



No foreign currency shortage in Kuwait

Central Bank affirms country's economic vigor

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The Central Bank of Kuwait has affirmed that the country is not facing a shortage of foreign currency levels, attributing this to the majority of state revenues being derived from oil, which is paid in US dollars, reports Al-Rai daily.

The bank emphasized that the liquidity is supported by reserves in the form of foreign assets. When the Ministry of Finance purchases dinars from the Central Bank for the state budget, the equivalent is deposited in dollars, bolstering foreign reserves crucial

for exchange rate policy stability.

The Ministry of Finance's role in this mechanism is pivotal. When acquiring dinars from the Central Bank to meet the requirements of the state's general budget, the Ministry ensures an equivalent deposit in dollars. This practice not only facilitates the seamless execution of the budget but also actively contributes to the continuous augmentation of foreign reserves. These reserves, in turn, play a crucial role in implementing the exchange rate policy, a strategy designed to maintain the relative stability of the dinar exchange rate and ensure overall monetary stability.

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Amir in stable health: Diwan

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3, (KUNA): The health condition of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah remains stable, said the Amiri Diwan Affairs Minister Sunday.

Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah expressed wishes of good health and rapid recovery for His Highness the Amir.

Kuwait advances on climate action

DUBAI, Dec 3, (KUNA): Kuwait is now in the final stages of presenting its 2050 low-carbon strategy and plans to ensure it reaches carbon neutrality by 2060, said Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Oil, Sheikh Dr. Nimer Al-Fahad Al-Sabah.

In a statement to KUNA, Sheikh Nimer Al-Sabah congratulated the UAE for hosting the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28), considering it an opportunity to shed light on how the GCC and Arab countries are suffering from the negative effects of climate change.

Sheikh Nimer Al-Sabah stressed that Kuwait attaches the utmost importance to managing the climate change file at the national level through the

formation of a supreme national climate committee headed by the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Oil, and the Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs. It aims to develop programs and plans to reduce, emissions and enhance flexibility in facing the effects of climate change.

He stated that Kuwait is working to develop low-carbon development strategies in the sectors of oil, gas, energy, transportation, industry, land use, and the promotion of agriculture. These strategies include a roadmap to achieve sustainable economic growth through the principles of the circular carbon economy.

See Also Page 2

Ministry quizzed on expat teachers

MPs champion cooperative development with new bill

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: MPs Shuaib Al-Muwaizri, Badr Nashmi, Abdullah Fahad and Hamad Al-Matar have submitted a bill on the establishment of the Public Authority for Cooperatives, which will be affiliated to the State Ministry for Cabinet Affairs.

The bill stipulates the following description and tasks of the authority:

- An independent legal institution that will lay down general strategies for cooperative work in order to develop this field;
- Improve the performance of the cooperative sector;
- Protect the shareholders' money;
- Follow up and monitor the execution of integrated cooperative policies;
- Conduct studies on developing cooperative work;
- Review the international and regional treaties concerning cooperative work;
- Present recommendations to join or withdraw from these treaties;
- Raise the citizens' awareness about the importance of cooperative work;
- Lay down comprehensive strategies to protect the market from any crises threatening food security in collaboration with the Consumer Cooperative Societies Union (CCSU);
- Improve social services in coordination with the cooperative societies;
- Lay down an integrated strategy for training nationals to engage in cooperative work;
- Discuss and make decisions regarding applications for the establishment of cooperative societies;
- Replace Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Commerce and Industry in terms of oversight and following up cooperative societies;
- Lay down the general rules and regulations for organizing cooperative work while giving every cooperative society the right to issue certain regulations through their general assembly provided they are in line with the general rules and regulations;
- Appoint an employee who will monitor the performance of each cooperative society and represent the authority in the general assembly of each cooperative;
- Specify the dates for the elections of the board of directors of cooperative societies and announce the results of such elections;
- Request for plots for the establishment of cooperative societies and farms to increase food production;
- The authority's Board of Directors shall investigate administrative and financial violations in cooperatives and then take disciplinary action or refer the case to the Public Prosecution;
- The authority's chairman also heads the Board of Directors which will consist of three members who are the deputies of the board chairman in addition to the chairman of the CCSU;
- The authority's Board of Directors can invite concerned personalities to its meetings, but such personalities should not interfere in voting on decisions;
- The Board of Directors shall hold meetings every month;
- The concerned minister will issue the executive regulations within three months after the ratification of this bill.

In addition, MP Osama Al-Shaheen submitted a proposal to obligate schools under the supervision of the Public Authority for Disabled Affairs (PADA) to adopt the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) system.

He submitted another proposal for the Ministry of Education not to cut the summer vacation pay of teachers accompanying a family member or relative undergoing overseas treatment.

Meanwhile, Al-Shaheen asked Minister of Social Affairs and State Minister for Family, Women and Children Affairs Sheikh Feras Al-Sabah why the public hospitals do not cater to individu-

als with intellectual disabilities, especially the elderly, who are forced to avail services in private hospitals.

He also inquired if PADA is following up the curricula for students with autism and reasons for not adopting the (ABA) system in schools supervised by the authority.

MP Osama Al Zaid asked Minister of Health Ahmed Al-Awadhi about the total number ambulances in his ministry, number of ambulances in service and those outside, manufacturing date and equipment in each ambulance, number of unused ambulances if any, reasons for not using them, copies of purchase contracts for these ambulances, price and brand of each ambulance, if the ministry sent a team to check the ambulances before signing the contracts

with the manufacturers, if there are ambulances found to not match the specifications stated in the contract upon delivery to the country, measures taken if the answer is in the affirmative, copy of the technical report that proves they match the specifications if the answer is 'no', information about the team

tasked to receive the ambulances including the qualifications and experience of the team members, if the ministry conducts regular assessment of ambulances to upgrade the equipment, copies of relevant documents if the answer is 'yes', if there is an electronic link between the hospitals and the Medical Emergency Department to coordinate the time for transporting patients by ambulance, reasons behind the absence of such link if the answer is 'no', method used and procedures followed by the Medical Emergency Department in dealing with crises and disasters, number of patients that an ambulance can transport per hour from different parts of the country to the hospitals, if the ministry signed insurance policies for the ambulances, value of the insurance compared to the purchase price of each ambulance if the answer is 'yes', entity that shoulders the cost in case ambulances are involved in traffic incidents if the answer is 'no', number of Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti employees with medical emergency certificates, number of Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti employees hired in the last 10 years, if the ministry rejected a Kuwaiti applicant with such a certificate, reasons for rejection if the answer is 'yes', if the ministry conducted a study to determine the reasons behind the low number of Kuwaitis pursuing medical emergency studies, copies of the conclusion and recommendations of that study, allowances granted to medical emergency employees, reasons for not granting them the infection and hazard allowances, if the ministry asked the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to put emergency workers under the rare jobs category, and if the ministry asked the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) to put emergency workers under the hard, dangerous and harmful jobs category.

MP Shuaib Shaaban asked Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Adel Al-Manea to provide him with copies of all the decisions that his office issued since Sept 13, 2023 till date; number of consultants at the office including their experience, qualifications, salaries and allowances; if the consultants communicate directly with employees in the headquarters of the ministry and the educational districts; rationale behind such direct communication if the answer is 'yes' considering it is a violation of the CSC regulations; number of teachers with higher studies certificates including their tasks at the workplace; if these teachers are promoted for holding higher academic certificates; if the ministry coordinates

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Opinion

Amiri reassurance statements ... and 'social media' abuses

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah
Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

IN his book "La Psychologie Sociale" (Social Psychology), the French sociologist and psychologist Jean Maisonneuve wrote, "A rumor is a form of social pressure of unknown origin that is generally shrouded in mystery and vagueness, and usually attracts the attention of broad sectors of society."



Al-Jarallah

Rumor used to be one of the weapons used to destabilize countries. Some rumors were even used to ignite wars, and there is much evidence of this, although time does not allow us to state them at the moment.

On the other hand, transparency is the weapon used to refute all the rumors and fight against the rumormongers and their goals. However, it needs a way to create the appropriate atmosphere for it to be effective.

Therefore, in countries where administrations understand the meaning of stability, their officials work to avoid any delay in refuting rumors so that the public is not misled, especially in a time when the influence of social media has become great, and sometimes even shapes public opinion.

It is true that freedom in Kuwait is great, but the delay in announcing an event opens the way for the spread of rumors, which undoubtedly create confusion among the public, and provide an opportunity for external parties with their own interests to create more confusion on the internal situation. Therefore, promoting transparency is the only way to maintain stability.

The Amiri Diwan did well by issuing daily statements about the health condition of His Highness the Amir, after reports that he is not feeling well had emerged.

Nonetheless, while all of Kuwait is praying that Almighty Allah will grant His Highness good health and wellness, the delay in issuing the first statement and limiting it to a brief daily statement gave way to rumors flooding the social media.

In fact, it did not just stop at the health status of His Highness, but rather reached the arrangements in the hierarchy of power, and the distribution of positions to some individuals, in addition to linking what is happening in the region and the political atmosphere based on rumors in the country.

In Kuwait, we went through such events in the past. Prior to social media, news was limited to the press, print, audio and visual back then, and so things were fine despite the many observations in this regard at that time.

However, today the situation has changed to such a degree that it is not possible to be satisfied with daily brief press

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Email: ahmed@aljarallah.com

Follow me on:



ahmedaljarallah@gmail.com

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday at Bayan Palace, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

His Highness also received Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) Basel Al-Haroun, who handed the annual report for the financial year of 2022-2023. (KUNA)

DUBAI: An American warship and multiple commercial ships came under attack Sunday in the Red Sea, the Pentagon said, potentially marking a major escalation in a series of maritime attacks in the Mideast linked to the Israel-Hamas war.

"We're aware of reports regarding attacks on the USS Carney and commercial vessels in the Red Sea and will provide information as it becomes available," the Pentagon said. (AP)



Smoke rises following an Israeli bombardment in the Gaza Strip, as seen from southern Israel, Dec. 3, 2023. (AP)

Hopes for another truce dim

Gaza's south braces for escalation

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip, Dec 3, (AP): Israel's military on Sunday ordered more areas in and around Gaza's second-largest city of Khan Younis to evacuate, as it shifted its offensive to the southern half of the territory where it says many Hamas leaders are hiding.

Heavy bombardments were reported overnight and into Sunday in the area of Khan Younis and the southern city of Rafah, as well as parts of the north that had been the focus of Israel's blistering air and ground campaign.

The U.N. human rights chief urged for an end to the war, saying the suffering of civilians was "too much to bear."

Many of the territory's 2.3 million people are crammed in the south after Israeli forces ordered civilians to leave the north in the early days of the 2-month-old war, sparked by an Oct. 7 attack by Hamas and other militants that killed about 1,200 people, mostly civilians, in southern Israel. Around 240 more were taken hostage.

With the resumption of fighting, hopes for another temporary truce receded. A weeklong cease-fire, which expired Friday, had facilitated the release of dozens of Gaza-held Israeli and foreign hostages and Palestinians imprisoned by Israel.

"We will continue the war until we achieve all its goals, and it's impossible to achieve those goals without the ground operation," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Saturday.

On Sunday, the Israeli military widened evacuation orders in and around Khan Younis, telling residents of at least five more areas and neighborhoods to leave.

Iran-linked cyber attacks affect multiple US states

HARRISBURG, Pa., Dec 3, (AP): A small western Pennsylvania water authority was just one of multiple organizations breached in the United States by Iran-affiliated hackers who targeted a specific industrial control device because it is Israeli-made, U.S. and Israeli authorities say.

"The victims span multiple U.S. states," the FBI, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, known as CISA, as well as Israel's National Cyber Directorate said in an advisory emailed to The Associated Press late Friday.

They did not say how many organizations were hacked or otherwise describe them.

Matthew Mottes, the chairman of the Municipal Water Authority of Aliquippa, which discovered it had been hacked on Nov. 25, said Thursday that federal officials had told him the same group also breached four other utilities and an aquarium.

Cybersecurity experts say that while there is no evidence of Iranian involvement in the Oct. 7 attack into Israel by Hamas that triggered the war in Gaza they expected state-backed Iranian hackers and pro-Palestinian hacktivists to step up cyberattacks on Israeli and its allies in its aftermath. And indeed that has happened.

Marcos blames foreign militants

Bomb blast in Philippines south claims four Catholic worshippers

MANILA, Dec 3, (AP): The Philippine president blamed "foreign terrorists" for a bomb blast that killed four people Sunday, wounded dozens of other Catholic worshippers in the south and sparked a security alarm, including in the capital, Manila, where state forces were put on alert.

The suspected bomb, which the police said was made from a mortar round, went off and hit students and teachers who attended a Mass in a gymnasium at Mindanao State University in southern Marawi city, Taha Mandangan, the security chief of the

state-run campus, told The Associated Press by telephone.

Dozens of students and teachers dashed out of the gym and the wounded were taken to hospitals.

Regional military commander Maj. Gen. Gabriel Viray III said four people were killed by the explosion, including three women, and 50 others were brought to two hospitals for treatment.

Six of the wounded were fighting for their lives in a hospital, said Gov. Mamintal Adiong Jr. of the Islamic province of Lanao del Sur, which has Marawi as its capital.



In this handout photo provided by the Provincial Government of Lanao Del Sur – Public Information Office, law enforcers conduct an investigation at the site of an explosion in Marawi city, southern Philippines on Dec. 3, 2023. (AP)

Paris knife attack kills 1, wounds 2

PARIS, Dec 3, (AP): French police arrested a man who targeted passersby in Paris on Saturday night, killing a German tourist with a knife and injuring two others, France's interior minister said.

Police subdued the man, a 25-year-old French citizen who had spent four years in prison for planning a violent offense. After his arrest, he expressed anguish about Muslims dying, notably in Afghanistan and the Palestinian territories, and claimed that France was an accomplice, French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said. The attacker apparently cried "Allahu Akbar" (God is great), Darmanin added.

"This person was ready to kill others," Darmanin told reporters.

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	05:02	Asr	14:30
Sunrise ..	06:26	Maghrib ..	16:49
Zohr	11:38	Isha	18:11

Local

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

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

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

By Night: Rather cold to cold with light variable wind to light

Weather

to moderate northwesterly wind, with speed of 08-28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	24	15

Kuwait Airport	24	10
Abdaly	25	08
Jahra	25	12
Salmiyah	23	16
Nuwaisib	26	13
Wafra	25	12

Workshop to shed light on latest in nuclear medicine: Dr Al-Shammari

‘Providing best care for heart patients among MoH priorities’

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

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Chairman of the Council of Nuclear Medicine Departments and Head of the Nuclear Medicine Department at the Kuwait Cancer Control Center Dr. Abdul-Redha Abbas affirmed the keenness of the Ministry of Health, especially the Kuwait Cancer Control Center, to continuously develop the performance of the health system and update health care policies and protocols in various fields, in accordance with the latest global developments, especially when it comes to cardiovascular diseases.

During the opening of the workshop titled “The latest developments in nuclear medicine in imaging heart diseases”, which was organized by the center under the patronage of the Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, Dr. Abbas explained that the workshop focuses on the latest developments in heart imaging techniques using radioactive materials. It will discuss modern applications in diagnosing heart diseases and focus on the mechanism of their development, which would lead to a greater understanding of how to provide better healthcare.

He expressed appreciation for the interest and dedication of the ministry’s leaders and employees and their endeavor to improve the scientific knowledge of doctors and workers through endless care and support for establishing such scientific activities.

Dr. Abbas said the workshop is an example of the contribution to the cognitive advancement of services provided to patients.

He highlighted that the workshop will exchange ideas, enrich discussions with specialists in clinical heart diseases and their diagnosis using radioisotopes, gain knowledge that will contribute to professional growth, improve health care, and form a different and advanced vision for diagnosing and imaging heart diseases and their modern applications.

Dr. Abbas stressed that the ministry continues to strive to develop medical teams and train them on the latest protocols used globally by holding specialized scientific workshops and medical conferences.

He expressed appreciation for the cooperation of doctors in other specialties, specifically cardiologists, which has contributed to choosing the best and most appropriate treatment plans.

Meanwhile, the Nuclear Medicine Consultant and Head of the Nuclear Medicine Department at the Amiri Hospital Dr. Al-Shaima Al-Shammari explained in her speech that the workshop will shed light on the latest developments in nuclear medicine for imaging heart diseases with the aim of

raising the efficiency of workers to provide high-quality health services. It provides the possibility of detecting the disease in its early stages and determining the extent of response to medical intervention.

Treating patients suffering from cardiovascular diseases is among the priorities of the Ministry of Health, which has paid great attention to combating the disease. It has developed multiple programs and strategies aimed at ensuring the development of the health services system in terms of early detection, treatment, and support for scientific research.

Furthermore, a Nuclear Medicine specialist at the Amiri Hospital Dr. Abrar Ashkanani stressed the ministry’s keenness to provide the latest research and studies, and keep pace with their application on the ground in the hospitals in Kuwait.

She explained that the medical and technical staff represent the backbone of the medical sector due to which it was necessary to present a number of research and studies that ultimately aim at educating doctors and nuclear medicine technicians about the latest diagnostic devices and protocols through a workshop that aims primarily to help reduce catheterization operations in light of the presence of a large number of heart patients.

The ministry, represented by the Kuwait Cancer Control Center, is keen to use the latest diagnostic imaging methods for cardiovascular diseases to evaluate the condition of the heart and arteries and the severity of their dysfunction, hence the importance of the workshop.

Heart diseases are among the priorities of the ministry, which has paid great attention to combating them and has developed multiple programs for them in terms of early detection, treatment, and support for scientific research.

In addition, a consultant cardiologist from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Dr. Ahmed Al-Jaziri said heart disease is still the main cause of death globally and in the Middle East and Gulf region.

He explained that the rapid development witnessed by the Gulf countries has led to an increase in the rates of causes of heart disease such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and cholesterol. This increase has led to an increase in heart disease and subsequently an increase in deaths resulting from it. This circle must be broken with knowledge of the causes and advanced accurate diagnosis before the disease reaches a point of inability to treat. This is what the workshop serves.

Dr. Al-Jaziri also highlighted the importance of the workshop in dealing with the latest developments in diagnosis without resorting to interventional cardiac catheterization in an attempt to know and control the disease before it leads to complications - either illness or death.

He said heart and arterial diseases are diseases that recur annually, adding that trying to obtain the latest developments requires hosting and exchanging experiences.



KUNA photo

KFAED, FCDO signing the statement.

KFAED, UK sign statement on upgrading ME ‘climate action’

DUBAI, Dec 3, (KUNA): The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) and the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) signed on Sunday a joint statement bolstering climate action in the Middle East in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG).

In a statement addressed to KUNA, KFAED’s Acting Director Waleed Al-Bahar and Alicia Forsyth, Head of the Climate Strategy and Co-ordination Department at FCDO, signed the document on the sidelines of the COP 28 held in Dubai.

The fund indicated that the technical cooperation between the two sides on combating Sand and Dust Storms (SDS) in Kuwait, Iraq, and nearby countries was

also touched upon to counter the ill effects of such phenomena on the environment.

The cooperation between the fund and the FCDO would be under the umbrella of the UN-Habitat program in coordination with Kuwait and Iraq.

The statement went on to say that activities included an early alarm system for sandstorms for areas heavily affected in addition to methods to counter them.

The current cooperation between Kuwait and the UK came in line with the recommendations coming from the 19th session of the long-standing UK-Kuwait Joint Steering Group, which was held in February of 2023.

It also came in the framework of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in February of 2020.



Dr. Rasheed Al-Qenae and guest speakers pose for picture.

KPMG Kuwait conducts its first ESG symposium

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Considering rising investor concerns and expectations pertaining to environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues, KPMG in Kuwait held an exclusive seminar to help organizations understand how they can integrate ESG into their businesses on 29 November 2023. The event also aimed to put more light on the implications of climate change, their impact on businesses’ bottom line, and how potential opportunities within the marketplace can be leveraged.

The seminar came in the light of climate change emerging as a matter of increasing global urgency and a potential marketplace both locally and globally. As a result of this upshot, organizations are finding it challenging to tackle climate-related risks and/or tap into possible growth pools.

Opening the event, Dr. Rasheed Al-Qenae, Managing Partner, KPMG in Kuwait, said, “Last year, at the COP27 conference in Egypt, Kuwait committed to achieving Net-Zero by 2060 and becoming carbon neutral in the oil and gas sector by 2050. Today, ESG has not only emerged as one of the most accelerated risks and opportunities but also serves as a critical framework to assess the sustainability and ethical impact of businesses and investments.

“That is why it is paramount that organizations aligned their goals with sustainable values to contribute to the commitment and fulfil their business ambitions. ESG issues are no longer limited to parts of the world.

“They are transcending borders and are as real as any other global emergency. Solving them will require organizations to press play and act swiftly in order to drive wider positive impact and stay relevant within the investor community.”

The seminar focused on all three components of ESG, i.e., environment, social and governance, and featured three guest speakers: Charbel Moussa, Decarbonization

Subject Matter Expert and Partner, KPMG Netherlands, Kal Subramanian, ESG Subject Matter Expert, KPMG in Bahrain, and Naren Pasupalati, ESG Subject Matter Expert, KPMG in Bahrain.

The speakers laid special emphasis on how business leaders can lead sustainable development from the front, contribute to the sustained well-being of communities, promote IDE (inclusion, diversity and equity) and uphold human rights.

Speaking at the session, Charbel Moussa, Decarbonization Subject Matter Expert and Partner, KPMG Netherlands, highlighted the importance of transparency, accountability and ethical leadership across organizations. He said, “Companies need to proactively embed ESG as an integral part of their organizational strategies to successfully manage the associated risks and capitalize on the opportunities.

“Putting in place key ESG implementation and reporting measures will help organizations cater to the needs of investors, customers and regulators for sustainability-related information, and contribute toward strengthening the national ambitions set out in the Kuwait National Development Plan and New Kuwait 2035 while helping monitor the progress.”

Boursa Kuwait made a formal commitment to drive corporate sustainability in financial markets in 2017, introducing its initial Sustainability Disclosure Guide and subsequently becoming a member of the United Nations Sustainable Stock Exchange (SSE) initiative. In 2021, the exchange updated its metrics to incorporate ESG related initiatives, launching the “Unified Direction for a Sustainable Future” guide.

The Kuwaiti stock exchange then went on to play a pivotal role in developing the optional GCC ESG metrics with the GCC Stock Exchanges Committee, a noteworthy initiative launched in 2023 .

Oman head inquires Amir’s health

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a call Sunday from Oman’s Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, checking on the health of His Highness the Amir

Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince thanked Sultan Haitham for his kind feelings, wishing him good health and the Sultanate further progress.

Book date for CSC visit

Transfer, registration on ‘Sahel’

By Munaif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: As part of a series of measures aimed at making it easier for citizens and residents, the General Traffic Department (GTD) says vehicle ownership transfer in addition to renewing the vehicle registration will soon be available on the government application “Sahel”.

Informed sources told Al-Seyassah daily that the General Traffic Department pays great attention to the importance of converting all its services electronically, noting that it is working on the possibility of adding the services of transferring vehicle ownership and renewing its insurance on the “Sahel” application in coordination with the concerned authorities, for the benefit of citizens and residents.

Meanwhile, citizens must book an appointment on the Sahel platform if they want to meet any of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) officials while everyone is allowed to enter the reception hall where the staff and officials are keen on providing the best services to the public, reports Al-Anba daily quoting a reliable source.

The source emphasized that the one completing a transaction or making an inquiry must be the concerned person or someone authorized to act on his behalf. He explained this is aimed at protecting information and maintaining the privacy of individuals. He added the implementation of flexible working hours for the CSC employees started on Sunday.

On the other hand, sources affirmed that the CSC started the nomination of people with disabilities for employment in their chosen government agency immediately after the development of the systems at the Public Authority for Disabled Affairs (PADA) and re-establishment of the automated link with the CSC for verifying the data of job applicants.

