor laws – particularly street vendors and marginal workers -- during a security crackdown in the Al-Khuwaisat area, specifically on the Subiya Bridge, reports Al-Rai daily.

The daily added, all those arrested have been referred to the deportation center.

The campaign also focused on addressing camp-related issues, curbing negative phenomena, and ensuring the legalities surrounding the rental of camps and horses during the camping season. Specific instructions have been issued to prohibit the unauthorized rental of camps and the presence of food trucks and street vendors during this period.

It has been revealed that cases were also filed against those illegally exploiting state property for financial gains, and corresponding cases have been directed against parents who have neglected to protect their children, thereby endangering their lives.

Security sources emphasize a proactive approach to prevent activities that cause environmental pollution, citing what is left behind by campers is of significant concern.

There is a clear directive for security personnel to actively deter such actions, and there is no tolerance or mediation towards individuals engaged in these prohibited activities.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior has taken action against a citizen and two expatriates who were caught fishing in the prohibited fishing zone of Al-Haishan, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source the Operations Department of the Ministry of Interior was alerted when the fishing trawler was spotted in the prohibited area following which the Coast Guard intercepted the vessel and seized fishing nets and the catch.

The trio was then handed over to the Environment Public Authority where the citizen was referred for interrogation and the two expatriates were transferred to the Deportation Department.



Bus impounded by police.

Boisterous driver held

The traffic police have apprehended a bus driver after he was featured in a widely circulated video, showcasing his violation of traffic rules and laws, putting the lives of others at risk, reports Al-Rai daily.

The Ministry of Interior confirmed that requisite legal actions have been initiated against the driver, and the bus has been seized and placed in the traffic detention garage.

‘Multi-pronged strategy to curb scourge’

70 pc crimes committed by drug abusers: report

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: As the Ministry of Interior continues with its relentless war on drugs dealers, a government report says 60% of all prisoners are serving time for cases related to drug use and drug trafficking, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The report prepared by the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning revealed over the past 10 years 25,000 people were convicted of drug peddling or drugs use in 19,000 drugs-related cases.

The report pointed out drugs are the primary cause for the spread of many crimes, in light of official medical reports proving that perpetrators abused various types of narcotic substances that affect mental perception, and out of every 100 cases examined by the security services in the country, there are 70 cases related to drugs.

Moreover, a security source explained that the relevant agencies, under direct orders from the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled, has approved a new advanced plan to control and contain drug smugglers and protect the country from this danger, through several axes, most notably international coordination to dry up the smuggling operations targeting Kuwait, implementing strict procedures and modern mechanisms at the ports to control the contraband, as well as tightening the noose around drug traffickers inside the country and protecting the country from their evil.

In this context, a security source revealed to Al-Qabas that drugs seized in 2023 are the highest quantity than in 15 years, the last of which was 800 kilograms of various drugs, and about 1.5 million psychotropic pills, within 3 months (from August to October 2023),

in addition to thwarting an attempt to smuggle 800 kilograms of hashish from Lebanon to Kuwait.

The source pointed out that international coordination resulted in the arrest of smuggling gangs planning to target Kuwait and make it a transit station for promoting various types of drugs.

The source revealed 64 expatriates were arrested with drugs during the past two months and were referred to the deportation prison.

According to the data, a copy of which has been obtained by Al-Qabas, the Ministry of Interior, represented by its various sectors, was able to arrest dozens of suspects in various drug cases and they were referred to the competent authorities to take legal measures against them.

It was noteworthy that 6.150 kilograms of various drugs and 763 psychotropic pills were seized in one day in August. The Ministry of Interior registered 10 cases against 15 defendants, while it seized 15 kilograms of drugs coming via postal parcels, and 7 kilograms of psychotropic substances, and 14 cases were registered against 14 people, 250,000 psychotropic pills and 11 kilograms of narcotics were seized, in addition to 8,130 pills in the possession of defendants in other seizures, during the same month.

First Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled stressed that Kuwait is waging a fierce war against poison dealers, announcing “unprecedented seizures of drugs of various types and quantities during the past two years.”

He mentioned drug smuggling gangs mainly target ‘our countries’ in an attempt to undermine our capabilities and our youth, by trying to create a popular market for drug trade in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

Divorce bid rejected

Wife sues spouse for PlayStation addiction

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

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: The Personal Status Court dismissed a wife’s plea for divorce based on her husband’s addiction to the PlayStation game. The court rejected the argument, stating that while the husband may be engrossed in gaming both inside and outside the home, the cited reason was insufficient to warrant the dissolution of the marriage.

Representing the husband, Lawyer Hawra’a Al-Habib contended that divorce should only be granted when there is an insurmountable impediment to the continuation of marital life. She emphasized that her client did not engage in betrayal, was not financially stingy, nor cruel in his dealings with his spouse, and he did not neglect his marital responsibilities.

Al-Habib expressed support for separation if it serves the best interests of both parties, but highlighted that her client was keen on preserving the marriage.

She argued that the wife’s reliance on her husband’s gaming habit did not constitute a valid or logical reason for divorce.

Following the rejection of the divorce plea, the court affirmed that the presented grounds were not compelling enough for separation. Consequently, the court prioritized the husband’s desire to sustain his marital life, noting that he had fulfilled the necessary life requisites for his spouse.

Bouyabes fined KD 2,000

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: The Court of Appeals, chaired by Counselor Nasr Salem Al-Heid, affirmed the verdict clearing Twitter user Hamid Bouyabes of engaging in a hostile act against Saudi Arabia, reports Al-Rai daily.

However, he was fined 2,000 dinars for the misuse of a phone, specifically for insulting the Saudi Minister of Interior.

Initially, the Public Prosecution had charged Bouyabes with committing a hostile act against Saudi Arabia through his account on the “X” platform. The charges included insulting the Saudi Minister of Interior, demeaning customs employees, and deliberately misusing the means of telecommunications.

Bouyabes, in response, refuted the allegations and expressed his admiration and respect for the Saudi leadership and people.

In its verdict, the Court of Appeal maintained the acquittal on the primary charge, reasoning that a hostile act must involve a physical and external action. However, it overturned the acquittal on the secondary charge and imposed a fine of

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

To those who have been deceived by Satan goals

“IN every era and time, a group of lunatics descends upon humanity, who is tempted by Satan to implement their goals to the point that they are ready to commit suicide for the sake of Satan and his followers, so they are more devilish than Satan himself,” columnist **Abdulaziz Al-Tamimi** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

“In the fourteenth century, the Renaissance began to establish history and civilization on the shoulders of leaders of intellectuals, scientists, thinkers, businessmen, and religious leaders.

“The Florentine economist **Alvanzo de Medici** was one of the economic pillars of that Renaissance, and Galileo, the scientist, astronomer, thinker, and cultural theorist, was the first to announce to the world that the sun is the center of the solar system around which the rest of the elements and components of the group and its moons revolve in an organized, mechanical manner, neither lagging behind nor advancing one from the other, nor by a billionth of a millimeter from its path.

“This is what God Almighty mentioned in his book, and Galileo and his students and scholars believed in it. Then there was the great architect and inimitable engineer Michelangelo, who was entrusted with building Florence and creating it from scratch.

“It was the civilizational city that today is more than five centuries old and is discovered every day. A well-established engineering and architectural base taught today in universities and technical engineering schools.

“In that period, Leonardo da Vinci, the engineer, inventor, designer, and architect, came out with those who possessed bright minds and people of creativity. You find in our societies ignorant people who belittle the extent of their contributions, which continued for five hundred years.

“It was built on what the genius Da Vinci presented with many means that relieved the world of a lot of hardship and difficulty, such as the plane, the tank, advanced bridges, the clock, and transport wheels that divert water into other streams.

“There is the first journalist, George Fazzari, the owner of the first book and cultural reference documenting the artistic and architectural movement in the entire world, and not in just Florence.

“These days, you find some people who are arrogant with themselves holding some certificates that do not fatten or enrich the hunger that comes upon us without a warning.

“The creative and accomplished artist who served humanity with his generosity is disbelieved and the ignorant is glorified. Whoever says after man reached Mars that the Earth is flat and not spherical and that the sun is the one that revolves around the Earth.

“What is strange about these people is that if it had not been for Galileo and the geniuses of the Renaissance period who brought about the renaissance and technological development we would not have had the iPhone 14.”

Also:

“A glimmer of hope for a truce has emerged as the devastating Israeli offensive on the resilient Palestinian people continues. Despite international claims of upholding human rights, the plight of Palestinian civilians, especially women and children, persists as collateral damage in the conflict. The question arises: When will appeals and condemnations be replaced by tangible actions in a world governed by power dynamics,” columnist Dr. **Masouma Ahmad Ibrahim** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

“The Arab and Islamic gatherings, historically limited to denunciations, must recognize the ineffectiveness of

such rhetoric. Palestinian internal divisions only serve to weaken their stance against oppression, providing Israel with an unintended advantage.

“Israel’s leaders need to acknowledge that decades of oppression have not silenced Palestinian resistance. A shift towards peaceful coexistence is urged for the sake of stability, security, and well-being.

“The so-called “sponsors of human rights” face scrutiny for applying selective standards, favoring Western interests. The Security Council’s disregard for Palestinian rights raises questions about its commitment to principles and its misuse of veto power.

“The Western bias towards Israel, evident in media coverage and human rights organizations, amplifies the double standards. It is time for Arabs to appeal directly to the Western public, exposing the disparity between government actions and the values they claim to uphold.

“The Arabs must empower themselves to gain influence in the Security Council, as relying on Western governments proves futile. The real solution lies in breaking the cycle of hypocrisy and raising awareness among Western populations, challenging the status quo that perpetuates injustice.”



“The competencies and leadership revenge is clear. The phenomenon of dismissing or transferring employees in leadership offices -- whether civilian or military -- has become prevalent, such that once the new official assumes the position, he immediately proceeds to change all the employees or transfer them to other positions that are not related to the nature of their work or specialization, given that they follow the previous leader,” columnist Major General **M. Faisal Al-Jazzaf** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“This matter is illogical. As a result, the employee is harmed over a matter in which he has neither say nor responsibility. Also, the leader has the right to bring in his work team. This is a legitimate matter, but it is unacceptable for injustice to befall the employees, as many of them may be qualified in their specialization. It is unacceptable to view these employees as opponents. This is a mistake.

“As we are approaching the year 2024, the time has come for us to rise up from this action considering the abundant evidence for those who were wronged. They are competent employees who served their institutions for years before the appointment of any official to the position.

“The job is a public service -- service to the nation and society, not loyalty to individuals. This is the general principle. The leader has the responsibility to deal with impartiality, justice, equality and professionalism. One of his responsibilities is to evaluate the employees after working with them, as this is an indicator of whether an employee will continue or not.

“Injustice to people is injustice per se. It is necessary to correct injustice if it occurs. Public interest is above all considerations. Therefore, it has become necessary to unite and cooperate to establish the principle of taking responsibility, which is inevitable towards the nation and the citizen.

“The series of treason and the involvement of State employees in leadership conflict must be stopped as well. This has contributed to the decline and harmed the interests of the nation. The division of countries is based on public interest, not the interest of individuals. The homeland is higher and greater than everyone’s differences.

“Here, I quote Nelson Mandela’s statement in his memoir in which he wrote: ‘The mentality of revenge does not build a State, while the mentality of tolerance builds nations.’

“We ask God to protect Kuwait and its people under the leadership of His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince, may God protect them. May God have mercy on our righteous martyrs.”

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary

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Congratulations sent to leaders of respective countries on national days

HH Amir congratulates Central Africa, Romania, UAE and Laos

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has sent a cable of congratulations to President of the Central African Republic Faustin-Archange Touadera on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished President Touadera good health and further promotion and prosperity for his nation.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has sent a cable of congratulations to President Iohannis on his country's National Day.

HH the Crown Prince sent a congratulatory cable to President Iohannis on his country's National Day.

In the meantime, HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf sent a cable to President of United Arab Emirates (UAE) Sheikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, expressing sincere congratulations on the 52nd anniversary of the UAE National Day.

HH the Amir hailed the civil and development achievements the UAE has witnessed in all fields and at all levels, especially in the economic, educational and cultural sectors. This has reflected on the UAE prestigious status on the regional and international arenas.

His Highness the Amir praised the brotherly and friendly deep-rooted relations between the two countries, stressing on the importance of boosting cooperation in all fields.

He wished Sheikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan everlasting health and wellness, and to his country further progress and prosperity under his wise leadership.

HH the Crown Prince sent a congratulatory cable to President Sheikh Mohammad Al Nahyan on his country's 52nd National Day anniversary.

HH the Prime Minister sent a congratulatory cable to President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

Also, National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun addressed a cable of congratulations to Speaker of the UAE Federal National Council Sagr Ghobash on the 52nd anniversary of the country's National Day.

Meanwhile, HH the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad sent a congratulatory cable to President of Laos Thongloun Sisoulith on his country's National Day.

HH the Amir wished the president good health and for his country further progress and prosperity.

HH the Crown Prince sent a congratulatory cable to President Sisoulith on his country's National Day. HH the Prime Minister also sent a congratulatory cable to President Sisoulith.

Council to discuss ‘exemption’ of SMEs from fees for public events

Panel to tackle PART’s request on rainwater collection tank

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: The Legal and Financial Committee of the Municipal Council, during its meeting to be headed by Fahad Al-Abduljader on Sunday, will discuss the letter submitted by the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises regarding the exemption of small and medium-sized enterprises from municipal fees for activities on public roads, squares, sidewalks, and public squares. It will also discuss the proposed ministerial decision re-

garding the list of fees for the services provided by the municipality.

Meanwhile, the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate Committee in the Municipal Council, during its meeting headed by Nassar Al-Azmi on Monday, will discuss the request of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) to modify the shape and dimensions of the location of a rainwater collection tank on an area of 7,898.5 square

meters, and allocate a path to connect the tank in Sabah Al-Salem, Block 3 in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate.

It will also discuss the request of the Public Authority for Industry for the allocation of a site to build a station for treating liquid industrial waste in Sabhan Industrial Area, Plot 1. It will discuss the request of a Kuwaiti woman to amend the regulatory status of plot No. 156 in Abu Fatira, Block 10.

Furthermore, the Ahmadi Governorate Committee of the Municipal Council will hold a meeting on Monday during which it will discuss the Ministry of Justice’s request to renew the Municipal Council’s decision dated June 23, 2008 regarding the reallocation of a site for the Family Court in Egaila in Ahmadi Governorate.

It will also discuss the request of PART for the allocation of nine basins, five water channels, and four connecting links to collect and drain rainwater between the areas of Wafra, Qaradan, and Hufaira to protect Khairan. It will discuss a request from the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs for the expansion of the Mubarak Abdullah Al-Dabous Mosque’s parking area in Fahheel, Block 12.

In addition, the Joint Committee of the Municipal Council’s Technical, Legal and Financial committees, during its meeting headed by Dr. Hassan Kamal on Tuesday, will finish amending the regulations related to construction works and the attached schedules, and the final version of the proposal to amend table No. 1 regarding the requirements and specifications for private and model housing buildings.



Facade of Kuwait Nabat Poets Diwaniya.

Nabat Poets Diwaniya ... a minaret of genuine culture

By Hammad Al-Mutairi (photo feature)

ABU DHABI, Dec 2, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Nabat Poets’ Diwaniya, established in 1977, is a minaret for poets and poetry, constituting a key segment of the national cultural heritage.

The diwaniya, built with a tent shape in Subhan, is a symbol for preserving the national memory in the genuine poetic language.



Officials with winners who were recognized with certificates and gifts.

Taiba Hospital ‘collaborates’ with KU for Innovative Clinic Design Initiative

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: In a pioneering initiative, Taiba Hospital has collaborated with Kuwait University’s College of Architecture to nurture young talent and revolutionize its clinics’ design. This partnership involves a design competition for third-year Interior Architecture students, focusing on re-imagining several specialized clinics at Taiba Hospital.

The challenge

Students are tasked with creating practical, thoughtfully designed spaces that adhere to global healthcare design standards and prioritize patient comfort. Recognizing that a healing environment significantly influences recovery, these designs must differ from conventional buildings, incorporating unique color schemes, materials, lighting, and ventilation suited for healthcare settings.

Faculty insights

Dr. Hamad Al-Qabandi, from the College of Architecture, highlighted the significance of this collaboration. “This real-world challenge allows our students to contribute meaningfully to patient wellbeing. Hospital design goes beyond aesthetics; it’s about creating a space that alleviates anxiety and supports recovery,” he said.

Strategic goals

This competition aligns with Taiba Hospital’s strategy to engage the community and foster innovation among the youth. Dr. Nabila Abdella, Chief Medical Officer at Taiba Hospital, commended the students and faculty for their dedication to creating a therapeutic environment. She emphasized the importance of integrating psychological comfort into patient care through thoughtful design.

Celebrating young talents

The final designs were showcased at Taiba Hospital, with detailed presentations from the students. A panel comprising faculty members and hospital executives evaluated the entries, awarding the top three designs. Hawraa Abdullah clinched the first position, and all winners were recognized with certificates and gifts, celebrating their creative contributions to healthcare design.

Al-Ghadhoury appointed as MAIA undersecretary’s office controller

By Abdul-Nasser Al-Aslami
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs (MAIA) Bader Al-Mutairi issued a decision to appoint Nawaf Al-Ghadhoury as the Office Controller in the Department of the Undersecretary’s Office for a period of one year starting from the date of issuance of the decision, with all the consequences that arise from that.

In addition, the Islamic Studies Department for the Capital and Hawally Governorates in the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs plans to hold a number of training programs and courses for its administrators, teachers, and employees.

Dr. Mousa Al-Mazeedi will present a training program on the secrets of effective leadership from December 17 to December 21 in the Islamic Studies Department for the Capital and Hawally Governorates, targeting heads, agents, and supervisors of the centers. Lecturer Badr Al-Yaqout will present a training program on “The Power of Self-Change” from December 10 to December 14 in the Islamic Studies Department for the Capital and Hawally Governorates, targeting female administrators.

Lecturer Dr. Jafar Al-Haddad will present a training program titled “How to Become a Creative Teacher” from December 24 to 28 for the teachers of the Islamic Studies Department for the Capital and Hawally Governorates.

Dr. Haila Al-Bassam will present a training program on skills and patterns in creative teaching during the period between December 10 and 14 for the teachers of the Islamic Studies Department for the Capital and Hawally Governorates.

Lecturer Yousef Al-Huzaimi will present a training program on the art of effective communication in the Islamic Studies Department for the Capital and Hawally Governorates during the period from December 24 to 26.

Meanwhile, the Technical Affairs Department of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs has issued a decision to make “the virtues of Sharia rulings” the topic of the Friday sermon.

It was stated in the text of the sermon that one of the greatest characteristics of the Sharia rulings is that they link the servant in all their commands and prohibitions, legislation and etiquette to his Lord, so the person supervises himself and fears his Lord Almighty.

The sermon stated, among other things, that security would be achieved for people in their communities, and hence crimes would disappear or decrease, and whoever was not prevented by admonition, deterrent punishments would come to him. What distinguishes the Sharia rulings is that they bring together all the needs of the soul and the body. They therefore proceed with moderation, without excess or negligence.

It was stated in the sermon that Allah Almighty has prescribed for the servant of acts of worship that fill his heart with certainty and faith, such as prayers, remembrances, reading the Quran, fasting, zakat, and Hajj to the Sacred House of Allah, the Kaaba.

The sermon also legislated for him what fulfills his body’s instinctive requirements, such as fulfilling his basic needs due to which it legalizes marriage for him and explained the rulings and benefits it entails.

It was also stated in the text of the sermon that Sharia law has strictly forbidden immoral acts.



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Photos by Rizk Taufiq

Above: Some photos from the voting exercise.

Egyptians vote on day 2 to elect new president

By Fares Al-Abdan
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: For the second day in a row, the Egyptian presidential elections was held in the State of Kuwait for the members of the Egyptian community at the headquarters of the Interim Electoral Committee in Hall 4B of the Mishref Fairgrounds to elect the next president of Egypt.

The Egyptian Ambassador to the State of Kuwait Osama Shaltout explained that the people of Egypt in Kuwait are always at the forefront of the communities and have a sense of patriotism and active participation in drawing the map of Egypt's future and choosing the captain of the ship in the coming years to cross it to safety.

He said, "The Arab region is going through very delicate circumstances that require the solidarity of all its people, either as countries or as people. We are

going through a very delicate stage in the nation's history that requires us to actively participate and make a good choice about who will represent Egypt during the coming period.

The members of the Egyptian community in Kuwait enjoy their high patriotic sense of Egypt's issues, and they are indeed a model for Egyptian communities abroad to follow.

The exhibition grounds were carefully chosen due to its location in the middle of various areas of Kuwait, the ease of access to this location, the availability of public and private transportation, and the presence of large spaces for parking private cars or buses."

The Egyptian Ambassador Osama Shaltout thanked the government of the State of Kuwait, represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, and the Kuwait Red Crescent Society for providing all fa-

cilities to facilitate all procedures.