In a related context, the CSC announced the continuation of the registra-

Mol notifies MoE

No ‘iqama’ teachers

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Acting Assistant Undersecretary for the Administrative Sector at the Ministry of Education Faisal Al-Jutaili has announced that some administrators and teachers under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Education (MoE) have no valid residency permits, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily obtained a copy of the letter that Al-Jutaili sent to the undersecretary of the ministry stating: “We would like to inform you that we have received official communication from the Ministry of Interior stating that a group of employees -- administrators and teachers -- under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Education have no valid residency permits to date. Based on Decree 17/1959 or the Foreigners Residency Law, it is prohibited to harbor, house or employ any foreigner whose residence in the country is illegal. It is considered a violation of the Residency Law, which obstructs the legal documentation process due to their status not being settled.

“Accordingly, you are kindly requested to circulate to the assistant undersecretaries in all sectors of the ministry about the need to ensure the validity of the residency and conformity with legal procedures.

“In the event that an expatriate employee is proven to have violated the Residency Law, please coordinate with the Passports Section at the Human Resources Department to complete the legal procedures to settle their situation.”

tion of job applicants until Dec 15 for all specializations and qualifications through its website: portal.csc.gov, clarifying that government agencies submit lists of their actual manpower needs to the commission and then the latter nominates applicants based on the lists.

diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

‘Hostage deal seen, but Israel brutal policies against Palestinians to continue’

“THE Egyptian-Qatari mediation and American pressure on Israel succeeded in consolidating a truce agreement in Gaza after 40 days of continuous brutal bombing by the Zionist entity on Gaza, which left an unprecedented number of deaths and destruction. The truce included a ceasefire, an exchange of prisoners between Hamas and Israel, and the entry of humanitarian aid, fuel and medicine into the Strip,” columnist **Dr Noura Saleh Al-Majim** wrote for **Qabas** daily.

“The war in Gaza this time was completely different from its predecessors that began in 2008. This was in terms of its impact on the reputation and pride of Israel, the Israeli interior, and the future of Netanyahu and the Israeli right as a whole; also, in terms of its impact and reflection on the armed resistance, the balance of power in the region and at the international level, especially the American involvement.

“Therefore, it is not easy to say with certainty -- as it was in the past -- that this truce will be extended, or will pave the way for a comprehensive ceasefire followed by a comprehensive settlement or the revival of a broader peace process, as the various international parties, led by the United States, seek.

“By reading the course of the war in Gaza since October 7 until the truce agreement, as well as the determinants and data, some of which were imposed by the war, we can deduce three expected scenarios for the war in Gaza after the truce:

“First: Completely ending the war in Gaza. In politics, everything is possible and constantly changing according to changing interests, equations, and pressures. However, we believe that this scenario is the weakest and is very difficult to achieve. The slap that Israel received on October 7 is considered the most humiliating since it was forcibly planted in the region in 1947.

“In addition to its disastrous repercussions on Israel in various aspects, its negative repercussions, whose manifestations are now beginning to become clear, have on the immigration of Jews, and the dissipation of the dream of a greater Jewish state. Nearly one million Jews have left Israel since October 7.

“In light of this, Israel’s primary declared goal from the first day of its operations in Gaza was to liquidate the Hamas movement and end its complete control over the Gaza Strip.

“In order to remove this threat that has become existential to Israel, restore its dignity, and reassure the Jewish people about Israel’s strength. Regardless of the tactics followed by Israel in Gaza, most notably the issue of displacing the people of the north to the south, the ultimate goal is to facilitate the process of eliminating Hamas. Hence, the idea of eliminating Hamas will not fall from Israel’s future calculations in the Gaza Strip, only the tactics may differ, as we will explain later.

“Second: By ending the truce and continuing brutal operations in the Gaza Strip two main things come to the forefront -- Israel’s failure to achieve any ma-

jor goal in Gaza after 49 days of its brutal operations, while Israel’s economic losses continue to bleed -- and the pressure from powerful parties on Israel, led by Washington, to end these operations, which have severely tarnished the reputation of Israel and Washington in the world. We can say that this scenario is likely not to last long. It is possible, but it is difficult for it to continue for a long time.

“Especially since Israel has submitted to the truce due to the strong internal pressure that Netanyahu faces from the families of the prisoners, after a miserable failure to liberate them through the destructive force of the Gaza Strip and this will not be allowed by many parties, especially Washington and Israel will need to destroy the entire Strip to free the rest of the hostages.

“Third: The cessation of brutal operations in Gaza, with the continuation of specific operations in the Strip against Hamas leaders, individuals, and places. We believe that this scenario is likely after the truce or in the coming period.

“The elimination of Hamas -- as we said -- will never fall from Israel’s calculations, even if the leftist and moderate parties take the lead in Israel. But at the same time, continuing the brutal operations has proven to the Jews and their allies to be an impractical option.

“Therefore, Israel may acquiesce to a comprehensive deal to exchange all prisoners, but as usual, it will recapture more or carry out assassination operations on some of them, while following a long-term policy of targeting Hamas leaders and ending their rule in the Gaza Strip.”

Also:

“No to the reconstruction of Gaza ... Kuwait and the citizen come first. A bank robbery occurred in the Swedish capital, Stockholm, in 1973, during which four hostages, including a woman, were held captive for six consecutive days. During the abduction, the kidnappers talked to the hostages. Little by little, the woman fell in love with one of the kidnappers -- her attacker. Since then, this behavior has become an illness known as ‘Stockholm Syndrome,’ columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawaas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Is it not strange that the victim sympathized with her kidnapper or the perpetrator, that is, to love the person who wronged her? This expression applies to our country. Kuwait was oppressed by Arab countries during the Iraqi occupation, but they continued to help and defend the latter.

“During the occupation, we felt that we were a displaced, humiliated people seeking refuge in this or that country. We lived those days with our hearts breaking in pain over the loss of our homeland, Kuwait. The Palestinians, whom Kuwait helped for a hundred years, yes, 100 years, starting with the smuggling of weapons to them in World War I, did not stand with us. This has been the case up to the present.

“After the liberation, Kuwait continued to defend these people politically, help them financially, and fight for people who stabbed it in the back -- Palestine, Jordan, Tunisia and Yemen. We even named a street near Rabieh after Jordan. We named a residential area and a commercial complex after Kairouan, known as Tunis Street.



Dr. Noura Al-Majim



The suspects with the contraband seized.

Gun, cash found

14 kg of drugs seized, as 31 people nabbed

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The General Department of Narcotics Control have arrested 31 people of different nationalities in 18 cases of possession of about 14 kilograms of drugs including shabu, hashish, chemicals, marijuana, and heroin, 42,000 pills of psychotropic substances, an unlicensed firearm and ammunition, and sums of money believed to be proceeds from sale of drugs, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

The Public Relations and Security Media Department of the Directorate-General of Drugs Control at the Ministry of Interior said in a statement that when the defendants were confronted with what was seized from them, they admitted that they were trafficking and consuming drugs.

The daily added, they have been referred along with the seized drugs to the competent authority, to take the necessary legal measures against them.

The Ministry called on everyone to cooperate with security personnel and report any negative phenomena on the emergency phone No. 112 and the DGDC Hotline of 1884141.

Fake maids offices raided

Cleaning drive kicks off in Jahra industrial area

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The Public Cleanliness Supervisor at the Jahra Governorate Municipality Branch, Dahham Al-Enezi, announced 7 violations of the cleanliness regulations were issued and 18 abandoned vehicles were removed, as part of a wide campaign carried out by the Public Cleanliness and Road Works Department at the Jahra Governorate Municipality Branch, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The daily added, the officials targeted several locations in the Jahra Industrial Area, Saturday, in order to raise the level of cleanliness and to remove everything that obstructs the aesthetic view of the governorate and prevent waste from being thrown outside the containers.

Al-Enezi pointed out that field tours by the supervisory team at the Public Cleanliness and Road Works Department are continuing, indicating in this regard that there will be no complacency in taking all legal measures against those who violate the Public Cleanliness and Road Works Regulations.

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Fake maids offices: Security personnel have arrested 292 violators of residence and labor laws and raided 13 fake servants’ offices during security campaigns in 5 regions of Kuwait, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

The Public Relations and Security Media Department of the Interior Ministry stated that the campaigns were carried out by the Search and Investigation Department, the Joint Tripartite Committee, the Violators Follow-up Department, and the Search and Investigation Department in Salmiya, Farwaniya, Fahaheel, Mahboula, and Mangaf.

The sources added, legal measures are being taken against them and referred to the competent authorities.

Around 30 injured in Central Prison brawl

Worker pleasing the sponsor

By Munaif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The Central Prison security men, in collaboration with Special Forces, controlled a fight that broke out between 30 inmates during which several prisoners were injured, including a security man.

The **Al-Seyassah** daily said all the injured were taken to the hospital for treatment under police guard while at the same time taking necessary measures against them.

According to a security source, the fight happened due to disagreements between inmates.

□ □ □

Acquitted in fraud case: The Misdemeanor Court has acquitted an employee of the charge of helping an employer to recruit 9 workers from outside the country and hiring workers from inside the country who were proven to be in excess of the quota, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The Public Prosecution had charged the employee with helping the sponsor bring in workers from outside the country and employing workers from inside the country in excess of the quota as per the provisions of Article 10/ second paragraph of Law No. 6 of 2010 regarding work in the private sector, as amended by Law No. 108 of 2013.

The defense lawyer representing the accused

Docus forged for job

10-year jail for nurse

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The Criminal Court sentenced to ten-year imprisonment an Egyptian nurse who forged her documents in order to be appointed by the Ministry of Health, and imposed a fine of KD 21,000 for undeserved salaries she received in five years. It also imposed a fine of KD 5,000 on another person for forging the nurse’s appointment.

The Public Prosecution had charged the two suspects of forging official documents for employment at the Ministry of Health, using unofficial papers, and seizing sums of money they were not entitled to as a result of this crime. However, the two suspects denied the accusations attributed to them by the prosecution.

Salem Al-Rashidi argued that the charge was not brought against his client, stressing that Article 10, Paragraph 2 of Law No. 6 of 2010 regarding work in the private sector, the legislator distinguished between two types of violations that could be committed by the employer and cited Article 138 of the same law as a punishment.

‘Phone tapping not allowed’

Rules on eavesdropping devices

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: State Minister for Municipal and Communication Affairs Fahd Al-Shoula issued a decision on the use of communications equipment and eavesdropping devices, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

Article One: It is not permissible for any party to place any telephone under surveillance or provide any party with data and information about calls made or received from or to any telephone device unless a permit is issued by the Public Prosecution, approving the monitoring of specific telephone(s) within a specific period, that is, during investigation of cases.

Article Two: The permission stated in Article One shall be issued through an official letter from the Attorney General or by one of the public attorneys, if the permission is related to cases being investigated by the Criminal Investigations General Department or written permission issued by a member of the district or prosecution offices. This is in the event that permission is issued by the competent prosecution based on investigations conducted by the Criminal Investigations General Department or State Security Service.

Article Three: Results of the monitoring carried out based on permission of the Public Prosecution in the two cases mentioned in Article Two shall be sent directly to the party that requested the issuance of this permission, provided that the Public Prosecution is given a copy thereof.

Article Four: Results of the monitoring, as well as all procedures and correspondences that take place, shall be kept strictly confidential in order to ensure that the sanctity and privacy of the telephone communications being monitored or recorded are not infringed.

Article Five: It is prohibited to use, trade, possess, sell or display all types of audio or visual eavesdropping devices. The Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) is responsible for determining the type and nature of these devices and their technical specifications.

Article Six: The Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) shall receive the requests of official authorities for the possession and use of eavesdropping devices. It then studies these requests and submits its recommendations to the competent minister in preparation for presenting them to the Council of Ministers.

Article Seven: No party may possess eavesdropping devices except after the issuance of the relevant decree. It is also not permissible for any of these parties to use eavesdropping devices without obtaining permission from the Public Prosecution.

Article Eight: Calls may be transmitted to and from the State of Kuwait via satellite, Internet or any other technical means of connection, subject to the approval of CITRA.

Article Nine: CITRA is responsible for licensing international carriers to transport international traffic to and from the State of Kuwait and through the licensees’ international gateways, in accordance with the appropriate controls, rules and means determined by CITRA.



Al-Shoula

Other Voices

Bashar & ‘righteous’ decision

By Ahmad alsarraf

An Amiri decree was issued pardoning a group of citizens and others who had previously had their state citizenship revoked, in addition to a person sentenced to death for a state security crime, another failed politician, a third who forged his certificate, in addition to a terrorist, another who stole donation funds, a tenth known as a sectarian killer, and a group of those who escaped from prison sentences, and others.

The amnesty did not include three citizens, for reasons unknown to the insider. Only the doctor, Bashar Adnan Al-Baghli, remained alone and distinguished in his case, as he had previously been included in a pardon, and a case similar to the case in which he had previously been pardoned remained in his record.

Dr. Bashar was accused, while studying medicine in Britain, where he still works in hospitals, of sending a tweet that harmed national unity, and another tweet related to insulting a Gulf country.

Dr. Bashar says he admits to one of the two tweets, while the other was from a fake account attributed to him, but he was sentenced to a prison term in absentia, and his circumstances did not allow him to return and face the charge, for fear of the prison sentence being executed against him.

As for the other, it was dropped when a pardon was issued, and one is pending. However, a pardon had previously been issued to anyone who tweeted something similar, or he was sentenced to pay financial fines, and

the last of these rulings was for a well-known tweeter.

I do not know Bashar Al-Baghli, and none of his family or friends contacted me to ask me to write about him, his circumstances, and his misfortune. I have never met him, and there are only two or three messages between me and him on the X platform, but I am aware that he is a person of good conduct and the son of a noble and well-known family.

Brother of the late MP and Minister Ali Al-Baghli, I know, of course, that he has been living in exile for many years, far from his homeland, his family, and his loved ones.

He is over forty years old, and his return to his homeland does not pose a threat to anyone. Also, the country is in dire need of someone with his experience, and we hope that those concerned will seek to issue a high paternal pardon for him.

It appears from the data, his entitlement to pardon, and the lack of seriousness of his “crime” compared to the majority of those who were issued generous pardon, that an “administrative oversight” may have dropped his name from being included in the pardon lists, as he is indeed, according to the data available to me, the first to deserve the princely honor, regardless of his accusation or because of his good conduct, or because of his rare knowledge and specialization.

Truth, reality, and justice require, after all that has happened, the zeroing out of the prisons, and the dropping of even the cases of debtors from the days of the climate crisis, who have had forty lean years. It is not permissible, with reason and justice, for a single prisoner convicted of cases other than murder and drugs to remain in prison after reviewing “the history of some of those who were recently pardoned.”

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500 tents allocated: Al-Suwailem

Kuwait dispatches 32nd planeload of aid supplies for Gazans

‘Kuwait among top global nations in diagnosing and treating AIDS’

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

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Director of the Public Health Department Dr. Fahad Al-Ghamlas says Kuwait is among the top countries in the world in terms of diagnosing and treating AIDS.

In a press statement on the sidelines of the Ministry of Health’s celebration of the World AIDS Day, he said Kuwait keeps pace with, if not surpasses, other countries in the world in early diagnosis and complete treatment of infected pregnant women such that the rate of transmission of the disease to fetuses is less than

1 percent. Dr. Al-Ghamlas said the World AIDS Day is marked on the first of December every year, and it is celebrated with the aim of communicating with the community by sending a media message about the disease from a preventive and therapeutic perspective through existing prevention methods and rapid diagnosis methods in Kuwait.



He noted that Kuwait is distinguished globally in diagnosis and treatment, and in providing ways to contain the virus and reduce the level of disease.

Dr. Al-Ghamlas highlighted the continuous endeavor to raise the level of diagnosis and treatment to more than 95 percent, through coordination between the preventive and therapeutic sectors in Kuwait.

He revealed that the event is based on three main axes - shedding light on the methods of prevention and treatment, dealing with societal stigma, and early diagnosis of the disease.

Dr. Al-Ghamlas explained that patients are treated with confidentiality and utmost respect, and ensured that they are included in society. There is no exaggeration in fear of them because AIDS is a disease that is treated with the latest methods of prevention and treatment. Therefore, there is no fear of the presence of sick people among the public in society.

He stressed the importance of

early diagnosis and complete treatment of patients, indicating that the Ministry of Health has doctors and specialists in the field of diagnosing and treating AIDS at the highest levels and it is keen about professional training and continuing medical education in the field of awareness for doctors and health practitioners.

Dr. Al-Ghamlas said the ministry is currently in the process of training cadres to deal with cases and learn about diagnostic methods currently available in the country, indicating that diagnosis is carried out in the preventive sector represented by the Public Health Department, and the treatment takes place at the New Jahra Hospital, which receives cases and provides them with rapid diagnostic methods and advice in terms of follow-up and referral to treatment agencies after diagnosis.

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3, (KUNA): The 32nd plane within the Kuwait Relief Air Bridge took off Sunday heading to the Egyptian city of Al-Arish, carrying some tents to support Kuwait’s Hospital in Gaza and to help shelter families who lost their homes.

A member of the Gaza Relief Committee at the International Mercy Society (Al-Rahma), Walid Al-Suwailem, told KUNA, that after receiving special reports related to the need to urgently expand the society’s “Kuwait Hospital” in the Gaza Strip due to the increasing number of wounded, 500 tents were allocated, of which they

were carried on today’s flight.

He also noted that (Al-Rahma International) has allocated, to date, more than one million Kuwaiti dinars of medical supplies, medicines, various relief and shelter materials, and several ambulances, to provide relief to the Palestinian brothers in the Gaza Strip.

For his part, the charitable activist at (Al-Rahma International) Khaled Al-Qassar confirmed that under the humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip, Kuwait’s Specialized Hospital is witnessing the reception of more than 600 cases per day.



KUNA photo
Member of Gaza Relief Committee at the International Mercy Society (Al-Rahma) Walid Al-Suwailem.

Fair attracts 524 publishers from 29 countries

Kuwait Int’l Book Fair receives over 360,000 visitors – official

By Faisal Al-Khameily

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3, (KUNA): The 46th edition of Kuwait International Book Fair attracted as many as 524 publishers from 29 countries with more than 171,000 entries on display.

Fifty-two publishing houses made their debuts at the annual event, held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah between November 22 and December 2.

The event received more than 360,000

visitors, including 18,400 students from 598 schools, general supervisor of the fair Saad Al-Enzi told KUNA after the closing ceremony on Saturday.

Of the 171,000 entries on display, 11,000 were new ones, including 2,000 child-centered books, Al-Enzi pointed out.

During the just ended edition of the fair, 140 functions, including workshops, seminars, symposia, panels and lectures, were organized by the National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature (NC-CAL) in collaboration with competent state agencies and public interest societies from Kuwait and friendly countries, he added.

First launched on November 1, 1975, the fairs draw publishers and cultural institutions from countries inside and outside the Arab region.



Saad Al-Enzi

Event held under patronage of Dr Al-Manae

AU celebrates graduation of 350 grads

By Inass Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The Australian University (AU) celebrated the graduation of the 21st batch of diploma students and the 15th batch of bachelor’s students, totaling 350 graduates, last week at the Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Resort.

The event was organized under the patronage of the Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Adel Al-Manae, and in the presence of the Secretary-General of the General Secretariat of the Council of Private Universities Adel Al-Badr.

In his opening speech, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of AU Dr. Saad Al-Omari said, “The university is continuing efforts to develop the university’s educational journey by offering new programs related to digital transformation and artificial intelligence, and developing the infrastructure to implement these programs.

It is working to strengthen its great belief in social responsibility and achieve it effectively by presenting an integrated program for community awareness, in the hope that a large segment of society will benefit from this program in order to be in line with the plan for a new Kuwait.

It is preparing them optimally to enter the labor market, especially with the world changing rapidly and unprecedentedly. We advise the graduates to continue learning to keep up with everything that is new.”

Meanwhile, the President of AU Dr. Issam Zaabalawi told the graduates, “We know that you have gone through times when you felt some difficulties and challenges, but it was not able to discourage you from continuing your journey. Rather, with the support of your families and friends and the guidance of your teachers, you were able to nourish the feeling of determination to reach these moments that you will always remember.

Your university has worked with the support of the Council of Private Universities, guidance from the Board of Trustees, and cooperation with our strategic partner, the Australian University of Central Queensland, to qualify you to be worthy of the academic degrees you have been awarded.”

Dr. Zaabalawi went on to enumerate the skills acquired by the AU students, such as scientific thinking, critical analysis, communication skills, and

Absconding cases on the ‘Sahel’ app

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The Ministry of Interior has announced the addition of the registration of absconding cases against domestic workers on the government application for electronic services ‘Sahel’, reports Al-Anba daily.

The addition of this new service is part of the ministry’s commitment to provide more online services for citizens and expatriates.

Mol clarifies

Linking of transactions to ‘biometric’ in stages

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The Ministry of Interior said the completion of citizens’ transaction procedures is continuing and added linking the biometric fingerprint system to transactions will be done in stages and will not be implemented directly, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The clarification was issued by the Ministry of Interior after news circulated about linking the biometric fingerprint system to all state ministries, and that no transaction will be conducted without the presence of the biometric fingerprint.

mastery of research and investigation tools, which contributed to refining their creativity.

In addition, the Australian Ambassador to the country Melissa Kelly said global issues are difficult and unprecedented, adding that the challenges that students are exposed to during their years of study are what give them flexibility in dealing with the surrounding data.

She expressed her pride in the Australian University of Kuwait and its partnership with Australia.

The ambassador praised the university graduates who are armed with world-class education and unique personal skills, the most important of which are courage, flexibility and kindness, in order to support them in facing the future with all its gifts and pushing innovations.

MC members propose controls for disability-friendly facilities

By Inass Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The Municipal Council members Farah Al-Roumi and Sharifa Al-Shalfan submitted a proposal to set controls for preparing the existing facilities and buildings for the use of people with disabilities, in coordination with the Public Authority for the Disabled Affairs, and to give a three-year opportunity to implement those controls after approving this proposal.

In the preamble to their proposal, Al-Roumi and Al-Shalfan emphasized that people with dis-

abilities represent an active part of society, due to which obstacles should be removed to achieve an accessible environment, social justice, and their integration into all areas of life.

On a related level, the Municipal Council member Nasser Al-Jadaan submitted questions to the Kuwait Municipality’s executive body regarding the Municipal Council’s decision to allocate land to establish a project for recreational, sports, investment and commercial activities in Subbiya.

In the letter of inquiries, Al-Jadaan highlighted the Municipal Council’s decision dated October 7, 2021 based on a request submitted by the Na-

tional Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development regarding the allocation of land of an area of one million square meters in Subbiya to the fund on a temporary basis to attract mobile vehicles and establish a drive-in cinema on the site for a period of five years via small and medium enterprise owners.

He said, “Based on the supervisory role over the decisions issued by the Municipal Council, we noticed that the project had not been started since that time, which hinders the owners of small and medium enterprises who were targeted by the decision.”



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LOCAL

Amiri reassurance

Continued from Page 1

statements, because social media wants more fuel for the fire.

Unfortunately, this is what eludes the concerned officials. During the time when the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad was ill, the spread of rumors about it at that time should have served as a lesson for us to change the way we handle such events.

The health of senior officials is important, because it affects the political situation both locally and regionally, as well as the economy, stock market indicators, and other aspects of life.

Therefore, when an official statement is delayed, as it is supposed to be issued more than once a day, this directly affects everyone, because each has its own calculations in light of developments, especially in a region witnessing sensitive situations, and each of its countries has its own calculations.

Also, all the forces and groups lurking in Kuwait have a vision of what they can achieve through the political poisoning of the situation in order to destroy faith in the homeland and weaken social cohesion, which then leads to inciting tribal and sectarian strife.

If all these calculations are not in the minds of the state officials, they are indirectly contributing to sprinkling more salt on the wound of national unity, which leads to further weakness.

However, when frankness is the basis, and the local public opinion, which is the incubator of the political system especially in a country like Kuwait, is exposed, all of this leads to the demolition of the structure of lies on the heads of those who built it.

Finally, it must be emphasized that the threat of referring to the Public Prosecution those who spread lies is a form of fiction, as all of these people are either publishing from outside Kuwait, or under fake names. Therefore it is not possible to refer all of them to the Public Prosecution, but the correct path is through transparency, moment by moment.

No foreign

Continued from Page 1

Addressing the data flow between local banks and the Central Bank, the statement clarifies that banks provide transaction data for statistical purposes and monitoring comparative growth. Contrary to any misconceptions, this data is not employed to impose restrictions on transfers. Kuwait maintains an open economy, and there are no restrictions on external transfers. The positive economic indicators in the country reinforce the idea that there is no need for the imposition of such restrictions on foreign transfers.

Despite a slight decrease in the

value of Kuwait's official reserve assets by the end of October, the Central Bank asserts that the exchange rate policy has been efficiently managed. This policy pegs the dinar to a weighted basket of foreign currencies and is underpinned by the continued accumulation of foreign reserves.

In terms of supporting the exchange rate policy, the Central Bank actively directs monetary policy at the interest rate level. This strategic approach is aligned with providing a favorable environment for economic growth while simultaneously enhancing the attractiveness of the dinar against foreign currencies. Additionally, the bank is committed to fortifying the deposit base in the dinar, a fundamental source of financing for various sectors of the national economy.

Turning attention to concerns related to combating money laundering and terrorist financing, the statement elucidates the role of banks in monitoring and reporting suspicious transactions. Banks, when having sufficient evidence to suspect any external or internal transfers to customers, carry out their responsibilities as outlined by Law No. 106 of 2013. This law mandates financial institutions, including banks, to notify the Kuwait Financial Investigation Unit directly about any transactions associated with criminal activity or posing a risk of money laundering or terrorist financing.

Importantly, the statement emphasizes that decisions regarding suspicions about external transfers to customers or inward transfers are made by individual banks based on continuous monitoring of the movement in the customer's account. This data is not available to the Central Bank, as it falls within the purview of the banks' responsibilities as specified by Law No. 106 of 2013. The Central Bank does not engage in monitoring or tracking the movement of external and internal transfers for customers, as such accounts are not within its mandate.

In providing this comprehensive overview, the Central Bank seeks to reinforce confidence in Kuwait's financial system, regulatory framework, and the prudent management of its economic policies.

MPs champion

Continued from Page 1

with its finance counterpart if it intends to join international organizations and it has to pay subscription fees; number of Kuwaitis employed in international organizations in which the ministry is a member including their positions and tasks; if foreign employees represent Kuwait in such organizations; names, experience and qualifications of employees assigned in the cultural offices from Jan 1, 2022 till date; if all the schools have clinics; if these clinics are ready to deal with emergency cases; vision for online

education considering the students and teachers are not well-equipped for such system while not all the required equipment are available; reasons behind the continuous hiring of expatriate teachers in public schools; if the local educational institutions still lack the capability to produce the required number of teachers; detailed report in this regard including the number and specializations of expatriate administrative employees and teachers; clarification about the alleged non-payment of salaries for Bedoun teachers since September 2023; and if this is upon the request of the Central System for Remedying the Status of Illegal Residents (CSR-SIR) because of the expiry of their security cards.

On the other hand, Rapporteur of the Budgets and Final Accounts Committee MP Osama Al-Zaid disclosed that the committee on Sunday met with the representatives of the concerned institutions to discuss the final account of the Ministry of Education for fiscal 2022/2023. He said Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Adel Al-Manea neither attended the meeting nor sent his representative as a sign of respect for the National Assembly. He added the senior officials who represented the Ministry of Education in the meeting are acting officials, indicating they cannot respond to the committee's queries as they assumed the interim post recently. He called on HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to follow up this issue and instruct the ministers to respect the Assembly and not to ignore the parliamentary meetings. He highlighted the importance of the meeting since the Ministry of Education ranks second in terms of budget allocation -- KD 2.2 billion.

Chairman of the Public Facilities Committee MP Muhammad Al Mahan confirmed that the committee on Sunday approved the proposal of MP Dawoud Maarefi to transfer the supervision of public parks from the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) to the cooperative societies.

The proposal stipulates the provision of more services for citizens, especially those residing in the southern areas where public services are limited. It mandates the cooperatives to supervise the public parks, allot spaces for citizens who want to establish small businesses at a low cost, and provide jobs for the retirees under the wages chapter without reducing their pension. Representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs, CCSU, PAAAFR and Ministry of Finance attended the meeting.

Furthermore, Assembly Speaker Ahmed Al-Saadoun had meetings with Kuwaiti Ambassador to Thailand Muhammad Husain Al-Failakawi and Kuwaiti Ambassador to Venezuela Fadel Al-Hassan.

MEW takes lead with five as CAPT floats 26 tenders in Nov

'Justice' secures 1st tender, PAFN second

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: In November, the Central Agency for Public Tenders floated a total of 26 tenders to various government entities.

Notable tenders include the Ministry of Electricity and Water took the lead with five tenders, followed by the Ministry of Health with four, the Ministry of Education with three, the Public Authority for Industry with two, and the Public Authority for People with Disabilities also two tenders.

The Ministry of Justice secured the first tender, valued at two thousand dinars, for the supply, installation, operation, maintenance, and licensing of Mimix application software.

The second tender, concerning the rental of service vehicles for the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition, and the third tender, related to providing meals for Kuwait University students, amounted to 45 thousand dinars and were valued at 62 thousand dinars, respectively.

The Ministry of Education secured two more tenders, the fourth and fifth, for maintenance, restoration, and construction work in the Farwaniya and Al-Ahmadi Educational Districts, each with insurance values of 62 thousand and 45 thousand dinars, respectively.

Other notable tenders included the sixth, issued for the Ministry of Public Works to purchase AUTODESK programs, and the seventh, for the Kuwait Oil Company, focusing on fencing and security systems in Jaber Al-Ahmad and Subbiya.

The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy also secured the eighth tender for annual maintenance of cranes and handling tools, valued at 62 thousand dinars.

Further tenders covered diverse areas, including consulting services for the Naayem Industrial City, operation and maintenance of engineering services in Jahra Hospital, and projects for the Kuwait National Petroleum Company and the General Authority for Persons with Disabilities.

The Central Agency for Public Tenders plays a vital role in over-

Kuwaiti team to attend political consultation meet in Laos: envoy

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Ambassador of Laos to Kuwait Boun Inthapandith has affirmed the depth and strength of bilateral and friendly relations between his country and Kuwait, reports Al-Qabas daily.



Inthapandith

week of this December. He believes the meeting will contribute to further deepening the friendly relations and strong coordination between the two countries.

The ambassador made the announcement when he hosted some Kuwaiti media practitioners at his residence recently, during which he also disclosed that the chambers of commerce and industry of the two countries will meet soon to discuss trade and investment cooperation.

He praised Kuwait, describing it as a "peaceful country." He added: "Laos

and Kuwait established diplomatic relations on July 14, 2008. This year marks the 15th anniversary of successful diplomatic relations between the two countries. Since the establishment of such relations, there have been high-level mutual visits between the two countries like the official visit of His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed and his accompanying delegation to Vientiane in August 2008.

He affirmed: "We have a memorandum of understanding in the field of manpower exchange, but so far, it has not been implemented due to the lack of labor experience and limited knowledge, especially with regard to language. We are looking into other capabilities and appropriate skills to discuss with the Kuwaiti government in the future. Currently, there are 14 agreements between the two countries; including trade, avoidance of double taxation, prevention of financial evasion, and taxes on income and capital."

He highlighted his country's endeavor to attract foreign companies to invest there, stressing that "Laos is always ready to welcome Kuwaiti institutions and individuals. We encourage them to visit and explore the enormous potential to start profitable projects in various sectors," he added.

45th 'tamkeen' conference opens

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3, (KUNA): International Women's Empowerment and Capacity Building Organization (IWECBO), better known as (tamkeen), said it will launch its 45th conference under the patronage of Minister of Social Affairs Dr. Firas Saud Al-Sabah.

IWECBO's Head Ibtisam Al-Qaoud said in a statement to KUNA that the two-day conference will be organized in cooperation with several women's organizations and societies.

The event will highlight women's issues, primarily financial, social and political empowerment and media role in this regard, she remarked.

It also aims to communicate with all organizations that support women's

empowerment in all domains, through adopting new laws that empower women, she added.

For her part, Dr. Salwa Al-Jassar, the organization's board member said in a statement to KUNA that her agency is keen to follow up governmental and nongovernmental efforts to empower women in many fields in order to achieve sustainable development, especially regarding the regional and international developments in the world.

Al-Jassar, who also doubles as the head of the conference's scientific committee confirmed that the gathering will attract many specialists and parliamentarians in many fields to share their own experience in this regard.

seeing the issuance, evaluation, and management of public tenders across government agencies, ensuring ad-

herence to legal procedures and promoting transparency in the contracting process.



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World News Roundup

Europe

Father, son duo held

Jailed Putin ‘critic’ faces new charges

MOSCOW, Dec 3, (AP): Imprisoned opposition leader **Alexei Navalny** has been handed new charges by Russian prosecutors.

The 47-year-old is already serving more than 30 years in prison after being found guilty of crimes including extremism - charges that his supporters characterize as politically motivated. In comments passed to his associates, Navalny said he had been charged under article 214 of Russia’s penal code, which covers crimes of vandalism.

“I don’t even know whether to describe my latest news as sad, funny or absurd,” he wrote in comments on social media Friday via his team. “I have no idea what Article 214 is, and there’s nowhere to look. You’ll know before I do.”



Navalny

He said that the charges were part of the Kremlin’s desire to “initiate a new criminal case against me every three months.” Never before has a convict in solitary confinement for more than a year had such a rich social and political life,” he joked.

Navalny is one of President Vladimir Putin’s most ardent opponents, best known for campaigning against official corruption and organizing major anti-Kremlin protests. The former lawyer was arrested in 2021, after he returned to Moscow from Germany where he had recuperated from nerve agent poisoning that he blamed on the Kremlin. He has since been handed three prison terms and has faced months in solitary confinement after being accused of various minor infractions.

Several Navalny associates have also faced extremism-related charges after the politician’s Foundation for Fighting Corruption and a network of regional offices were outlawed as extremist groups in 2021, a move that exposed virtually anyone affiliated with them to prosecution.

Ex-president barred from leaving Ukraine: Former Ukraine president Petro Poroshenko was denied permission to leave Ukraine for a planned meeting with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, Ukraine’s security service said Saturday.

Poroshenko announced Friday that he had been turned away at the border despite previously receiving permission from Parliament to leave the country. Under martial law, Ukrainian men between 18 and 60 years of age are not allowed to leave the country without special approval.

The 58-year-old, who lost his re-election bid in 2019 to current Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy, said that he had planned to meet with U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson, and the Polish parliament during his trip.

But security officials said that Poroshenko had also agreed to meet Orban, who has previously praised Russian President Vladimir Putin and refused to support Kyiv’s bid for EU accession. In a statement on social media, they said such talks would make Poroshenko a “tool in the hands of the Russian special services.”

Police in Greece arrest father, son: A father and son duo in Greece were arrested for selling adulterated sunflower oil marketed as olive oil, police said Saturday.

A raid in a warehouse outside the northern city of Thessaloniki on Friday yielded over 13 tons of the oil, with slightly more than half already packaged in tin cans and plastic bottles and the rest in a tank, police said.

The pair, aged 80 and 36, bought the sunflower oil in Bulgaria, not far from Thessaloniki, and added coloring agents to pass it off as extra virgin olive oil. Some of it they sold in Bulgaria and the rest in Greece, police said.

The pair were provisionally released after interrogation by a magistrate. Oil samples have been sent to a laboratory to determine whether the coloring agents are dangerous.

Tens of thousands attend military parade: Tens of thousands of people turned out in Romania’s capital on Friday to watch a military parade that included troops from NATO allies to mark the country’s national day.

The annual parade at the Arc de Triomphe in Bucharest brought together thousands of marching soldiers as dozens of combat jets and helicopters flew overhead. Many spectators waved Romanian tricolor flags: red, yellow and blue.

Friday’s ceremony celebrated the 105th anniversary of Great Union Day of 1918 when modern-day Romania was formed after its unification with the neighboring regions of Transylvania, Bessarabia and Bukovina. After communism ended in 1989, Dec 1 was declared a national holiday to commemorate the ethnic Romanians in Alba Iulia who declared a union of Transylvania with Romania.

Trucking boss gets 7 years: A trucking company boss who claimed he thought he was smuggling booze into Britain was sentenced to seven years in prison for his role in a human trafficking ring in which 39 Vietnamese migrants suffocated in a cargo container in 2019.

Caolan Gormley was the last of 11 people to be convicted in London in the migrant smuggling scheme. Five of the suspects were convicted of manslaughter.

Gormley, 26, from Armagh, Northern Ireland, was convicted of conspiracy to assist unlawful immigration by a jury that deliberated for little more than an hour in the Central Criminal Court, known as the Old Bailey.

Sweden halts adoptions from SKorea: Sweden’s main adoption agency said it was halting adoptions from South Korea, following claims of falsified papers on the origins of children adopted from the Asian country.

Swedes have been adopting children from South Korea since the 1950s. The head of Adoptionscentrum - the only agency in Sweden adopting children from South Korea - said the practice is now ending.

Kerstin Gedung referred to a South Korean law on international adoptions passed earlier this year, which aims to have all future adoptions handled by the state.

Sweden’s top body for international adoptions - the Family Law and Parental Support Authority under the Swedish Health and Social Affairs Ministry - said the Adoptionscentrum had sent an application asking for the ministry to mediate adoptions from South Korea. A decision is expected in February.



US Republican presidential candidate and Florida Gov Ron DeSantis speaks during the final event of a 99-county tour of Iowa on Dec 2 in Newton. (AP)

Politics

Trump calls Biden ‘destroyer’ of democracy

DeSantis hits Iowa campaign milestone

NEWTON, Iowa, Dec 3, (AP): Ron DeSantis completed his campaign promise to visit each of Iowa’s 99 counties, crossing a symbolic but also tactical threshold by telling his audience in a central Iowa town “this should show you that I consider myself a servant, not a ruler.”

Former President Donald Trump, who still remains far ahead of DeSantis, mocked him at a larger rally about 100 miles away and said the Florida governor’s campaign was falling “like a very seriously wounded bird.”

In that way, the Florida governor’s moment, much like the months of campaigning so far, took place under Trump’s towering shadow.

The presence of Trump on DeSantis’ day of accomplishment underscores the challenge he and other Trump rivals face in Iowa. DeSantis has said he expects to win the caucuses. He’s focused much of his campaign on the state and a super PAC supporting him has invested more than \$16 million in advertising and more on building a campaign organization for the Jan. 15 caucuses.

But even with the endorsement of Iowa Gov Kim Reynolds, DeSantis has not cut into Trump’s huge lead and is facing new pressure from the campaign of former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley.

feat for presidential candidates of visiting all of Iowa’s counties as an adventure for his family. On one visit, he went to the “Field of Dreams” baseball movie set and pitched to his children on a baseball diamond cut into a cornfield.

Stops at famous bakeries and ice cream parlors made for quaint stories about his family, including wife and three young children, trekking across Iowa since May. But the mission taught him more, he said.

“You meet people, rustle up some votes,” he said at an events center in Jasper County, just east of Des Moines in central Iowa. “But is it just all about politics?”

Trump has savaged DeSantis, mostly criticizing him as disloyal for running against Trump after seeking his endorsement when DeSantis first ran for governor.

Trump’s allegations about Biden, a Democrat, echo the ones that Biden has been making for years against his predecessor. As Trump has dominated the Republican presidential primary and talked about targeting his rivals and the news media if he wins the White House again, Biden has stepped up his own warnings, contending Trump is “determined to destroy American democracy.”

Misusing

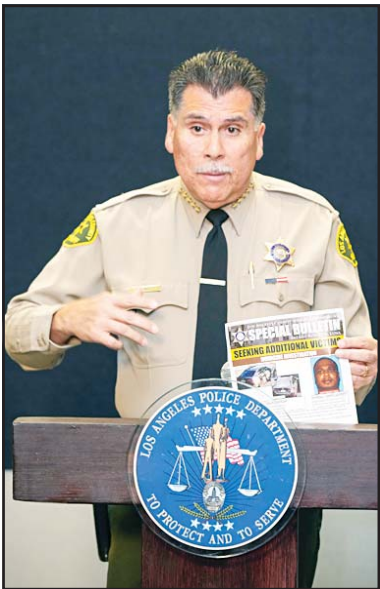
On Saturday, Trump made his most explicit argument to date on why voters should instead see his rival as the bigger democratic threat. Trump repeated his longstanding contention that the four criminal indictments against him show Biden is misusing the federal justice system against his rival.

“He’s been weaponizing government against his political opponents like a Third World political tyrant,” Trump said to a crowd in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. “Biden and his radical left allies like to pose as standing up as allies of democracy,” Trump continued, arguing: “Joe Biden is not the defender of American democracy, Joe Biden is the destroyer of American democracy.”

Ammar Moussa, a Biden campaign spokesman, responded: “Donald Trump’s America in 2025 is one where the government is his personal weapon to lock up his political enemies. You don’t have to take our word for it - Trump has admitted it himself.”

Trump has long promised to prosecute Biden in retaliation should he return to the White House. On Saturday, though, the former president extended his arguments about Biden’s threat to democracy to lawsuits filed by two liberal organizations seeking to rule him ineligible for office under a rarely used Civil War-era constitutional provision that prohibits those who “engaged in insurrection” from returning to office.

All of the suits to date have failed. Biden has no involvement in them, but Democratic donors who back him also help fund the liberal groups filing the claims.



Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna announces the arrest of a suspect in three recent killings of homeless men, on Dec 2 in Los Angeles. (AP)



Ziegler



Moore

America

Idaho baby found dead: An Idaho baby was found dead by police on Saturday, one day after an Amber Alert was issued for him, authorities said. The baby’s father was taken into custody on an arrest warrant issued in connection with the death of his wife.

Police found the body of 10-month-old Zeke Best about 24 miles (39 kilometers) east of Idaho Falls after a hunter called to report a man in a sleeping bag on the side of the road. The man was identified as Jeremy Albert Best and was wanted in the alert issued Friday on suspicion of kidnapping the child in Teton County, the Bonneville County Sheriff’s Office said.

Officers located Best’s car in an embankment off the road and found the baby dead at the scene, the office said in a news release. Idaho State Police and the FBI were among the agencies processing the scene, authorities said. The investigation is ongoing.

The man was also wanted as part of an investigation into the death of his wife, Kali Jean Randall, whose body was found in her Victor residence on Thursday. The Teton County Sheriff’s Office said on its Facebook page Randall’s death was being investigated as a homicide. (AP)

Family pet kills 3-month-old boy: A 3-month-old boy was killed as his parents tried to rescue the baby from the family pet, a hybrid animal that was part dog, part wolf, authorities said.

The boy had been bitten but was alive when first responders arrived shortly before 1 pm Thursday at the home in Chelsea. He was transported to Grandview Medical Center where he was later pronounced dead, news outlets reported.

The “wolf-hybrid” was euthanized and taken to the Alabama State Diagnostics Laboratory in Auburn for further examination, the Shelby County Sheriff’s office said.

Shelby County Coroner Lina Evans said the family and investigators know the dog’s lineage and confirms there is wolf in that lineage.

The International Wolf Center has published an extensive online warning against bringing such hybrids into family homes. (AP)

Fla GOP chair denies allegation: The head of the Florida Republican Party, whose wife is a founder of one of the

nation’s most prominent conservative groups, has been accused of rape, leading Gov Ron DeSantis to call for his resignation, roiling the state’s conservative politics and creating accusations of hypocrisy from Democrats.

Police search warrant affidavits obtained by Florida news organizations show that a woman who had been friends with **Christian Ziegler** for 20 years has accused him of raping her in her apartment two months ago. Ziegler,



Skiers take the lift after heavy snowfall on the start of the skiing pre season, on Dec 3 in Wildhaus, Switzerland. Munich’s airport has canceled all flights on Dec 2 after a winter storm dumped snow across southern Germany and parts of Austria and Switzerland, affecting travel across the region. Trains to and from Munich’s central station were also halted, Germany’s national railway said, advising passengers to delay or re-route their journeys. (AP)

Lat/Am

Bukele granted leave

3rd party candidate leaves Mexico ‘race’

MEXICO CITY, Dec 3, (AP): A third-party candidate announced Saturday he is leaving Mexico’s 2024 presidential race, practically ensuring the country’s next president will be a woman.

Samuel García, the governor of the northern border state of Nuevo Leon, said Saturday he won’t run for president in the June 2 elections. He had been polling below 10% in the race, and was given almost no chance of actually winning.

That leaves only the ruling Morena party and the opposition coalition’s candidates, both of whom are women. While García’s small Citizen’s Movement party could yet nominate another male candidate, García’s troubled exit suggests the party won’t be able to find anyone of much stature to run.

Gov. García’s decision came after one of the wilder chapters in Mexican politics. On Friday, the border state across from Texas briefly saw two interim governors designated to replace García, who had asked for a six-month leave of absence to campaign for president.

Mexican law requires any official to resign or take a leave at least six months before running for office. With the presidential elections on June 2, that meant Friday was the last day for García to do so. But in view of the conflict, García had to drop his presidential bid to put his state in order.

García had appointed one of his Cabinet members to serve as interim governor, and he was supposed to take over the job on Friday. But the state congress, where García’s party is a minority, has the formal right to name the interim governor and chose an assistant prosecutor who isn’t linked to García’s party.

Angered by that decision, protesters apparently linked to García broke through doors of the state legislature building, took over the floor of the state congress and launched a smoke bomb.

Absence

The standoff - which also featured riot police and armored vehicles posted outside the governor’s office at one point Friday - led García to announce he was abandoning his leave of absence and resuming his job as governor.

“I have decided not to participate in the campaign for president,” García wrote in a decree announcing his decision.

García’s decision will almost certainly be a disappointment for President Andrés Manuel López Obrador. López Obrador had openly expressed sympathy for García, whose Citizen’s Movement party has been a sometimes ally of the president’s Morena party.

López Obrador claims his sympathy for García stemmed from supposed attempts to keep the governor from running, which the president said paralleled his own experience in 2005 and 2006, when a court briefly stripped him of his right to hold office.

But critics say López Obrador was encouraging García’s doomed candidacy - as Mexican ruling parties have done frequently in the past - as a way to split the opposition vote.

Nuevo Leon, across the border from Texas, is an important industrial hub and García, 35, had hoped his youthful, social media-savvy campaign style would attract younger voters.

Since he took office in 2021, García has faced a severe water crisis that left much of Monterrey, the state capital, without service for weeks. He has also bragged about his friendship with Elon Musk, and has touted hopes that a Tesla plant will be built in his state.

Also:

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador: El Salvador’s Congress granted President **Nayib Bukele** leave for six months to allow him to campaign for reelection despite a constitutional prohibition and approved the president’s selection of his private secretary to be the country’s interim leader.

Bukele will seek a second five-year term for the New Ideas party in the Feb 4 national elections. Vice President **Félix Ulloa** was also granted leave to campaign again as Bukele’s running mate.

Lawmakers voted 67 in favor to 12 against to approve Bukele’s request for leave.

Congress then voted to approve Bukele’s selection of **Claudia Juana Rodríguez de Guevara**, his private secretary, to fill in until his current term ends May 30, 2024. Rodríguez de Guevara has been a close collaborator of Bukele since his political start as mayor of **Nuevo Cuscatlan**.

Constitutional lawyers maintain that Bukele’s reelection bid violates at least four articles of the constitution. But the Supreme Electoral Tribunal ruled earlier this month that Bukele’s candidacy met the legal requirements.

While highly popular in **El Salvador** for his aggressive war against the gangs that long terrorized the country, Bukele has faced international criticism for consolidating power and not respecting human rights.