Meanwhile, the Consul General Ambassador Dr. Heba Zaki expressed her happiness with the wide participation of the people of Egypt in Kuwait during the first hours on the first day of the elections.

She highlighted the great keenness of the people of the Egyptian community in Kuwait to participate positively and paint the true picture of Egyptians abroad.

Dr. Zaki stressed that many Egyptian families were keen to be present early in the morning with their children to see that beautiful picture and express their love for their country Egypt.

She described the election day as "a day in love with Egypt."

Dr. Zaki said she is expecting large number of voters to arrive throughout the three days, especially families, adding that, "This is what great Egypt deserves from all of us."

KU to fill over 100 top posts

Required measures to be taken: official

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: Kuwait University intends to fill up more than 100 leadership positions soon, including seven directors and 15 observers, reports Al-Qabas daily quoting a source from the academic sector.

The source explained that this step must be taken immediately in order to implement work plans within the academic edifice and for competent nationals to occupy the leadership positions.

In addition, acting Secretary General of the university Dr Fayez Al-Dhafiri has announced some vacant supervisory positions based on the two decisions of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) on the regulations, conditions and procedures for selecting candidates for various leadership positions. He said these positions include the department director, controller, department head, division head and the like; affirming that the first phase will be the publication of these vacant posts: department director, controller and the like from Dec 3-9, 2023; while the remaining positions will be published from Dec 25-31, 2023.

He explained that the required measures will be taken once the period specified for the announcement of vacancies ends; signaling the beginning of the period for submitting applications to the Human Resources Department, followed by the thorough assessment of the applications to ensure compliance with the conditions through the coordinated efforts

of the Administrative Development and Human Resources Development departments. He added the Human Resources Development Department shall send the lists of applicants, who will meet conditions, to the corresponding work places to form the interview and selection committees, in preparation for presenting candidates to the Personnel Affairs Committee and issuing the appointment decisions.

On the other hand, Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr Adel Al-Manae issued a decision to stop the registration or enrollment of students in all levels of undergraduate and postgraduate studies in literary colleges at the Lebanese University.

He issued a similar decision concerning students at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in the Sultanate of Oman.

These two decisions do not apply to students who are already enrolled and continuing their study prior to the issuance of such decisions, as well as students who were accepted for the second semester of academic year 2023/2024 at the latest.

MoE excludes 9 employees: The Ministry of Education has excluded nine employees assigned in the confidential printing press for high school or secondary level exams in the former Ministry of Education building

in Shuwaikh from the task of printing the examination papers for the current academic year as they have children or relatives in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades, reports Al-Anba quoting a reliable source from the academic sector.

The source clarified this is part of the ministry's intensified efforts to complete the printing of examination papers for the abovementioned grade levels as scheduled, indicating the ministry assigned others to carry out the task of the excluded employees.

In a related context, acting Undersecretary of the ministry Dr Salman Al-Lafi issued a decision to amend the first clause of Resolution 54708 regarding the assignment of employees in the confidential printing press and the work mechanism therein, such that a total of 23 employees from the educational and administrative sectors are assigned to the confidential printing press. This decision takes effect in academic year 2023/2024 and the concerned authorities have been instructed to implement it properly.

'Kuwaiti women upholding national dev strategy'

By Abdullah Al-Enzi

NEW YORK, Dec 2, (KUNA): Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs, Ambassador Sheikh Jawaher Ibrahim Duaij Al-Sabah on Thursday assured Kuwait is keen on enabling women to partake in the nation's development strategies and decision-making.

She made the remarks in an interview with KUNA during the training program held by the Kuwaiti mission to the United Nations which spun on women's rights, peace, and stability in the region.

The event gathered Assistant Secretary-General for Middle East, Asia and

the Pacific Affairs Khaled Al-Khayari.

Sheikha Jawaher highlighted the importance of safeguarding women, noting that this training program plays a pivotal role in shedding light on the character that women can play in strengthening peace and security in our world.

UN Resolution 1325 was also touched on, considering it a center focus of global politics on all ends, she added, as our duty to society in essence leans towards the development of social, economic, and humanitarian aspects, in addition to enhancing the effectiveness of national, regional, and international efforts in preventing and helping the struggle of prompting gender inequality.

She mentioned the establishment of the Arab Women's Strategy for Peace and Security in 2020 in accordance with the Security Council resolution, which lead to the establishment of the Network for Women and Peace Brokers, priding herself in being a representative in the Network since 2021.

58-percent of the national workforce in Kuwait consists of women, with the private sector holding at 48-percent and 60-percent in the public sector, she added.

At the moment Kuwait ranks third in the Arab region in the women, peace and security index for the year 2023, as leadership roles in all sectors of the state are represented by 28-percent.

Kuwait condemns

Continued from Page 1

It also stressed that further relief and humanitarian aid should be delivered to the Gaza Strip, calling for carrying on efforts to stop this absurd war in a sustainable manner, leading up to a comprehensive and just solution for the Palestinian cause that includes an independent state on the 1967 border with East Jerusalem being its capital.

Meanwhile, the Health Ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said the death toll has surpassed 15,200 and that 70% of those killed were women and children.

The figure was announced Saturday by ministry spokesman Ashraf al-Qidra, who did not provide further details.

'Delays' in

Continued from Page 1

of the court ruling, if the State Audit Bureau (SAB) requested for refund of the salaries paid to the official whose appointment decision was cancelled, and reasons for allowing an expatriate officials to access confidential information on corruption issues at the office of the chairman.

On the housing issue, Shaaban inquired about the projects currently facing difficulties, list of concerned contractors, total amount of fines imposed on contractors who caused the delayed implementation of projects since 2000 till date, as well as the number and amount of variation orders for each project if any.

He asked Minister of Health Ahmed Al-Awadhi about the allegation that an expatriate employee embezzled a total of KD15 million from the overseas treatment budget by manipulating the receipts of hotels booked for Kuwaiti patients in Europe, how and when the crime was discovered, date of referring the case to the Public Prosecution, how long the accused official embezzled public funds through the submission of fake receipts, method that the accused official used to embezzle public funds, and procedures adopted to verify the receipts.

The lawmaker asked Minister of Social Affairs and State Minister for Family, Women and Children Affairs Sheikh Feras Al-Sabah to provide him with the list of public profit organizations, societies and charities that obtained licenses from the ministry; members of the board of directors in each entity; number of cooperative societies and date of the most recent General Assembly of each cooperative.

He asked Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Adel Al-Manea to provide him with the list of Kuwaiti cultural attaché offices; number of employees in each office; nationalities, qualifications and experience of these employees; recruitment method; and copies of job advertisements for employees in each overseas cultural attaché office since 2018 till date.

He asked Minister of Finance Fahd Al-Jarallah to provide him with copies of the budget allocated for SAB since 2014 till date and comments of the

Ministry of Finance about such budgets if any.

Kuwait climate

Continued from Page 1

Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah also highlighted Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development's role in this regard, noting that 105 countries have benefited from a total of USD-23-billion in developmental projects, including USD 523 million for green energy in the last 10 years. The State of Kuwait has also joined the One Planet Sovereign Wealth Fund Working Group in 2017, represented by the State's Investment Authority, he added.

Kuwait will soon present its plan, in implementation of the Paris Agreement, especially paragraph 19 of Article 4 stipulating Parties to strive to formulate and communicate long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies, he said.

Kuwait has clear commitments in reaching carbon neutrality in the oil sector by 2050 and on a State level by 2060, Sheikh Salem concluded. Acting Director General of the Environment Public Authority, Dr. Samira Al-Kandari, said that Kuwait's 2060 low-carbon strategy was prepared based on economic pillars and in partnership with the UN Environment Program in line with the state's development plans and programs.

In remarks to KUNA Saturday, on the sidelines of Kuwait's participation in the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) in Expo City Dubai, she said that the Authority prepared the strategy based on its mandate by the Kuwaiti cabinet.

She pointed out that the strategy includes Kuwait's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, indicating its ability to reduce the resulting carbon emissions by 60 to 80 percent if it follows some ambitious scenarios by 2060.

Moreover, She stated that Kuwait seeks to reach carbon neutrality in 2060, according to the announcement of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, at (COP27), by doubling carbon capture and storage projects in the industrial and oil sectors and working to reduce 7.4 of its total emissions in 2035.

Meanwhile, fifty oil companies representing nearly half of global production have pledged to reach near-zero methane emissions and end routine flaring in their operations by 2030, the president of this year's United Nations climate talks said Saturday, a move that environmental groups called a "smokescreen."

The announcement by Sultan al-Jaber, president of the climate summit known as COP28 and head of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Co., comes as he and others have insisted his background would allow him to bring oil companies to the negotiating table. Al-Jaber has maintained that having the industry's buy-in is crucial to drastically slashing the world's greenhouse emissions by nearly half in seven years to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) compared with pre-industrial times.

The pledge included major national oil companies such as Saudi Aramco, Brazil's Petrobras and Sonangol, from Angola, and multi-nationals like Shell, TotalEnergies and BP.

"The world does not work without energy," said al-Jaber. "Yet the world will break down if we do not fix energies we use today, mitigate their emissions at a gigaton scale, and rapidly transition to zero carbon alternatives."

Methane can be released at several points along the operation of an oil and gas company, from fracking to when natural gas is produced, transported or stored. Over a shorter period, it's more than 80 times more powerful than carbon dioxide, the greenhouse gas most responsible for climate change.

For months leading up to COP28, there has been talk that one of the biggest outcomes could be on methane. Not only do methane leaks, along with flaring, which is burning of excess methane, and venting of the gas all contribute to climate change, but these problems can largely solved with current technologies and changes to operations.

Tourism and

Continued from Page 1

This approach, undoubtedly, would result in boosting the gross domestic product (GDP) and easing reliance upon oil earnings for these countries, Al-Awadhi added.

For his part, Chairman of the Touristic Property Committee of the Kuwait Festival Association Hani Al-Seddi, speaking to KUNA, underscored the significance of spotlighting the role of touristic properties and tourism industry in general, since this would help in diversifying the country's income sources and raising non-oil revenues.

He regarded this being as one of the most important aspects of the first edition of the Kuwait Festival for Tourism and Entertainment due in January 2024.

He added that there is a close and positive relationship between investment in touristic real estate and the touristic environment as a whole as touristic properties play a significant and crucial role in flourishing tourism in Kuwait, just like other world countries.

Properties have clear-cut and tangible influence in the overall future dimensions on the way to making a local tourism industry and building a developed and prosperous economy, based on a distinctive vision of Kuwait's touristic roadmap in line with the New Kuwait 2024 Vision, he noted.

Furthermore, real estate contributes to boosting rental returns thanks to growing demand and landlords' ability to capitalize on relevant opportunities to rent their facilities at higher prices during the touristic season, he said.

However, Al-Seddi emphasized that environmental suitability would lead to sustainable real estate, and that traditional properties could face challenges in answering mounting environment needs.

Investment in touristic real estate is deemed to be a common option for investors to notch up great profits, with the availability of a various set of investment opportunities, he pointed out.

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World News Roundup

Europe

‘Add 170K troops’

Preliminary Dutch govt talks delayed

THE HAGUE, Netherlands, Dec 2, (AP): The official appointed to investigate possible coalitions after the Dutch election won by **Geert Wilders**’ far-right Party for Freedom said Friday he needs more time because of reluctance by potential partners to join Wilders in a government.

Ronald Plasterk, a former government minister from the center-left Labor Party, had been expected to present his report on possible formations early next week ahead of a Dec 7 debate in the lower house of parliament.

But in a letter to the lower house president, Vera Bergkamp, he said he hopes to report back to her early in the following week.

The delay comes after two key parties backed away from joining a coalition with Wilders. The new leader of the People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) of outgoing prime minister Mark Rutte has said she will not join a coalition led by Wilders, but would offer it support in parliament.

Pieter Omtzigt, the leader of another potential coalition partner, New Social Contract, told Plasterk he was not yet ready to discuss forming a coalition with Wilders.

He has urged Omtzigt, VVD leader Dilan Yeşilgöz-Zegerius and the agrarian Farmer Citizen Movement to join him in coalition talks.



Wilders

Ex-health secretary defends his record: Former British health secretary Matt Hancock defended his record at the UK’s COVID-19 inquiry, contesting widespread accusations of incompetence in leading the response to the biggest public health crisis Britain faced in a century.

The inquiry, which began public hearings this summer, is questioning key government officials about their political decision-making - namely when they decided to impose national lockdowns - during the pandemic.

Hancock played a key role in the UK’s pandemic response but resigned in 2021 after he was caught on camera kissing his aide in his office, breaking the social distancing rules in place at the time.

Ex-UK Treasury chief Darling dies: Former British finance minister Alistair Darling, a central figure in the UKs response to the 2008 financial crisis who later helped organize the campaign against Scottish independence, has died. He was 70.

Darling had been treated for cancer and died in a hospital in Edinburgh, his family said in a statement. He served as Britain’s Treasury chief between 2007 and 2010 under Labour Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who praised him as a “popular and effective” government minister.

Though Darling held a variety of posts during his 28 years in the House of Commons, he is likely to be remembered most for his work in steering the nation’s finances during the global credit crunch.

‘We see no reason to review our goals’: Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov delivered a blunt message to Western leaders Friday and declared at an international security conference that his government was not prepared to “review its goals” in Ukraine.

“We aren’t seeing any signals from Kyiv or its masters about their readiness to seek any kind of political settlement,” Lavrov told reporters while attending an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe conference in North Macedonia.

“We see no reason to review our goals,” he said. North Macedonia, which joined NATO in 2020, waived a flight ban on Russian officials so Lavrov could attend the two-day meeting of the OSCE’s Ministerial Council, prompting the top diplomats of Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to skip the event in protest.

Putin orders military to add 170K troops: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday ordered the country’s military to increase the number of troops by nearly 170,000 to a total of 1.32 million, as Moscow’s military action in Ukraine continues into its 22nd month.

Putin’s decree was released by the Kremlin on Friday and took force immediately. It brings the overall number of Russian military personnel to about 2.2 million, including 1.32 million troops.

It is the second such expansion of the army since 2018. The previous boost by 137,000 troops, ordered by Putin in August 2022, put the military’s numbers at about 2 million personnel and about 1.15 million troops.

Spy agency stages train explosions: Ukraine’s spy agency staged two successive explosions on a railroad line in Siberia that serves as a key conduit for trade between Russia and China, Ukrainian media reported Friday. The attacks underscored Moscow’s vulnerability amid the war in Ukraine

Ukrainska Pravda and other news outlets claimed the Security Service of Ukraine conducted a special operation to blow up trains loaded with fuel on the Baikal-Amur Mainline, which runs from southeastern Siberia to the Pacific Ocean in the Russian Far East.

Global Red Cross suspends Belarus chapter: The International Red Cross on Friday suspended the Belarusian chapter after its chief stirred international outrage for boasting that it was actively ferrying Ukrainian children from Russian-controlled areas to Belarus.

He is accused of having breached the Red Cross’ much-vaunted and much-defended standards of neutrality and integrity. The board of IFRC had given the Belarus Red Cross until Nov. 30 to dismiss him, and said it would suspend the branch if it didn’t.

Snowstorm causes travel chaos: All flights were grounded at Munich’s airport Saturday after a winter storm dumped snow across southern Germany and parts of Austria and Switzerland, affecting travel across the region.

After initially announcing a halt in air traffic until noon on Saturday, the airport later announced flights would be canceled until 6 am Sunday. Other airports in the region, including in the Swiss financial capital, Zurich, also announced weather-related delays and cancellations.



US Rep George Santos, faces reporters at the Capitol in Washington on Nov 30. The House voted on Dec 1 to expel Santos after a blistering ethics report on his conduct heightened lawmakers’ concerns about the scandal-plagued freshman. (AP)

Politics

Hesselbein elected new Senate minority leader

House expels New York Rep Santos

WASHINGTON, Dec 2, (AP): The House voted on Friday to expel Republican Rep. George Santos of New York after a blistering ethics report on his conduct heightened lawmakers’ concerns about the scandal-plagued freshman. Santos became just the sixth member in the chamber’s history to be ousted by colleagues, and the third since the Civil War.

The vote to expel was 311-114, easily clearing the two-thirds majority required. House Republican leaders opposed removing Santos, whose departure leaves them with a razor-thin majority, but in the end 105 GOP lawmakers sided with nearly all Democrats to expel him.

The expulsion marked the final congressional chapter in a spectacular fall from grace for Santos. Celebrated as an up-and-comer after he flipped a district from Democrats last year, Santos’ life story began to unravel before he was even sworn into office. Reports emerged that he had lied about having Jewish ancestry, a career at top Wall Street firms and a college degree, among other things.

Indicted

Then, in May, Santos was indicted by federal prosecutors on multiple charges, turning his presence in the House into a growing distraction and embarrassment to the party.

Santos joins a short list of lawmakers expelled from the House, and for reasons uniquely his own. Of the previous expulsions in the House, three were for siding with the Confederacy during the Civil War. The remaining two occurred after the lawmakers were convicted of crimes in federal court, the most recent in 2002.

Seeking to remain in office, Santos had appealed to colleagues to let the court process play out. He warned of the precedent they would set by expelling a member not yet convicted of a crime.

“This will haunt them in the future,” Santos told lawmakers on Thursday evening as they debated his removal.

As it became clear Friday that he would be expelled, Santos appeared resigned to his fate. He placed his overcoat over his shoulders and shook

Biden hosts Angolan president, seeks to strengthen Africa ties

WASHINGTON, Dec 2 (AP): US President Joe Biden hosted Angolan President João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço in the Oval Office on Thursday as he sought to reaffirm his commitment to Africa even as two wars consume much of his administration’s foreign policy focus.

The White House meeting follows Angola’s move to position itself as a strategic partner to the United States and as it has shifted away from Russian and Chinese influence under Lourenço’s tenure. The visit comes as Biden appears set to break his commitment to African leaders to visit the continent this year - though senior US officials have made key trips to Africa throughout 2023.

“We meet a historic moment,” Biden said. “America is all in on Africa. We’re all in with you in Angola.”

Lourenço praised Biden’s approach to the continent and said his country is looking to develop increased economic and security ties with the US.

“This is a new page that has been turned in US-Africa relations and that’s thanks to you, Mr. President,” he said.

Lobbyists for Lourenço had petitioned Biden administration officials to set up the meeting between the two leaders for months, warning that the absence of such a high-

profile engagement could jeopardize Angola’s commitment to working with the US.

“While others in southern Africa are strengthening ties to China, President Lourenço is shedding Angola’s historic relationships with China (and Russia) in favor of a new and strategic partnership with the United States. This is a fundamental shift in Angolan foreign policy,” lobbyist Robert Kapla wrote in April to Biden confidant Amos Hochstein, according to lobbyist disclosure records.

“We are informed that if President Lourenço is unable to meet with President Biden this year, there is real risk that the positive momentum both sides have generated since 2017 will begin to lose traction,” Kapla wrote a week earlier to Ambassador Molly Phee, the assistant secretary of state for African affairs.

The visit comes months after Biden and allies among the Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations unveiled a Trans-African Corridor connecting the Angolan port of Lobito with landlocked areas of the African continent: the Kananga province in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the copper mining regions of Zambia. It’s part of a global infrastructure program championed by Biden that is meant as a counterweight to China’s Belt and Road initiative.

hands with conservative members who voted against his expulsion. House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La, who voted against expelling Santos, was solemn as he announced the result of the vote and declared the New York seat vacant.

Also:

MADISON, Wis.: Democrats in the Wisconsin state Senate have a new leader.

The caucus elected **Dianne Hesselbein** of Middleton on Friday to re-

place Melissa Agard as minority leader, the caucus’ assistant leader, **Jeff Smith**, said in a news release.

The move came a day after Agard announced that she will run for Dane County executive next year. State law bars her from holding a Senate office and county executive office simultaneously for more than two months.

The jockeying comes as the state Supreme Court’s liberal majority appears poised to invalidate Republican-drawn legislative district boundaries, perhaps by the end of the year.



US President Barack Obama presents the 2009 Presidential Medal of Freedom to Sandra Day O’Connor, Aug 12, 2009. O’Connor, who joined the Supreme Court in 1981 as the nation’s first female justice, has died at age 93. (AP)



Britain’s Prince William and Kate, Princess of Wales arrive for the Royal Variety Performance at the Royal Albert Hall, London on Nov 30. (AP)



Trump



Chauvin

America

Retired Justice O’Connor dies: Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, an unwavering voice of moderate conservatism and the first woman to serve on the nation’s highest court, died Friday. She was 93.

O’Connor died in Phoenix, of complications related to advanced dementia and a respiratory illness, the Supreme Court said in a news release.

Chief Justice John Roberts mourned her death. “A daughter of the American Southwest, Sandra Day O’Connor blazed an historic trail as our Nation’s first female Justice,” Roberts said in statement issued by the court. “She met that challenge with undaunted determination, indisputable ability, and engaging candor.”

In 2018, she announced that she had been diagnosed with “the beginning stages of dementia, probably Alzheimer’s disease.” Her husband, John O’Connor, died of complications of Alzheimer’s in 2009.

O’Connor’s nomination in 1981 by President Ronald Reagan and subsequent confirmation by the Senate ended 191 years of male exclusivity on the high court. A native of Arizona who grew up on her family’s sprawling ranch, O’Connor wasted little time building a reputation as a hard worker who wielded considerable political clout on the nine-member court. Funeral plans were not immediately available. (AP)

Trump claim of immunity rejected: Donald Trump is not immune from prosecution in his election interference case in Washington, a federal judge ruled Friday, knocking down the Republican’s bid to derail the case charging him with plotting to overturn the 2020 presidential election.

US District Judge Tanya Chutkan’s decision amounts to a sharp rejection to challenges the Trump defense team had raised to the four-count indictment in advance of a trial expected to center on the Republican’s multi-pronged efforts to undo the election won by Democrat Joe Biden.

Though the judge turned aside Trump’s expansive view of presidential power, the order might not be the final say in the legal fight. Lawyers for Trump, who has denied any wrongdoing, are expected to quickly appeal to fight what they say an unsettled legal question.

In her ruling, Chutkan said the office of the president “does not confer a lifelong ‘get-out-of-jail-free’ pass.”

“Former Presidents enjoy no special conditions on their federal criminal liability,”

Chutkan wrote. “Defendant may be subject to federal investigation, indictment, prosecution, conviction, and punishment for any criminal acts undertaken while in office.” (AP)

Vegas police search for suspect:

Five homeless people were shot in Las Vegas on Friday, two of them fatally, and police were searching for a lone suspect, authorities said. The shooting occurred around 5:30 pm near a freeway overpass in the northeastern part of the city, according to Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

Lt. Mark Lourenco.

Two people died and three others suffered non-life-threatening injuries. All the victims were unhoused, Lourenco said.

“We believe this is an isolated event,” Lourenco responded in a text when asked if there was an active shooter situation.

One shooter was involved, but a suspect had not been captured, he said Friday evening. The shooting comes after police in Los Angeles announced Friday they are searching for a suspect in the fatal shootings of three homeless people in separate incidents last month. (AP)

Inmate charged with stabbing: Derek Chauvin was stabbed in prison 22 times by a former gang leader and one-time FBI informant who told investigators he targeted the ex-Minneapolis police officer because of his notoriety for killing George Floyd, federal prosecutors said Friday.

John Turscak was charged with attempted murder a week after the Nov. 24 attack at the Federal Correctional Institution in Tucson, Arizona. He told correctional officers he would have killed Chauvin had they not responded so quickly, prosecutors said.

Turscak, who is serving a 30-year sentence for crimes committed while a member of the Mexican Mafia prison gang, told investigators he thought about attacking Chauvin for a month because he is a high-profile inmate but denied wanting to kill him, prosecutors said. (AP)

Africa

UN ends mission in Sudan

Somalia president hails lifting of arms embargo

MOGADISHU, Somalia, Dec 2, (AP): Somalia’s President **Hassan Sheikh Mohamud** welcomed Saturday the UN Security Council vote to lift an arms embargo imposed on the Horn of Africa nation more than 30 years ago.

The 15-member council unanimously voted Friday night in favor of the British-drafted resolution to lift the weapons ban. However, France was the only member to abstain when voting on another resolution to reimpose an arms embargo on al Qaeda-linked al-Shabaab militants, saying the resolution lacked references to the territorial disputes between Djibouti and Eritrea.

In a statement sent to the Associated Press, Information Minister Daud Aweis said the embargo lift will help modernize the country’s armed forces.

“Somalia has been grappling with significant security challenges, including the presence of extremist groups such as al-Shabab. The Somali government needs access to modern arms and equipment to effectively combat these threats and maintain security within its borders,” the statement read.

The Somali president, in a televised statement soon after the adoption of the resolution, said the embargo lift “means that we are now free to purchase any weapons needed,” adding that “friendly nations and allies” can now “provide us with the necessary weapons without any limitations or restrictions.”

Somalia was placed under the embargo in 1992 to stop the sale of weapons to warlords who toppled former dictator Mohamed Siad Barre. The ouster led to decades of civil war and instability in the country as the warlords fought against each other.

Last month, Mohamud pledged to wipe out the Islamist group, al-Shabaab, by Dec 2024. The militant group has lost swaths of territory since the government backed by local militias, African Union troops and Western powers, launched an extensive offensive against it in May.

UN ends political mission in Sudan: The United Nations Security Council voted Friday to end its political mission of a few hundred people dedicated to ending the civil war in Sudan.

Russia abstained from the unanimous vote to end UNITAMS, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan. The United States’ and United Kingdom’s ambassadors expressed dismay over the decision to pull out from Sudan but said the move was inevitable, given the Sudanese government’s desire to end the mission’s presence.

While the United States voted in favor of this resolution in order to enable a safe and orderly drawdown, US deputy ambassador Robert Wood said, “we are gravely concerned that a reduced international presence in the Sudan will only serve to embolden the perpetrators of atrocities.”

A paramilitary group known as the Rapid Support Forces, which was born out of the notorious Janjaweed militias, has been at war against the Sudanese military since mid-April, when months of tension exploded into open fighting in the capital, Khartoum, and other urban areas.

Madagascar court ratifies prez reelection: Madagascar’s top court on Friday ratified the victory of incumbent President Andry Rajoelina in last month’s election, giving him a third term as leader following a boycott of the vote by opposition candidates.

The High Constitutional Court said Rajoelina received 58.96% of votes in the first round and was reelected without the need for a runoff. The results had already been announced by Madagascar’s electoral commission but the constitution requires they are ratified by the top court.

Rajoelina, 49, first served as president of a provisional government from 2009-2014 following a political crisis and a coup in the Indian Ocean island. He won a vote in 2019.

The Nov 16 election was marked by trouble. It was delayed for a week because of a series of anti-Rajoelina protests led by the opposition. A curfew was announced on the eve of the election after protesters torched some ballot stations.

A coalition of opposition candidates called for a boycott, although their names still appeared on ballots. Turnout was low, with only 46% of those registered casting a vote.

Kenyan cult leader gets 18 months: The leader of a doomsday cult in Kenya was sentenced Friday to 18 months in prison for the illegal distribution of films and operating a film studio without licenses.

The senior magistrate in the city of Malindi, Olga Onalo, handed down the sentence for Paul Mackenzie. The controversial preacher can appeal within 14 days.

More than 30 trapped in mine collapse: More than 30 people are trapped under rubble at an open-pit mine in Zambia after part of a waste pile was thought to have collapsed on them, a government minister said on Friday.

Home Affairs and Internal Security Minister Jack Mwiimbu said in Parliament that the collapse happened in the city of Chingola, in Zambia’s copperbelt, about 400 kilometers (248 miles) north of the capital, Lusaka.

“May I just inform the nation that we have a tragedy that is brewing in Chingola, where a number of our people have been affected by a collapse of the open pit,” Mwiimbu said. “We have more than 30 people under the rubble and we are struggling to retrieve them.”

He said rescue teams were at the site. Mines and Minerals Development Minister Paul Kabuswe was also at the scene and said no one had yet been found and it wasn’t clear exactly how many people were trapped under the rubble.

Gunfire erupts in Guinea-Bissau: Gunfire erupted in Guinea-Bissau’s capital city late Thursday night and continued through Friday morning during what local media reported as clashes between security forces after two senior government officials were improperly released from custody.

The shooting in the city of Bissau involved members of the Presidential Palace Battalion and an elite military division known as the National Guard, which illegally freed the two officials under investigation for alleged corruption, The Democrat newspaper reported.



In this image from video provided by SpaceX, South Korea launches its first military spy satellite from Vandenberg Space Force Base, California on Dec 1. Using SpaceX’s Falcon 9 rocket, it was the first of five spy satellites South Korea plans to send into space by 2025 under a contract with SpaceX. The launch took place a little over a week after North Korea claimed to put its own spy satellite into orbit for the first time as tensions rise between the rivals. (AP)

Asia

Japan expresses concern about Ospreys continuing to fly

South Korea launches its 1st spy sat

VANDENBERG SPACE FORCE BASE, Calif., Dec 2, (AP): South Korea launched its first military spy satellite into space Friday, a little over a week after North Korea claimed to put its own spy satellite into orbit for the first time as tensions rise between the rivals.

Launched from California’s Vandenberg Space Force Base using SpaceX’s Falcon 9 rocket, it was the first of five spy satellites South Korea plans to send into space by 2025 under a contract with SpaceX. The event had been scheduled for earlier in the week but was pushed back because of weather conditions.

South Korea had no military reconnaissance satellites of its own in space and has partially resorted to the United States’ spy satellites to monitor moves by North Korea.

South Korea’s Defense Ministry described the launch as successful, saying the satellite had a communication with an overseas ground station.

A ministry statement said the launch allowed the South Korean military to acquire an independent space-based surveillance system. It said the satellite would also help bolster the military’s preemptive missile strike capability, a key part of its so-called three-axis system that includes missile defense and massive retaliatory capabilities.

After two launch failures earlier this year, North Korea said it successfully placed its Malligyong-1 spy satellite into orbit last week. North Korea has since said its satellite had transmitted imagery with space views of key sites in the US and South Korea, including the White House and the Pentagon. But it hasn’t yet released any of those satellite photos. US and South Korean officials confirmed the North Korean satellite entered orbit, but many outside experts question whether it can send militarily useful high-resolution imagery.

The North Korean satellite launch sparked immediate, strong condemnations from the US, South Korea and others. Multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions ban any satellite launches by North Korea, viewing them as covers for testing its long-range missile technology.

Also:

TOKYO: Japan’s top government spokesperson expressed concern that the US military is continuing to fly Osprey aircraft in the country without providing adequate information about Wednesday’s fatal crash.

One crew member was killed and seven others are missing following the crash off southern Japan, the Air Force Special Operations Command said in

Manila opens a monitoring base on remote island in disputed sea

THITU ISLAND, South China Sea, Dec 2, (AP): The Philippines inaugurated a new coast guard monitoring base Friday on an island occupied by Filipino forces in the disputed South China Sea and plans to expand joint patrols with the United States and Australia to counter China’s “pure bullying” in the strategic waterway, a Philippine security official said.

High-seas faceoffs between Chinese and Philippine ships have intensified this year in the contested waters, fueling fears of a larger conflict that could involve the United States. The US has repeatedly warned that it’s obligated to defend the Philippines, its oldest treaty ally in Asia, if Filipino forces come under an armed attack, including in the South China Sea.

China has accused the US of meddling in an Asian dispute and sowing discord in the region.

National Security Adviser Eduardo Ano and other Philippine officials flew to Thitu Island on an air force plane Friday and led a ceremony to open the newly constructed, two-story center that will have radar, ship-tracking and other monitoring equipment to monitor China’s actions in the hotly disputed waters and other problems, including sea accidents.

“It’s no longer gray zone. It’s pure bullying,” Ano told reporters after the seaside ceremony, describing the actions of Chinese ships as openly flouting international law.

Dwarfed by China’s military might, the Philippines decided

this year to allow an expansion of the US military presence in its local camps under a 2014 defense pact. It also recently launched joint sea and air patrols with the United States and Australia in a new deterrence strategy that puts the two allied powers on a collision course with Beijing.

Ano said the separate joint patrols involving the US and Australia would continue and could expand to include other nations like Japan once a security agreement being negotiated by Tokyo and Manila was concluded.

Also:

MANILA, Philippines: France and the Philippines are considering a defense pact that would allow them to send military forces to each other’s territory for joint exercises, the Philippine defense chief said Saturday after holding talks with his French counterpart.

Gilberto Teodoro Jr said in a joint press conference with French Minister for the Armed Forces **Sebastien Lecornu** that they were seeking authorization from their heads of state to begin negotiations.

“We intend to take concrete steps into leveling up and making more comprehensive our defense cooperation, principally by working to get authorization from our respective heads of state and relevant agencies to begin negotiations for a status of visiting forces agreement,” Teodoro said.

triggered flash floods and a landslide on Indonesia’s Sumatra island, leaving at least 12 people missing, officials said Saturday.

Tons of mud, rocks and trees rolled down from a mountain late Friday, reaching a river that burst its banks and tore through mountainside villages, said **Budiono**, who heads the local search and rescue agency.

Worst hit was Simangulampe, a village near the popular Lake Toba in North Sumatra province, where several people buried under tons of mud and houses were damaged, said Budiono, who goes by a single name like many Indonesians.

He said relief efforts were hampered by blocked roads covered with thick mud, debris and giant rocks, and rescuers were still searching for the 12 missing people Saturday.

a statement Friday. One set of remains has been recovered, the Air Force said.

The search for the aircraft and missing crew members continues, the command said. “Search and rescue operations consist of a combination of air, surface, and subsurface search of water and coastline in the vicinity of **Yakushima**, Japan, in order to locate the crewmembers,” the command said.

The cause of Wednesday’s crash, which occurred during a training mission, is still under investigation. Search operations widened Friday with additional US military personnel joining the effort, while Japanese coast guard and military ships focused on an undersea search using sonar.

MEDAN, Indonesia: Torrential rain



French Minister for the Armed Forces Sebastien Lecornu (left), shakes hands with his Philippine counterpart Secretary Gilberto Teodoro as they hold a document during a joint press conference at a hotel in Manila, Philippines on Dec 2. (AP)

oil slips

The price of Kuwaiti crude oil dropped by USD 3.20 to USD 84.12 per barrel on Friday, compared with USD 87.32 pb the day earlier, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Saturday.

The Brent crude and West Texas Intermediate in the global markets fell each by USD 1.98 and USD 1.89 to settle at USD 78.88 per barrel and USD 74.07 per barrel respectively. (KUNA)

Kuwait’s ‘CHRR’ signals sustainable shift in UAE transportation landscape

EnerTech, a Kuwait-based innovator, investor and developer of end-to-end sustainability solutions, today announced the launch of a novel, solar-powered charging platform for electric motorcycles in the UAE as COP28 gets underway in Dubai.

EnerTech’s fully-integrated, sustainable electric mobility ecosystem, called CHRR, integrates solar charging points with last-mile delivery

electric motorcycles, marking a new era in sustainable transportation.

The first set of CHRR charging points will be deployed across The Emirates in partnership with the Private Office of His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Dalmouk Al Maktoum.

The agreement signifies the start of an expansive plan to decarbonize the UAE’s transportation landscape within the next

three years.

As the first end-to-end electric mobility platform in the UAE, CHRR is setting a new benchmark for sustainable last-mile delivery and is set to contribute towards the UAE’s journey to a net-zero economy by 2050.

Coinciding with the start of COP28, where the international climate community will focus on fast-tracking the energy transition with targets of tripling renewable

energy capacity and doubling energy efficiency by 2030, CHRR emerges as a breakthrough infrastructure solution for decarbonizing transport and logistics systems in the Middle East and beyond.

Commenting on the launch, Abdullah Al Mutairi, CEO of EnerTech, said, “CHRR ushers in a new era for sustainable mobility. At EnerTech, we are immensely proud to launch this

innovative platform in the UAE in partnership with the Private Office of His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Dalmouk Al Maktoum.”

“The development of this sustainable last-mile delivery solution underscores our determination to lead the region’s charge towards a circular economy and can play a significant role in accelerating the race to global net-zero emissions by mid-century.”

Market Movements 01-12-2023

		Change	Closing pts			Change	Closing pts
PHILIPPINES	- PSEI	+21.45	6,245.18	UAE	- DFM	-4.61	3,987.75
PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	+1,252.96	61,779.73				
EUROPE	- EURO STOXX 50	+36.04	4,418.51				
UK	- FTSE 100	+75.60	7,529.35				

Business

OPEC+ extends output cuts amidst lagging crude prices

Brazil joins OPEC+ as oil alliance expands

LONDON, Dec 2, (AP): The OPEC oil cartel led by Saudi Arabia and allied producers including Russia made another big swipe at propping up lagging crude prices Thursday, expanding some output cuts into next year and bringing up-and-coming oil supplier Brazil into the fold.

Lower oil prices have been a good thing for U.S. drivers, who have been able to fill their gas tanks for less money in recent months. But it’s bad news for OPEC+ countries whose oil income bolsters their economies and who have faced setbacks in pushing prices higher despite initial fears that the Israel-Hamas war could affect oil flows.

The OPEC+ oil ministers came out of an online meeting with more than 2 million barrels per day in voluntary cuts through the first three months of next year and declared that Brazil would join the bloc in January, bringing one of the world’s fastest-growing oil producers into an alliance that is trying to rein in global supply.

However, sweeping cutbacks from OPEC+ and individual member countries since October 2022 have not made lasting changes to oil prices because of concerns about too much crude circulating in a weakening global economy, which could weigh on the thirst for oil for travel and industry.

The market even shrugged off the new move, though it amounts to roughly 2% of global supply.

Jorge Leon, senior vice president of oil market research for Rystad Energy, called it a “bit of disappointing meeting” for OPEC+ and a “bitter-sweet” one for Saudi Arabia in particular because it couldn’t convince the whole group to commit to production cuts.

The market also was let down, because it “was likely expecting a deal covering the first half of next year,” he said.

Other energy experts saw the oil bloc’s two-part solution for a lagging market more positively. Paul Tossetti, an executive director of S&P Global Commodity Insights, praised the “imaginative ways” of OPEC+ lately in dealing with market challenges from the Americas, climate change efforts and on other fronts.

Taken together, the bloc’s two moves Thursday serve to “preserve the unity of the group at a challenging time,” Bhushan Bahree, another executive director at the group, wrote.

Saudi Arabia led the deepening voluntary cuts Thursday, extending its reduction of 1 million barrels per day through March. It was followed by Russia, which is cutting 500,000 barrels per day of crude and refined oil products, and then Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria and Oman with smaller amounts.

Russia wants higher oil prices to boost the main way it fills its war chest against Ukraine, while the Saudis have to earn nearly \$86 per barrel to meet their planned spending goals, according to the latest estimate from the International Monetary Fund.

Saudi Arabia is trying to fund an ambitious overhaul of the kingdom’s economy, reduce its dependence on oil and create jobs for a young population. But the international benchmark

Brent crude has stayed in the low- to mid-\$80 range in recent weeks and fell more than 2% to \$80.91 a barrel following the meeting before settling at \$82.83 Thursday. U.S. crude also dropped 2.5% to \$75.90 before settling at \$75.96 per barrel.

The expanded cuts were expected to keep crude prices in the same range of \$80 to \$85 a barrel for the first half of the year, Leon said.

Lower oil prices have allowed U.S. gas prices to fall or stay steady since Sept. 19, AAA said. Gas is averaging just below \$3.25 a gallon, the motor club said, down about 7% from a month ago.

But that’s still higher than when President Joe Biden took office in January 2021, when prices were averaging about \$2.40 a gallon. High inflation has been a political challenge for Biden going into the 2024 election, prompting him to say this week that efforts to improve supply chains and reduce price pressures are a priority.

“President Biden is focused on prices for American consumers, which have been coming down steadily,” the White House said in a statement Thursday after the OPEC+ meeting.

U.S. oil production has hit records as OPEC+ has cut back, with producers outside the group expected to keep leading global growth in oil supply next year, the International Energy Agency said.

For instance, daily production in the U.S. averaged 13 million barrels a day in August, an increase of more than 1 million barrels from a year ago, according to the latest monthly figures from the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

The risk is growing that production cuts could reduce the influence of OPEC+ over oil supplies as other countries boost their output.

Kuwait voluntarily cuts 135,000 bpd from Jan ’24

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2, (KUNA): Kuwait will voluntarily cut crude oil output by 135,000 barrels per day for three months starting January 1, 2024, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Oil Dr. Saad Al-Barrak announced on Thursday.

Thus Kuwait oil production will stand at 2.413 million bpd until the end of March 2024, Al-Barrak, who is

also minister of state for economic and investment affairs and board chairman of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, said in a statement following his participation in the 187 OPEC ministerial meeting and the 36 OPEC+ alliance ministerial meeting via videoconference.

The minister noted the decision was taken in coordination with other pro-

ducers of the OPEC+ group.

He said that this additional reduction to the previously announced by Kuwait in April 2023 and estimated at 128,000 bpd until the end of 2024.

Al-Barrak pointed out that the cuts are preventive measures taken by the OPEC+ alliance to ensure market stability and balance.

KFH’s CEO AIRushood emphasizes islamic finance’s vital role in addressing challenge

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Group proudly announces its successful sponsorship of the 18th Annual Islamic Banking and Finance Conference organized by the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) and the Islamic Development Bank Group (IsDB). The conference, themed “Strategies for the Impending Economic Slowdown and a Post Oil World: Through Economic Diversification and Leveraging Islamic Finance,” took place on 29-30 November 2023 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

In the face of global economic challenges, including the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical conflicts, inflation and climate emergencies, KFH Group actively participated in discussions that addressed crucial topics outlined in the conference agenda. The event brought together thought leaders, economists, policymakers and industry experts to explore strategies for economic diversification and the role of Islamic finance in fostering resilience.