MEXICO CITY: The day he was arrested, Luis was in a government office trying to get a document attesting to his clean criminal history so he could apply for a call center job.

“What I wanted at that time was something better for my life,” said the 23-year-old, who was working as a baker.

When his turn came, he was told an agent from the National Civil Police would be involved because there was an offense on his record, an allegation that he had been associated with gang members. **Luis** was floored. Denying it repeatedly was useless, he recalled, because “at that time people didn’t have rights.”

That was April 2022, the month after **El Salvador** President **Nayib Bukele** received special powers suspending fundamental rights like access to a lawyer or being informed of why you were arrested. Bukele launched a full-scale war against the country’s powerful street gangs. The exceptional powers remain in effect more than 1 ½ years and some 72,000 arrests later.

Accused of illegal association without any publicly known evidence, Luis was arrested that day and in less than 24 hours taken to **El Salvador**’s largest prison, La Esperanza, also known as Mariona.

During the 11 months he spent incarcerated, Luis often feared he would die.

Luis, who asked that only his first name be used to avoid reprisals, is among the some 7,000 prisoners who Justice Minister **Gustavo Villatoro** said in August had been freed, though most merely were released from pre-trial detention and their cases remain open.



This handout photo released by the Local Government Unit of Hinatuan shows a damaged house after an earthquake struck Hinatuan town, Surigao del Sur province, southern Philippines on Dec 3. A powerful earthquake struck Saturday off the southern Philippine coast, prompting many villagers to flee their homes in panic around midnight after Philippine authorities issued a tsunami warning. Inset: Patients at Manuel J. Santos Hospital in Butuan City, southern Philippines are evacuated. (AP)

Asia

Myanmar military losing ground against attacks

Strong quake kills 1 in southern Philippines

MANILA, Philippines, Dec 3, (AP): A powerful earthquake that shook the southern Philippines killed at least one villager and injured several others as thousands scrambled out of their homes in panic and jammed roads to higher grounds after a tsunami warning was issued, officials said Sunday.

The US Geological Survey reported that the quake Saturday night had a magnitude of 7.6 and struck at a depth of 32 kilometers (20 miles). The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said it expected tsunami waves to hit the southern Philippines and parts of Indonesia, Palau and Malaysia, but later dropped its tsunami warning.

In Japan, authorities issued evacuation orders late Saturday in various parts of Okinawa prefecture, including for the entire coastal area, affecting thousands of people.

Collapsed

A pregnant woman died after she, her husband and daughter were hit by a 15-feet (4.5-meter) concrete wall that collapsed in their neighborhood as the ground shook and prompted them to flee from their house in Tagum city in Davao del Norte province, the city’s disaster-mitigation chief, Sheldon Isidoro, told The Associated Press.

Her husband and daughter were injured. Two other children and their parents jumped from a second-floor window in panic as their house swayed but were not injured after landing on a grassy lot, said Isidoro, who was at his home when the ground started to shake.

“Initially the swaying was weak. Then it quickly became stronger and I could hardly stand. My perfume bottles fell off a table, pictures on my wall swung and I heard people screaming outside: ‘Get out, get out, earthquake, earthquake!’” Isidoro said.

While he feared the roof of his house would collapse on him, Isidoro said he was more worried that there could be many casualties in Tagum, a city of about 300,000 people, where he had led regular earthquake drills that he thought helped prevent more deaths and injuries.

Hundreds of patients were evacuated from a Tagum hospital but later were escorted back after an inspection showed no major damage to the build-

ing, officials said.

Thousands of residents stayed outside their homes for hours in many towns due to the earthquake and tsunami scare, including in some that were drenched by an overnight downpour, officials said. Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr told a news conference that authorities were assessing the quake’s impact but initial reports indicated there were no major damages except for two damaged bridges and pockets of power outages. One death was reported with a few injuries, he said.

Teresito Bacolcol, the head of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, told The AP shortly after the quake hit that his agency advised residents along the coast of Surigao del Sur and Davao Oriental provinces, which were near the epicenter of the undersea quake, to immediately evacuate to higher ground or move farther inland. Pictures posted on the Facebook account of Hinatuan town in Surigao del Sur province show residents fleeing to higher ground on foot or aboard cars, trucks, motorcycles and tricycle taxis overnight.

Many villagers who fled to evacuation centers returned to their homes on Sunday, officials said.

After undertaking inspections, civil aviation officials said there was no major damage in several airports in the south and there was no disruption in flights operations.

The Philippines, one of the world’s most disaster-prone countries, is often hit by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions due to its location on the Pacific “Ring of Fire,” an arc of seismic faults around the ocean. The archipelago is also lashed by about 20 typhoons and storms each year.

Also:

BANGKOK: About two weeks into a major offensive against **Myanmar**’s military-run government by an alliance of three well-armed militias of ethnic minorities, an army captain, fighting in a jungle area near the northeastern border with **China**, lamented that he’d never seen such intense action.

His commander in Myanmar’s 99th Light Infantry Division had been killed in fighting in **Shan** state the week before and the 35-year-old career soldier said army outposts were in disarray

and being hit from all sides.

“I have never faced these kinds of battles before,” the combat veteran told The Associated Press by phone. “This fighting in Shan is unprecedented.” Eight days later the captain was dead himself, killed defending an outpost and hastily buried near where he fell, according to his family.

The coordinated offensive in the northeast has inspired resistance forces around the country to attack, and Myanmar’s military is falling back on almost every front. The army says it’s regrouping and will regain the initiative, but hope is rising among opponents that this could be a turning point in the struggle to oust the army leaders who toppled democratically elected **Aung San Suu Kyi** almost three years ago.

“The current operation is a great opportunity to change the political situation in Myanmar,” said **Li Kyar Win**, spokesperson for the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, or MNDA, one of the three militias known as the Three Brotherhood Alliance that launched the offensive on Oct. 27.

“The goal and purpose of the alliance groups and other resistance forces are the same,” he told the AP. “We are trying to eliminate the military dictatorship.”

Caught by surprise by the attack dubbed Operation 1027, the military has lost more than 180 outposts and strongpoints, including four major bases and four economically important border crossings with China.

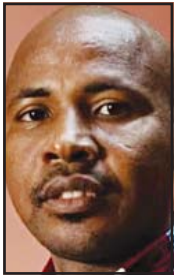
Both sides claim they have inflicted heavy tolls on the other, though accurate casualty figures are not available. Nearly 335,000 civilians have been displaced during the current fighting, bringing the total to more than 2 million displaced nationwide, according to the United Nations.

In the latest assault, a coalition of militia forces attacked a town in southeastern **Kayin** state on Friday, blocking the main road to a key border town with Thailand. Residents said the military responded with artillery and airstrikes.

“This is the biggest battlefield challenge that the Myanmar military has faced for decades,” **Richard Horsey**, the International Crisis Group’s Myanmar expert, said of the offensive.



Heavily armed police guard the streets after El Salvador’s congress granted President Nayib Bukele’s request to declare a state of emergency, amid a wave of gang-related killings, in downtown San Salvador, El Salvador on March 27, 2022. The exceptional powers still remain in effect in Nov 2023, more than 1½ years after they were granted and some 72,000 arrests later. (AP)



Diallo



Hichilema

Africa

Burkina Faso, Niger quit G5: The governments of Burkina Faso and Niger announced Saturday that they are pulling out of the Sahel Alliance - known also as G5, and the joint defense treaty of the grouping.

The decision is based on deep calculation and assessment of the objectives and operation of the alliance, according to a joint statement by both countries.

It is illogical for the alliance to put the interests of foreign countries above those of its own nations and accept external dictations under the pretext of false partnerships that undermine the sovereignty of our states, the statement noted.

Nevertheless, the two government reaffirmed commitment to the efforts aiming to secure peace and stability, and combat terrorism and trans-border crimes in the Sahel region.

Founded in 2014, the G5 used to be made up of Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad.

On May 16, 2022, Mali quitted the group in protest against failure to hand the presidency of the group over to it. (KUNA)

7 miners dead in landslides: Seven miners were confirmed dead and more than 20 others were missing and presumed dead after heavy rains caused landslides that buried them inside tunnels they had been digging illegally at a copper mine in Zambia, police and local authorities said Saturday.

No bodies had yet been retrieved after the landslides late on Thursday night, police said. Many of the victims were believed to have drowned.

The miners were digging for copper ore at the Seseli open-pit mine in the copper-belt city of Chingola, around 400 kilometers (250 miles) north of the capital, Lusaka, according to police. The landslides happened some time between 9 pm and 10 pm on Thursday, police said.

Police gave names or partial names of seven confirmed victims and said all the miners in the tunnels are “suspected to have died.”

Neither police nor government officials could say exactly how many miners were trapped in the tunnels, but Chingola District Commissioner Raphael Chumupi told The Associated Press that there were at least 36.

“We are saddened to hear about the tragic accident at a makeshift mine site in Chingola that has claimed many lives,” Zambian President **Hakainde Hichilema** said in a post on his official Facebook page. “Our

prayers are with the families and loved ones of those who died in the accident. We express gratitude to the rescuers and volunteers working tirelessly to reach those still trapped.”

The victims were buried at multiple sites, police said. Police, a mine rescue team

and emergency services were at the mine. “The bodies are not yet retrieved, as efforts are being made to retrieve them,” police spokesperson Rae Hamoonga said. (AP)

Rights defender abducted: A promi-



Mine workers are seen during a rescue mission in Chingola, around 400 kilometres (248 miles) north of the capital Lusaka, Zambia on Dec 2. Seven miners were confirmed dead and more than 20 others were missing and presumed dead after heavy rains caused landslides that buried them inside tunnels they had been digging illegally at a copper mine in Zambia, police and local authorities said Saturday. (AP)

nent human rights defender in Burkina Faso has been abducted by unknown individuals, rights groups have announced, in what activists say could be the latest attempt by the military government to target dissidents using a controversial law.

Daouda Diallo, a 2022 recipient of the Martin Ennals international human rights award, was abducted on Friday in Burkina Faso’s capital of Ouagadougou after visiting the passport department where he had gone to renew his documents, according to the local Collective Against Impunity and Stigmatization of Communities civic group, which Diallo founded.

His captors - in civilian clothing - accosted him as he tried to enter his car and took him to “an unknown location,” the group said in a statement on Friday, warning that Diallo’s health could be at risk and demanding his “immediate and unconditional” release.

Amnesty International’s West and Central Africa office said Diallo’s abduction was “presumably (for him) to be forcibly conscripted” after he was listed last month among those ordered to join Burkina Faso’s security forces in their fight against jihadi violence as provided by a new law.

“Amnesty International denounces the use of conscription to intimidate independent voices in #BurkinaFaso and calls for the release of Dr Diallo,” the group said via X, formerly known as Twitter.

Earlier this year, Burkina Faso’s junta announced the “general mobilization” decree to recapture territories lost as jihadi attacks continue to ravage the landlocked country. (AP)

KIB names Ma'ab Qassem as General Manager of International Banking

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is pleased to announce the appointment of Ma'ab Mohammed Qassem as General Manager of the International Banking and Financial Institutions Department. This appointment reinforces KIB's commitment to fostering talent and empowering women in key leadership roles within the organization. Qassem brings a wealth of expertise, a proven track record in the international banking sector, and a fresh perspective to the Bank. In her new role, she will be responsible for developing and managing the Bank's inter-

national relationships, growing the bank's international portfolio, in addition to promoting the Shari'a-compliant banking solutions offered to international corporate clients. Commenting on the Bank's newest hire, Feras Al Darmi, General Manager of the Human Resources Department at KIB, said: "Qassem represents a rising force in the banking industry, challenging traditional norms and setting new standards for leadership. We anticipate her leadership will contribute significantly to the success and growth of the International Banking Depart-

ment and further solidify the Bank's position as an industry leader." Al-Darmi added: "Qassem's appointment aligns with the Bank's core values and its ongoing efforts to position itself as a forward-thinking institution by attracting national talents while empowering its employees across all departments. To this end, KIB is committed to fostering an inclusive and merit-based workplace where talent is recognized and rewarded, regardless of gender or age. Promoting the growth of talented Kuwaiti professionals is an essen-

tial component of our comprehensive sustainable development plan, which aims to, among other things, foster leadership capabilities and cultivate cohesive work teams." Before joining KIB, Qassem was the Deputy General Manager of Financial Institutions and Sovereigns at Gulf Bank. She was responsible for a global portfolio of assets and relationships via loan syndication and secondary participations, where she successfully managed and developed a healthy portfolio of assets and correspondent banks, yielding profits and value to the bank.



Ma'ab Qassem

Market Movements 3-12-2023

	SAUDI	Tadawul	Change	Closing pts	EGYPT	EGX 30	Change	Closing pts
			+41.54	11,219.02			-163.41	24,571.98

Business

First phase of Kuwait Airport's terminal reaches 72% progress

Second phase at 68.1% completion

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3, (KUNA): The first phase of the new passenger terminal building project (T2) at Kuwait International Airport reached 72.64 percent complete, said the Directorate General of Civil Aviation Sunday.

The second phase of the new (T2) had also reached 68.1 percent, said Deputy Director General for (Civil Aviation) Saad Al-Otaibi in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA).

He assured the continuation of development projects in the airport, as well as the modernization of the infrastructure in the air transport sector in the country, thanks to the relevant government entities.

The new passenger terminal is of top priority for the government, as it is considered one of the major development projects. Additionally, it receives direct follow-up by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

A meeting chaired by the Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy and Acting Public Works Minister Dr. Jassim Al-Ustad, in the presence of relevant government officials, to discuss the requirements to accelerate the pace

KDIPA renews registration of 8 firms

By Mahmoud Shendi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) has renewed the registration of 8 companies and offices to submit applications on behalf of investors for a period of one year from the date of issuance of the registration certificate.

The Authority stated in its Resolution No. 116 of 2013 that the

companies are: H. Eranvest Administrative and Marketing Consulting Company, Causeway Financial and Administrative Consulting Company, Kuwait Technical Institute Company for Private Training and Consultations, Al-Suwait Legal Group, Thaq Legal Law Group, Dalal Al-Mulla Legal Group, and Rakaez Legal, the office of lawyers Nasser Al-Kariwin and Muhammad Al-Zaid, and Adlouni & Partners for legal consultations and law firm.

the passenger terminal, central station, and the connection to service tunnels. The second phase involves car parks, service buildings, and roads leading to the new passenger Terminal (T2). The third phase contains aircraft parking and taxis.

The (T2) project's carrying capacity is about 25 million passengers annually and contains 30 fixed bridges to accommodate 51 planes at once, as well as 5,000 parking spaces, in addition to a modern hotel in the transit area. It will provide 15,000 job opportunities for Kuwaiti youth.

of the project.

He added that the Ministry of Interior, (Public Works), (Electricity and Water), Kuwait Fire Force, Kuwait Municipality, Public Authority of Manpower, (Civil Aviation), and the Government Performance Follow-up Agency were present at the meeting.

He praised the Public Works team working on the project, as well as the collaboration and cooperation of government bodies to overcome the obstacles and challenges.

The airport development projects contain 3 phases, the first containing

Core PCE hits 3.50% YoY, overall PCE at 3.00%

US economy continues to show signs of resilience

By National Bank of Kuwait

North America

CB Consumer Confidence

In November 2023, the US economy witnessed a rebound in consumer confidence, reversing a trend of three consecutive monthly declines. This rise in sentiment was primarily driven by an improvement in expectations, despite persistent concerns over inflation and interest rates. The Consumer Confidence Index, as reported by the Conference Board, climbed to 102.0 from a downwardly revised 99.1 in October, and above expectations of 101.0. The surge in confidence was predominantly observed among older households, while younger consumers remained more cautious about their financial prospects.

Prelim GDP q/q

The US Gross domestic product showed expansion in the third quarter, coming in at 5.2% compared to the initial reading of 4.9% and exceeding expectations of 5%. The news release, which followed a higher-than-expected Conference Board consumer confidence data, indicates that the US economy continues to show signs of resilience and sustained growth despite the tightening policies. The growth marks a significant increase from the second quarter's rate of 2.1%. The news was also followed by an easing in unemployment rate which dropped from 233k to 209k in November, further supporting the argument that the US economy is withstanding higher rates. The data seems to support the narrative that a possible soft landing is achievable for the Fed.

Core PCE Price Index

The latest core personal consumption expenditure price index, which excludes the volatile food and energy components advanced 3.5% YoY the Fed's preferred gauge of underlying inflation. Meanwhile, overall PCE price index is running at 3.00%, the smallest gain since March 2021 yet still above the fed's 2% target. One of the FOMC's hawks signaling no more hikes and even potentially opening the door to policy easing. Fed gov. Chris Waller said that "If you see this [lower] inflation continuing for several more months, I don't know how long that might be—3 months? 4 months? 5 months? — you could then start lowering the policy rate because inflation's lower."

Highlights

- Consumer confidence climbed to 102.0 from a downwardly revised 99.1.
- US Prelim GDP expanded for the third quarter.
- Core PCE advanced to 3.50% YoY, overall PCE is running at 3.00%.
- The US labor market appears to be more resilient than expected.
- OPEC+ agrees on additional oil outputs cuts.

US unemployment claims

US unemployment claims rose to 218,000 last week, up 7,000 claims from 211,000 the week prior on a seasonally adjusted basis. About 1.9 million workers continue to claim unemployment benefits, the highest level in two years. That number had been generally on the rise over the past two months, suggesting unemployed workers are increasingly having a harder time finding new jobs. Overall, the labor market remains resilient, but Thursday's figure is the latest indication its strength is fading.

The US Dollar index closed the week at 103.193.

Europe

ECB Speakers

In her recent speech, European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde emphasized the ECB's vigilant and focused approach to monetary policy amid current economic challenges. This stance comes after a significant hike cycle in interest rates by 450 basis points over the last year to counter inflation. Despite these measures and the current economic data, the ECB remains cautious, closely monitoring inflation trends, wage dynamics, and labor market conditions. In a meeting with EU lawmakers, European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde warned that now "is not the time to start declaring victory." Additionally, she warned that the central bank will "need to remain attentive to the different forces affecting inflation and firmly focused on our mandate of price stability." Lagarde also reiterated the ECB's guidance that current rates would need to be held for a "sufficiently long" period of time. Furthermore, she acknowledged that the

current environment of elevated rates, slow growth, and softening labor market will be key to bring inflation down to their 2% target.

The EUR/USD currency pair ended the week at 1.0885.

Asia Pacific

Australian CPI y/y

Australia's inflation eased in November more than expected. With the consumer price index coming at 4.9%, significantly lower than the previous rate of 5.6%, and lower than the expected 5.2%. The drop is mainly contributed by a fall in the prices of goods, while core inflation also edged down. The fall in inflation affirms that the central bank's approach is yielding results, hinting that higher interest should be kept at the current rates. The Australian dollar dipped to 0.6637 before currently stabilizing at around 0.6645 against the US dollar.

The AUD/USD currency pair ended the week at 0.6672.

OPEC+

OPEC+ meeting

The organization of petroleum exporting countries and its allies, also known as OPEC+, assembled for a meeting to decide their next production policy steps on Thursday. They have agreed to make an additional voluntary cut to oil production in 2024 in an attempt to support the current market conditions. Saudi Arabia pledged to extend an existing voluntary cut of 1 million barrels per day until the end of the first quarter while Russia also announced that they will deepen its existing voluntary cuts in exports to 500,000 barrels per day from the previous of 300,000 mainly due to rise in supply from rival producers. In addition, other members including the UAE's state news agency saying it would voluntarily cut by 163,000 bpd in the first quarter, while Iraq and Kuwait said they would cut by 211,000 bpd and 135,000 bpd respectively. Oman, Algeria, and Kazakhstan also pledged additional reductions. With that said Brent Crude fell by 0.2% to \$80.72 a barrel, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude fell by 0.2% to \$75.84.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30770.

Qatar leads GCC markets with 5.4% return

Boursa Kuwait returns to growth in Nov

By Kamco Invest

GCC index sees biggest gain in sixteen months led by a global rally...

GCC equity market index witnessed the first gain in four months after benchmarks across the GCC countries witnessed gains during the month. The MSCI GCC index was up by 5.2% during November-2023 mainly led by optimism in the global markets following expectations that interest rates have peaked and central banks may start cutting rates next year, most likely during the second half. Qatar was the best performing market in the GCC with a return of 5.4% followed by Saudi Arabia and Dubai with gains of 4.6% and 3.0%, respectively. The monthly gains lowered the YTD2023 decline for the region to 2.4% as four out of the seven regional benchmarks still showed declines while Dubai followed by Saudi Arabia showed healthy YTD gains of 19.7% and 6.7%, respectively.

On the sectoral front, almost all regional indices showed gains during November-2023, barring the GCC Insurance index that dropped marginally by 0.4%. On the gainers side, Pharma & Biotech was leading with a gain of 21.4% followed by Consumer Durable & Apparel and Healthcare indices with gains of 14.0% and 11.7%, respectively. Large-cap sectors like Banking showed impressive gains of 6.6% while Energy and Materials indices showed relatively smaller gains of 1.8% and 4.3%, respectively.

On the international front, almost all key global markets were up during the month with healthy gains. The optimism pushed the MSCI World index to the highest in almost four months with a gain of 9.2%, the biggest monthly gain in 3 years. The YTD-2023 gain

for the index stood at 16.2%. US Tech stocks were the best performing during the month with the NASDAQ Composite index gaining 10.7% during the month while the S&P 500 index was up by 8.9%. Emerging market index also witnessed a healthy gain of 7.9% during November2023.

Boursa Kuwait

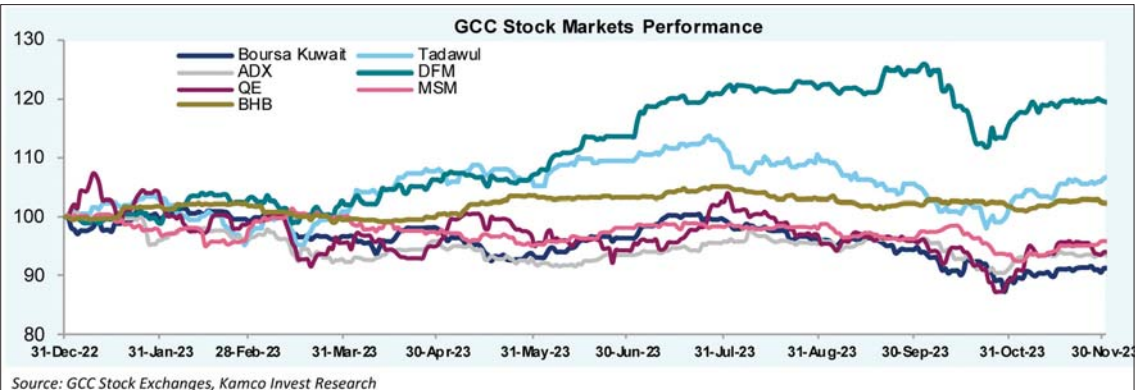
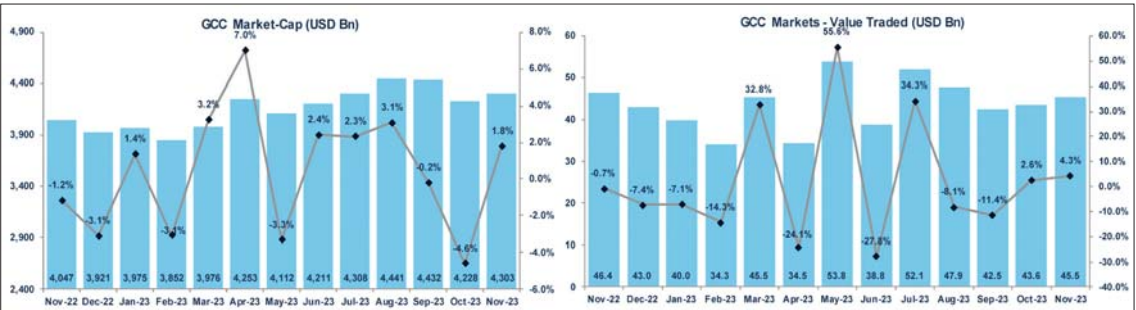
Boursa Kuwait returned to growth with all the four benchmark indices witnessing gains during the November-2023. The gains were mainly seen in large-cap stocks as the Premier Market Index outperformed other indices on the exchange with a gain of 2.1% to close at 7,291.7 points. The Main 50 Index witnessed a slightly smaller monthly growth of 1.6% while the Main Market Index was up 1.1%. The All-Share Market Index reported a monthly growth of 1.9% and closed at 6,653.84 points. In terms of YTD-2023 performance, all the market segments were in red with Premier Market Index down by 10.2% followed by 8.8% decline for the All-Share Market Index. The Main 50 Index and Main Market Index dropped by 6.3% and 2.6%, respectively.