The 18th edition of the AAOIFI-IsDB Islamic finance conference delved into various essential topics, including the role of Islamic finance in diversifying economic activity, the impact of technology on economic diversification, challenges and opportunities posed by high benchmark rates, the use of Islamic finance for infrastructure development to combat climate change and the evolution of investment accounts towards real profit and loss sharing.

Mr. Abdulwahab Iesa AIRushood, Acting Group CEO of KFH Group, shared his insights about the conference, stating, “In times of economic uncertainty, it is imperative for financial institutions to collaborate and contribute to the development of innovative and resilient financial solutions. Islamic finance, with its ethical principles and risk-sharing mechanisms, is well-positioned to play a crucial role in navigating the challenges of the future.”



KFH participants in the AAOIFI conference.

Mr. Abdulwahab Iesa AIRushood, Acting Group CEO of KFH Group, shared his insights about the conference, stating, “In times of economic uncertainty, it is imperative for financial institutions to collaborate and contribute to the development of innovative and resilient financial solutions. Islamic finance, with its ethical principles and risk-sharing mechanisms, is well-positioned to play a crucial role in navigating the challenges of the future.”

“Having said that, we are very proud to continue our support of the Annual AAOIFI-IsDB Islamic Banking and Finance Conference for its 18th edition. It is a conference that brings much value to the region’s Islamic finance arena and consequently the financial sector as a whole,” he added.

Additionally, Mr. Abdulhakeem Alkhayyat, Managing Director and CEO of KFH - Bahrain, expressed pride in the bank’s support for initiatives that foster dialogue and innovation in Islamic finance. He remarked, “As a prominent financial institution in Bahrain, we are proud to have supported this conference, providing a platform to address pressing issues and explore opportunities for sustainable economic growth. It aligns with KFH – Bahrain and the KFH Group’s commitment to contributing to the economic well-being of the communities we serve.”

Other Voices

OPEC summit focuses on ‘balancing’ market

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

The OPEC meeting last Thursday ended with some uncertainty surrounding the future oil prices.

From OPEC’s decision, it can be understood that the meeting



Al-Harami

did not result in any statement or conclusion. After delaying the scheduled meeting by four days, the outcome

does not seem to be a firm and comfortable decision.

The oil markets did not react positively, and retained the oil price at \$83 per barrel, perhaps reflecting the disagreement with the group, even though it did agree to cut production by an additional one million barrels more than the voluntary Saudi cut of one million barrels, and with Russia committing to additional cut of 200,000 barrels, making it 500,000 barrels per day. Therefore, the combined Saudi and Russian cut is 1.5 million barrels, along with a cut of 163,000 barrels by the Emirates, 135,000 by Kuwait and 200,000 barrels per day by Iraq. This is a total reduction of two million barrels, with the aim of raising the oil prices, while facing the increased supply and production by the USA to a new level of 13 million, Canada with 4.5 million and new volumes of three million barrels per day from Brazil.

Therefore, OPEC+ has to curtail its own production to reach a price level that suits its own local economies, not the global ones. OPEC+ member states are going to need higher oil prices to cater for expansion, huge and ambi-

tious overseas projects aimed to be part of the global economy. Projects such as the World Cup and Expo 2030 in Saudi Arabia demand more income in order to be part of the global economy, perhaps paving the way to move away from a single source of income, which is oil.

The decision last week by the oil producing group to further reduce supply until June seems to be a long time to read the oil markets, as it depends highly on the weather conditions in the coming winter months, which we hope will be cold so that the demand rises.

Oil producers need good news related to an increase in the oil prices, as the current level of \$83 per barrel is not suitable any more. The USA is not keen to witness further escalation in the oil prices. It must tackle the inflation, which seems to have gone down, but it does not want any increase in gasoline prices, with the election on the horizon.

OPEC+ did come out with some decisions, despite the wide disagreement with its African members like Angola, Nigeria and Congo, which refused any cuts in their production, and with some unable to even achieve their agreed quota.

OPEC and its new partners must manage the oil supply and must meet its local financial requirements. Disagreements may prevail at each and every meeting, but the question is why it took it four days to come up with a “wishy-washy” decision, leaving its members to cut productions as suitable.

Now let us hope that OPEC+, with its cut of two million barrels will help in stabilizing the oil prices. We hope the price will get close to \$90 a barrel with the help of the weather conditions. This is the dream of oil producing countries.

Email: nafikkuwait@yahoo.com

Govt & National Assembly drive development in commercial transport

Kuwait keen on creating legislative environment for global financial hub

VIENNA, Dec 2, (KUNA): A Kuwaiti official affirmed Friday her country’s keenness on creating a required legislative environment to be a global financial hub.

This came in a statement to KUNA made by Maraheeb Al-Fahad, undersecretary of Fatwa and Legislation Department at the Cabinet and head of Kuwait’s team participating in 43rd session of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

Both the government and the National Assembly are doing their best to achieve the development plan and keep pace with developments in commercial transport, she said.

Al-Fahad referred to enacting several guidelines laws and legislation on the

International Trade Law.

Kuwait’s eagerness regarding this matter was apparent when the country had a UNCITRAL membership, she stated.

She underlined the importance of such meetings in sharing expertise with participating countries, and developing commercial and economic activities.

The meetings of the working group VI of UNCITRAL kicked off Monday in which Kuwait participated with a delegation led by Kuwait’s Ambassador to Austria and Permanent Representative at International Organizations in Vienna Talal Al-Fassam.

Al-Fahad and her team were also present in the meetings.

‘Premature to conclude Fed defeated high inflation with rate hikes’

Inflation eases, Powell brushes off rate cut speculation

Lower mortgage rates next year unlikely to entice ‘rate-locked’ homeowners to sell, economists say

LOS ANGELES, Dec 2, (AP): Several housing economists are projecting that mortgage rates will ease moderately next year, though the forecasts call for the average rate on a 30-year home loan to remain above 6%.

While lower rates could help bring more buyers off the sidelines, the projected declines are unlikely to encourage homeowners who locked in rock-bottom rates two years ago to sell. That sets the stage for the housing market to remain constrained by a low supply of homes on the market, even if rates decline, economists say.

“The costs are going to remain high and we’re going to see a lot of people just choose to sit out,” said Danielle Hale, chief economist at Realtor.com.

Hale’s forecast calls for the rate on a 30-year mortgage to average 6.8% in 2024, then slip down to 6.5% by the end of the year. At First American Financial, chief economist Mark Fleming predicts the average rate will range between 6.5% and 7.5%.

The National Association of Realtors’ latest forecast calls for the rate on a 30-year home loan to average between 6% and 7% by the start of next year’s spring home buying season.

Forecasts from other housing economists also

put the average rate somewhere in the 6% range in 2024. That’s still about double what the average rate was just two years ago.

Any decline in home loan borrowing costs would be welcomed by home buyers that just five weeks ago were facing an average rate of 7.79%, the highest in over 20 years. The average rate fell to 7.22% this week, the lowest in 10 weeks, mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday.

As mortgage rates climb they can add hundreds of dollars a month to borrowers’ costs, limiting what they can afford in a market that’s already out of reach for many Americans. Even a modest decline in rates will help lower the cost of a home loan, improving affordability.

A bigger hurdle is the dearth of homes on the market, which has helped prop up home prices even as sales of previously occupied U.S. homes fell 20.2% through the first 10 months of the year.

A modest pullback in rates next year won’t spur homeowners to sell, especially if they are reluctant to take on a mortgage with a higher rate. Consider, nearly 90% of homeowners with a mortgage had a rate of 6% or below as of the second quarter.

“This disincentive to sell is likely to persist as long as mortgage rates remain elevated,” Fleming wrote in his 2024 housing market outlook.

Those rate hikes have made loans significantly more expensive across the economy, notably for mortgages, auto loans, credit cards and business borrowing. The result has been diminished purchases of homes, cars, furniture and appliances, a trend that has slowed the economy and forced prices modestly lower in those categories.

Powell’s remarks Friday follow

comments from a raft of Fed officials this week, with most of them signaling that the Fed can afford to keep its key rate steady in the coming months. But like Powell, they have mostly shied away from signaling a definite end to rate hikes.

Yet some officials have sounded more optimistic than others. Christopher Waller, a key Fed official who typically favors keep-

ing rates relatively high, said Tuesday that he was “increasingly confident” that the central bank’s benchmark rate is high enough to return inflation to the Fed’s 2% target.

Waller went so far as to open the door to the possibility that the Fed would cut rates as early as spring as long as inflation continued to cool. Some other Fed officials.

Cyprus & Chevron reach deal on natural gas field

The Cyprus government and U.S. energy company Chevron have reached a deal on how to develop the Aphrodite gas field, the first to be discovered under the seafloor off Cyprus, an official Friday. The field is estimated to hold 4.2 trillion cubic feet of gas.

The agreement is “mutually beneficial” for both Cyprus and the company, the Cypriot official told The Associated Press but did not disclose further details.

It was not immediately clear when the deal was reached. The official spoke on

condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the agreement publicly.

The Cypriot energy ministry said in a statement Friday a letter from Chevron affirmed that both sides are in “alignment” regarding the “wider framework of the field’s exploitation.” The ministry added that they would “intensify discussions” in the coming weeks on the agreed-upon development plan “for the mutually beneficial exploitation” of the site.

Chevron wanted to send the gas to Egypt through a pipeline, but Cyprus preferred to process it on a floating production facility because it would be more economically beneficial for the Cypriot government and would lend more flexibility to supplying other markets.

The agreement ends protracted negotiations that stalled development of the field for years and now paves the way for extraction of the hydrocarbon after a dozen years since the deposit was discovered. (AP)

Mexico’s minimum wage will rise

Mexico’s president said Friday the country’s minimum wage will rise by 20% in 2024, to the equivalent of about \$14.25 per day.

About one-third of Mexico’s registered workers report earning the minimum wage, which will amount to about \$1.75 per hour starting Jan. 1.

In pesos, the minimum will rise from about 207 pesos to about 248 pesos. The minimum is higher in areas along the northern border, where living costs are higher. There, the

20% increase would take the minimum to about 375 pesos, or about \$21.50.

Part of the increase in dollar terms comes from the peso’s appreciation against the dollar in the last year. The Mexican currency has risen by about 10% in value against the dollar since December 2022. That increase is largely attributable to the high inflow of remittances and high domestic interest rates, which make the peso attractive for investors. (AP)

Former cbank chief picked as Argentina’s economy minister



In this file photo, then Finance Minister Luis Caputo attends a news conference at the Casa Rosada Presidential palace in Buenos Aires. (AP)

Pick confirms Milei is building a more orthodox

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, Dec 2, (AP): Argentina’s president-elect, Javier Milei, announced Wednesday he has chosen Luis Caputo, a former finance minister and Central Bank chief known as an expert in markets, to lead the Economy Ministry when the right-wing leader takes office on Dec. 10.

The pick confirms that Milei, a libertarian outsider, is building a more orthodox team to manage Argentina’s economy, which is suffering from red-hot inflation running at an annual rate of 143%.

“Yes, the economy minister is Luis Caputo,” Milei said in a radio interview shortly after landing from a two-day trip to the United States, where he met with officials from the Biden administration.

As the first finance minister in former conservative President Mauricio Macri’s government, Caputo was in charge of a debt restructuring and later became Central Bank chief.

Macri’s party backed Milei in a Nov. 19 presidential run-off election, and his allies now are jockeying for Cabinet positions, leading to some tensions with the president-elect’s traditional libertarian allies.

The market has welcomed signs of Milei’s more orthodox choices for key Cabinet positions. Argentine stocks and bonds have increased while the local currency, the peso, has appreciated slightly in financial markets since he won the election.

The choice of Caputo is “a wise choice in order to bring some kind of favorable expectations for markets regarding what economic policy is going to look like, at least in the short run,” Nicolás Saldías, a senior analyst at the Economist Intelligence Unit for Latin America and the Caribbean, said. “He’ll be very orthodox, and he understands the financial markets quite well.”

Milei had previously said he was going to hold off until his inauguration to unveil the post of economy minister, because he feared his choice could get blamed for any economic woes before he even takes office.

Caputo nonetheless faces challenges on multiple fronts. Milei is warning Argentines to expect a painful period of high inflation and slow growth even as he seeks put many public companies into private hands and to reduce the size of the state more broadly.

“There will be stagflation because when you carry out the fiscal restructuring, it will negatively impact economic activity,” Milei said in a radio interview Wednesday. “What we are doing is creating all the mechanisms to stop the money supply and put an end to inflation within a span of 18 to 24 months.”

One of Milei’s main campaign promises involved getting rid of the Central Bank of Argentina as he said the country’s three-digit inflation rate was largely due to the monetary authority’s penchant for printing money.

The closure of the Central Bank was part of a broad plan that would eventually lead to the dollarization of the economy, replacing the local peso currency with the U.S. dollar. Since his election, Milei has made clear the dollarization plan is on the back burner - in an interview, he called it a “a second-order issue” - and that it would only become a priority once a slew of other actions were taken to shore up Argentina’s economy.

However, Milei’s office has insisted that it still plans to

close the Central Bank.

“I think Milei knows that he needs somebody with the reputation of Caputo to calm market jitters about his policies,” Saldías said. “I also think it suggests that at least in the short-to-medium run, a kind of dollarization plan is off the table.”

“It’s not clear if Caputo is inherently against dollarization,” adds Saldías, “but at least for the short run, the fears of a dollarization under Milei seem to be overblown.”

Caputo’s naming is no surprise as he was part of the small group of Milei aides who accompanied the new president-elect to Washington.

Milei previously praised Caputo for his market expertise. In a television interview last week he said he believes Caputo could overcome the problem of short-term notes known as “Leliqs” - short-term loans the Central Bank makes to banks as a way to vacuum up excess pesos - and “end controls on the exchange rate.”

Milei has said he considers the Central Bank’s stock of “Leliqs” as one of the first problems he has to solve. He says the notes could spark hyperinflation because they increase the stock of pesos.

“I have to dismantle the ‘Leliqs’ ball to avoid hyperinflation,” Milei said in an interview. “There is no greater financial expert in Argentina than Luis ‘Toto’ Caputo. He is the ideal person to dismantle this problem.”

Milei, an admirer of former U.S. President Donald Trump, said he received a positive reception at the White House on Tuesday when he met with national security adviser Jake Sullivan.

“We were able to present our economic program and have also outlined our international alignment. The response was truly very positive,” Milei said. “We staunchly defend the ideas of freedom, liberal democracy, and align ourselves neither with autocrats nor with those who do not respect freedom or democracy, nor with the communists. This stance was very well received by the White House.”

Milei has said that his top allies as president would be the United States and Israel.

Caputo and Nicolas Posse, who will be Milei’s Cabinet chief, also held meetings in Washington at the Treasury Department and the International Monetary Fund. Argentina currently has a \$44 billion loan program with the IMF.

Gita Gopinath, the IMF’s first deputy managing director, posted on social media Wednesday that she had a “positive meeting” with Caputo and Posse.

“We discussed the complex challenges facing Argentina and plans for urgently strengthening stability,” Gopinath wrote. “Our teams will remain closely engaged in the period ahead.”

Caputo has experience dealing with the International Monetary Fund from during the Macri administration and relations between the two were tense during his brief tenure as Central Bank chief. IMF officials objected to his efforts to spend much-needed cash to prop up the value of the peso. He only lasted three months in the job.

Milei also confirmed that Gerardo Werthein, a business magnate, will be Argentina’s ambassador to the United States and he wants Daniel Scioli, a former vice president, to remain as ambassador in neighboring Brazil for now.

Inflation in Europe falls to 2.4 percent

Interest rates pack a punch

LONDON, Dec 2, (AP): Europeans again saw some relief as inflation dropped more than expected to 2.4% in November, the lowest in over two years, as plummeting energy costs have eased a cost-of-living crisis but higher interest rates squeeze the economy’s ability to grow.

Inflation for the 20 countries using the euro currency fell from an annual 2.9% in October, according to numbers released Thursday by Eurostat, the European Union’s statistics agency. It’s a far cry from the peak of 10.6% in October 2022 as an energy crisis left Europe’s households and businesses struggling to make ends meet.

The new figure is close to the European Central Bank’s inflation target of 2% following a rapid series of interest rate hikes dating to summer 2022. But the tradeoff is stalled economic growth.

Much-watched core inflation, which excludes volatile fuel and food prices, fell beyond analysts’ predictions - to 3.6% this month from 4.2% in October. It raises expectations that the ECB would hold rates steady for the second time in a row at its next meeting Dec. 14.

“It will hard for the ECB to ignore the extent to which the inflationary tide is turning,” said Andrew Kenningham, chief Europe economist for Capital Economics.

ECB President Christine Lagarde reiterated this week that the bank would make decisions based on the latest data and keep rates high as long as needed to reach its inflation goal.

Energy prices plunged 11.5% from November 2022. But risks remain from global conflicts, and while food prices in the eurozone have eased, they are still up 6.9% from a year earlier.

“This is not the time to start declaring victory,” Lagarde said Monday during a hearing in the European Parliament.

That’s on stark display in Germany, Europe’s largest economy, which saw annual inflation fall to 2.3% this month from 3% in October. But it is now dealing with a budget crisis - on top of being the world’s worst-performing major economy when it comes to growth.

The energy crunch was especially hard on Germany, which relied on cheap natural gas from Russia to power its factories. Moscow largely cut off its supplies to Europe following Western sanctions over the invasion of Ukraine, and companies are still facing the fallout.

Relief on their bills is at risk after a court ruling upended Germany’s spending plan and left the government scrambling to fill a 60 billion-euro (more than \$65 billion) hole.

In the U.S., the Federal Reserve’s preferred inflation measure fell to an annual rate of 3% in October from 3.4% in September. The Fed is expected to keep its key rate unchanged when it meets in two weeks.

Meanwhile, with rates high in the eurozone, the economy has stalled this year, even shrinking 0.1% in the July-to-September quarter, according to Eurostat. On Wednesday, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development projected that the full year’s muted growth of 0.6% would rise only to 0.9% in 2024.

“With a weakening economic outlook and disinflation, rate hikes should be off the table at the December meeting,” Carsten Brzeski, global head of macro at ING bank, said about the ECB, whose key rate has hit a record-high 4%.

“Given that the full impact of the tightening so far will still unfold in the coming months, the risk is even high that the ECB has already tightened too much,” he said in a research note.

Canadian mining firm starts arbitration in the case of closed copper mine in Panama

PANAMA CITY, Dec 2, (AP): Canada’s First Quantum Minerals Ltd. announced Friday it has requested arbitration proceedings to fight a Panamanian decision to halt a major open-pit copper mine concession in Panama or obtain damages.

First Quantum said one arbitration was requested under the Canada-Panama Free Trade Agreement. It has also started proceedings before the International Court of Arbitration, which would meet in Miami, Florida, the company said in a statement.

In a historic ruling on Tuesday, Panama’s Supreme Court declared that legislation granting the mine a 20-year concession was unconstitutional. That decision was celebrated by thousands of Panamanians activists who had argued the project would damage a forested coastal area and threaten water supplies.

First Quantum said it requested arbitration from the international panel on Wednesday and that it had initiated proceedings under the free trade agreement even before the court ruling. It did not say what remedy or damages it was seeking, but did say it was open to talks.

First Quantum’s subsidiary, Cobre Panama, “reiterates that transparency and compliance with the law has always been fundamental for the development of its operations and remains open to constructive dialogue in order to reach consensus,” the company said.

The mine, which would be closed by the court ruling, has been an important economic engine for the country since the mine began large-scale production in 2019.

But moves this year to grant the company the 20-

year concession triggered massive protests that paralyzed the Central American nation for over a month, mobilizing a broad swath of society, including Indigenous communities, who said the mine was destroying key ecosystems.

The company has said the mine generates 40,000 jobs, including 7,000 direct jobs, and that it contributes the equivalent of 5% of Panama’s GDP.

The firm said it would take time to properly close the mine.

“The Court’s decision does not take into account a planned and managed closure scenario, in which key environmental measures are required to be implemented to maintain the environmental safety of the site during this process,” including water treatment and the storage of mine tailings.

Panama two weeks ago received an initial payment of \$567 million from First Quantum under the new contract that was finalized in October. Due to the legal dispute, the amount went directly to a restricted account.

The contract also stipulated that Panama would receive at least \$375 million annually from the mining company, an amount that critics considered meager.

Cobre Panama published a scathing statement on Wednesday saying the Supreme Court decision will likely have a negative economic impact and warned that lack of maintenance of drainage systems in the mines could have “catastrophic consequences.”

The move also “puts at risk” all of Panama’s other business contracts, the company said.

Credentials to be presented to Chinese president

Taliban’s new envoy to China arrives in Beijing as they court foreign investment

KABUL, Afghanistan, Dec 2, (AP): The Taliban’s new ambassador to China arrived in Beijing on Friday - the first time Afghanistan’s rulers have officially sent an ambassador to another country since returning to power more than two years ago.

No country recognizes the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan but some, including China, have embassies in the capital. Many other diplomatic missions were shuttered and their staff evacuated as the Taliban bore down on Kabul.

China is of particular importance to the Taliban, who are courting foreign investment and regional alliances amid their continued isolation on the international stage because of their restrictions on Afghan women and girls.