The monthly sector performance chart favored gainers. The Basic Materials index topped during November-2023 with a gain of 6.5% followed by Energy and Financial Services indices with returns of 4.7% and 4.1%, respectively. On the decliner's side, the Insurance index witnessed the biggest decline of 1.7% during the month followed by the Consumer Discretionary index with a decline of 0.9%. All the constituent stocks of the Basic Materials index witnessed gains during the month. Shares of Al Kout for Industrial Projects and Boubyan Petrochemicals reported gains of 10.0% and 5.9%,

respectively. Gains for the Energy index was mainly led by strong gain in shares of The Energy House at 43.3%, further supported by gains of 7.2% and 4.3% in shares of NAPESCO. and Independent Petroleum Group, respectively. NAPESCO reported a net profit of KWD 6.4 Mn in 9M-2023 compared to a net profit of KWD 5.4 Mn in 9M-2022 led by the increase in the operating revenue. The Telecom index was supported by a 7.4% gain in shares of STC Kuwait followed by 5.8% and 3.7% gain in shares of Ooredoo Kuwait and Hayat Comm., respectively. Large-cap indices like Banking was up by 1.2% after shares of four out of ten Kuwaiti banks declined.

In terms of monthly stock performance, IFA Hotels & Resorts topped with a gain of 98.6% followed by Int'l Financial Advisors and The Energy House with gains of 47.1% and 43.3%, respectively. On the decliner's side, Kuwait Cement topped with a decline of 15.5% followed by Dar Al Thuraya Real Estate and Arkan Al-Kuwait Real Estate with declines of 13.5% and 13.4%, respectively. In terms of trading activity, Total monthly volume traded increased by 9.2% to 4.0 Bn shares as compared to 3.6 Bn shares during the previous month, while monthly value traded also increased by 4.8% to KWD 1.0 Bn as compared to KWD 970.2 Bn during October-2023. Shares of KFH topped the value traded chart with total trades worth KWD 156.8 Mn followed by NBK and IFA at KWD 78.4 Mn and KWD 64.0 Mn, respectively. In terms of monthly volume, Arzan Financial Group for Fin. & Invest. topped with 322.6 Mn traded shares followed by IFA and Sokouk Holding Co. recording 267.5 Mn and 237.8 Mn shares traded during the month, respectively.

GCC Equity Markets	Index Closing	MTD Chg%	YTD Chg%	M-Cap (USD Bn)	Monthly Val Traded (USD M mn)	P/E (x) TTM	P/B (x) TTM	Div. Yield
Kuwait - Premier Market Index	7,291.7	2.1%	(10.2%)	131.0	3,367.2	13.3	0.8	3.0%
Kuwait - Main 50 Index	5,361.0	1.6%	(6.3%)					
Kuwait - Main Market Index	5,453.5	1.1%	(2.6%)					
Kuwait - All Share Index	6,653.8	1.9%	(8.8%)					
Saudi Arabia	11,177.5	4.6%	6.7%	2,949.3	30,949.4	18.9	2.2	3.1%
Abu Dhabi	9,559.6	2.3%	(6.4%)	769.9	5,429.1	27.0	3.0	1.6%
Dubai	3,992.4	3.0%	19.7%	183.3	1,909.0	8.8	1.3	4.5%
Qatar	10,041.7	5.4%	(6.0%)	161.4	3,075.9	12.0	1.3	4.8%
Bahrain	1,939.8	0.5%	2.3%	84.7	49.4	6.9	0.7	8.6%
Oman	4,658.2	2.5%	(4.1%)	23.4	712.6	14.3	0.9	4.7%
Total GCC				4,303.0	45,492.6	17.8	2.1	3.1%



Monthly Indicators	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
Premier Market Index	8,115.7	8,085.4	8,069.8	7,821.7	7,912.5	7,494.7	7,809.3	8,060.9	7,695.2	7,520.8	7,142.7	7,291.7
Monthly % Change	(4.4%)	(0.4%)	(0.2%)	(3.1%)	1.2%	(5.3%)	4.2%	3.2%	(4.5%)	(2.3%)	(5.0%)	2.1%
Main 50 Index	5,719.0	5,725.5	5,703.1	5,593.1	5,644.1	5,365.8	5,375.0	5,574.1	5,634.2	5,710.1	5,277.4	5,361.0
Monthly % Change	(1.9%)	0.1%	(0.4%)	(1.9%)	0.9%	(4.9%)	0.2%	3.7%	1.1%	1.3%	(7.6%)	1.6%
Main Market Index	5,596.8	5,623.4	5,548.7	5,500.8	5,606.4	5,440.8	5,463.6	5,630.1	5,692.6	5,717.4	5,396.0	5,453.5
Monthly % Change	(1.9%)	0.5%	(1.3%)	(0.9%)	1.9%	(3.0%)	0.4%	3.0%	1.1%	0.4%	(5.6%)	1.1%
All Share Market Index	7,292.1	7,277.3	7,244.4	7,050.8	7,142.5	6,796.8	7,029.8	7,253.8	7,005.8	6,886.7	6,531.8	6,653.8
Monthly % Change	(3.9%)	(0.2%)	(0.5%)	(2.7%)	1.3%	(4.8%)	3.4%	3.2%	(3.4%)	(1.7%)	(5.2%)	1.9%
Market Cap (KWD Mn)	46,745	46,706	46,423	45,130	43,989	40,228	41,615	42,939	41,580	40,877	38,830	39,577
P/E (X) - TTM	19.66	17.99	17.94	16.72	14.10	13.10	13.41	13.85	13.30	13.40	13.12	13.32
P/BV (X) - TTM	1.67	1.67	1.66	1.09	0.80	0.79	0.82	0.85	0.80	0.80	0.77	0.78
Dividend Yield (%)	2.83%	3.45%	3.46%	3.59%	2.76%	2.97%	2.88%	3.01%	3.10%	3.10%	3.30%	3.00%
Volume (Mn Shares)	2,926.4	3,698.5	2,297.8	2,553.4	2,131.3	2,986.1	3,444.8	4,354.4	3,706.0	3,412.4	3,648.8	3,983.1
Value (KD Mn)	764.5	1,052.2	699.7	889.3	643.9	941.2	815.9	904.8	796.8	772.5	970.2	1,017.3
Trades ('000)	159.1	211.6	153.1	181.3	151.3	209.3	169.7	218.3	228.0	204.6	255.1	236.5

Gold hits record highs surpassing \$2,070/oz

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Gold soared to record-breaking heights, surpassing the \$2,070 per ounce threshold by the close of last week's trading session, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The surge came in response to disappointing US economic data and escalating military tensions in the Middle East. Adel Al-Fadhli, Head of Strategic Planning at Kuwaiti Dar Al-Sabaek Company, revealed that the precious metal marked its third consecutive week

of gains amid sluggish American economic indicators.

Al-Fadhli cited a sustained contraction in US factory activity, a slowdown in personal consumption expenditures, and a sub-level decline in the inflation rate as key factors driving gold's ascent.

Gold futures contracts for February delivery climbed by 1.6 percent to \$2,089 per ounce, while the US dollar index, measuring the currency against major counterparts, dropped

by 0.35 percent to reach 103.1 points. Analysts' pessimistic outlook on US spending and production growth for the coming year prompted investors to seek refuge in gold.

Al-Fadhli highlighted expectations of a 25 basis points interest rate reduction by the Federal Reserve in March 2024, predicting "significant rises" in gold prices if the central bank implements a total reduction of 135 basis points by the end of the next year.

Rates - 3rd December, 2023

Previous Week Levels					This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
Currencies	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.0935	1.0827	1.1017	1.0881	1.0770	1.1080	1.0925
GBP	1.2592	1.2588	1.2733	1.2700	1.2610	1.2905	1.2709
JPY	149.43	146.65	149.67	146.81	144.80	147.9	144.70
CHF	0.8820	0.8677	0.8828	0.8677	0.8490	0.8795	0.8609

Rail union: Lay-off jeopardizes safety

The head of the union that represents track maintenance workers says Union Pacific is jeopardizing safety by delaying nearly 1,200 planned projects until next year and laying off more than 1,000 workers, but the railroad says the seasonal move shouldn't be alarming. The president of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division union has been sending letters to regulators for more than a month raising concerns about the

layoffs, but the the Surface Transportation Board hasn't intervened. "Chaos and disruption with Union Pacific's Maintenance of Way forces can only lead to one outcome - deferred maintenance and catastrophic outcomes," Tony Cardwell, who leads the union, said in his letters. "These furloughs will affect the safety of Union Pacific operations and pose serious safety risks for the general public and the communi-

ties surrounding Union Pacific's infrastructure." Union Pacific said the decision to delay these projects is a reflection of the fact that the railroad went over budget after dealing with several unexpected weather events like the tropical storm that hit California this year and last summer's extreme heat. The railroad said it remains committed to safety and improving its track network across the western U.S. (AP)

Chinese developer Evergrande risking liquidation

A Hong Kong court will convene a hearing Monday on troubled Chinese property developer Evergrande's plans for restructuring its more than \$300 billion in debts and staving off liquidation. The company, the world's most indebted property developer, ran into trouble when Chinese regulators cracked down on excessive borrowing in the real estate sector. Last month, the company said Chinese police were inves-

tigating Evergrande's chairman, Hui Ka Yan, for unspecified suspected crimes in the latest obstacle to the company's efforts to resolve its financial woes. The Hong Kong High Court has postponed the hearing over Evergrande's potential liquidation several times. Judge Linda Chan said in October that Monday's hearing would be the last before a decision is handed down. Evergrande could be ordered

to liquidate if the plan is rejected by its creditors. In September, Evergrande abandoned its initial debt restructuring plan after authorities banned it from issuing new dollar bonds, which was a key part of its plan. The company first defaulted on its financial obligations in 2021, just over a year after Beijing clamped down on lending to property developers in an effort to cool a property bubble. (AP)

Company sees arrival of higher margin models

GM believes it will start making money on EVs in 2025

DETROIT, Dec 3, (AP): General Motors is losing money on every electric vehicle it sells, but the company says it's on track to generate mid single-digit pretax profit margins in 2025 as it produces more higher margin EVs, works out kinks in battery manufacturing, and sees battery cost reductions. That's what Chief Financial Officer Paul Jacobson told analysts at a Barclays conference in New York on Thursday, conceding that the company has struggled to ramp up electric vehicle manufacturing. "While the ramp has been a little bit bumpy, we have worked through that," he said. Specifically, the company has had trouble with machinery that stacks battery cells into modules at its assembly plants after the cells are produced at a battery plant near Warren, Ohio, a joint venture with LG Energy Solution of Korea. The guidance on Thursday of mid single-digit profit margins in two years is a little better than the low-to-mid single digits the company has estimated in

the past, Jacobson said. But the new figure includes benefits from U.S. government clean energy tax credits. Jacobson said current margins on electric vehicles are "substantially negative" as the company builds battery plants, retools factories and then underutilizes them as EV production and demand grow. Demand While the rate of electric vehicle sales growth has slowed in the U.S. this year, Jacobson said demand continues to rise. The company still plans to build factory capacity to manufacture 1 million EVs per year by the end of 2025, but it won't make all of them if the demand isn't there. "I don't want to stuff vehicles into a market that doesn't want them," he said, adding that GM also doesn't want to sell EVs at big discounts. The growth of U.S. electric vehicle sales has slowed sharply since last year.

In June 2022, EV sales were growing about 90% year over year. By June of this year the 12-month growth rate had slowed to about 50%, and it remained there at the end of October. Automakers have become increasingly fearful that the pace may weaken further due to consumer concerns about high prices, a lack of charging stations and whether they will run out of juice. GM is rolling out a series of electric SUVs including an Chevrolet Equinox with a starting price of close to \$30,000, as well as a Chevy Silverado EV pickup truck, GMC Hummer EVs and some Cadillac SUVs. It also plans to come out with a new version of the Chevrolet Bolt in 2025. The company expects to make the EVs profitable by spreading costs over more vehicles as sales increase, by selling more higher-cost/higher profit EVs, and with battery cost savings, Jacobson said. Shares of GM, which on Wednesday announced a \$10 billion stock buyback program and a 33% dividend increase, rose about 1% to \$31.82 Thursday.

Role in global warming

US admin targets oil & gas industry

WASHINGTON, Dec 3, (AP): The Biden administration on Saturday issued a final rule aimed at reducing methane emissions, targeting the U.S. oil and natural gas industry for its role in global warming as President Joe Biden seeks to advance his climate legacy. The Environmental Protection Agency said the rule will sharply reduce methane and other harmful air pollutants generated by the oil and gas industry, promote use of cutting-edge methane detection technologies and deliver significant public health benefits in the form of reduced hospital visits, lost school days and even deaths. Air pollution from oil and gas operations can cause cancer, harm the nervous and respiratory systems and contribute to birth defects. EPA Administrator Michael Regan and White House climate adviser Ali Zaidi announced the final rule at the U.N. climate conference in the United Arab Emirates. Separately, the president of the climate summit announced Saturday that 50 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. Vice President Kamala Harris, the top American representative at the summit, said the U.S. and other nations must act boldly to confront the fallout from climate change. "The urgency of this moment is clear," Harris said. "The clock is no longer just ticking. It is banging. And we must make up for lost time." The U.S. rule on methane emissions is part of a broader effort by the Biden administration that includes financial incentives to buy electric vehicles and upgrade infrastructure - spending that Harris said will total roughly \$1 trillion over 10 years. Oil and gas operations are the largest industrial source of methane, the main component in natural gas and far more potent than carbon dioxide in the short term. It is responsible for about one-third of planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions. Sharp cuts in methane emissions are a global priority to slow the rate of climate change and are a major topic at the conference, known as COP28. Presidents, prime ministers and royals from nations rich and poor have vowed to reduce how much their countries spew heat-trapping gases and asked their colleagues to do better. "On Day One, President Biden restored America's critical role as the global leader in confronting climate change," Regan said, referring to Biden's actions returning the U.S. to the Paris climate agreement and ordering an immediate review of environmental regulations rolled back by the previous administration. The methane rule finalizes a proposal Biden made at a UN climate conference in Scotland in 2021 and expanded a year later at a climate conference in Egypt. It targets emissions from existing oil and gas wells nationwide, rather than focusing only on new wells, as previous EPA regulations have done. It also regulates smaller wells that will be required to find and plug methane leaks. Such wells currently are subject to an initial inspection but are rarely checked again for leaks. Studies have found that smaller wells produce just 6% of the nation's oil and gas but account for up to half the methane emissions from well sites. The plan also will phase in a requirement for energy companies to eliminate routine flaring, or burning of natural gas that is produced by new oil wells. The new methane rule will help ensure that the United States meets a goal set by more than 100 nations to cut methane emissions by 30% by 2030 from 2020 levels, Regan said. The EPA rule is just one of more than 100 actions the Biden administration has taken to reduce methane emissions, Zaidi added. "From mobilizing billions in investment to plug orphaned wells, patch leaky pipes and reclaim abandoned mines, to setting strong standards that will cut pollution from the oil and gas sector, the Biden-Harris Administration is putting the full throw-weight of the federal government into slashing harmful methane pollution," he said.

Work restarts on \$10b renewable energy transmission project despite objections

Bureau lifts temporary suspension

WASHINGTON, Dec 3, (AP): The tractors are back at work clearing land and building access roads for a \$10 billion transmission line that the Biden administration describes as an important part of the nation's transition to renewable energy. But Native American leaders have vowed to keep pushing the federal government to heed their concerns about the project cutting through a culturally significant valley in southern Arizona. Billed by California-based developer Pattern Energy as an infrastructure undertaking bigger than the Hoover Dam, the SunZia transmission line will stretch about 550 miles (885 kilometers). It will funnel electricity from massive wind farms in central New Mexico to more populated areas as far away as California. Executives and federal officials gathered in New Mexico in September to break ground on the project, touting negotiations that spanned years and resulted in the necessary approvals from the Bureau of Land Management. In Arizona, federal land managers briefly halted work this month along a 50-mile (80-kilometer) stretch of the line through the San Pedro Valley after the Tohono O'odham Nation, other tribes and archaeologists raised concerns that the BLM had not formally consulted them before work began. The Bureau of Land Management lifted the temporary suspension and work resumed Wednesday. The agency scheduled a Dec. 11 meeting with tribal leaders. Federal land managers in a letter sent Monday to the developer said the timing of the information provided by the tribes relative to the many years that have gone into planning and permitting did not support pausing work. The agency noted that the right of way through the valley was issued in 2015.

Transmission "The SunZia transmission line project is an important part of transitioning our nation to a clean energy economy by creating jobs, lowering energy costs and boosting local economies, and the BLM is committed to implementing it with as little impact as possible," agency spokesman Brian Hires said in a statement. The BLM said it had met with tribal representatives during the pause and that it would work with tribes to evaluate whether the valley could be classified as a traditional cultural property while mitigating effects from the transmission line on cultural and archaeological sites. The agency said it has not received information on any additional cultural sites beyond those previously identified. Tohono O'odham Chairman Vernon M. Jose said he was disappointed but not surprised that the federal government opted to move ahead before meeting its obligation to consult with the tribes. "It's more than a slap in the face. It's a punch to the gut," he said during an interview Wednesday. "They reversed course and allowed construction to continue before the meeting could actually take place. You know, it is difficult to describe this decision as anything other than acting in bad faith."

Jose said bulldozers have been clearing roads and pads for the massive towers that will support the high-voltage lines so damage already has been done to land that contains what he described as a high concentration of sacred sites. He said tribal members are frustrated. "This means a lot to us," he said of the rolling hills and mountains that make up the region. "There has not been true, meaningful consultation on this - all these years. And if we had worked together to address these issues, I'm sure we could have mitigated the concerns here." He added that the Tohono O'odham people have cultural and traditional responsibilities that call for them to care for the land and for people. As part of that, he said the tribe supports efforts to address climate change but insisted that development needs to be done in such a way that cultural and historic sites are given appropriate consideration under federal laws and regulations. Like Jose, other tribal leaders have complained that the federal government often treats the consultation process as a check-the-box practice despite promises by U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland that tribes would have a seat at the table. From Nevada and New Mexico to Alaska, permitting decisions over mining projects and oil and development for example have highlighted what some tribal leaders say are shortcomings in the process. Developers of the SunZia project argue that they have worked with tribes over the years and surveys were done to identify cultural resources in the San Pedro Valley. Natalie McCue, Pattern Energy's assistant vice president for environmental and permitting activities, said the company will continue to support the consultation process between the federal government and tribes and will adopt mitigation measures that might result from the talks. More than a decade in the making, SunZia's line would be capable of transporting more than 3,500 megawatts of new wind power to 3 million people in the West. It's expected to begin commercial service in 2026.



In this file photo, dignitaries including US Secretary of Interior Deb Haaland, (center) break ground on the SunZia transmission line project in Corona. (AP)

Facility to power 90,000 homes

Masdar to develop 150MW solar plant in Angola

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Dec. 3, (PRNewswire): Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company PJSC - Masdar, one of the world's leading renewable energy companies, has announced plans to develop a major 150 megawatt (MW) solar PV project in Angola to deliver renewable energy to 90,000 homes while creating hundreds of jobs, spurring economic growth, and cutting carbon emissions. As global leaders engaged in climate negotiations at the UN's climate change conference COP28 in Dubai, Masdar - the UAE's clean energy powerhouse - signed a concession agreement with Angola's Ministry of Energy and Water to build and operate the ground-mounted solar power project in the Quipungo region, Hulía province, southern Angola. The area enjoys strong solar irradiation levels but struggles with a lack of access to reliable electricity. Energy insecurity remains one of the most significant constraints on Africa's development. In Angola, less than half of the population has access to electricity, that proportion falls even further in rural areas. This project will significantly support Angola's goal of increasing its national electrification rate to around 60 percent by 2025. The agreement was signed by HE Joao Baptista Borges, Angola's Minister of Energy and Water and Masdar's Chief Executive Officer, Mohamed Jameel Al Ramahi. HE Dr Sultan Al Jaber, UAE Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology, Chairman of Masdar and COP28 President, said: "Africa has what it takes to become the world's renewable energy powerhouse. At COP28 and beyond, we will continue to work with Africa for Africa. The UAE stands shoulder-to-shoulder with our friends in Africa as we strive to secure a just energy transition at this COP of action and COP for all. We are delighted to be moving forward with plans to build this solar power plant in Angola that will bring vital clean energy and jobs to communities. We look forward to developing this strong partnership with Angola as we work together to maximize the country's huge clean energy potential."

Mohamed Jameel Al Ramahi, Chief Executive Officer of Masdar, said: "Developing renewable energy capacity is the key to unlocking Africa's enormous economic potential, and Masdar is excited to be playing a major part in this effort. Masdar is the largest renewables energy company in Africa, through our platform Infinity Power. To accelerate a just energy transition, Masdar recently joined forces with Africa50, a pan-African infrastructure investment platform. Our mission is to fast-track and scale projects so we can deliver 10GW of clean energy in Africa by 2030. Masdar is an anchor partner of the UAE-led Africa Green Investment Initiative and has committed to mobilize US\$10 billion in clean energy finance, of which US\$2 billion will be generated from equity with an additional US\$8 billion from project finance. This transformative project in Angola is a proud milestone on that pivotal journey." Provinces like Huila, where this solar project will be built, are highly constrained by their dependence on emissions-intensive, unreliable fuel. Once completed, the solar facility will displace over 224,000 tonnes of carbon emissions every year, the equivalent of removing 50,000 cars from the roads. The solar plant will support homes and businesses to leapfrog from patchy, traditional-fuel powered electricity to accessing continuous clean energy. The project will boost the local economy too. Up to 600 jobs are expected to be created during the construction phase. Afterward, the supply of reliable, clean energy is expected to help grow sectors including agriculture. The solar project in Quipungo forms part of a wider commitment made by Masdar in January, during Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week 2023, to develop 5 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy projects across Angola, Uganda and Zambia. The Agreements were signed under the umbrella of Etihad 7 - a global development fund launched by the UAE to provide 100 million people across the African continent with clean electricity by 2035. About Masdar Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company (Masdar) is the UAE's clean energy champion and one of the fastest growing companies in the world, advancing the development and deployment of renewable energy and green hydrogen technologies to address global sustainability challenges. Established in 2006, Masdar has developed projects in over 40 countries, helping them to achieve their clean energy objectives and advance sustainable development. Masdar is jointly owned by Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), Mubadala Investment Company (Mubadala), and Abu Dhabi National Energy Company (TAQA), and under this ownership the company is targeting a renewable energy portfolio capacity of at least 100 gigawatts (GW) by 2030 and an annual green hydrogen production capacity of up to 1 million tonnes by the same year. For more information please visit: <http://www.masdar.ae> and connect: facebook.com/masdar.ae and [twitter. com/masdar](https://twitter.com/masdar)

over the years and surveys were done to identify cultural resources in the San Pedro Valley. Natalie McCue, Pattern Energy's assistant vice president for environmental and permitting activities, said the company will continue to support the consultation process between the federal government and tribes and will adopt mitigation measures that might result from the talks. More than a decade in the making, SunZia's line would be capable of transporting more than 3,500 megawatts of new wind power to 3 million people in the West. It's expected to begin commercial service in 2026. In New Mexico, the route was modified after the U.S. Defense Department raised concerns about the effects of the high-voltage lines on radar systems and military training operations. Environmentalists also were worried about impacts on wildlife habitat and migratory bird flight patterns in the Rio Grande Valley. There are similar ecological concerns in the San Pedro Valley. The transmission line is at the heart of a legal challenge pending before the Arizona Court of Appeals over whether state regulatory officials there properly considered the benefits and consequences of the project.

Award reflects Al-Nusif's remarkable leadership in transforming company into a prominent industry leader

solutions by stc Kuwait CEO awarded for exceptional leadership by MEA Business

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced that solutions by stc's Kuwait CEO, Mohammed Al-Nusif, one of the Company's executive management members, has been presented with the 'Exceptional Leadership Award' from MEA Business, the region's first augmented-reality enabled business magazine.

stc highlighted in a statement that the 'Exceptional Leadership' recognition reflects Al-Nusif's remarkable leadership in transforming its specialized business arm, solutions by stc Kuwait, into a prominent industry leader. Through a comprehensive evaluation pro-

cess that included documentation about Al-Nusif's leadership trajectory and the remarkable milestones achieved under his guidance took center stage. This journey encompasses the Company's evolution from being an Internet Service Provider to an all-encompassing one-stop solutions provider, all while navigating a rapidly changing digital landscape and unprecedented challenges.

Under Al-Nusif's strategic direction, "Quality Net" was rebranded to become solutions by stc Kuwait and the process of acquiring the Company by stc was completed smoothly to be the specialized business arm of stc in providing integrated business solutions. This vital move strengthened stc's market presence and reinforced its position as



Mohammed Nizar Al-Nusif

a technological pioneer. With the expanded service portfolio, solutions by stc Kuwait successfully



'Exceptional Leadership Award'

broadened its outreach, catering to a diverse array of customers while setting new standards in

service delivery and technological excellence, both locally and regionally.

Despite the numerous challenges, including those posed by the pandemic, solutions by stc Kuwait, under Al-Nusif's leadership, has demonstrated remarkable resilience, adaptability, and forward-thinking. The Company has not only maintained its market position but also solidified its reputation as a digital solutions pioneer. It continues to invest in research, development, and infrastructure expansion, ensuring individual and corporate clients have access to cutting-edge and new-to-market solutions. Today, solutions by stc Kuwait holds a diverse portfolio spanning ICT, IT, Connectivity and Cyber Security Solutions catering to start-

ups, SMEs, large corporations and governmental institutions alike.

In receiving the award, stc conveyed its gratitude and appreciation to MEA Business and the esteemed members of its judging panel for recognizing and honoring the company's efforts and achievements on several fronts.

It is worth mentioning that MEA Business Technology Achievement Awards is a multisector recognition awards agency that highlights significant achievements within the region. The award nomination process is organized by MEA Business Magazine, a leading regional business publication. MEA Business Magazine is part of Creative Middle East Event Management & Publishing, and official Media partner for GITEX 2023.

Company awarded winners of first round's Grand Prix competition

Zain main sponsor of KEF Showjumping Tour's third season

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Continuing its ongoing support to local showjumping athletes, Zain announced its sponsorship of the third season of the Kuwait Equestrian Federation's (KEF) Showjumping Tour (2023-2024 season). The company remains a key supporter of this exciting competition for the third year running to reflect its commitment to support equestrian sports and encourage local athletes to pursue excellence.

During the event to mark the new season's kick-off, Zain awarded the top six winners in the first round's Grand Prix competition, held at Messila Equestrian Club in Sabhan. In attendance were Kuwait Equestrian Federation Chairman Masoud Johar Hayat and Zain Kuwait's Corporate Relations Department Manager Hamad Al Musaibeeh.

Zain honored the top six winners of the Grand Prix in the new season's first round: first place winner Ali Al Kharafi, second place winner Fawaz Al Subaie, third place winner Abrar Al Musallam, fourth place winner Ghazi Al Jerawi, fifth place winner Abdulrahman Al Fuzae, and sixth place winner Antonio Murruzzu.

The company is proud to continue supporting this exciting local sport event since its inception. The competition is organized by the Kuwait Equestrian Federation (KEF) in collaboration with the Kuwait Olympic Committee and Public Authority for Sport. Every year, it is joined by hundreds of showjumping athletes representing local clubs, along with crowds of equestrian enthusiasts.

Zain supports this event under the umbrella of its strategic goals to support, grow, and develop the local sports and youth sectors. The company is a fervent believer in the exceptional talents of Kuwait's young athletes, many of whom are passionate about equestrian sports, which are deep rooted in the Kuwaiti, Arab, and Islamic identities.



Hayat and Al Musaibeeh awarding the winners.

The KEF Showjumping Tour is set to feature eight rounds, with each round's activities being held over a period of two days. The tour runs until May 2024 and will also feature several 2-star and 3-star international competitions. Hundreds of showjumpers from Kuwait's public and private equestrian clubs will compete in the thrilling competitions.

As a leading private sector company in Kuwait, Zain is constantly looking to identify and support excellence across the sports sector. The company will continue to put Kuwaiti sports and athletes at the forefront of its priorities and pledges to continue motivating them to achieve all the recognition and support they deserve.



Zain is a main supporter of Kuwaiti equestrian athletes.

'Humanity in the Age of Robotics'

AUK unveils upcoming production

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The American University of Kuwait (AUK) will be holding a production that explores the question of what defines humanity in a technologically driven world. Titled R.U.R., the production is directed by Mr. Q-mars, AUK lecturer in theater and drama. The play will be held in the AUK theater on December 6, 7, and 9.



AUK production poster

Drawing inspiration from Karel Čapek's 1921 play R.U.R., which introduced the term "Robot," the production takes an interdisciplinary approach, involving students from both the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) and the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (CEAS) as actors and stage crew. This unique collaboration promises to bring a fresh perspective on the timeless significance of exploring the essence of humanity.

Mr. Q-mars anticipates that the play will wield a profound impact, expressing, "My expectation is that the production will provide the audience with a framework to contemplate essential questions regarding our coexistence with robots and the deliberate utilization of AI. It delves into the exploration of how AI can be a helpful ally, all the while encouraging reflection on the very core of human identity."

To purchase tickets for the play, email theatre@auk.edu.kw

Prize distribution ceremony on the 15th of December

Kala (Art) Kuwait announces NIRAM 2023 winners

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Kala (Art) Kuwait has announced the winners of "NIRAM 2023" Children's Day painting competition held on Friday, 10th November 2023 at Online. The prize distribution ceremony will take place at Indian Community School, Khaitan Friday, 15th December 2023 at 2:00 PM onwards.

Kala (Art) Kuwait proudly announce that this is the 19th consecutive year of NIRAM has been conducted on the occasion of Children's Day, the birth day of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India. It is worthwhile to note that students of different nationalities from all 28 Indian Schools in Kuwait with the active participation of more than 3,300 children in the competition. The School Managements as well as Indian Community including business establishments as sponsors have also voluntarily extended their entire support to this wonderful event.

Winners of Painting Competition titled "NIRAM2023" have been adjudged by the well-known Artists Mr. Sasi Krishnan, Mr. Sunil Kulanada, Mr. Hari Chengannur and Mr. Rajive appointed by the Executive Committee of "Kala (Art) Kuwait" and accordingly the Lists of Winners are being released by the organizers as follows:

Overall Championship: 1st Position- IES-Bharatiya VidhyaBhavan, Abbasiya, 2nd Position - Learners Own Academy, Abbasiya 3rd Position-Fahaheel Al-Watanih Indian private School, Ahmadi

C. Bhaskaran Memorial Trophy as a tribute to Late. Mr. C Bhaskaran, one of the founder and advisory board member of Kala (Art) Kuwait, won by IES-Bharatiya Vidhya Bhavan, the school from which maximum numbers of students were participated in this event.

Group-A: 1st Prize-Reyna Elizabeth Philip, 1st Std, Indian Community School, Jr.Salmiya, 2nd Prize- Kairavi Patel, 1st Std, Indian Community School, Jr. Salmiya, and Siya Shenoy, 1st Std, Indian School of Excellence, 3rd Prize-Althea Mariam Sobin, LKG, Jack & Jill Bhavans, Mangaf and Akilesh Jayakumar, LKG, Learners Own Academy, Abbasiya

Group-B: 1st Prize-Parthiv Kailas, 4th Std., Learners Own Academy, 2nd Prize- Dhyan Krishna, 2ndStd., Smart Indian School, Kuwait, 3rd Prize-Saraswata Roy, 4th Std., Fahaheel Al-Watanih Indian private School, Ahmadi

Group-C: 1st Prize-Samantha Smith Sunil, 7th Std., Learners Own Academy, 2nd Prize-Rithul Mathew Jerry, 6th Std., United Indian School, Abbasiya, 3rd Prize-SohaKhanum, 6th Std., IES-Bharatiya Vidhya Bhavan and Rosann P Binoj, 7th Std., Indian Community School, Amman

Group-D: 1st Prize - Eunice Dinjen, 12th Std., Indian Community School, Sr. Salmiya, 2nd Prize-Ann Niya Jose, 9th Std., Indian Community School, Sr. Salmiya, 3rd Prize- Khansa Ifrath, 8th



Group photo during the Romanian Embassy event.

Romanian Embassy and Spotlynx collaborate to promote tourism with 'Discover Romania' event

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Spotlynx Company from Romania with the support of the Romanian Embassy in the state of Kuwait and HE Romanian Ambassador Mugurel Stancu was pleased to hold the first meeting and tourism presentation called "Discover Romania". The event was hosted by the Romanian Embassy, on Wednesday, November 22 2023. At this special event were invited some of the most important local and International Travel Tourism Companies including ITL World, Jumbo Travel, Al Maktab Travel, Al Athla Travel, and Eagle Travel & Tourism.

Apart from the travel agencies, the meeting was also attended by the Vice President of Kuwait Traveller Association Ms. Mariam Al Kandari, and the travel influencer Ms. Noura Khan.

During the presentation, all guests were amazed to learn so much information about Romanian hidden gems, including Dracula's Castle, the Salt Mines, the beauty of Danube Delta, the Balneotherapy treatments offered in Romania or other amazing places that could be visited during a tour trip to Romania! On this occasion, Spotlynx which is a Destination Travel Management Company based in Bucharest, launched their tailor-made package offers and invited all Kuwaiti tourists for an unforgettable trip as they are planning to visit and explore Romania!



Discover Romania poster.

Std., India International School, Mangaf and Ananyaa Rajesh, 12th Std., Indian Community School, Khaitan

Clay Sculpture: 1st Prize- Sanjay Suresh, 12th Std., Learners Own Academy, 2nd Prize-Onega William, 11th Std., Indian Community School, Sr.

Salmiya, 3rd Prize- Aryananda Ravi, 8th Std., United Indian School

The organizers announced that the entire winners list consisting 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 80 Merit Prizes as well as 230 Consolation Prizes (Total 329 Prizes) have already been forwarded to all par-



Kala (Art) Kuwait Niram-2023 winners

ticipated Schools. The List may also be available at our website www.kalakuwait.net.

Kala (Art) Kuwait, highlights the exclusive prizes for the winners as first place with Gold Coin & gold medal, second place with silver medal and third place with bronze medal along with memento & certificate. Merit and Consolation prize winners also will have trophy & certificate.

Kala (Art) Kuwait has congratulated all the Winners and also thanked all the participants and the School Managements, Sponsors, all Indian Associations for their wholehearted support to make the event as a great success and well supported by Kuwait's English & Malayalam visual and print medias and Web Portals. The organizers also convey their heartfelt thanks to the Parents and Art Teachers, according to Kala (Art) Kuwait President Jaishon Joseph, General Secretary Rakesh P. D., Treasurer Ashraf Vithura, General Convener Ambili and Media Convener Mukesh V. P.

Rock legends embrace digital avatars

Farewell to reality: Kiss become first US band to go virtual

NEW YORK, Dec 3, (AP): On Saturday night, Kiss closed out the final performance of their “The End of the Road” farewell tour at New York City’s famed Madison Square Garden.

But as dedicated fans surely know - they were never going to call it quits. Not really.

During their encore, the band’s current lineup - founders Paul Stanley and Gene Simmons as well as guitarist Tommy Thayer and drummer Eric Singer - left the stage to reveal digital avatars of themselves. After the transformation, the virtual Kiss launched into a performance of “... Gave Rock and Roll to You.”

The cutting-edge technology was used to tease a new chapter of the rock band: after 50 years of Kiss, the band is now interested in a kind of digital immortality.

The avatars were created by George Lucas’ special-effects company, Industrial Light & Magic, in partnership with Pophouse Entertainment Group, the latter of which was co-founded by ABBA’s Björn Ulvaeus. The two companies recently teamed up for the “ABBA Voyage” show in London, in which fans could attend a full concert by the Swedish band - as performed by their digital avatars.

Per Sundin, CEO of Pophouse Entertainment, says this new technology allows Kiss to continue their legacy for “eternity.” He says the band wasn’t on stage during virtual performance because

“that’s the key thing,” of the future-seeking technology. “Kiss could have a concert in three cities in the same night across three different continents. That’s what you could do with this.”

In order to create their digital avatars, who are depicted as a kind of superhero version of the band, Kiss performed in motion capture suits.

Experimentation with this kind of technology has become increasingly common in certain sections of the music industry. In October K-pop star Mark Tuan partnered with Soul Machines to create an autonomously automated “digital twin” called “Digital Mark.” In doing so, Tuan became the first celebrity to attach their likeness to OpenAI’s GPT integration, artificial intelligence technology that allows fans to engage in one-on-one conversations with Tuan’s avatar.

Immortalized

Aespa, the K-pop girl group, frequently perform alongside their digital avatars - the quartet is meant to be viewed as an octet with digital twins. Another girl group, Eternity, is made up entirely of virtual characters - no humans necessary.

“What we’ve accomplished has been amazing, but it’s not enough. The band deserves to live on because the band is bigger than we are,”

Kiss frontman Paul Stanley said in a roundtable interview. “It’s exciting for us to go the next step and see Kiss immortalized.”

“We can be forever young and forever iconic by taking us to places we’ve never dreamed of before,” Kiss bassist Gene Simmons added. “The technology is going to make Paul jump higher than he’s ever done before.”

And for those who couldn’t make the Madison Square Garden show - stay tuned, because a Kiss avatar concert may very well be on the way.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Singer-actor **Dove Cameron** drops her debut album “Alchemical: Volume 1,” which contains six new songs and two previous hits, “Boyfriend” and “Breakfast.” One of the new songs is “Lethal Woman,” a club banger about a woman “sharp as a knife under the table” that includes sounds of banging on a door, a gun being cocked and heavy production elements. The lyrics include the playful rhyme: “Game recognizes game/By the way, what’s your name?” Cameron has had a heady few years, winning new artist of the year honors at the 2022 American Music Awards and being named Best New Artist at the 2022 VMAs. She also was scene-stealer in season two of “Schmigadoon!”

Variety



Hugh Grant, (from left), Calah Lane, Olivia Colman, Timothee Chalamet, director Paul King, Rowan Atkinson, Keegan-Michael Key, Sally Hawkins, Jim Carter, Paterson Joseph, Mathew Baynton and Matt Lucas pose for photographers upon arrival at the photo call of the film ‘Wonka’ in London, Monday, Nov. 27, 2023. (AP)

The Conversation

Children’s classic exposed

Racism persists in ‘Wonka’ movie

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

By Meisha Lohmann

Binghamton University, State University of New York

Several years ago, I made a visit to a local book sale and came across a rare 1964 edition of Roald Dahl’s “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.” Popular in its own right, the novel has also served as the inspiration for a number of movies, including “Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory” - the classic 1971 movie starring the late Gene Wilder - a 2005 reboot starring Johnny Depp, and “Wonka,” the 2023 version.

As a child of the 1980s, I had voraciously consumed Dahl’s novels, so I knew the book well. But the illustrations in this particular edition looked unfamiliar.

Once I brought the worn and tattered book home and began to read it aloud to my kids, I realized that some passages looked unfamiliar as well. My voice faltered as the Oompa-Loompas - the pint-sized workers in Wonka’s chocolate factory - appeared and Charlie asked, “Are they really made out of chocolate, Mr. Wonka?”

To which Wonka replied: “Nonsense!”

“They belong to a tribe of tiny miniature pygmies known as Oompa-Loompas,” Wonka explains in this version of the book. “I discovered them myself. I brought them over from Africa myself - the whole tribe of them, three thousand in all. I found them in the very deepest and darkest part of the African jungle where no white man had ever been before.”

The accompanying black-and-white illustration of several dark-skinned Oompa-Loompas left me stunned. Dahl’s book is part of a long history of children’s books that feature racist stereotypes - a list that includes six Dr. Seuss books that were removed from publication in 2021. Other children’s classics, such as “Peter Pan” and “Mary Poppins,” have also been criticized for perpetuating racism.

As an English lecturer who specializes in decoding some of the hidden meanings and dark realities in popu-

lar children’s stories, I looked deeper into the blatant racism in the 1964 edition of “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” comparing it to a more recent copy from 2011.

Notably, the description of the Oompa-Loompa’s skin had been changed from “almost black” to “rosy-white.” And rather than coming from Africa, they came from “Loompaland.” I learned that these changes were made by Dahl for the 1974 edition after criticism by the NAACP and others. Dahl’s response was to remove the Black characters altogether.

Yet as philosophy lecturer Ron Novy points out, even the latest editions of the book still perpetuate racist and imperialist ideologies.

When Wonka describes how he “smuggled” the Oompa-Loompas into the country in “large packing cases with holes in them,” the image clearly recalls slave ships navigating the Middle Passage. Wonka’s promise to pay the Oompa-Loompas’ wages in cacao beans, and the admission that no one ever sees them come in or out of the factory, reinforces the Oompa-Loompas’ subjugation to Willy Wonka, who plays the role of their “Great White Father,” as fourth grade reading teacher Katherine Baxter noted in 1974.

Revised

Historian Donald Yacovone has pointed out that, even in its revised form, “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory” has long contributed to the perpetuation of white supremacist ideology. Not only do the Oompa-Loompas immediately appear - ready to obey - whenever Wonka clicks his fingers, but Wonka is also repeatedly dismissive of them. He calls them “charming” but tells his visitors not to believe a word the Oompa-Loompas say. “It’s all nonsense, every bit of it!”

Wonka even uses the Oompa-Loompas as experimental subjects. He feeds them gum that turns them into blueberries and fizzy drinks that send one unfortunate man aloft until he “disappeared out of sight” and was never seen again. These experiments seem a grotesque parody of the myriad cases of enslaved and free Black Americans who have been subjected to experimental surgeries, treatments and medical neglect.

In both the book’s current version and in the origi-

nal, he smuggles them into his factory and pays them in cacao beans because they were “practically starving to death” and cacao was “the one food that they longed for more than any other ... but they couldn’t get it” on their own.

It’s an absurd assertion that this community of people, originally located in the heart of Africa, cannot access a crop that, while native to the Amazon, is primarily grown in West African countries. That they need Wonka to give them access to the resources of their own land is a damaging colonialist fantasy - one which, as Yacovone notes, has historically buoyed, rather than diminished, the popularity of the novel and the 1971 and 2005 films.

Unfortunately, the latest Wonka movie also engages in the type of implicit racism that remains in the revised 1974 version of the novel. The most prominent Black character, a girl named Noodle, played by the talented Calah Lane, takes a back seat to Wonka in the major events of the film.

The new Wonka almost broke from the tradition of having Wonka played by white men. Early in the new film’s conception, Newsweek reported that actor, comedian and musician Donald Glover was under consideration for the lead role, a choice that could have at least begun to force a rewrite of the original novel’s racist narrative.

Instead, the film casts Noodle in the position of an unfortunate Black girl who can only hope for a ride on Wonka’s velvet coattails.

“I know things haven’t been easy for you,” Wonka says in the movie. “They’re going to get better.”

“You promise?” Noodle replies, hopefully, and he does promise, highlighting his role as her white savior. Another character in voice-over agrees: “You could change her life, Mr. Wonka. Change all their lives.”

I was initially hopeful about the prospect of a movie that moves away from the novel’s racist origins, yet still imparts the power of imagination on a new generation. Unfortunately, moviegoers may find themselves having to hold their breath and make a wish, as Gene Wilder stated in a song from the 1971 movie, for a version that holds no remnants of its racist past. (AP)

and political ambushes financed by foreign agents,” according to the statement. (AP)

NEW YORK: An appeals court upheld the disorderly conduct convictions Friday of actor **Jusie Smollett**, who was accused of staging a racist, homophobic



Palacios



Smollett

attack against himself in 2019 and lying about it to **Chicago** police.

Smollett, who appeared in the TV show “Empire,” challenged the role of a special prosecutor, jury selection, evidence and many other aspects of the case. But all were turned aside in a 2-1 opinion from the **Illinois** Appellate Court.

Smollett had reported to police

that he was the victim of a racist and homophobic attack by two men wearing ski masks. The search for the attackers soon turned into an investigation of Smollett himself, leading to his arrest on charges he had orchestrated the whole thing.

Authorities said he paid two men whom he knew from work on “Empire,” which filmed in Chicago.

Prosecutors said Smollett told the men what slurs to shout, and to yell that he was in “MAGA Country,” a reference to **Donald Trump**’s presidential campaign slogan.

A jury convicted Smollett in 2021 on five felony counts of disorderly conduct, a charge that can be filed in Illinois when a person lies to police. (AP)

People & Places

Books

New twist in ‘Mutts’

‘Eyeliner’ chronicles defiance and beauty

NEW YORK, Dec 3, (AP): Zahra Hankir opens “Eyeliner: A Cultural History” by marveling over her mother’s elegant beauty process as she delicately sweeps black kohl on her waterline, dreaming of displaying that same confidence one day.

For Hankir, eyeliner is more than just a cosmetic product. It provides protection and empowerment. It provides cultural connection. It exists beyond borders, gender roles and Western beauty standards. Lining one’s waterline or drawing a delicate black line across an eyelid is more than aesthetics. For many of the underrepresented groups and communities of color highlighted in Hankir’s book, applying the product is a ritual deeply rooted in spirituality, culture, identity and more. To loosely quote Audre Lorde, if self-care is an act of resistance, then an eyeliner is a tool in the rebellion throughout Hankir’s novel.



Hankir

The Lebanese-British journalist seamlessly takes her readers on a global investigation of how the cosmetic product is used worldwide. Through intimate narratives with varied characters from different cultures and communities, we learn more about the product’s rise in prominence while having a fly-on-the-wall inside look at the ways it serves medicinal purposes, fuels spiritual practices, uplifts self-expression and how its mere existence on someone’s eyelid can be viewed as a form of defiance.

Hankir begins this thoroughly researched journey by educating her readers on Egypt’s Queen Nefertiti and her rise as a symbol of “ideal feminine beauty.” The Egyptian queen posthumously influenced mainstream culture, leading eventually to the beauty item’s spot in shopping mall stores and in make-up ads across Western society. But while detailing Nefertiti’s legacy, Hankir does not shy away from reflecting on how the queen’s thick-lined trademark became twisted and co-opted by white Western culture. She addresses it head-on and shares the complete history of its popularity. All of the good and the bad that follows popularity.

Information

The book is a little over 300 pages long and packs enough information for readers to walk away with more in-depth knowledge of the staple product sitting idly inside their makeup bag. As readers twist open their liner applicator, they’ll be reminded of the Wodaabe men who wear kohl to enhance their appearance and attract a partner in a ritual ceremony. They’ll think of artists like Shirin Neshat, who wear the item as a form of solidarity for the women back home who cannot publicly line their eyes. They’ll remember the drag queens who drew on their bold, exaggerated liner as they prepared to perform and the stories of the Cholas in Mexican-American culture who wore the product, expressing their dual femininity and strength.