The new ambassador, Bilal Karimi, who has no diplomatic experience and is in his late 20s or early 30s, was welcomed in Beijing by China’s special envoy for Afghan affairs at the Foreign Ministry, Yue Xiaoyong, according to a Taliban statement. Karimi presented his credentials to the ministry’s director-general of the protocol department, Hong Lei.

Before his appointment as ambassador, Karimi was a spokesman in the Taliban-controlled admin-

istration and worked with its chief spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, who is close to the Taliban supreme leader.

Lei welcomed Karimi and called his appointment an important step in the development of relations between the two countries, the Taliban statement said. Lei said Karimi’s credentials will be presented to Chinese President Xi Jinping in a special ceremony.

Karimi praised China’s positive policies toward Afghanistan, especially for not intervening in domestic issues, and said the country was a good neighbor.

The Taliban have been trying to gain control of Afghan embassies over the past two years, sometimes publicly rebuking their staff for not cooperating.

In India, Afghanistan’s embassy closed last week, citing a lack of support from New Delhi and the absence of a legitimate government in Kabul.

The Taliban’s deputy foreign minister, Abbas Stanikzai, told state television this week that some countries did not hand the embassies over because of political considerations or U.S. pressure. Some embassies, including the one in India, were working against the Taliban, Stanikzai claimed.

“We have consulates in Mumbai and Hyderabad. They are active and in touch with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and provide consular services daily,” Stanikzai told RTA. “After two to three days, the embassy will open again and provide services.”

The Taliban frequently complain about the lack of official recognition.

They don’t have Afghanistan’s seat at the U.N. General Assembly - that is still held by officials from the former Western-backed government - and earlier this week they condemned their exclusion from the COP28 climate summit in Dubai.

They said summit organizers were depriving Afghans of their rights. The National Environmental Protection Agency of Afghanistan said it had prepared a comprehensive plan for this year’s meeting, but was not invited.

Much of the international community’s reluctance to engage with the Taliban stems from their restrictions on women and girls. Afghanistan is the only country in the world with bans on female education. Women are banned from most jobs and public spaces. Girls cannot go to school beyond the sixth grade, including university.

Industrial policies must be aimed at fairer globalization, says UNIDO

VIENNA, Dec 2, (KUNA): The new edition of UNIDO’s flagship publication, the Industrial Development Report 2024 (IDR2024), stresses the pivotal role industry can play in delivering sustainable development solutions, given its strong impact on social and environmental goals.

Participants at a pre-launch event, “Industrial Policy for a Fair Globalization: Insights from the Industrial Development Report 2024,” heard how progress on industry-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in relation to clean energy, decent work and innovation has been slower than hoped for, especially in developing countries.

There is an urgent need for new industrial policies that are aligned with the SDGs, the panellists agreed.

The IDR2024 presents model solutions for developing countries, such as supply chain development in the green minerals sector - a key element for the energy transition, skills development for local digital solutions to improve advanced manufacturing, and strategically fortifying trade infrastructure to attract Foreign Direct Investment.

The Report provides concrete examples, which demonstrate how different regions of the world are

successfully implementing industrial policies to accelerate progress for sustainable development.

In his opening remarks, UNIDO Director General Gerd Muller said, “The Industrial Development Report 2024 shows that the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and the consequences of ongoing wars around the world hit people in developing countries the hardest.”

He pointed out that the report “gives insight into the future we are heading towards and what needs to be done to make it a bright one.”

In his analysis he stressed that UNIDO wants to bring industrial policy back into focus and that there is a huge need for investment in infrastructure, and particularly in agribusiness infrastructure and in the food-processing industry, in sustainable energy for all, in de-carbonization of industry and in job creation.

The event convened distinguished speakers and panellists, including Jeffrey Sachs - Director of the Centre for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, Melaku Alebel - Ethiopia’s Minister of Industry, and Jose David Prado Vasquez - Guatemala’s Vice-Minister for Investment and Competition.

TECHNOLOGY

Business Plus



Proposed changes could impact availability of full EV tax credits

New rules pose challenges for Biden’s goal



US President Joe Biden drives a Cadillac Lyriq through the show room during a tour at the Detroit Auto Show, Sept. 14, 2022, in Detroit. The Biden administration has proposed new rules that could make it harder for electric vehicles to qualify for a full \$7,500 federal tax credit. (AP)

Clarity is exactly what we’re after with manufacturers in particular as they make major investments in EVs that are vital for the future growth of this important industry’

WASHINGTON, Dec 2, (AP): Americans could have a harder time finding electric vehicles that qualify for a full \$7,500 federal tax credit under new rules proposed Friday that are likely to hinder President Joe Biden’s goal that half of new passenger vehicles sold in the U.S. run on electricity by 2030. Plans outlined by the departments of Treasury and Energy would limit EV buyers from claiming the full tax credit if they purchase cars containing battery materials from China and other countries that are considered hostile to the United States. The new rules, required under Biden’s signature climate law approved last year, are likely to slow consumer acceptance of electric vehicles just as Biden is trying to ramp up sales to help meet his goal to cut planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030. EV sales have tripled since Biden took office, but the U.S. still depends on foreign sources, especially China, for many of critical minerals needed to produce EV batteries. It’s still not clear which vehicles would be eligible for the full \$7,500 tax credit under the new plan because the Biden administration has yet to publish any lists. Congress included language in

the Inflation Reduction Act that bars electric cars from qualifying for the full tax break if critical minerals or other battery components were made by a “foreign entity of concern.” The law defines that as any company that is owned by, controlled by or subject to the jurisdiction of North Korea, China, Russia or Iran, although the main target is China. Administration officials said the auto industry has long been aware of the pending rules and has taken steps to develop auto-supply chains in the U.S. and distance the industry from China, which has long dominated production and processing of minerals such as lithium and graphite used in EV batteries. The White House hopes the new tax credit rules will encourage development of auto-supply chains in the U.S. “Automakers have already adjusted the supply chain to ensure buyers are eligible for these credits and are continuing to do so,” Deputy Treasury Secretary Wally Adeyemo told reporters this week. “These changes take time, but companies are making the investments and Americans are buying these cars.” Spurred by the climate law, carmakers such as General Motors and Hyund-

dai, are racing to build U.S. factories to produce batteries and process materials like lithium. But they are still years away from being able to produce an electric vehicle without materials and components from China. Adeyemo and other officials said the rules are intended to provide clarity following months of uncertainty over how strictly the administration would interpret rules on foreign entities of concern, sometimes referred to as FECC. “Clarity is exactly what we’re after with manufacturers in particular as they make major investments in EVs that are vital for the future growth of this important industry,” Deputy Energy Secretary David Turk said. Asked how many cars that now qualify for tax credits will lose some or all of the credit next year, Adeyemo said the auto companies themselves “will determine which ones qualify” by their actions. “These are sophisticated players,” Turk added, referring to the auto industry. Ford, GM and other U.S. companies “are moving already” to boost U.S. supplies of batteries and critical minerals and will move further to comply in coming months, Turk said. John Bozzella, president and CEO of the Alliance for Automotive In-

novation, a trade group representing major automakers, said the transition to EVs “requires nothing short of a complete transformation of the U.S. industrial base. It’s a monumental task that won’t happen overnight.” The Treasury Department’s guidance “recognizes the complexity of this task and the challenges facing automakers with some good balance. Day one verdict: Clarity for automakers. Finally,” he said in a statement Friday. Sam Abuelsamid, a mobility analyst for Guidehouse Insights, expects many EVs now eligible for the full \$7,500 tax credit will see that cut in half next year when the new regulations take effect. Automakers can probably comply with a requirement that 60% of battery parts come from North America next year to qualify for a \$3,750 tax credit, he said. But it will be much harder for them to get batteries with half their critical minerals from the U.S. or countries with which it has a free trade agreement, and it’s likely they’ll lose \$3,750 of the credit. Beginning in 2024, an eligible clean vehicle may not contain any battery components that are manufactured by a foreign entity of concern, the Treasury Department said. Begin-

ning in 2025 clean vehicle must not contain any critical minerals that were extracted, processed, or recycled by a foreign entity of concern in order to qualify for a tax credit. As a result, 2024 and 2025 are likely to be tough years for automakers to meet the battery content requirements, Abuelsamid and other analysts said. China is currently responsible for about three-quarters of the world’s cathode and lithium-ion battery cell production, and more than 90% of anode production. To allow for credits to continue while the rulemaking process proceeds, the proposed rules would provide a transition period for EVs placed in service after Jan. 1, Treasury said. While smaller tax credits and high interest rates could hurt EV sales, a new rule allowing tax credits to be applied at the time of sale might offset those problems, Abuelsamid said. Getting the tax credit upfront, rather than waiting until filing tax returns next year, “will actually reduce your monthly payment, which is a major stumbling block for consumers,” he said. Customers also can lease an EV and get the full tax credit since they are classified under the law as commercial vehicles exempt from the North America manufacturing and battery-content requirements. Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., said the new rules don’t go far enough to prevent Chinese-made batteries from receiving U.S. tax breaks. Manchin, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, was a key author of the provision barring the full tax credit if battery components are manufactured or assembled by a political adversary such as China. He slammed the new rules as an “unlawful” attempt to bypass the climate law’s made-in-America provisions. “I do not understand why President Biden is allowing his administration to now route our essential supply chains through China,” Manchin said, adding that he would move to overturn the battery rules through the Congressional Review Act if the regulations are not revised. A spokesman for the National Mining Association welcomed the new rules as “an important step forward” to address China’s dominance of EV supply chains, but said more needs to be done to build secure and reliable mineral supply chains in the U.S. “We simply need vastly more domestic mining and processing. We can’t catalyze secure, responsible supply chains if we don’t approve domestic mines,” spokesman Conor Bernstein said. The complexity of the rules is shown by controversy over Ford Motor Co.’s plans to build a factory in Michigan that would employ about 1,700 people to make batteries for new and existing EVs. Ford says a wholly owned subsidiary would own the factory and employ the workers. But China’s Contemporary Amperex Technology Co. Limited, or CATL, which is known for its lithium-iron-phosphate expertise, would supply technology, some equipment and workers. Administration officials declined to say whether batteries from the Ford plant would qualify for tax credits.

AUKUS elevates defense collaboration aimed at countering China’s influence in Indo-Pacific

US, Australia and UK forge new high-tech alliance

China undermining the freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific, we’ve never had a greater need for more innovation, open navigation of the seas, including in the Pacific and the South China Sea, is critical

MOUNTAIN VIEW, California, Dec 2, (AP): From underwater drones to electronic warfare, the U.S. is expanding its high-tech military cooperation with Australia and the United Kingdom as part of a broader effort to counter China’s rapidly growing influence in the Indo-Pacific. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin met with defense chiefs from Australia and the United Kingdom at the U.S. military’s defense technology hub in Silicon Valley on Friday to forge a new agreement to increase technology cooperation and information sharing. The goal, according to a joint statement, is to be able to better address global security challenges, ensure each can defend against rapidly evolving threats and to “contribute to stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.” Austin met with Australian Defense Minister Richard Marles and Grant Shapps, the British secretary of state for defense, at the Defense Innovation Unit headquarters.

Speaking at a news conference after the meeting, Austin said the effort will, for example, rapidly accelerate the sophistication of the drone systems, and prove that “we are stronger together.” The new technology agreement is the next step in a widening military cooperation with Australia that was first announced in 2021. The three nations have laid out plans for the so-called AUKUS partnership to help equip Australia with a fleet of eight nuclear-powered submarines. AUKUS is an acronym for Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Under the deal, Australia will buy three Virginia-class submarines from the United States and build five of a new AUKUS-class submarine in cooperation with Britain. The subs, powered by U.S. nuclear technology, would not carry nuclear weapons and would be built in Adelaide, Australia, with the first one finished around 2040. Marles said there has been an

enormous amount of progress in the submarine program. He added that as an island nation, Australia has a need for improved maritime drones and precision strike capabilities. And Shapps said that with China “undermining the freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific, we’ve never had a greater need for more innovation.” He said open navigation of the seas, including in the Pacific and the South China Sea, is critical. According to officials, Australian Navy officers have already started to go through nuclear power training at U.S. military schools. Earlier this year the U.S. announced it would expand its military industrial base by helping Australia manufacture guided missiles and rockets for both countries within two years. Under that agreement, they would cooperate on Australia’s production of Guided Multiple Launch Rocket Systems by 2025. The enhanced cooperation between the nations has been driven by growing concerns about China’s burgeon-

ing defense spending and rapidly expanding military presence in the region. Last year Beijing signed a security pact with Solomon Islands and raised the prospect of a Chinese naval base being established there. The U.S. has increased its troop presence, military exercises and other activities in the region. U.S. relations with China have been strained in recent years, over trade, U.S. support for self-governing Taiwan, Beijing’s military buildup on a series of man-made islands, and a number of aggressive aircraft and ship encounters. The new agreement also sets up a series of military exercises involving the use of undersea and surface maritime drones and improves the ability of the three countries to share intelligence and data collected by their sonobuoys. The buoys are used to detect submarines and other objects in the water. It also calls for plans to expand the use of artificial intelligence, including on P-8A surveillance aircraft, to more

quickly process data from the buoys in order to improve anti-submarine warfare. And it says the three countries will establish new radar sites to beef up their ability to detect and track objects in deep space. High-tech demonstrations were set up across a large parking area at DIU and inside the headquarters, allowing Austin to take a few minutes before the start of the meeting to see a number of projects being developed, including a virtual training device that will help Ukrainian pilots learn to fly F-16 fighter jets and swarming drones being developed for warfighters. The projects aren’t tied to the Australian agreement, but reflect the ongoing effort by the three nations to improve technology - an area where China often has the lead. As Austin walked through the exhibits, he was able to watch a swarm of five drones lift off from the pavement and hover over the onlookers - all controlled by a single worker with a small handheld module.

editor’s choice



Film

NEW YORK, Dec 2, (AP): Eddie Murphy has fond childhood memories of gathering with his family in Brooklyn and being wrapped in the wonder of the season as they watched classic holiday movies. Now, his Christmas wish is his new film, “Candy Cane Lane,” will create similar memories for others.

“That was in the front of my mind when we chose this script ... we want to do something that’s going to be around forever,” Murphy said. “When I was growing up, we used to watch ‘It’s a Wonderful Life,’ and ‘How the Grinch Stole Christmas’ and ‘Rudolph’s Shiny New Year’ ... I think we made a movie like that, that people will watch over and over again.”

The Prime Video release out Friday follows Chris Carver (Murphy) who’s obsessed with winning his neighborhood’s annual Christmas decorating contest. Stumbling upon a mysterious store, he unwittingly strikes a deal with a good intentioned but slightly mischievous elf named Pepper (Jillian Bell) who brings the 12 days of Christmas to life. That turns into a holiday headache for the town and puts Carver at risk of being transformed into a miniature ornament.

“There is the element of magic in the movie, that imagination that children have and all the fantasy of it,” said Tracee Ellis Ross, the “black-ish” and “Girlfriends” star who plays Murphy’s wife. “I’m excited to watch kids watch the movie.”

Ross and Murphy are so dynamic on-screen, it’s hard to believe the two actors never worked together before - let alone had never met. Ross’ Carol is the ultimate spousal teammate, providing levity to her

husband’s extreme Christmas competitiveness.

“She’s a comedian and a great actress and all that came together. And she improvises ... you don’t even expect to click with an actor,” said the 62-year-old Oscar nominee. Chuckling, he added, “Most of the time, you have a working relationship and there is no clicking - but there’s a great deal of clicking on this one.”

The film also stars Thaddeus J. Mixson, Ken Marino and David Alan Grier, along with an ensemble that includes Nick Offerman, Robin Thede and Chris Redd whose figurine characters are past victims of Pepper’s antics.

Moments

The film was written by Kelley Younger, whose family grew up on Candy Cane Lane in El Segundo, California - a neighborhood known for competitive holiday decorating. While there are plenty of feel good moments in the story, the movie is also packed with action scenes.

“I wanted a movie that had everything I like in it,” said director Reginald Hudlin. “I love Christmas movies. I love Christmas music. I love the colors. But I also love action movies... So, I said, why not put everything you like into one movie?”, explained Hudlin, whose 1990 flick “House Party” starring Kid ‘n Play was added to the National Film Registry last year. “Christmas movies are surprisingly elastic.”

“Candy Cane Lane” is Murphy’s first holiday film and his first re-

union with Hudlin since their 1992 classic “Boomerang.” The uber-popular romantic comedy helped expand Murphy beyond comedy-first roles and action films, allowing him to flourish in new Hollywood territory as a debonair ladies man.

“I love that ‘Boomerang’ has the legs that it has. I love that it still works,” said Murphy of the film which also starred Halle Berry, Robin Givens, Martin Lawrence and Grier. “I love that all the people that were in it went off and did amazing things and yeah, I’m proud of that film.”

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Murphy planned a return to his stand-up comedy roots, but as the global health crisis upended much of the world, Murphy pivoted to making movies again. He recently wrapped shooting “Beverly Hills Cop: Axel Foley,” the fourth installment of his blockbuster franchise nearly 30 years after the last chapter.

“It’s not something that I would rule out and say I would never do,” Murphy said about returning to stand-up.

But what Murphy and Ross are aiming to do is give friends and loved ones yet another reason to spend time together during not just this holiday season, but future ones as well.

“That is the hope, that we’ve made a timeless classic,” said Ross.

Murphy, a father of 10 and a grandfather, echoes Ross’ sentiments: “Christmas movies have a built-in audience - your family’s all together and they want to look at something that they can all watch together... if you do a good job, you watch them forever.”

Variety



Beyonce accepts the award for best R&B performance for ‘Black Parade’ at the 63rd annual Grammy Awards on March 14, 2021. In concert film ‘Renaissance,’ Beyoncé offers glimpse into personal life during world tour. (AP)

Film

‘Renaissance’ chronicles making of masterpiece

Beyoncé’s intimate look in concert film

SANTA FE, N.M.: The weapons supervisor on the film set where **Alec Baldwin** shot and killed a cinematographer in 2021 waived her arraignment in a separate case, pleading not guilty to a charge of carrying a gun into a Santa Fe bar.

Hannah Gutierrez-Reed had been set to appear in court next week on the charge, but a state courts spokesperson said Friday that her attorneys opted instead to waive her appearance. Her attorneys did not immediately respond to a message that The Associated Press left Friday seeking comment.

The firearm charge against Gutierrez-Reed stems from an incident days before she was hired to work as the armorer on “Rust.” According to court records, a witness told authorities that she was carrying a gun when she walked into a bar in downtown Santa Fe.

Gutierrez-Reed also is awaiting trial on charges of involuntary manslaughter and evidence tampering stemming from the fatal shooting of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins during a rehearsal on the “Rust” movie set on Oct. 21, 2021.

As part of their preparation for trial, special prosecutors have issued subpoenas for documents from producers of “Rust” and any audio and video recordings held by a Los Angeles film production company that might include Baldwin on the set or his comments about the film elsewhere. (AP)

□ □ □

WASHINGTON: President **Joe Biden** will head to Los Angeles next week for a big-dollar event that will be his first since strikes by writers and actors effectively ground his fundraising to a halt in the heart of the entertainment industry, which has long served as the ATM for the Democratic Party.

The event next Friday at the home of **Michael Smith**, a celebrity interior designer, and his partner **James Costos**, a former HBO executive who was President **Barack Obama**’s ambassador to Spain, is expected to raise millions and draw a star-studded crowd. Rocker **Lenny Kravitz** is slated to perform.

Director **Steven Spielberg** and his wife, **Kate Capshaw**, who starred in “Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom,” are among the hosts of the event, as are recording industry mogul **David Geffen**, “Scandal” showrunner **Shonda**

LOS ANGELES, Dec 2, (AP): In Beyoncé’s concert film, she described her recent Renaissance World Tour as being run like a machine: From lighting to set design, the superstar singer had a hand in everything production-related to ensure her stadium tour exceeded expectations after four years of preparation.

As a perfectionist, Beyoncé was tirelessly determined - working almost 50 days straight - to create an epic concert experience. This comes clear in her movie “Renaissance: A Film by Beyoncé,” which chronicles the massive tour in support of her seventh studio album. The film - written, directed and produced by Beyoncé - perfectly captures her dazzling performances for the big screen and somewhat unveils intimate behind-the-scenes footage from a normally private singer, who has rarely done interviews in the past decade.

Beyoncé released her nearly three-hour “Renaissance” movie through AMC Theaters in similar fashion as the “Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour” film, which opened with a record-breaking \$97 million domestically for a concert film last month. But unlike Swift, whose project primarily focused on her onstage performances, Beyoncé took a different approach by offering more insight into her personal life.

“I’m really excited for everyone to see the process,” she said in the film.

With “Renaissance,” Beyoncé displays more of her human side like in her 2019 Netflix film “Homecoming,” which delved into the singer headlining the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. This time, she goes a step further into her story as arguably music’s most hardest-working performer, who attempts to juggle being a mother of three children while she maintains her mental and physical fortitude during her tour.