“Eyeliner” comes full circle, highlighting today’s beauty influencers and allowing viewers to see the ripple effects of popularity and cultural exchange as this one beauty product carries the constant line of simultaneously emphasizing the beauty and power each person possesses as they line their eyes and prepare to embark on their personal journeys.



Something is different on the comics pages this week. In the panels of “Mutts,” there’s the long-delayed sight of freedom.

Patrick McDonnell, the cartoonist who draws the popular strip, is freeing his character Guard Dog, liberating an animal who has become for decades a symbol of the cruelty of dog chaining.

“I think it just hit me that I can’t do it forever and that it has to happen,” McDonnell told The Associated Press ahead of the publication of Thursday’s panel showing Earl’s owner kneeling beside the dog and announcing: “We have to remove this chain.” On Friday’s strip, it will be gone.

“I had a vague idea what the story was going to be, but I finally took some time and said, ‘Well, what is that story?’ And I was happy with what I came up with. So I said, ‘Now’s the time to do it.’”

“Mutts” premiered in 1995 with two heroes - the small canine Earl and the feline Mooch, fond of saying “Yesh.” There’s also Woolfie, Sid the fish, Crabby, Sourpuss and Butchie, the ever-vigilant owner of the Fatty Snax Deli.

Character

Guard Dog was added about a year after launch as McDonnell explored the idea of having an antagonist for his heroes.

“I started in my sketchbooks drawing a tough dog,” he says. “I drew a big gruff dog and I put a studded collar on him. And then I drew a chain. And when I did that, it changed everything. I realized that it wasn’t a villain. It was a tragic character.”

For years, Guard Dog sat in the unmowed grass of a neighborhood lawn or howled at the moon, alone and philosophical. In one strip he holds a piece of paper that reads “Guard Dog’s To Do List” with only one item: “Remind people of man’s inhumanities.”

Doozy, a neighborhood girl, regularly visits the mutt on her way to and from school, bringing something to brighten his day: an umbrella, treats, a hug, a kind word and a reminder that he isn’t alone. One frigid night, he was shivering and she brought a blanket and a kiss.

Fans of Guard Dog would regularly plead with McDonnell to free the mutt but the artist was also lobbied by animal welfare groups to keep the dog chained as a way to increase the spotlight on the issue.

“I always felt like, ‘Geez, if I inspired even one family to bring the dog in the house, that it was worth doing. I know it was tough on the readers and it was tough on Guard Dog,” he said.

“You know, whenever I drew him in my sketchbooks or if I did a talk, I always drew Guard Dog free. So part of me felt like he was an actor playing a part.”

In the lead-up to Guard Dog’s freedom, McDonnell crafted a multi-comic seven-week storyline in which the owner of Guard Dog moves away, leaving the dog utterly alone. The other animals and kids rally to save him.



This image released by Apple TV+ shows, (from left), JaNae Collins, Lily Gladstone, and Cara Jade Myers in a scene from ‘Killers of the Flower Moon.’ (AP)

‘Killers of the Flower Moon’ named best film by NY film critics

Martin Scorsese’s “Killers of the Flower Moon” has been named the best film of the year by the New York Film Critics Circle.

It’s the third time that Scorsese has been given the best film award from his hometown’s critics, who named 1990’s “GoodFellas” their top movie, as well as 2019’s “The Irishman.” On Thursday, the group also awarded Lily Gladstone, who stars alongside Leonardo DiCaprio in “Killers of the Flower Moon,” best actress.

“Killers of the Flower Moon,” a \$200 million Apple Studios production based on David Grann’s nonfiction bestseller, chronicles the Osage murders of the 1920s.

“Oppenheimer,” Christopher Nolan’s blockbuster drama about J. Robert Oppenheimer and the Manhattan Project, picked up several awards: best director for Nolan and best cinematography, by Hoyte van Hoytema.

The New York Film Critics Circle, founded in 1935, is the oldest critics group in the country. The awards will be handed out at a dinner on Jan. 3. Last year, the critics named Todd Field’s “Tár” the best film of 2022. Here’s a full list of their picks:

Best Film: “Killers of the Flower Moon”
Best Director: Christopher Nolan, “Oppenheimer”
Best Actress: Lily Gladstone, “Killers of the Flow-

er Moon”

Best Actor: Franz Rogowski, “Passages”
Best International Film: “Anatomy of a Fall”
Best Supporting Actress: Da’Vine Joy Randolph, “The Holdovers”
Best Supporting Actor: Charles Melton, “May December”
Best Screenplay: “May December”
Best Non-Fiction Film: “Menus-Plaisirs - Les Troisgros”
Best Cinematography: Hoyte van Hoytema, “Oppenheimer”
Best First Film: “Past Lives” (AP)

Music

R&B singer takes back control in music and life

Ledé on healing through music

NEW YORK, Dec 3, (AP): Kiana Ledé is one of R&B’s brightest rising stars but that doesn’t mean she always embraces the compliment.

“I kind of have mixed feelings about it because it gets me in my head about me needing to do more or me being more invested in my craft, or I just don’t have the right (industry) politics surrounding me,” said Ledé, who’s launching the international leg of her “Grudges” tour Tuesday starting in Auckland, New Zealand. “(But) it also makes me feel great because they’re clearly appreciating me and understanding that I do this for healing purposes and that the music is just good.”

It’s a pivotal moment in the career of the 26-year-old songstress whose upcoming tour stops include London, Paris, Sydney and Berlin. Ledé, who wrapped up her 21-date North American tour in October and recently parted ways with her record label, Republic, has built a loyal fanbase and respect from industry contemporaries. But she doesn’t always garner the same attention as some of the leading ladies of R&B’s new generation.

“I probably get at least four tweets every day with my name mentioned next to ‘underrated’...that is a constant conversation that people have about me,” said Ledé.

Album

Crafting popular songs like “Wicked Games” and “EX,” which reached No. 9 on Billboard’s hot R&B songs chart, the Phoenix-raised artist released her sophomore album, “Grudges,” during the summer. The 17-track project has features from Bryson Tiller, Khalid and Ella Mai, and is executive produced by Nija Charles who scored a non-classical songwriter of the year Grammy nomination for her work on Beyoncé’s “Renaissance.”

“Grudges” follows Ledé’s critically-acclaimed debut, “Kiki,” which reached No. 30 on the Billboard 200 and No. 7 on the top R&B album charts. Her latest work unabashedly recounts her experiences with love and unhealthy relationships, a musical composite sometimes referred to as an unofficial genre, toxic R&B.

“‘Grudges,’ I think, is...me just being able to be honest about what I was going through in that moment, knowing that it’s healthy and okay to be upset,” said Ledé, who has writing cred-

its on every track. “I’ve been so happy with the response to ‘Grudges’...I always say this almost every show. I have two goals: to make you twerk and to make you cry.”

Part of what draws fans to the artist, whose previous collaborations include with Usher, Kehlani and Offset, is a combination of raw transparency and skilled writing, conveying sensitive emotions through the music.

“It’s her being so relatable and being so real...I feel like a lot of artists are robots - artists are just moving on what people are telling them to do,” said Christine Sanchez, Ledé’s manager. “We’ve all been in a place where we’ve just been bitter after a relationship. But for someone to acknowledge it and be so honest about it, you’re just like, wow, OK, I see myself in her.”

Session

While Ledé introduced the album with the Ella Mai-assisted “Jealous” and the sultry track “Deeper,” songs like “Same Type” highlight her vulnerability, as she laments about significant men in her life, including her father, all being the same type and the emotional scars they’ve caused. And on “Deserve,” Ledé addresses being sexually assaulted.

“I remember crying almost that whole session... I needed to help myself heal from that situation because that was about me being raped a few years before,” recalled Ledé. “There’s some people I told about that experience that either didn’t believe me or never went through it, so they didn’t really empathize or sympathize. And with...almost every person in that room being a woman, I felt so heard and seen and loved.”

Ledé says she’s been working to heal from painful experiences from her past.

“There’s still a lot of ways it affects me to this day...most of my sexual experiences have been traumatic,” revealed the singer. “But I’m a lot more balanced and healed than I was even six months ago, a year ago. So, I think over time, it gets a little bit quicker - but I also have a great therapist.”

Ledé first experienced depression at age 12 and was diagnosed with bipolar disorder during the coronavirus pandemic. The singer, who has Black, Native American, Mexican and white heritage, initially rejected the diagno-

sis, saying “she was a white therapist, so I didn’t trust her with half the stuff that I was telling her about,” sharing the mistrust many people of color have toward medical professionals. Actor Jennifer Lewis, who has bipolar disorder, also hinted to Ledé that she might have the same mental health issue, but it wasn’t until Ledé found a Black female therapist that she accepted it.

“The way that she said it just felt so gentle...she showed me basically a road map of how I can feel more healthy mentally, and how I didn’t have to struggle as much as I was,” said Ledé as tears formed in her eyes.

Describing her sound as alternative R&B, Ledé grew up listening to an eclectic mix of musicians. Citing Alicia Keys as a significant inspiration, she was also influenced by artists such as Ne-Yo, Ryan Leslie, Mariah Carey and Whitney Houston, along with pop and alternative acts like The Spice Girls, Justin Timberlake, John Mayer and Sara Bareilles.

Record

Ledé’s entrance into the music industry began at 14 after she won KIDZ Star in 2011, the annual Kidz Bop talent contest. That led to a record deal with RCA, and at 21, she joined Republic Records. In addition to her two studio albums, Ledé has released several EPs, including 2018’s “Selfless” which birthed “EX” and “Wicked Games.” She’s also an actor, securing roles on “Scream: The TV Series” and “All About the Washingtons.”

While “Grudges” hasn’t garnered the commercial success of “Kiki,” Ledé has been taking back control of her life in all aspects, and her manager says momentum is moving in the right direction.

“The music’s always been her, but as far as putting it out into the world, it’s always been a bunch of people helping... kind of really (being) told what to do. And (“Grudges”) was taking control back,” said Sanchez, who understands Ledé’s apprehension over the underrated title. “Nobody needs to change her. We just need to amplify her, and that’s the next step...her moment is coming.”

Ledé is also optimistic about her future, both in her career and personal life, but she’s also laser-focused on the present - and that includes connecting with those who love her music the most, at home and abroad.



R&B singer Kiana Ledé poses for a portrait on Tuesday, Oct. 3, 2023, in New York to promote her album ‘Grudges.’ (AP)

Variety

ROSWELL, N.M.: The International UFO Museum & Research Center in Roswell, **New Mexico**, is celebrating an out-of-this-world milestone: 5 million visitors.

A father and daughter from Roswell became the lucky visitors when they entered the museum earlier Nov. 21, the Roswell Daily Record reported.

Chris and Hannah McDonald received balloons, memorabilia and a lifetime family museum membership.

Museum Executive Director **Karen Jaramillo** said it was a surprise that Roswell residents brought them to 5 million because so many guests are from out of state.

The UFO Museum, which opened in 1992, draws over 220,000 visitors each year, Jaramillo said.

Roswell has been a hub for people fascinated by space and extraterrestrial phenomenon since the 1947 so-called Roswell Incident.

Something crashed at what was then the **J.B. Foster** ranch, with the **US Army** announcing it had recovered a “flying disc” but later saying the debris was merely the remnants of a high-altitude weather balloon. (AP)



MILAN: Italy’s culture minister is reportedly refusing a request by the German State Antiquities Collection in **Munich** to return an ancient Roman statue that embodied **Hitler**’s Aryan aesthetic, calling it a national treasure.

The Discobolus Palombara is a 2nd Century Roman copy of a long-lost Greek bronze original. Hitler had bought the Roman copy from its private Italian owner in 1938 under pressure from Italian dictator **Benito Mussolini** and against the wishes of the education minister and cultural officials. The statue, unearthed at a Roman villa in 1781, was returned to Italy in 1948 as part of works illegally obtained by the Nazis.

The dispute arose when the director of the National Roman Museum requested the statue’s 17th Century marble base be returned from the **Antikensammlung** state antiquities collection. The German museum instead asked for the return of the Discobolus Palombara, saying it had been illegally transported to Italy in 1948, the Corriere della Sera newspaper reported Friday.

Italy’s culture minister, **Gennaro Sangiuliano**, expressed doubts that the German culture minister, **Claudia Roth**, was aware of the Bavarian request.

“Over my dead body. The work absolutely must remain in Italy because it is a national treasure,” Sangiuliano was quoted

by Corriere as saying, adding that he hoped that the base would be returned. (AP)



CHEYENNE, Wyo.: **Alec Baldwin** didn’t have to pay anything to resolve a \$25 million lawsuit filed by family members of a Marine killed in **Afghanistan** after the actor chastised them on social media over the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the **US Capitol**, Baldwin’s attorney said. **US Southern District of New York**



Sangiuliano



Baldwin

Judge **Edgardo Ramos** in August dismissed the lawsuit sought by the wife and sisters of Lance Cpl. **Rylee McCollum**, of **Jackson, Wyoming**. When the McCollum family didn’t file an amended lawsuit as Ramos invited to do before a September deadline, the judge closed the case in October.

Baldwin paid nothing to resolve the case, his attorney **Luke Nikas** said Wednesday in an email to The Associated Press. (AP)

The Conversation

World’s top flyer faces radiation equivalent to 1,000 chest X-rays

Air travel exposes you to radiation – and cancer risk

By Timothy J. Jorgensen
Georgetown University

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

In 2017, business traveler Tom Stuker was hailed as the world’s most frequent flyer, logging 18,000,000 miles of air travel on United Airlines over 14 years.

That’s a lot of time up in the air. If Stuker’s traveling behaviors are typical of other business flyers, he may have eaten 6,500 inflight meals, drunk 5,250 alcoholic beverages, watched thousands of inflight movies and made around 10,000 visits to airplane toilets.

He would also have accumulated a radiation dose equivalent to about 1,000 chest x-rays. But what kind of health risk does all that radiation actually pose?

You might guess that a frequent flyer’s radiation dose is coming from the airport security checkpoints, with their whole-body scanners and baggage x-ray machines, but you’d be wrong. The radiation doses to passengers from these security procedures are trivial.

The major source of radiation exposure from air travel comes from the flight itself. This is because at high altitude the air gets thinner. The farther you go from the Earth’s surface, the fewer molecules of gas there are per volume of space. Thinner air thus means fewer molecules to deflect incoming cosmic rays - radiation from outer space. With less atmospheric shielding, there is more exposure to radiation.

The most extreme situation is for astronauts who travel entirely outside of the Earth’s atmosphere and enjoy none of its protective shielding. Consequently, they receive high radiation doses. In fact, it is the accumulation of radiation dose that is the limiting factor for the maximum length of manned space flights. Too long in space and astronauts risk cataracts, cancer and potential heart ailments when they get back home.

Indeed, it’s the radiation dose problem that is a major spoiler for Elon Musk’s goal of inhabiting Mars. An extended stay on Mars, with its extremely thin atmosphere, would be lethal due to the high radiation doses, notwithstanding Matt Damon’s successful Mars colonization in the movie “The Martian.”

Cumulative

What would be Stuker’s cumulative radiation dose and what are his health risks?

It depends entirely on how much time he has spent in the air. Assuming an average flight speed (550 mph), Stuker’s 18,000,000 miles would translate into 32,727 hours (3.7 years) of flight time. The radiation dose rate at typical commercial airline flight altitude (35,000 feet) is about 0.003 millisieverts per hour. (As I explain in my book “Strange Glow: The Story of Radiation,” a millisievert or mSv is a unit of radiation dose that can be used to estimate cancer risk.) By multiplying the dose rate by the hours of flight time, we can see that Stuker has earned himself about 100 mSv of radiation dose, in addition to a lot of free airline tickets. But what does that mean for his health?

The primary health threat at this dose level is an increased risk of

some type of cancer later in life. Studies of atomic bomb victims, nuclear workers and medical radiation patients have allowed scientists to estimate the cancer risk for any particular radiation dose.

All else being equal and assuming that low doses have risk levels proportionate to high doses, then an overall cancer risk rate of 0.005 percent per mSv is a reasonable and commonly used estimate. Thus, Stuker’s 100-mSv dose would increase his lifetime risk of contracting a potentially fatal cancer by about 0.5 percent.

The question then becomes whether that’s a high level of risk. Your own feeling might depend on how you see your background cancer risk.

Most people underestimate their personal risk of dying from cancer. Although the exact number is debatable, it’s fair to say that about 25 percent of men ultimately contract a potentially fatal cancer. Stuker’s 0.5 percent cancer risk from radiation should be added to his baseline risk - so it would go from 25 percent to 25.5 percent. A cancer risk increase of that size is too small to actually measure in any scientific way, so it must remain a theoretical increase in risk.

Cancer

A 0.5 percent increase in risk is the same as one chance in 200 of getting cancer. In other words, if 200 male travelers logged 18,000,000 miles of air travel, like Stuker did, we might expect just one of them to contract a cancer thanks to his flight time. The other 199 travelers would suffer no health effects. So the chances that Stuker is the specific 18-million-mile traveler who would be so unlucky is quite small.

Stuker was logging more air hours per year (greater than 2,000) than most pilots typically log (under 1,000). So these airline workers would have risk levels proportionately lower than Stuker’s. But what about you?

If you want to know your personal cancer risk from flying, estimate all of your commercial airline miles over the years. Assuming that the values and parameters for speed, radiation dose and risk stated above for Stuker are also true for you, dividing your total miles by 3,700,000,000 will give your approximate odds of getting cancer from your flying time.

For example, let’s pretend that you have a mathematically convenient 370,000 total flying miles. That would mean 370,000 miles divided by 3,700,000,000, which comes out to be 1/10,000 odds of contracting cancer (or a 0.01 percent increase in risk). Most people do not fly 370,000 miles (equal to 150 flights from Los Angeles to New York) within their lifetimes. So for the average flyer, the increased risk is far less than 0.01 percent.

To make your exercise complete, make a list of all the benefits that you’ve derived from your air travel over your lifetime (job opportunities, vacation travel, family visits and so on) and go back and look at your increased cancer risk again. If you think your benefits have been meager compared to your elevated cancer risk, maybe its time to rethink flying. But for many people today, flying is a necessity of life, and the small elevated cancer risk is worth the price. (AP)

By Barret Michalec
Arizona State University

Better health care for patients begins with humility - a term not often associated with medicine.

I witnessed displays of humility firsthand eight years ago, the night my son was born, in the way the doctor and doula worked together to deliver our baby.

Neither tried to assert dominance over the other. Instead, they openly communicated with each other, respected each other’s roles, trusted each other and worked as a team. And what was most meaningful to us - they included my wife on that team by actively listening to her and putting her needs at the forefront.

Together, the team’s professional humility helped create the most unforgettable moment of our lives: the birth of a healthy baby boy.

Our experience with them made a significant impression on me because I’m a social scientist who studies how clinicians collaborate. Specifically, I explore how doctors, nurses and the entire health care team can better show professional humility to ensure better outcomes for patients and for health care workers as well.

Support

Put simply, professional humility in the health care setting is when doctors, nurses, physician assistants, pharmacists, physical therapists, support staff - basically every health care provider - see each other as playing on the same team.

That means team members share the same goals, understand the limitations of their own profession, see the strengths offered by others and include the patient and their caregivers in decision-making.

That willingness to make the patient part of the team is key to professional humility. Instead of talking about the patient among themselves, the providers address the patient directly and actively listen. They openly admit when they don’t know the answer or if they were incorrect. And rather than talking down to the patient, they explain things calmly, using everyday language and avoiding arcane medical jargon.

A growing body of research demonstrates that clinicians’ humility positively affects patient satisfaction, health outcomes and overall care. Additionally, emerging evidence indicates that having humility is good for health care providers as well - serving as a protective factor against burnout and even clinical uncertainty.

But if humility is so beneficial, why isn’t there more of it in health care? And why is it not formally taught in medical, nursing and other health profession schools?

Most people have likely experienced or witnessed scenarios where clinicians exhibit the opposite of humility, such as when providers show open disrespect for each other or engage in power struggles, or when a patient feels ignored, rushed, dismissed or spoken to rudely. These

A researcher’s prescription for better health care

‘Inject humility into medical practice’

CARE Court addresses mental health crisis

Polycrisis impacting mental health of 50 pct of Europeans: health ministers

BRUSSELS, Dec 3, (Agencies): Almost one in two Europeans has experienced an emotional or psychosocial problem in the last year due to the compounded crises of COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, the climate crisis, unemployment, and the food and energy price increases, according to EU health ministers who met in Brussels Thursday.

“As you know, we live in a time of polycrisis that has severely hit the mental health of Europeans. The COVID-19 pandemic, the consequences of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine or the climate crisis itself are just some of the shocks which have exacerbated already poor levels of mental health,” said Monica Gomez, Spanish Minister for Health; whose country holds the current EU Presidency.

In their conclusions, the health ministers highlight the importance of addressing mental health and well-being in a different context in the life course, which benefits both individuals and societies.

It recognises the beneficial role of communities, schools, sports and culture in strengthening mental health and life-long mental well-being.

An alternative mental health court to compel treatment for people with severe mental illness has received more than 100 petitions since launching in seven California counties in October, state officials said Friday.

The state believes between 7,000 and 12,000 people statewide will eventually be eligible for “CARE Court,” which launched on a limited basis before Los Angeles County became the latest and largest county to start the program on Friday.

“This is exactly where we want to be,” said Dr. Mark Ghaly, secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency.

Ghaly told reporters he’s optimistic

about the early results and that the number of referrals reflects the small population eligible until now. Only those who are at least 18 years old and have schizophrenia or a related disorder would qualify. Severe depression, bipolar disorder and addiction by itself do not qualify.

“We’re in good shape. We’re providing the time to our local partners to create the ability to manage the referrals to make sure that they’re doing all they can,” Ghaly said at a news briefing Friday. “In many ways, we see the snowball, if you will, building up little by little.”

The civil court process, created by Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom, is part of a massive push to address the homelessness crisis in California. It empowers family members and first responders to file a petition on behalf of an adult they believe “is unlikely to survive safely” without supervision and whose condition is rapidly deteriorating. They also can file if an adult needs services and support to prevent relapse or deterioration that would likely result in “grave disability or serious harm” to themselves or others.

Counseling

A special civil court in each county reviews each petition to determine eligibility before asking the individual to participate in a voluntary plan that includes housing, medication, counseling and other social services. If all parties cannot agree to a voluntary plan, the statute says the court will order they work on a plan. Among the ongoing petitions, some have entered the court process and are working on creating their care plans, while other referrals are still being reviewed, Ghaly said. Some cases have also been dismissed, the Los Angeles Times reported.

Lawmakers hoped the program could get people with severe mental illnesses, many of whom are homeless, the help they need and off the streets. California

is home to more than 171,000 homeless people - about 30% of the nation’s homeless population. But critics worried the program will be ineffective and punitive because it could coerce people into treatment.

The administration didn’t give specific data on the number of petitions submitted in each county. San Francisco, Orange, San Diego, Riverside, Stanislaus, Tuolumne and Glenn counties launched the court Oct. 1, with Los Angeles County beginning its program Friday. The rest of the state has until December 2024 to establish mental health courts.

Counties are trying different approaches to implementation. San Diego County is integrating CARE Court with its conservatorship system to help divert people off of conservatorships, while Orange County is moving the mental health court away from the typical courtrooms and into community spaces, Ghaly said.

“I’m pretty pleased with the level of engagement, the level of partnership, the level of, you know, belief and optimism that’s growing in our counties,” he said.

Representatives from Disability Rights California, a nonprofit that sued the state arguing the program would violate due process and equal protection rights under the state constitution, said CARE Court could result in unintended consequences.

“While officials express optimism, the rushed implementation may overlook critical aspects of community engagement and careful consideration,” said community organizer Vanessa Ramos said.

Newsom signed a law in October to expand the definition of “gravely disabled” to include people who are unable to provide themselves basic needs such as food and shelter due to an untreated mental illness or unhealthy drugs and alcohol use, which makes it easier for authorities to compel treatment.