Beyoncé expressed frustration with challenges to her lofty aspirations for her tour and felt she wasn’t being heard because she’s a Black woman. The tour ultimately grossed around \$500 million, according to Billboard. She opens up about having surgery on her knee, which forced her into rehabilitation a month before her first opening show in Stockholm.

Rhimes and “This is Spinal Tap” director **Rob Reiner**, according to an invitation obtained by The Associated Press.

Former House Speaker **Nancy Pelosi**, D-Calif., is also a co-host. **Barbra Streisand** is set to attend.

“We are overwhelmed by the enthusiasm. We don’t do many events, but when we do, we do it

Unlike her tour, Beyoncé confesses she’s “not a machine.”

But through her aches and pains, Beyoncé - who is the most decorated Grammy artist in history - showed up and performed at a very high level. It’s what she demanded of herself and others who mirrored her mentality to make each show come into fruition.

The film showcases a few big-named performers who separately accompanied Beyoncé onstage including Megan Thee Stallion in Houston. During her Los Angeles stint, Kendrick Lamar was special guest along with Diana Ross, who sang to Beyoncé for her 42nd birthday.

But out of all the celebrity appearances, the one who stole the show was Beyoncé’s 11-year-old daughter, Blue Ivy, who made her presence felt as a background dancer. Initially, the singer was opposed to pushing Blue into the limelight of performing in front of tens of thousands.

Confidence

“She told me she was ready to perform, and I told her no,” Beyoncé said in the film.

In time, Queen Bey finally gave into her princess, agreeing she had only one time to show her stuff. Her first performance, however, fell under heavy scrutiny on social media from those who criticized Blue Ivy’s dance moves as subpar.

But Blue Ivy used the criticism to train harder. She gained confidence as the tour progressed and gained more standing applause each time she hit the stage.

Blue Ivy’s maturation brought joy to Beyoncé and to Mathew Knowles, the proud grandfather who was shown saying “Now, that’s a Knowles!”

During a stop in Houston, Beyoncé along with her mother, Tina Knowles, drove around her old Third Ward neighborhood before they stopped by her childhood home. The return to her hometown marked another reunion between Beyoncé and all the members of the girl group Destiny’s Child - which included Kelly Rowland, Michelle Williams, LeToya Luckett and LaTavia Roberson, who was once ousted from

out of a great passion,” Smith said.

The event is part of a broader fundraising swing by Biden and comes as the Democratic president tries to stockpile cash for what will likely be a grueling rematch against Republican **Donald Trump**.

Biden also planning fundraisers in Boston, which will include a concert by **James Taylor**,

the group.

Now, it appears peace is between them. There were no words exchanged on camera except for a collective hug, which Beyoncé called during her narration a “new birth for us. A lot of healing.”

Beyoncé along with her mother shared heartfelt moments of the singer’s late uncle Johnny - a Black gay man who introduced her to house music as a child and made her prom dress. She dedicated the “Renaissance” album to him.

The film squeezed in Beyoncé’s appreciation for her devoted BeyHive fanbase who were often shown in the audience in various cities. During her shows, she expressed her gratitude for them, calling them “beautiful faces.”

Not every song performed on tour made the cut for the film except for jams like “Alien Superstar,” “Church Girl” and “Cuff It.”

And that’s just fine. This “Renaissance” film is more about getting a glimpse into her life - even for just a little bit.

“Renaissance: A Film by Beyoncé,” an AMC release, is not rated. Running time: 168 minutes. Four stars out of four.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: **Matthew Heineman**’s “American Symphony” captures a whirlwind year for **Jon Batiste**. The film covers the pianist winning the 2022 Grammy for album of the year, winning an Oscar for co-creating the score to “Soul” and a triumphant concert at Carnegie Hall - all while his wife, **Suleika Jaouad**, battled leukemia. “American Symphony” is now streaming on Netflix.

“The Super Mario Bros. Movie” hits the streaming service Sunday, Dec. 3, after its previous run on Peacock. The film, which grossed nearly \$1.4 billion in theaters, has fared slightly better than the infamous 1993 “Super Mario Bros.” In my review, I praised the primary-color visuals but wrote that “as nice as it is to look at ‘The Super Mario Bros. Movie,’ it’s not anywhere near as fun as it would be to play it.”

Washington and **Maryland**, where he will appear with Gov. **Wes Moore**, according to two people familiar with the schedule who insisted on anonymity to discuss internal planning details. He will also appear in Philadelphia alongside Gov. **Josh Shapiro**.

With a cash haul from elite party donors expected to reach into the millions, the Los Angeles event could help ease concerns among Democrats about Biden’s reelection chances. He already has drawn one primary rival, Minnesota Rep. **Dean Phillips**, whose candidacy is a symbolic challenge to national Democrats trying to project the idea that there is no reason to doubt Biden’s electability. (AP)



Biden



Baldwin

People & Places

Obituary

Powerful songwriter

MacGowan, Pogues singer, dies aged 65

LONDON, Dec 2, (AP): **Shane MacGowan**, the rabble-rousing singer and chief songwriter of The Pogues, who infused traditional Irish music with the energy and spirit of punk, died Thursday, his family said. He was 65.

MacGowan’s songwriting and persona made him an iconic figure in contemporary Irish culture, and some of his compositions have become classics - most notably the bittersweet Christmas ballad “Fairytale of New York,” which Irish President Michael D. Higgins said “will be listened to every Christmas for the next century or more.”

“It is with the deepest sorrow and heaviest of hearts that we announce the passing of our most beautiful, darling and dearly beloved Shane MacGowan,” his wife Victoria Clarke, his sister Siobhan and father Maurice said in a statement.

The singer died peacefully with his family by his side, the statement added.

The musician had been hospitalized in Dublin for several months after being diagnosed with viral encephalitis in late 2022. He was discharged last week, ahead of his upcoming birthday on Christmas Day.

The Pogues melded Irish folk and rock ‘n’ roll into a unique, intoxicating blend, though MacGowan became as famous for his sozzled, slurred performances as for his powerful songwriting.

His songs blended the scabrous and the sentimental, ranging from carousing anthems to snapshots of life in the gutter to unexpectedly tender love songs. The Pogues’ most famous song, “Fairytale of New York” is a tale of down-on-their-luck immigrant lovers that opens with the decidedly unfestive words: “It was Christmas Eve, babe, in the drunk tank.” The duet between the raspy-voiced MacGowan and the velvet tones of the late Kirsty MacColl is by far the most beloved Pogues song in both Ireland and the UK.

Singer-songwriter Nick Cave called Shane MacGowan “a true friend and the greatest songwriter of his generation.”

Connected

Higgins, the Irish president, said “his songs capture within them, as Shane would put it, the measure of our dreams.”

“His words have connected Irish people all over the globe to their culture and history, encompassing so many human emotions in the most poetic of ways,” Higgins said.

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar said MacGowan’s songs “beautifully captured the Irish experience, especially the experience of being Irish abroad.”

Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald said: “No-body told the Irish story like Shane - stories of emigration, heartache, dislocation, redemption, love and joy.”

Born on Christmas Day 1957 in England to Irish parents, MacGowan spent his early years in rural Ireland before the family moved back to London. Ireland remained the lifelong center of his imagination and his yearning. He grew up steeped in Irish music absorbed from family and neighbors, along with the sounds of rock, Motown, reggae and jazz.

He attended the elite Westminster School in London, from which he was expelled, and spent time in a psychiatric hospital after a breakdown in his teens.

MacGowan embraced the punk scene that exploded in Britain in the mid-1970s. He joined a band called the Nipple Erectors, performing under the name Shane O’Hooligan, before forming The Pogues alongside musicians including Jem Finer and Spider Stacey.

The Pogues - shortened from the original name Pogue Mahone, a rude Irish phrase - fused punk’s furious energy with traditional Irish melodies and instruments including banjo, tin whistle and accordion.

“It never occurred to me that you could play Irish music to a rock audience,” MacGowan recalled in “A Drink with Shane MacGowan,” a 2001 memoir co-authored with Clarke. “Then it finally clicked. Start a London Irish band playing Irish music with a rock and roll beat. The original idea was just to rock up old ones but then I started writing.”

The band’s first album, “Red Roses for Me,” was released in 1984 and featured raucous versions of Irish folk songs alongside originals including “Boys from the County Hell,” “Dark Streets of London” and “Streams of Whisky.”

Playing pubs and clubs in London and beyond, the band earned a loyal following and praise from music critics and fellow musicians from Bono to Bob Dylan.

MacGowan wrote many of the songs on the next two albums, “Rum, Sodomy and the Lash” (1985) and “If I Should Fall from Grace with God” (1988), ranging from rollicking rousers like the latter album’s title track to ballads like “A Pair of Brown Eyes” and “The Broad Majestic Shannon.”

The band also released a 1986 EP, “Poguetry in Motion,” which contained two of MacGowan’s finest songs, “A Rainy Night in Soho” and “The Body of an American.” The latter featured prominently in early-2000s TV series “The Wire,” sung at the wakes of Baltimore police officers.

“I wanted to make pure music that could be from any time, to make time irrelevant, to make generations and decades irrelevant,” he recalled in his memoir.

Appearances

The Pogues were briefly on top of the world, with sold-out tours and appearances on US television, but the band’s output and appearances grew more erratic, due in part to MacGowan’s struggles with alcohol and drugs. He was fired by the other band members in 1991 after they became fed up with a string of no-shows, including when The Pogues were opening for Dylan. The band briefly replaced MacGowan with Clash frontman Joe Strummer before breaking up.

MacGowan performed with a new band, Shane MacGowan and the Popes, with whom he put out two albums: “The Snake” in 1995 and “The Crock Of Gold” in 1997. He reunited with The Pogues in 2001 for a series of concerts and tours, despite his well-documented problems with drinking and performances that regularly included slurred lyrics and at least one fall on stage.

MacGowan had years of health problems and used a wheelchair after breaking his pelvis a decade ago. He was long famous for his broken, rotten teeth until receiving a full set of implants in 2015 from a dental surgeon who described the procedure as “the Everest of dentistry.”

MacGowan received a lifetime achievement award from the Irish president on his 60th birthday. The occasion was marked with a celebratory concert at the National Concert Hall in Dublin with performers including Bono, Nick Cave, Sinéad O’Connor and Johnny Depp.



Members of KISS, (foreground from left), Gene Simmons, Tommy Thayer and Paul Stanley and Eric Singer on drums, perform at the the Riverbend Music Center in Cincinnati on Aug. 29, 2019. (AP)



Bradley Cooper, (left), and Carey Mulligan pose for photographers upon arrival at the screening of the film ‘Maestro’ on Friday, Dec. 1, in London. (AP)



McDonald



Gergiev

Variety

PASADENA, Calif.: Audra McDonald will serve as grand marshal of the 135th Rose Parade next year.

The 53-year-old actor and singer was introduced Friday on the lawn of Tournament House in Pasadena.

“As a **California** kid raised in Fresno - very proud to be from Fresno - the new year was always ushered in with the Rose Bowl,” McDonald said. “Every January first I’d wake up early to watch the parade and the game with my family.”

The six-time Tony Award winner will ride the 5 1/2-mile route down **Colorado Boulevard** in Pasadena on Jan. 1. McDonald will be part of the coin flip for the 110th Rose Bowl game later that day.

“I’m actually practicing,” she said. “If anybody can mess up a coin toss, it would be me.”

The parade’s theme of “Celebrating a World of Music: The Universal Language” represents different cultures and beliefs coming together. McDonald has defied racial stereotyping in her Tony-nominated and winning roles.

“For me growing up in Fresno, representation matters,” she said. “When you can see someone that looks like you achieving things, it helps you to realize your dream even more fully and to see that it’s absolutely possible. Those barriers have been broken down so I can walk through.”

McDonald was joined on the outdoor stage by members of the Rose Court, including 2024 queen **Naomi Stillitano**. (AP)

MOSCOW: The Russian government on Friday named **Valery Gergiev**, the renowned director of the Mariinsky Theatre in **St. Petersburg**, to also lead Moscow’s Bolshoi Theatre.

Gergiev is replacing **Vladimir Urin** at the Bolshoi. Urin announced Thursday that he was stepping down after a decade, but didn’t explain the reason behind his move.

Some Russian media said the departure of 76-year-old Urin was related to health issues. Others speculated it was linked to a letter calling for an end to Moscow’s military action in **Ukraine** that he and some other prominent cultural figures signed after the Kremlin sent troops across the border in February 2022.

Several other theater directors who signed the letter have lost their jobs since then.

Russian President **Vladimir Putin** first suggested in March 2022 the idea of

Music

A look back at 50 years of Kiss-tory

Rock band Kiss bids goodbye at MSG

NEW YORK, Dec 2, (AP): Fifty years ago, four young New Yorkers dragged their guitars, amps and drums to a loft on 23rd Street in New York, dreaming of becoming the biggest band in the world.

This weekend, Kiss, the band started by those four - albeit with two different members currently in the fold - will say its goodbyes about 10 blocks north of that loft. Kiss will play Madison Square Garden, having become if not THE biggest band in the world, certainly one of the biggest, one that’s redefined expectations for the live concert experience.

Here is a look back at major events in Kiss’ history, taken from Associated Press interviews with Kiss members, quotes they gave to other media and material from band members’ autobiographies:

1973: Gene Simmons, who worked briefly as a teacher and loved horror films and comic books, and cabbie Paul Stanley, who once dropped passengers off at Madison Square Garden to see Elvis Presley and vowed someday he’d be on that same stage, exit their band Wicked Lester and begin searching for bandmates to put together a true spectacle: an act where the show and the visuals were as important as the music. They find drummer Peter Criss, who had placed an ad in a music paper looking for a band, and Ace Frehley, who showed up at auditions with one red sneaker, one orange sneaker and a guitar.

Each member adopts a specific stage identity: Simmons the demon; Stanley the starchild; Frehley the spaceman, and Criss the catman. The band hones their act with tiny club gigs, and by New Year’s Eve, lands a support slot on the bill with Blue Öyster Cult. Simmons accidentally sets his hair ablaze that night while breathing fire. (It would happen many times over the years, to the point where they stationed a roadie with a sopping wet towel nearby.)

1974: Kiss releases its self-titled debut album, and its follow-up, “Hotter Than Hell.”

1975: The band releases its third album, “Dressed to Kill,” which includes a catchy song called “Rock And Roll All Nite.” But it isn’t until that track’s live version comes out later

that year as the anchor of Kiss “Alive!” that the band has its first major hit.

1976: Kiss releases what is considered by many fans to be its best studio album, “Destroyer,” which includes the orchestral ballad “Beth” that would, quite accidentally, become one of their biggest hits. “Beth” was the B-side of the hard-rocking single “Detroit Rock City,” but radio disc jockeys began playing the ballad instead and it took off.

1977: The band releases “Love Gun” and a second live album, “Alive II.” The Gallup Poll names Kiss the most popular band in America. The band plays Madison Square Garden for the first time.

1978: In a move unheard of in the music industry, the four members release solo albums simultaneously, each selling over a million copies. But Frehley’s is the only one to spawn a hit, with “New York Groove.” NBC airs a two-hour TV movie starring the band, “Kiss Meets The Phantom Of The Park.” Kiss floods the globe with band-themed merchandise far beyond the usual T-shirts and posters, including lunchboxes, vitamins, transistor radios, trading cards, and pinball machines. Later offerings include Kiss Kondoms and Kiss Kaskets.

1979: Kiss releases “Dynasty,” with the disco-inspired “I Was Made For Lovin’ You.” By this point, their live show features Simmons seeming to fly into the air and land atop speakers above the stage, in addition to the usual fire-breathing and blood-spitting.

1980: They release the pop-y “Unmasked” and later hire drummer Eric Carr to replace Criss.

1981: The band releases “Music From The Elder,” a concept album that evokes “Harry Potter” 20 years before that phenomenon began. But the album, with its medieval theme and departure from their typical musical style, does not appeal to many fans.

1982: Reacting to backlash against “The Elder,” Kiss releases “Creatures Of The Night,” a bombastic, drum-heavy masterpiece that remains one of its heaviest albums to date. Frehley is replaced by Vinnie Vincent on lead guitar.

1983: Deciding it’s time to forsake

the trademark makeup, Kiss reveals what they actually look like on an MTV special, timed to the release of the “Lick It Up” album. They remain without makeup until a 1996 reunion tour with the original members.

1984-1990: Kiss releases the albums “Animalize,” “Asylum,” “Crazy Nights” and “Hot In The Shade” as MTV embraces their new look. Guitarist Mark St. John replaces Vincent in 1984, but a painful nerve condition in his hands soon renders him unable to continue. He is replaced by Bruce Kulick.

1991: Carr dies of heart cancer.

1992: Eric Singer, a well-respected drummer for Alice Cooper, Black Sabbath, Badlands and Lita Ford, is hired, having toured with Paul Stanley’s solo band in 1989. The band releases “Revenge,” and records the album “Alive III” on that tour.

1995: The lineup - Stanley, Simmons, Kulick and Singer - is joined by Frehley and Criss during the taping of an MTV “Unplugged” show, telegraphing an upcoming reunion.

1996-7: “Carnival Of Souls,” a grunge-inspired album that had leaked and was already widely bootlegged, is officially released. The original members of Kiss reunite for what would become the top-grossing tour of the year.

1998: The reunited Kiss releases “Psycho Circus.”

2000-3: Kiss announces its first farewell tour. Soon after it ends, Stanley and Simmons change their minds. In 2002, Frehley is replaced by Tommy Thayer, a longtime band assistant. The band releases “Alive IV” with a symphony orchestra in 2003. Singer rejoins, cementing a lineup that has remained steady since then.

2009-2012: Kiss releases “Sonic Boom” and “Monster,” their final studio albums. They begin a series of annual autumn “Kiss Kruise” with fans to tropical destinations.

2014: Kiss is inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, but do not play at the ceremony.

2019: Kiss begins its “End Of The Road” tour, 19 years after its first “farewell” tour. Its final two shows are scheduled for Dec. 1 and 2 at Madison Square Garden, a five-minute subway ride from where they started.

putting the countries’ two most prominent theaters, the Bolshoi and the Mariinsky, under single leadership.

Gergiev, 70, a world-famous conductor

who has been the director of Mariinsky Theatre for 35 years, has been a strong supporter of Putin and his policies.

A week after Moscow sent troops into

Ukraine, he lost the job of conductor of the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra and some other European theaters also cut ties with him over his failure to denounce the Kremlin’s action. (AP)

NASHVILLE, Tenn.: A judge sided with **Daryl Hall** on Thursday in his request to keep **John Oates** temporarily blocked from selling his potentially lucrative share of the Hall & Oates duo’s joint venture without his longtime partner’s permission.

Chancellor **Russell Perkins** in Nashville extended his pause on the sale of Oates’ share of Whole Oats Enterprises LLP to Primary Wave IP Investment Management LLC while the music duo moves through the early stages of arbitration. The temporary injunction in the lawsuit filed by Hall blocks Oates from selling until an arbitrator weighs in, or until Feb. 17.

The joint venture in question includes Hall & Oates trademarks, personal name and likeness rights, record royalty income and website and social media assets, according to a court declaration by Hall, who has called Oates’ planned sale the “ultimate partnership betrayal.”

At a hearing Thursday, **Christine Lepera**, an attorney for Hall, said she hasn’t heard anything from Oates’ legal team indicating that there’s some urgency in closing the deal. (AP)



Eddie Murphy, (left), and Tracee Ellis Ross, (center), cast members in ‘Candy Cane Lane,’ and the film’s director Reginald Hudlin pose together at the Four Seasons Hotel, Nov. 29, 2023, in Los Angeles. (AP) — **Details Page 11**

‘Eliminate exposure to tobacco in any form’

Dr. Rajan shares new treatments, goals for healthy heart

By Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: In a recent interview with Dr. Rajesh Rajan, we discussed the new treatment targets and goals for preventing cardiovascular disease. Dr. Rajan has been instrumental in overseeing various clinical research registries focused on heart failure.

According to Dr. Rajan, the new treatment targets and goals are aimed at providing individuals with clear guidelines on how to prevent and manage cardiovascular disease. These targets focus on several factors, including smoking, diet, physical activity, body weight, blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and diabetes.

When it comes to smoking, Dr. Rajan emphasizes the key goal of completely eliminating exposure to tobacco in any form. Quitting smoking can significantly reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, and it is crucial for individuals to seek support if needed.

A healthy diet plays a crucial role in preventing cardiovascular disease. Dr. Rajan recommends a diet low in saturated fat, with a focus on whole grain products, vegetables, fruits, and fish. These food choices provide essential nutrients and help maintain a healthy heart.

Monitor

Regular physical activity is another important aspect. Dr. Rajan suggests aiming for 3.5-7 hours of moderately vigorous physical activity per week or 30-60 minutes most days. Engaging in regular exercise strengthens the heart and improves overall cardiovascular health.

Maintaining a healthy body weight is also emphasized. The recommended body mass index (BMI) range is between 20-25 kg/m², with a waist circumference below 94 cm for men and 80 cm for women. Excess weight puts added strain on the heart, increasing the risk of heart-related conditions.

Controlling blood pressure is crucial in preventing cardiovascular disease. The target for blood pressure is below 140/90 mmHg. High blood pressure can damage blood vessels and increase the risk of heart disease and stroke. It is important to monitor and manage blood pressure effectively.

Lowering LDL-C (low-density lipoprotein cholesterol) levels is a focus in preventing cardiovascular disease. The treatment targets for LDL-C vary based on the individual's risk level. For individuals at very high risk, the goal is to achieve at least a 50% reduction in LDL-C from baseline, with an LDL-C goal of less than 1.4 mmol/L or 55 mg/dL. For high-risk individuals, the LDL-C goal is less than 1.8 mmol/L or 70 mg/dL, while for moderate-risk individuals, the goal is less than 2.6 mmol/L or 100 mg/dL.

Apart from LDL-C, non-HDL-C (non-high-density lipoprotein cholesterol) and apolipoprotein levels are also important in managing cardiovas-



Dr. Rajesh Rajan

cular disease risk. The secondary goals for non-HDL-C and apolipoprotein levels vary based on risk levels, with lower goals for higher-risk individuals.

For individuals with diabetes, managing blood sugar levels is crucial. The target for glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) in individuals with diabetes is below 7% or 53 mmol/mol. Effective management of blood sugar levels reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Dr. Rajan emphasizes the importance of adopting healthy lifestyle choices. By following these treatment targets and goals, individuals can significantly reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease and improve their heart health. It is crucial to consult with healthcare professionals for personalized guidance based on individual circumstances and risk factors.

The interview with Dr. Rajesh Rajan provided valuable insights into the new treatment targets and goals for preventing cardiovascular disease. These guidelines offer individuals a roadmap to a healthier heart and a reduced risk of cardiovascular complications.

Recognition

Dr. Rajan is a renowned Indian cardiologist at Al Amiri Hospital Kuwait and Chairman of the Indian Association of Clinical Cardiologists. Dr. Rajan also holds prestigious positions as the current President of the Association of MD Physicians and the managing editor of the esteemed Annals of Clinical Cardiology Journal by Wolters Kluwer. His contributions to the medical community are highly regarded, with notable achievements that include the invention of the RHF Risk Score calculator for heart failure patients and the development of Rajan's and Kotevski's modified Lipton's classification. Beyond his groundbreaking research, Dr. Rajan has garnered recognition through various Fellowships from esteemed institutions such as the Royal College of London, Edinburgh, Ireland, and Glasgow. Moreover, he has been honored as a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, the European Society of Cardiology, and the American Heart Association, further highlighting his expertise and commitment to cardiovascular health.

Modern facilities, state-of-the-art medical techs presented

Burjeel concludes Kuwait Medica showcase

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: Burjeel Holdings, one of the largest healthcare services providers in the MENA region, successfully concluded its participation at the Kuwait Medica Conference and Exhibition, a prominent medical tourism event in the country. Taking place from Nov 29 to 30, the conference served for leading healthcare providers, plastic surgery facilities, medical equipment suppliers, health technology specialists and various stakeholders. The central theme of the event revolved around enhancing the patient referral process beyond Kuwait's borders.

Showcasing its flagship facility, Burjeel Medical City, the Group took part in the event under the theme 'Pioneer In Healthcare'. The Group's pavilion attracted a diverse audience from different segments of society and provided attendees with an opportunity to delve into the comprehensive range of healthcare services offered. These services encompass advanced orthopedic care, gynecology, foetal medicine, radiation oncology, physical therapy, rehabilitation and robotic surgery. It served as an ideal platform for the Group to highlight its modern facilities and state-of-the-art medical technologies.

"It was an honour to be a part of the Kuwait Medica Conference and Exhibition. We are committed to excellence and forging long-standing alliances to deliver comprehensive healthcare services across the region," said Mr. John Sunil, CEO of Burjeel Holdings.

The Group held productive dis-



Burjeel Medical City booth at the Kuwait Medica Conference and Exhibition.

cussions with various stakeholders, including representatives from key entities such as the Ministry of Defence, Fire Department, and Ministry of Health as primary sources of patient referrals. Physicians from Burjeel actively leveraged the exhibition as an opportunity to interact with patients, while many of them sought second opinions and immediate appointments, with the team actively working to facilitate their needs.

Furthermore, Her Excellency Sheikh Fadia Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, Chairperson of the Board of

Directors of Al-Saad Foundation for Knowledge and Scientific Research, inaugurated the proceedings of this event. The occasion drew the presence of a distinguished assembly, including medical professionals, administrators, academics and ambassadors from Spain, Thailand, and Turkey.

Services

Dr. Michael Uglov, Director of Poley Middle East Clinic and Consultant Pediatric Orthopedic Surgery at Burjeel Medical City, shed light on orthopedic rehabilitation services at the hospital. Additionally, Mr.

Rashed Al-Alawi from the Patient Experience Department of Burjeel Medical City delved into the extensive healthcare solutions available at the facility.

At the end of the Kuwait Health Conference and Exhibition, Dr. Maha Feda, Consultant in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation at Burjeel Medical City, expressed her gratitude and presented a commemorative gift on behalf of Burjeel Holdings to Her Excellency Sheikh Fadia Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, who was present at the event.

Anthony Fauci to testify on COVID origins

Nausea concerns halt Pfizer's obesity pill study

NEW YORK, Dec 2, (AP): Pfizer shares sank Friday when the drugmaker said it would abandon a twice-daily obesity treatment after more than half the patients in a clinical trial stopped taking it.

The pharmaceutical company said it will focus instead on a once-daily version of the pill, danuglipron, instead of starting a late-stage study of the other version. Late-stage studies are usually the last and most expensive trials a drugmaker undertakes before seeking regulatory approval.

Obesity treatments are one of the hottest and more lucrative areas of medicine. Pfizer rivals Novo Nordisk and Eli Lilly already have injectable drugs on the market. But Novo and Pfizer are also trying to develop pill versions that would be easier for patients to take.

Pfizer said it saw patient discontinuation rates topping 50% across all doses in a mid-stage study of twice-daily danuglipron. That compares to about 40% for the placebo or fake drug.

The drugmaker also said side effects for the pills were mild but common. Up to 73% of patients experienced nausea and 47% dealt with vomiting.

Researchers did see statistically significant weight loss in adults with obesity but without type 2 diabetes.

It ranged from nearly 7% to more than 11% in patients taking the pills.

By comparison, obese patients without diabetes lost about 18% of their weight compared to a placebo when taking taking Eli Lilly's Zepbound in late-stage research.

The Food and Drug Administration approved Zepbound for obesity last month.

Pfizer Chief Scientific Officer, Dr. Mikael Dolsten, said in a statement Friday that they believe a once-daily version of danuglipron could play an important role in treating obesity, and the company would focus on that.

Research

A Pfizer spokeswoman said the company was conducting early-stage research on that version and expected to have results early next year.

Shares of New York-based Pfizer Inc. slipped nearly 5% to \$28.98 in midmorning trading while broader indexes were mixed.

That drop continued a rough year for the drugmaker. Pfizer shares had already slid 40% before Friday.

Anthony Fauci, former chief White House medical adviser, is expected to testify before Congress early next year as part of Republicans' yearslong investigation into

the origins of COVID-19 and the US response to the disease.

Fauci, who served as the nation's top infectious disease expert before retiring last year, will sit for transcribed interviews in early January and a public hearing at a later date. It will be his first appearance before the Republican-controlled House.

The Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic first requested a sit-down with Fauci in February, but an agreement over the timing and details of the interviews was just reached with Fauci's attorneys earlier this month, according to a letter sent Thursday from the committee.

"It is time for Dr. Fauci to confront the facts and address the numerous controversies that have arisen during and after the pandemic," Rep. Brad Wenstrup, the GOP chairman of the committee, said in a statement.

House Republicans have investigated whether Fauci or other U.S. government officials took part in any sort of cover-up about the origin of the deadly virus. Fauci, who served under both Republican and Democratic presidents, has repeatedly called the GOP criticism nonsense.

Wenstrup, who is also a longtime member of the House Intelligence Committee, has accused Fauci and U.S. intelligence of withholding key facts about its investigation into the

coronavirus. Republicans on the committee last year issued a staff report arguing that there are "indications" that the virus may have been developed as a bioweapon inside China's Wuhan Institute of Virology.

That would contradict a U.S. intelligence community assessment released in unclassified form in August 2021 that said analysts do not believe the virus was a bioweapon, though it may have leaked in a lab accident.

Many scientists, including Fauci, who until December served as Biden's chief medical adviser, say they still believe the virus most likely emerged in nature and jumped from animals to humans, a well-documented phenomenon known as a spillover event. Virus researchers have not publicly identified any key new scientific evidence that might make the lab-leak hypothesis more likely.

But Republicans have accused Fauci of lying to Congress when he denied in May 2022 that the National Institutes of Health funded "gain of function" research - the practice of enhancing a virus in a lab to study its potential impact in the real world - at a virology lab in Wuhan. Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, even urged Attorney General Merrick Garland to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate Fauci's statements.

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SPORTS

Nuggets extend winning streak with a 'gritty victory' over Suns

Magic win 9th straight to tie franchise record

PHOENIX, Dec 2, (AP): Nikola Jokic had 21 points and 16 assists, Reggie Jackson added 20 points and the Denver Nuggets held off the Phoenix Suns 119-111 for a hard-fought victory Friday night.

Down 17 in the first half, the Suns - on a night Kevin Durant moved into 10th place on the NBA's career scoring list - cut Denver's lead to 94-91 entering the fourth.

Phoenix tied it three times early in the fourth - and the game started

BASKETBALL

within one possession for much of the period - but Jokic and Michael Porter Jr. were among multiple players who made clutch buckets to keep the defending champion Nuggets ahead. Denver has won four straight.

Jusuf Nurkic led the Suns - playing without Devin Booker - with a season-high 31 points but fouled out after being called for a charge with 45 seconds remaining, which was upgraded to a Flagrant 1, meaning Jokic got to shoot two free throws. He made one of two for a 115-111 lead and Denver retained possession.

Durant added 30 points but shot just 8 of 25 from the field, including 0 for 5 in the fourth quarter. He moved into 10th place on scoring list late in the second quarter, driving the baseline for a layup to pass Moses Malone with 27,411 career points.

Magic 130, Wizard 125

In Orlando, Florida, Franz Wagner scored 31 points, Paolo Banchero had 28 points, 13 rebounds and seven assists and Orlando won its ninth straight to tie the franchise record, beating Washington.

Moritz Wagner added 18 points



Denver Nuggets center Nikola Jokic drives on Phoenix Suns center Jusuf Nurkic (20) during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Friday, Dec. 1, 2023, in Phoenix. (AP)

to help Orlando beat Washington for the second time in three nights. The Magic have had four nine-game winning streaks, previously in 1994, 2001 and 2010-11. They are one of only two NBA franchises without a double-digit winning streak. The Indiana Pacers' longest streak also is

nine games.

Kyle Kuzma scored 27 points for Washington. The Wizards have lost 11 of 12.

Celtics 125, 76ers 119

In Boston, Jayson Tatum scored 21 points before he was ejected for arguing near the end of the third quarter, Derrick White also had 21 and Boston beat depleted Philadelphia.

Without its top two scorers, Joel Embiid and Tyrese Maxey, the 76ers led 116-115 with under three minutes left before giving up the next eight points. Patrick Beverley had 26 points, eight rebounds and seven assists for Philadelphia, which has lost four of six.

De'Anthony Melton was leading the 76ers in scoring with 21 points when he fouled out with 5:08 to play and Boston leading 111-108. Jaylen Brown and Al Horford each scored 20 points for the Celtics, who had a full complement - until Tatum



Orlando Magic guard Gary Harris, left, shoots from behind the back of Washington Wizards forward Danilo Gallinari (88) during the first half of an NBA basketball game Friday, Dec. 1, 2023, in Orlando, Florida. (AP)

fouled out.

Grizzlies 108, Mavericks 94

In Dallas, Desmond Bane scored 30 points and depleted Memphis won consecutive games for the first time this season, beating Dallas with Mavericks superstar Luka Doncic out for personal reasons.

Doncic, third in the NBA in scoring at 31.1 points per game, missed a game for the first time this season as did Dallas' third-leading scorer, Tim Hardaway Jr., out with back spasms. Derrick Jones Jr. and Grant Williams scored 16 points apiece to lead the Mavericks. Kyrie Irving had a season-low 10 points on 3-of-15 shooting, and Dallas shot a season-worst 37.0%.

Pelicans 121, Spurs 106

In New Orleans, Jonas Valanciunas had 24 points and 12 rebounds, Trey Murphy scored 18 points in his first appearance this season and New Orleans sent San Antonio to its 14th straight loss.

Spurs rookie forward Victor Wembanyama, the first player taken in the NBA draft, was held out because of right hip tightness. San Antonio's losing streak is its second-longest. The Spurs lost 16 in a row last season, when they finished 22-60 and won the NBA draft lottery.

CJ McCollum scored 19 points and Herb Jones added 17 points and three steals for New Orleans, which won its second straight.

Knicks 119, Raptors 106

In Toronto, Jalen Brunson had 22 points, Josh Hart scored 15 of his 17 in the third quarter and New York beat Toronto to match a season high with its third straight victory.

Julius Randle had 20 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists to help New York improved to 10-0 against teams with losing records.

Scottie Barnes scored 29 points for Toronto.

Kansas holds off UConn 69-65

Northwestern takes down No. 1 Purdue for 2nd straight season

EVANSTON, Ill., Dec 2, (AP): Boo Buie scored seven of his 31 points in overtime to help Northwestern beat Zach Edey and No. 1 Purdue for the second straight season, winning 92-88 on Friday night in the Big Ten opener for each school.

Buie added nine assists and four rebounds, rallying Northwestern from an eight-point halftime deficit. Ty Berry also scored seven points in OT and finished with 21, and Ryan Langborg had 20.

The Wildcats (6-1, 1-0) became the seventh program since 2010-11 to beat a team ranked No. 1 in the AP poll in consecutive seasons. They topped the Boilermakers 64-58 on Feb. 12 for their first win against a No. 1 team.

The 7-foot-4 Edey, the reigning national player of the year, had 35 points, 14 rebounds and three blocked shots - but Purdue (7-1, 0-1) had no answer for Buie when it mattered most.

Moments after the final seconds ticked off, Edey & Co. trudged off the floor as students stormed the court at Welsh-Ryan Arena.

Kansas 69, UConn 65

In Lawrence, Kansas, Kevin McCullar Jr. scored 21 points, including

BASKETBALL

consecutive 3-pointers that gave Kansas the lead down the stretch, and the Jayhawks held off UConn in a showdown of the past two NCAA championships.

The Jayhawks (7-1) had a chance to wrap up the game in the final minute, when the Huskies (7-1) were forced to foul, but KJ Adams Jr. and Dajuan Harris Jr. were only able to make one of their four free throws.

The defending champion Huskies raced down the floor and Cam Spencer got a good look at a potential go-ahead 3, but the shot came up short and Adams grabbed the rebound. He was fouled, and this time made both free throws with 2.4 seconds left to clinch the win.

Hunter Dickinson had 15 points and nine rebounds, and Adams finished with 18 points to help Kansas snap the Huskies' remarkable streak of 24 consecutive nonconference wins by double digits.

UConn had won 13 in a row overall - all by double figures - dating to a 70-68 loss to Marquette in the semifinals of the 2023 Big East Tournament.

Tristen Newton hit a career-high six 3s and scored 31 points for the Huskies, but he got little help from the rest of the offense. Donovan Clingan, who banged with fellow 7-footer Dickinson all night, was held to eight points and seven boards.

Houston 66, Xavier 60

In Cincinnati, L.J. Cryer scored 23 points and Jamal Shead had 13 to help Houston hold off Xavier.

Houston improved to 8-0 for the

Ledecky loses freestyle race

GREENSBORO, N.C., Dec 2, (AP): For the first time in 11 years, Katie Ledecky has lost a 400-meter freestyle race in an American pool.

Canadian teenager Summer McIntosh took the title at the U.S. Open championships in Greensboro, North Carolina, on Thursday, beating Ledecky by nearly 3 seconds.

McIntosh took the title in a meet record of 3 minutes, 59.42 seconds, while Ledecky touched next

in 4:02.38.

Ledecky's last loss in the 400 free in her home country was at the 2012 U.S. Olympic trials, when she placed third at age 15.

SWIMMING

Last March, the 17-year-old McIntosh also snapped Ledecky's nine-year U.S. win streak in the 200 free.

The significance of McIntosh's latest victory is difficult to gauge, since swimmers are at different stages of their training cycles as they ramp up preparations for next year's Paris Olympics.

second straight season and fifth time in school history.

Quincy Olivari led Xavier (4-4) with 17 points. Desmond Claude added 14 in the first meeting between the schools. The Musketeers were missing one of their best perimeter shooters, with Trey Green out due to illness.

Houston won its first seven games by an average of 26.8 points. But the Cougars were challenged in their first true road game against a Big East opponent.

BYU 85, Fresno State 56

In Salt Lake City, Jaxson Robinson scored a career-high 24 points, making six 3-pointers, and Spencer Johnson added a career-best 22 to lead BYU over Fresno State.

Johnson also had five assists and five rebounds for BYU (7-0), which has won 12 straight nonconference games dating to last season - the program's longest streak since 2011.



Kansas guard Kevin McCullar Jr. (15) shoots under pressure from UConn guard Tristen Newton (2) during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game Friday, Dec. 1, 2023, in Lawrence, Kansas. (AP)

Salter leads unbeaten Liberty past New Mexico State 49-35 for C-USA title

Washington topples Oregon in Pac-12 finale to wrap up playoff spot

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LAS VEGAS, Dec 2, (AP): Michael Penix Jr. passed for 319 yards and a touchdown, Dillon Johnson ran for 152 yards and two TDs and No. 3 Washington wrapped up a spot in the College Football Playoff, beating No. 5 Oregon 34-31 on Friday night in the Pac-12 Championship.

The game was likely the final Pac-12 Championship given 10 of the 12 teams will be playing in different conferences next season. Only Oregon State and

FOOTBALL

Washington State will remain as they try to find a way to keep the tradition-rich conference together in some form.

Washington (13-0) was the last Pac-12 team to make the CFP - in the 2016 season.

The Huskies scored two touchdowns in the fourth quarter to take a 34-24 lead. Oregon (11-2) scored a late touchdown for the final score, but failed to recover the onside kick, ending the Ducks' six-game winning streak.

Two Washington receivers had more than 100 yards - Jalen McMillan (nine



Washington cornerback Dominique Hampton (7) breaks up a pass intended for Oregon tight end Terrance Ferguson (3) during the second half of the Pac-12 championship NCAA college football game Friday, Dec. 1, 2023, in Las Vegas. (AP)

receptions for 131 yards) and Biletchnikoff finalist Rome Odunze (eight for 102).

Oregon's Bo Nix, the favorite entering

the game to win the Heisman Trophy according to FanDuel Sportsbook, passed for 239 yards and three touchdowns and

rushed for 69 yards.

The Huskies also beat the Ducks in the regular season, 36-33 in Seattle on Oct. 14.

Liberty 49, New Mexico State 35

In Lynchburg, Va., Kaidon Salter threw two touchdown passes and ran for another score and undefeated No. 20 Liberty maintained its hopes for a New Year's Six bowl bid, beating New Mexico State 49-35 in the Conference USA championship game.

Salter was 20 of 25 for 319 yards and rushed 12 times for 165 yards in a dominant performance for the Flames (13-0), who could end up playing on New Year's Day as the highest-ranked Group of Five team if No. 17 Tulane falls to SMU on Saturday in the American Athletic Conference title game.

With the game tied at 35-all, Billy Lucas had a 2-yard touchdown early in the fourth quarter to put Liberty ahead. On New Mexico State's next possession, Brandon Bishop intercepted Blaze Berlovitz's pass in the end zone. Four plays later, Salter ran 35 yards for a TD.

New Mexico State (10-4) had won eight straight.

Amazing experiences for both fans and drivers

TGR concludes WRC season with 1-2-3 podium finish at Rally Japan



Toyota GAZOO Racing World Rally Team celebrates after Rally Japan.

TOKYO, Dec 2: TOYOTA GAZOO Racing (TGR) World Rally Team (WRT) has scored a flawless 1-2-3 podium finish on home roads at the FIA World Rally Championship's (WRC) Rally Japan to complete a season of success in style. Elfyn Evans, followed by Sébastien Ogier and Kalle Rovanperä, all claimed victory in their No. 33, No. 17, and No. 69 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1 Hybrid Electric Vehicles respectively.

The triumph, for Evans and co-driver Scott Martin, is their third of the season and the ninth in 13 rallies this year for TGR. Toyota, meanwhile, had already sealed its manufacturers' title during round 11 of Rally Chile before Rovanperä and Jonne Halttunen secured their second drivers' and co-drivers' titles on the penultimate event, the Central European Rally.

Akio Toyoda, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Toyota Motor Corporation and TGR-WRT Chairman, commented: "To foster the culture of rallying through continuous improvement in a Japanese way and to make the rally an essential autumn tradition in Japan. Rally Japan this year made all of these things come true. The most impressive thing was that we were able to use Toyota Stadium as one of the special stages allowing us to watch the top drivers driving up close and in front of that many spectators. It was a rally full of exciting and amazing experiences for both fans and drivers. If we continue this kind of rally events, I am sure that motorsport will become a culture in Japan and be more popular. I would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to make Rally Japan 2023 a great success."

This was the WRC's second visit to the technical and demanding asphalt roads in the mountains of the Aichi and Gifu prefectures around Toyota City. Heavy rain added significantly to day one's challenges, and this was where Evans built the foundations of his victory. Two stage wins in the most extreme wet morning weather helped him to open up a lead of almost one minute and 50 seconds over his team-mates. Day two and three brought further changeable and slippery weather conditions, but Evans managed both days expertly to seal the win. Meanwhile, Ogier and Rovanperä focused on maximising the team's result rather than their own positions in tricky weather conditions to finally emerge in second and third place.

Over the years, Toyota has been participating in many different forms of motorsports, including Formula One, the World Endurance Championship (WEC), and the Nürburgring 24 Hours endurance race. Toyota's participation in these events was overseen by separate entities within the company until April 2015, when Toyota established TGR, to consolidate all of its motorsports activities under one in-house brand. Representing Toyota's belief that 'the roads build the people, and the people build the cars,' TGR highlights the role of motorsports as a fundamental pillar of Toyota's commitment to making 'ever-better' cars. Harnessing years of experience gained under the extreme conditions of various motorsports events, TGR aims to forge new technologies and solutions that bring the freedom, adventure, and joy of driving to everyone.



Drivers in action.

Snow chaos in southern Germany

Bayern game with Union called off

MUNICH, Dec 2, (AP): Bayern Munich's home game against Union Berlin was called off Saturday because of heavy snowfall.

Cold weather, snowfall and ice have caused transport chaos in Munich and southern Germany.

"It was decided not to play the game because of the security risks for all involved," Union said in a statement 5½ hours before the Bundesliga game was due to start.

SOCCER

The German soccer federation said that stadium management had made the decision not to host the game "due to persistent heavy snowfall."

It came after a winter storm dumped snow across southern Germany and parts of Austria and Switzerland, affecting travel across the region.

"We very much regret that we have to postpone the match, but the safety of our fans and the supporters of Union Berlin has absolute priority," said Bayern chief executive Jan-

Christian Dreesen, who referred to the "numerous road closures and various public transport cancellations."

Flight operations at Munich airport were canceled until 6 a.m. Sunday, and numerous railway lines around Munich had to be closed. News agency dpa reported that some passengers in Munich and the nearby city of Ulm spent Friday night on trains because of the service suspensions.

The Union team had been in Munich since Thursday after traveling directly there from its Champions League game at Braga in Portugal on Wednesday.

Club spokesperson Katharina Brendel said the team and staff were already on their way home Saturday using a combination of "bus, car and mini-bus."

With Bundesliga leader Bayer Leverkusen not playing until Sunday, Bayern had been hoping to move provisionally atop the standings on Saturday with a win over Union, which is on a 15-game winless run across all competitions.

Leverkusen is due to host Borussia Dortmund on Sunday.

Kuwait Club aiming to extend league 'lead' against Al-Arabi

Bunjak refers showdown as 'crossroads'

By Hassan Musa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 2: The defending champions, Kuwait Club, are gearing up for a crucial match against Al-Arabi, originally scheduled in the eighth round of the Zain Premier League. The encounter, initially set for November 27, was delayed due to the teams' involvement in AFC Cup competitions. The match is slated to take place at 6:45 pm at the Friendship and Peace Stadium.

Currently leading the league with 17 points, Al-Kuwait face stiff competition from Al-Qadsia (16 points) for the top spot. Al-Arabi hold third place with 14 points.

SOCCER

In the AFC Cup, both teams are navigating a period of instability. Al-Arabi, positioned third with 5 points, missed the chance to qualify for the third group, trailing behind Al-Zawraa of Iraq (8 points) and Al-Riffa of Bahrain (13 points). Kuwait, in third place with 6 points, needs a win against Al-Wahdat in the last round. Additionally, they rely on Al-Zawraa losing to Riffa to secure qualification as the second-best among the three groups in the West Asia region.

Locally, Al-Kuwait boast a favorable position compared to Al-Arabi, having secured a convincing 4-1 victory over Al-Fahahel in the seventh round. Coach Boris Bunjak recognizes the pivotal nature of the upcoming match, referring to it as a "crossroads." A defeat would mean sharing the top spot with Al-Arabi and jeopardizing their chances of a third consecutive title.

Bunjak's squad comprises standout players such as Tunisians Yassin Al-Khanisi and Yassin Amri, Bahraini Muhammad Al-Marhoon, Moroccan Mahdi Barahma, and others.

On the opposing side, Al-Arabi aim for victory to claim the league's summit and boost morale for a title challenge. Bosnian coach Darko Nestorovic acknowledges the significance, understanding that anything less than a win could distance them from the competition, especially with close rivals Al-Nasr, Kazma, and Al-Salmiya, each holding 13 points.

Despite facing challenges like injuries and absences, Al-Arabi field a capable lineup featuring players like Moroccan Hamza Khaba, Bandar Al-Salama, Sultan Al-Anazi, and Mamadou Thiam. The outcome of this match will undoubtedly shape the trajectory of both teams in the league.

'He has been amazing'

Ronaldo walks off to chants of 'Messi, Messi' as Al-Hilal dominate Al-Nasr in Riyadh derby

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Dec 2, (AP): Cristiano Ronaldo walked off the field with the gleeful chants of "Messi, Messi, Messi!" ringing in his ears from delighted Al-Hilal fans who had just watched their Saudi Pro League team beat the Portugal superstar's Al-Nasr 3-0 in the Riyadh Derby.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner may have finished on the losing team - Aleksandar Mitrovic scored twice after fellow Serbian Sergej Milinkovic-Savic opened Al-Hilal - but Ronaldo still remains the focus of attention in Saudi Arabian soccer despite the taunts of opposition fans referencing his great rival of nearly two decades.

As thousands of cars headed east

out of downtown Riyadh to watch the top two league teams and bitter local rivals face off at the King Fahd International Stadium - the last to be played at the arena for three years as it is to be renovated to host games at the 2027 Asian Cup and anticipated 2034 World Cup - one Al-Nasr fan leaned out and shouted: "Are you here to see Cristiano?"

When Ronaldo warmed up, there were cheers from the several thousand away fans, many of whom had No. 7 on their backs, and jeers from the masses of home supporters. But even in those hostile sections, parents pointed out the 38-year-old soccer great to sons and daughters.

Saudi soccer has not been the same since the former Real Madrid

and Manchester United forward completed a move last December. Even fans of Al-Hilal, the most successful club in Saudi Arabia and Asia, with 18 and four championships respectively, acknowledge what he has done at Al-Nasr which has nine domestic titles.

"He has lifted the level of the whole of football here," Riyadh resident Fahad Al-Qahtani, 25, told The Associated Press. "Al-Hilal will still be champion this season and we are still the biggest in Asia but Ronaldo has been amazing."

In the previous 14 games of the league season, Ronaldo had netted 15 goals to top the scoring charts and help Al-Nasr move into second in the league behind Al-Hilal. His teammates now include former Liverpool star Sadio Mane, Marcelo Brozovic from Inter Milan and Alex Telles, who arrived from Manchester United.

"Cristiano is an example for everyone, an example that Al-Nasr are lucky to have," Al-Nasr coach Luis Castro said. "He is an example of

SOCCER

rigor, ambition and discipline. Lots of people want to be like Cristiano Ronaldo but few want to work like Cristiano Ronaldo. If you want something you have to give everything to get it."

Ronaldo tried everything on Friday. In the second half with Al-Nasr trailing by a solitary goal, he shot a fierce volley high into the net but it was marginally ruled out for offside. Soon after he rolled around the floor of the Al-Hilal penalty area claiming that he had been elbowed. When Mitrovic scored his first and Al-Hilal's second late in the game, Ronaldo insisted that he had been fouled in the buildup.

Hilal has its own superstar but a less influential one right now as Neymar, who signed from Paris Saint-Germain in August, suffered a serious injury while on international duty with Brazil in October.

On social media, Neymar posted good luck messages to his teammates, such as Mitrovic, midfielder Ruben Neves and defender Kalidou Koulibaly who all arrived in the summer as highly rated English Premier League players. They joined several Saudi Arabian internationals in the team such as Saleem Al-Dawsari and Saleh Al-Shehri, who scored against Lionel Messi's Argentina in Saudi Arabia's famous 2-1 win at the 2022 World Cup.

The derby defeat on Friday left Al-Nasr seven points behind leader Al-Hilal after 15 rounds. Ronaldo may have his work cut out to help his team win title No. 10 but, given his form so far this season, he may still have the last laugh with the Messi chants fading away.

Ronaldo's day was further soured with news from the U.S. that he has been hit with class-action lawsuit seeking at least \$1 billion in damages for his role in promoting cryptocurrency-related "non-fungible tokens," or NFTs, issued by the beleaguered cryptocurrency exchange Binance.



In this file photo, Al Nasr's Cristiano Ronaldo controls the ball during a friendly soccer match against Paris Saint-Germain in Osaka, western Japan. (AP)



In this file photo Al-Kuwait and Al-Arabi fight for the ball.



India's Jitesh Sharma plays a shot as Australia's captain Matthew Wade watches during the fourth T20 cricket match between Australia and India in Raipur, India. India won the fourth Twenty20 cricket match by 20 runs to clinch series against Australia. (AP)

Sports

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Taijul 10-wkt haul leads Bangladesh to 150-run win against New Zealand

'We are just thinking about the process, not the result'

SYLHET, Bangladesh, Dec 2, (AP): Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam took his second 10-wicket haul in tests as Bangladesh secured a 150-run victory in the series-opening match against New Zealand on Saturday.

Taijul followed his 4-109 with 6-75 in the second innings to wrap up New Zealand's innings for 181 in the first session of the final day, with the tourists chasing a target of 332 runs.

Offspinner Nayeem Hasan complemented him with 2-40, while pacer Shoriful Islam (1-13) and offspinner Mehidy Hasan (1-44) contributed a wicket apiece.

"We are just thinking about the process, not the result," Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto said. "We have so many test matches coming up. This win will give us a confidence to do well."

CRICKET

"As I said earlier, we want to make winning a habit at home. Hopefully we will be able to continue the performance."

Daryl Mitchell battled to top-score for the visitors with a patient 58 from 120 balls.

Resuming at 113-7, Mitchell's presence gave New Zealand a slim hope of an unlikely victory and he struck Taijul for a boundary from the third ball of the day before punching the same bowler for a single through cover to raise his ninth half-century off 99 balls.

Unlike many of his compatriots Mitchell looked confident against the host's spinners, but a mis-timed sweep shot against offspinner Nayeem Hasan eventually brought about his dismissal and effectively ended New Zealand's hopes of saving the game.

Skipper Tim Southee scored an attacking 34 off 24 balls, with one four and two sixes, before Taijul dismissed him to complete his 12th five-for.

Taijul then wrapped up the match when Ish Sodhi, who made a laborious 22 off 91, popped a simple catch to Zakir Hasan at silly mid-off.

"Bangladesh played well and are a very good side in these conditions. As a bowling group, we needed to sustain pressure," Southee said. "It was a pretty good wicket. Took a bit of spin which you expect in this part of the world."

"We'll reflect on this and try to be better in the next game. Everyone's striving to always improve their game and get better."

Opener Mahmudul Hasan made 86 as Bangladesh was bowled out 310 in its first innings but New Zealand compiled 317, for a seven-run lead, courtesy of a brilliant 104 from Kane Williamson.

Shanto then became the first Bangladeshi cricketer to hit a century on



Team Germany celebrates after winning the U-17 World Cup final soccer match against France at Manahan Stadium in Surakarta, Indonesia. (AP)



Bangladeshi cricketer Taijul Islam takes a catch to dismiss New Zealand's batsman Daryl Mitchell during the fifth day of the first test cricket match at Sylhet, Bangladesh. (AP)

debut as captain as the hosts made 338 in the second innings, and set a daunting 332-run target for the Black Caps on an increasingly deteriorating pitch.

Taijul then spun his way through the tourists batting line-up late on day four and the final morning to lead Bangladesh to its first victory against New Zealand at home, and only its second overall.

The second and final test of the series begins on December 6 at Mirpur.

Jerboa magic returns: Qatar Asia Cup 2023 mascot showcased in dazzling Doha event

DOHA, Dec 2: The Qatar Asia Cup 2023 Local Organizing Committee unveiled the tournament's mascot in a special ceremony held in Doha. The mascot, a family of jerboas, made its debut in the 2011 Asian Cup and has returned for the current edition, featuring characters known to football fans from 2011: Sabouk, Tembaki, Fariha, Zakriti, and Trina.

SOCCER

Described as embodying the dynamism of football players, the jerboa family symbolizes teamwork and celebrates the significance of family life in Qatar and the broader region, according to a statement from the committee. Hassan Al Kuwari, the Executive Director of Communications and Marketing, highlighted the mascot's return as a testament to Qatar's longstanding excellence in hosting major sporting events.

Al Kuwari emphasized the mascot's ability to evoke memories of the 2011 championship, capturing the excitement and energy of the tournament. The characters of the talisman

Nadal to return to playing in Brisbane

MADRID, Dec 2, (AP): Rafael Nadal will return to playing at the Brisbane International in Australia in January, the 22-time Grand Slam champion said.

"After a year of not competing, it is time to come back," Nadal said in a video posted on social media. "It will be in Brisbane in the first week of January. See you there."

The 37-year-old Spaniard has not played on tour since last January, when he hurt his hip flexor during a loss in the second round of the Australian Open.

In May, a little more than a

week before the start of the French Open, Nadal announced that he would miss the tournament he's won a record 14 times and wasn't exactly sure when he might return to play.

Nadal had said then that he hoped to compete in 2024, which he expected to be his final season.

"You never know how things will turn out," Nadal said at a news conference at the time, "but my intention is that next year will be my last year."

He wound up having arthroscopic surgery in June in Barcelona.

draw inspiration from Qatar's natural environment, providing an opportunity to showcase the country's heritage and traditions to a global audience.

Qatari artist Ahmed Al-Maadeed, responsible for illustrating the mascot characters, expressed his intention to create an artistic work that inspires societal engagement with the Asian Cup. The selection of the jerboa, a desert-dwelling animal native to Qatar, was a deliberate choice to embody the spirit of the game.

Katara Studios produced an animation film featuring the characters of the Qatar 2023 Asian Cup mascot. This film, set to be enjoyed by audi-

ences in the lead-up to and during the tournament (scheduled from January 12 to February 10, 2024), is expected to evoke nostalgic feelings reminiscent of beloved cartoon films.

The talismanic family includes Sabooq, the star athlete son in blue; Fariha, the eldest daughter in pink, named after the Fariha region in northern Qatar; Tembaki, the younger brother of Sabuk in yellow, named after the Tembaki region in eastern Qatar; Zakriti, the father in green, named after the Zakrit region in the west of Qatar; and Trina, the mother in purple, named after the Trina region in the south of Qatar.



Qatar Asia Cup 2023 mascot.

Girona edge Valencia

Juventus go top of Serie A

ROME, Dec 2, (AP): Juventus moved to the top of the Italian league on Friday after a dramatic 2-1 win at Monza.

The Turin side led 1-0 for almost the entire game only to see Va-

lentin Carboni equalize for Monza a minute into injury time.

However, the visitors reacted with aplomb and three minutes later Federico Gatti converted a cut-back from France midfielder Adrien Rabiot to give Juventus the lead again - and all three points.

The main action of the game until then came after 12 minutes. Monza goalkeeper Michele Di Gregorio saved his team twice in quick succession, first from Dusan Vlahovic's penalty and then again brilliantly from the rebound.

However, Rabiot rose to meet the resulting corner and power an unstoppable header into the net to give Juventus the lead.

The Turin giant is now unbeaten in nine league games.

The result lifts Juventus into first place in Serie A. It's a point ahead of Inter Milan, which plays fourth-place and defending champion Napoli on Sunday.

Monza, which was promoted from Serie B last season and has surprised fans with its string of solid results, remains in 10th place with 18 points from 14 games.



Rabiot

Veteran striker **Cristhian Stuani** came off the bench to rally **Girona** past **Valencia** in a 2-1.

The 37-year-old Stuani started the stunning comeback with a goal in the 82nd minute from a cross by fellow substitute **Yan Couto**.

Girona took the lead in the 88th when another cross by Couto intended for Stuani appeared to be turned into the goal by Valencia defender **Cristhian Mosquera**, although the league's website credited Stuani with the goal.

California-born **Julian Araujo** got his first goal of the season and veteran striker **Cristian Herrera** scored his first top-tier goal since the 2014-5 campaign as **Las Palmas** beat Getafe 2-0.

SOCCER

Getafe came into the game unbeaten in its last eight but it was no match for a home side which dominated from kickoff.

Full back Araujo opened the scoring shortly before halftime with a looping header.

Herrera came off the bench with five minutes remaining for only his third league appearance of the season and added a second in injury time after good work on the right from Marvin Park.

"I remember that the last goal I scored in the first division was in the '14-'15 season against Espanyol," the 32-year-old Herrera told Movistar. "This is my first goal with this team from where I am from and it provoked a lot of memories and emotions."

"Today I took my chance and so now I just have to keep working away the same as always."

The result could have been a lot worse for the visitors, who played almost the entire second half with 10 men after Paraguay defender **Omar Alderete** was sent off. **Sandro** and **Alberto Moleiro** both had goals ruled out for Las Palmas.

SOCCER

Reims returned to winning ways after two straight defeats and scored twice in a commanding first-half performance to beat Strasbourg 2-1 in the French league.

The hosts took the lead in the 10th minute when **Amir Richardson** hammered a simple cut-back into the roof of the net.

Mohamed Daramy doubled its lead three minutes before halftime when he finished off a quick counterattack.

Kevin Gameiro scored a late consolation from the penalty spot for **Strasbourg** but it was too little, too late for the visitors, who have now gone seven games without a win in Ligue 1.

The result consolidated Reims' fifth place after defeats to **Paris Saint-Germain** and **Rennes**. It now has 23 points from 14 matches, equal with fourth-place **Lille**, which plays **Metz** on Sunday.

Strasbourg is 14th with 13 points from 13 games.

PSG tops the league with 30 points, one point ahead of Nice.

Legia Warsaw fans appear in court

UEFA sets \$360 million prize fund for 24 national teams at Euro 2024 from 'revenue' of \$2.6 billion

HAMBURG, Germany, Dec 2, (AP): UEFA said Saturday it will pay 331 million euros (\$360 million) in total prize money to the 24 national teams at the men's European Championship that is expected to earn about 2.4 billion euros (\$2.61 billion) in commercial revenue.

The team prize fund is in line with the pandemic-delayed Euro 2020 and 20 times more than UEFA's prize fund for the women's Euro 2022.

The national federation of the Euro 2024 title winner can get a maximum of 28.25 million euros if the team wins all three games in the opening group stage, the European soccer body said ahead of the tournament draw.

Each of the 24 teams gets a minimum of 9.25 million euros for playing at the month-long tournament in Germany that starts June 14.

Clubs will share in a further 240 million euros from UEFA for releasing their players to national-team duty. They get a daily rate of several thousand euros per player while they are with national teams for qualifying games and at Euro 2024 itself.

FIFA paid prize money of \$440 mil-

lion to the 32 men's teams at the 2022 World Cup, four times more than the \$110 million shared among 32 women's teams at their 2023 World Cup.

The Euro 2024 winner will be paid more than the total 16 million euros prize money fund for the 16 women's teams that played at Euro 2022 in England. The women's event has separate commercial deals to the men's.

SOCCER

England won its home women's tournament last year and got just over 2 million euros in prize money. UEFA's fund to reward women's clubs for releasing players was 4.5 million euros.

UEFA previously said it allocated 140 million euros to be shared by clubs releasing more than 550 players needed for the Euro 2024 tournament.

The remaining 100 million euros in the player release fund is distributed according to call-ups for all national teams for qualifying games and two editions of the Nations League.

The UEFA fund for men's player release from Euro 2020 revenue was 200

million euros in total and nearly 700 clubs got a share. Chelsea's 5.1 million euros payment was the highest.

□ □ □

Police have filed charges against the Legia Warsaw fans who were arrested for violent disorder outside Villa Park on Thursday night before a Europa Conference League game against Aston Villa.

All but one of the 46 men arrested were due to appear on Saturday in a special court set up in Birmingham to begin hearing the cases, West Midlands Police said.

"We are continuing to review CCTV and body-worn video footage to identify further suspects in what was an appalling and violent public disorder," police said in a statement Saturday.

Most of the defendants are from Poland and a "small number" are UK residents, police said. They range in age from 21 to 63.

Two of the men were charged with assaulting police officers, and one was charged with possession of a knife. The rest were charged with a public order offense. One man had been bailed to appear in court at a later date.