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Alabama knocks off No. 1 Georgia for SEC title



Alabama quarterback Jalen Milroe (4) center and the team holds up the championship trophy after the Southeastern Conference championship NCAA college football game against Georgia in Atlanta, Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023. (AP)

Michigan blanks Iowa in Big Ten championship game

ATLANTA, Dec 3, (AP): Alabama is again the top dog in the Southeastern Conference - and perhaps headed to the College Football Playoff - after ending Georgia's 29-game winning streak with a 27-24 victory over the No. 1 Bulldogs in the SEC championship game Saturday.

Now, the big question: Is Georgia's bid for a third straight national title over?

Jalen Milroe threw a pair of touchdown passes and No. 8 Alabama's defense dominated much of the way - a compelling playoff statement for a Crimson Tide team that lost at home to Texas early in the season.

Alabama (12-1) hasn't lost since. The victory over Georgia was the Tide's 11th in a row and may be good enough to push them from No. 8 in the CFP rankings to the final four.

Georgia (12-1) will have to hope the selection committee provides a do-over in the playoffs, as it did two years ago. The Bulldogs hadn't lost since that defeat to Alabama in the SEC title game, beating the Crimson Tide for the national title and going 15-0 last season.

Georgia closed the gap to 20-17 after a 28-yard punt return by Anthony Evans III set up Carson Beck's sneak into the end zone.

Milroe then hooked up with Isaiah Bond on four completions for 56 yards, and Roydell Williams scored on a 1-yard run that restored Alabama's lead to 27-17 with 5:47 remaining.

Georgia scored with 2:52 left, but Milroe and Alabama didn't let the Bulldogs get the ball back.

Michigan 26, Iowa 0

In Indianapolis, Blake Corum scored twice, tying the school record for touchdown runs with 55, and Michigan beat Iowa in the Big Ten championship game to likely take the top seed in the College Football Playoff.

With coach Jim Harbaugh back on the sideline after serving a three-game suspension over allegations of sign stealing and in-person scouting, the Wolverines (13-0, No. 2 CFP) won their third straight conference title for the first time in school his-



Michigan running back Blake Corum (2) celebrates with teammates after scoring on a 2-yard touchdown run during the first half of the Big Ten championship NCAA college football game against Iowa, Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023, in Indianapolis. (AP)

Texas 49, Oklahoma State 21

In Arlington, Texas, Quinn Ewers set a career high by throwing for 452 yards with four touchdowns, one of those to 362-pound defensive tackle T'Vondre Sweat, and Texas bid farewell to the Big 12 by beating Oklahoma State in the conference championship game.

The Southeastern Conference-bound Longhorns (12-1, No. 7 CFP) will leave the Big 12 with four titles. They also won it in the league's inaugural 1996 season, in 2005 when they were last national champs and in 2009.

Keilan Robinson tipped the sideline on a 57-yard run for the first of his two touchdowns in the second half as the Longhorns, the only team to beat Alabama this season, stayed in contention for the College Football Playoff.

SMU 26, Tulane 14

In New Orleans, Kevin Jennings threw a touchdown pass and accounted for 266 yards from scrimmage in his first career start, Collin Rogers kicked four second-half field goals, and SMU beat Tulane in the American Athletic Conference championship game.

The Mustangs (11-2) limited Tulane (11-2, No. 22 CFP) to a touchdown during the final 59 minutes to snap the Green Wave's 10-game winning streak and dethrone the defending league champs.

SMU sacked Michael Pratt seven times. Defensive back Isaiah Nwokobia's interception in the fourth quarter all but sealed it.

FOOTBALL

The Seminoles moved to 13-0. No Power Five team has ever gone unbeaten, won its conference title and failed to make the playoff. But Florida State's offensive performance and unsettled quarterback situation created some doubt about whether it's one of the four best teams in the country.

Lawrance Toafili ran for 118 yards and a touchdown for the Seminoles, who stuck to a conservative game plan with third-string quarterback Brock Glenn behind center. Glenn finished 8 of 21 for 55 yards.

Arizona overwhelms Colgate in 2nd half for 82-55 win

Wisconsin outrebounds Marquette in 75-64 win

MADISON, Wisconsin, Dec 3, (AP): Max Klesmit scored all 21 of his points before halftime, Steven Crowl added 16 and Wisconsin capitalized on its rebounding superiority to beat No. 3 Marquette 75-64 on Saturday.

Wisconsin (6-2) beat Marquette (6-2) for a third straight season in this in-state rivalry between schools separated by just 79 miles. This marks the first three-game winning streak for either team in the 130-game series since the Badgers won four straight from 1998-2001.

Kam Jones scored 19 and Tyler Kolek added 11 for Marquette. AJ Storr had 13 and Tyler Wahl 10 for Wisconsin, which outrebounded the Golden Eagles 38-23 and outscored them 18-2 in second-chance points.

Arizona 82, Colgate 55

In Tucson, Ariz., Caleb Love scored 14 points, Omar Ballo had 13 points and 10 rebounds, and Arizona made a strong statement to move up to No. 1 by overwhelming Colgate.

BASKETBALL

The Wildcats (7-0) overcame a shaky offensive start by dominating inside and going on a big run to open the second half. The Raiders (4-4) managed to hang with Arizona the first half before being doomed by a shaky offensive start to the second.

Georgia Tech 72, Duke 68

In Atlanta, Baye Ndongo scored 21 points and his dunk with 44 seconds remaining pushed Georgia Tech ahead for good as the Yellow Jackets beat Duke, handing the Blue Devils their second loss this week to an unranked team.

Miles Kelly had 16 points and Kowacie Reeves Jr. had 14 points for Georgia Tech (4-2, 1-0 Atlantic Coast Conference).

Duke (5-3, 0-1) trailed most of the game, but the Blue Devils - who lost 80-75 on Wednesday at Arkansas - took a brief lead late before falling.

Miami 62, Notre Dame 49

In Coral Gables, Fla., Matthew Cleveland scored 14 points, Norchad Omier and Nijel Pack each added 13 and Miami beat Notre Dame in the Atlantic Coast Conference opener for both teams.

Omier added 13 rebounds for the Hurricanes, who finished with a 16-0 edge in fast-break points.

Baylor 91, Northwestern St 40

In Waco, Texas, Jalen Bridges made four 3-pointers while scoring 16 points, freshman Yves Missi had a double-double and Baylor remained undefeated with a victory over Northwestern State.

Rayl Dennis had 14 points and six assists for the Bears (8-0), and freshman Ja'Kobe Walter had 10 points and four steals. Missi finished with 13 points, 10 rebounds and four blocks.

Jimel Lane led Northwestern State (1-7) with 10 points. The Demons shot 25% (14 of 56) from the field.

Gonzaga 89, Southern Cal 76



Wisconsin's Chuckie Hepburn (23) drives against Marquette's Sean Jones (22) during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game, Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023, in Madison, Wis. (AP)

Colorado cruises past Air Force

Clark's 24 points, 11 assists guide Iowa women past Bowling Green

IOWA CITY, Iowa, Dec 3, (AP): Caitlin Clark had 24 points and 11 assists, Kate Martin added 17 points and No. 4 Iowa beat Bowling Green 99-65 on Saturday.

Clark, the nation's leader in scoring and assists, recorded the 47th double-double of her career and third of the season. She was 10 of 20 from the field, but just 2 of 11 on 3-pointers. Clark added seven rebounds.

Bowling Green played a diamond-and-one defense to try to slow Clark, but the rest of Iowa's offense took advantage. The Hawkeyes (8-1) shot 66.7% from the field and got 72 points inside.

Sydney Affolter tied a career high with 14 points for the Hawkeyes, going 7 of 7 from the field.

Lexi Fleming led Bowling Green (5-2) with 24 points. Amy Velasco added 11.

Colorado 74, Air Force 58

In Air Force Academy, Colo., Frida Formann scored 23 points and Colorado used a big second quarter to beat Air Force.

Formann finished 5 of 9 from 3-point range. Sara-Rose Smith added 11 points for the Buffaloes (8-1).

BASKETBALL

Taylor Britt led Air Force (4-4) with 13 points.

Utah 87, BYU 68

In Salt Lake City, Alissa Pili scored 23 points and Utah cruised past BYU.

Pili, the reigning Pac-12 Conference player of the year, made 9 of 12 shots from the floor, including 5 of 7 from 3-point range for Utah (7-1). Kennady McQueen scored 18 points while Gianna Kneepkens had 17. Ines Vieira had 12 assists.



Clark

In Las Vegas, Ryan Nembhard and Dusty Stromer each scored 15 points and Gonzaga defeated Southern Cal in the Las Vegas Invitational.

Graham Ike and Ben Gregg each added 14 for the Bulldogs. Gregg, who also grabbed eight rebounds, came off the bench to score 12 of his points in the second half when Ike was whistled for his fourth foul. Braden Huff added 12 points

while Nolan Hickman chipped in with 10.

UNC-Wilmington 80, Kentucky 73

In Lexington, Ky., Trazarien White scored 27 points to lead UNC-Wilmington to a victory over Kentucky.

The Seahawks (6-2) built a 14-point lead in the first half, leading 41-33 at the break. UNC-Wilmington held off a second-half rally by the Wildcats (6-2), who were up 55-49 with 12:51 remaining.

Hector 2nd fastest, Shiffrin finishes 3rd

Brignone wins World Cup giant slalom

TREMBLANT, Quebec, Dec 3, (AP): Federica Brignone of Italy picked up her first World Cup victory in two seasons by winning a women's giant slalom on Saturday. Mikaela Shiffrin finished in third place.

Brignone covered the two legs on foggy Mont Tremblant - which hadn't hosted a World Cup ski race in 40 years - in a combined time of 2 minute, 14.95 seconds. Petra Vlhova of Slovakia was second fastest in 2:15.16, followed by overall World Cup leader Shiffrin in 2:15.24.

SKIING

Shiffrin was denied what would have been a record-extending 91st career World Cup win.

Brignone had the quickest opening leg in the morning and held on for the win with the third-best run in the afternoon. The only better second legs were turned in by Vlhova and Shiffrin.

Sara Hector of Sweden was second fastest in the first run but faded to fourth, and Lara Gut-Behrami of Switzerland went from third place to fifth.



Federica Brignone of Italy speeds down the course as she races in the women's World Cup giant slalom in Mont Tremblant, Quebec, Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023. (AP)

Brignone was the 2020 World Cup overall champion and the silver medalist in the giant slalom at last year's Beijing Olympics, behind Hector. Gut-Behrami took the bronze at the Winter Games.

Gut-Behrami was seeking a third consecutive GS win to start the season after coming in first in the

season-opening race in Austria in October - where Brignone was the runner-up - and at Killington, Vermont, last weekend.

Shiffrin won the GS season title last season while setting the record for most career wins in the discipline with 21. She finished sixth in this season's opener, then was third in Killington.

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Crew stun Cincinnati with 3-2 victory in OT

LAFc to play for back-to-back MLS Cup titles after beating Houston in West final

LOS ANGELES, Dec 3, (AP): After the longest season in Major League Soccer history, Los Angeles FC still has one more week of work to do.

If the club completes its final assignment as well as it handled Saturday night, the reward will be historic.

Ryan Hollingshead scored late in the first half and defending champion LAFc advanced to its second straight MLS Cup Final with a 2-0 victory over the Houston Dynamo.

Houston's Franco Escobar scored an own goal in the 80th minute to seal the Western Conference Final for LAFc, which will travel to Columbus next weekend to play for the title. The Crew beat FC Cincinnati 3-2 in a thriller.

LAFc, an expansion club in its sixth year of competition, has the chance to become MLS' first back-to-back

SOCCER

champions since the LA Galaxy (2011-12). LAFc never faded or wilted in its 52nd match of 2023 - an MLS record for games in a calendar year, thanks to the club's competition in several non-league tournaments.

Maxime Crépeau made five saves in his third consecutive shutout for LAFc, which hasn't allowed a goal since October. An offensive powerhouse since the club's inception, LAFc is looking more like a dominant defensive team over the last several weeks.

Although Houston had more than 70% possession, the LAFc defense led by Giorgio Chiellini and Diego Palacios frustrated the Dynamo, whose nine-game winning streak ended just shy of the franchise's first MLS Cup Final since 2012.

The Black and Gold have reached the brink of a second straight title despite their heavy workload and despite losing several key players from last season's championship team, including high-scoring Chicho Arango and the retired Gareth Bale.

LAFc's home finale felt momentous for reasons beyond the win.

Los Angeles crowd gave a standing



Columbus Crew midfielder Darlington Nagbe (6) holds the trophy as he celebrates with teammates after the MLS Eastern Conference final soccer match against FC Cincinnati, Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023, in Cincinnati. Columbus won 3-2 in overtime. (AP)

ovation to Carlos Vela when he came off in the second half of what might be his final match at BMO Stadium. The club's first player is out of contract this winter and isn't sure whether he will return.

The match also could have been the last at home for Chiellini. The Italian great who joined LAFc from Juventus 18 months ago is thought to be considering retirement at 39.

Vela nearly put LAFc ahead twice in the first four minutes before the smoke had cleared from the sold-out BMO Stadium from the pregame fireworks display. LAFc finally broke through in the 44th minute when Chiellini's low header from Vela's corner was

saved by Steve Clark, but Hollingshead banged home the rebound for his fifth MLS goal of the season.

Houston hadn't even trailed during its nine-match unbeaten streak since Sept. 23.

LAFc had a few nervy moments on defense in the second half, but kept the box clean in front of Crépeau, the Canadian goalkeeper who has made a strong late-season comeback after breaking his leg in last year's MLS Cup Final and not returning until late July.

LAFc finally scored again when Bouanga put a ball through to Diego Palacios, whose centering pass was kicked into the net by a sliding Escobar.

Escobar, who played 19 games for LAFc last season, grabbed his head in his hands while his teammates attempted to boost his spirits after the crushing mistake.

Christian Ramirez scored in the 115th minute and the Columbus Crew rallied from two goals down to beat top-seeded FC Cincinnati 3-2.

Columbus (17-9-9), which has won two Cups in three previous trips to the final. It was the second-seeded Crew's ninth conference final, second only to the 13 of the Los Angeles Galaxy. It was the first time in league history that in-state rivals played for a conference title.

Brandon Vazquez scored in the

14th minute with an assist from Aaron Boupendza to give Cincinnati (20-6-9) the lead. League MVP Luciano Acosta took a pass from Alvaro Barreal and scored in the third minute of stoppage time to give the Supporters' Shield winners a 2-0 lead at halftime.

Cincinnati appeared to take a 3-0 lead in the 69th minute, but a hand-ball foul on Aaron Boupendza erased the goal. Six minutes later the Crew pulled within 2-1 on an own-goal by Cincinnati defender Alvas Powell.

Diego Rossi netted the equalizer for Columbus when he scored unassisted in the 86th minute. Rossi scored 10 minutes into the second half of two 15-minute OT periods. Cucho Hernán-

dez and Kevin Molino picked up assists on Ramirez's winner.

Patrick Schulte finished with five saves for the Crew. Roman Celentano stopped five shots for Cincinnati.

Cincinnati played without Matt Miazga, who was voted the league's top defender this season. Miazga began serving a three-match suspension handed out by the league on Wednesday and carrying over to the 2024 season. Miazga was suspended for misconduct after an 8-7 shootout win over the New York Red Bulls in a Nov. 4 playoff match.

The Crew entered play 0-5-1 when trailing at the half this season. Cincinnati was 11-0-0 this season when leading at halftime.

Al-Tadamon qualify for Crown Prince Cup quarters as Burgan eliminate Al-Salmiya

Sulaibikhat goalkeeper Abdullah Issa heroics in vain

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Al-Tadamon secured a spot in the quarter-finals of the Crown Prince Cup by clinching a 1-0 victory over Sulaibikhat at Abdullah Al-Khalifa Stadium.

The lone goal of the match was netted by Brazilian Jovani Gomez through a penalty kick in the 37th minute. However, Gomez missed another penalty opportunity in the 63rd minute, thwarted by the impressive performance of Sulaibikhat goalkeeper Abdullah Issa.

SOCCER

In the upcoming quarter-finals, Al-Tadamon is set to face Burgan, who caused an upset by eliminating Al-Salmiya with a 2-0 win.

Despite Sulaibikhat's goalkeeper displaying remarkable saves, Al-Tadamon dominated the game, nearly scoring on multiple occasions before Gomez's decisive goal. The situation worsened for Sulaibikhat as they had a player sent off, and subsequently, their defender Mohammed Al-Fadhli received a red card, complicating the team's mission.

In the second half, Al-Tadamon had opportunities to extend their lead, but Giovanni missed a penalty kick twice, skillfully saved by Abdullah Issa. As a result, the match concluded with Al-Tadamon winning 1-0.

Meanwhile, Burgan's coach, Mohammed Dehelis, attributed



Sulaibikhat and Tadamon players challenge for the ball during the Crown Prince Cup match.

their triumph over Al Salmiya to the players' discipline, commitment, and solid defensive organization throughout both halves of the match. Dehelis acknowledged the unpredictable nature of cup matches and emphasized the importance of maintaining a high standard to progress further in the tournament.

Dehelis expressed confidence in his team's ability to continue achieving victories and underlined the significance of performing well in the Crown Prince Cup matches. Looking ahead, he expressed his hope that Burgan would maintain the same level of performance in upcoming first division matches.

Notably, Dehelis, who previously coached Salmiya, achieved notable results with the team and also led Al-Sahel on multiple occasions. Burgan is now poised to face the winner between Al-Tadamon and Sulaibikhat in the quarter-finals of the Crown Prince Cup scheduled for December 27th.

Germany open against Scotland

'Titleholders' Italy join Spain and Croatia in tough group at Euro '24

HAMBURG, Germany, Dec 3, (AP): Italy and Spain will add to their storied European Championship rivalry next year, after the defending champions and two-time recent winners were drawn together in a tough group with World Cup semifinalists Croatia and Albania.

Euro 2020 winners Italy fulfilled predictions as the most difficult and dramatic option to come from the pot of lowest-ranked teams at the back end of a draw ceremony that was pranked by a British social media comedian as its name was called.

Italy beat Spain in the semifinals to win their European title, and the Spanish eliminated the Italians when winning back-to-back titles in 2008 and 2012, including a 4-0 rout in the final nine years ago in Kyiv, Ukraine.

"It is surely the most difficult group," said Croatia coach Zlatko Dalić, whose team went deep at the past two World Cups despite hard starts.



Head coach of England Gareth Southgate stands next to the trophy after the draw for the UEFA Euro 2024 soccer tournament finals in Hamburg, Germany. (AP)

SOCCER

The draw ensured the other Euro 2020 semifinal also will be a rematch in Germany next year. England will again face Denmark, which they beat to reach the final. Their group also includes Slovenia and Serbia.

France, the World Cup finalists a year ago, were drawn with Austria, the Netherlands and the winners of a playoff bracket in March involving Poland, Estonia, Wales and Finland. Kylian Mbappé scored twice in each of France's home and away wins over the Dutch in their qualifying group this year.

Germany, on a run of poor results, will open their home tournament against Scotland on June 14 at Bayern Munich's stadium. The group includes Hungary and Switzerland.

Germany lost six of their 13 friendlies this year and will not play a competitive game until facing Scotland to start the month-long tournament.

Portugal, still led by Cristiano Ronaldo, were the only team to come through qualifying groups with a perfect winning record and will play Turkey, the Czech Republic and the playoff winners from Georgia, Luxembourg, Euro 2004 champion Greece, and Kazakhstan. Ronaldo will be 39 when Euro 2024 starts and likely the only player still around from when Portugal, Turkey and the Czechs all

were in the same group at Euro 2008. Then, Portugal and Turkey advanced.

Belgium were grouped with Romania, Slovakia, and the playoff winners from Israel, Iceland, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Ukraine. That play-off bracket could see a final between Ukraine and Israel with a place at Euro 2024 at stake. Just 21 of the 24 tournament teams are confirmed, with three placeholders in the draw for the eventual winners of qualifying playoffs. The 12 teams in three knockout brackets will play single-leg semifinals and finals from March 21-26.

At the finals tournament, third-place teams in four of the six groups must advance to make a balanced bracket in the round of 16.

The 24-team format started at Euro 2016 and history shows earning three points from three games with a goal difference that is not negative is enough to reach the knockout stage.

The draw was made at a waterside concert hall in the northern port city Hamburg, and was disrupted by unexplained noises clearly heard on stage and in the international broadcast. A British social media prankster posted footage showing how he placed cell phone calls to make the noise.

Hamburg is among 10 cities that will host the 51 games, and only Düsseldorf's stadium was not also used at the 2006 World Cup.

The final is on July 14 at the Olympic Stadium in Berlin which also staged the final in 2006. That, of course, was won by Italy.

Women and Girls Table Tennis Championship begins

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The Women and Girls General League Championship for Table Tennis in the local sports season 2023-2024, organized by the Kuwait Table Tennis Association kicked off. This four-month-long tournament features four competitions across approved age categories and involves the active participation of four local clubs.

Khaleda Al-Ali, a member of the Federation's Women's Committee and the general referee of the tournament, conveyed in a statement to reporters that the competing clubs in the tournament are Al-Fatah, Salwa, Al-Oyoun, and Al-Arabi. These clubs are vying for victory in the U-17, U-15, and U-13 age categories.

Emphasizing the federation's

dedication to promoting table tennis among Kuwaiti girls, Al-Ali highlighted the players' commitment and technical prowess displayed in the launch of the tournament at the Ardiya Youth Center hall.

She noted that the tournament serves as a platform for national

team coaches to identify stand-out talents who can represent the country in international competitions. Al-Ali commended the efforts of the participating clubs' boards of directors for their focus on developing table tennis for women and girls, anticipating positive outcomes for the sport's growth.

The initial day's outcomes wit-

nessed victories for both Al-Fatah and Salwa clubs, each securing a 3-0 win against Al-Oyoun and Al-Arabi in the general age

group competitions. Additionally, Salwa club triumphed over Al-Oyoun with a score of 3-1 in the under-15 category.



Some of the players in action.

Euro 2024 draw

HAMBURG, Germany, Dec 3, (AP): Draw for the 2024 European Championship.

- Group A**
Germany, Hungary, Scotland, Switzerland
- Group B**
Spain, Albania, Croatia, Italy
- Group C**
England, Denmark, Slovenia, Serbia
- Group D**
France, Austria, Netherlands,

- Playoff winner (Poland, Estonia, Wales or Finland)
- Group E**
Belgium, Romania, Slovakia, Playoff winner (Israel, Iceland, Bosnia-Herzegovina or Ukraine)
- Group F**
Portugal, Turkey, Czech Republic, Playoff winner (Georgia, Luxembourg, Greece or Kazakhstan)



Liverpool's Darwin Nunez (left), challenges for the ball with Fulham's Kenny Tete during the English Premier League soccer match between Liverpool and Fulham at the Anfield stadium in Liverpool, England. (AP)

Sports

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Enzo stars as 10-man Chelsea edge Brighton

Newcastle beat Man Utd



The winners display their medals as they stand on the podium with officials.

Precision and skill

Kuwait fencers shine in season's inaugural tournament

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: The Kuwaiti General Fencing Championship concluded, featuring the active participation of 167 players representing 11 clubs competing across three distinct weapons: (Flore), (Sabre), and (Epee). The competitions unfolded over a span

FENCING

of three days within the Fencing Federation hall in the Daiya area.

On the tournament's opening day, Ali Abbas from Yarmouk clinched the gold medal in the fluorescent weapon category. Al-Shabab's Ahmed Nassar

secured the silver medal, followed by Salmiya's Yaqoub Al-Shatti and Yarmouk's Muhammad Al-Rabab, both earning bronze medals.

The second day witnessed Al-Qadisia's Abdulaziz Al-Shatti seizing the gold medal in the epee competition. Faisal Ashkanani, representing the Kuwaiti Fencing Federation, claimed the silver medal. Kuwaiti players Abdul-Rahman Yaqout and Abdulaziz Al-Awadhi both achieved third place, earning bronze medals.

In the final day's events, Al-Arabi's Abdulaziz Khalifa emerged victorious with the gold medal in the saber competition. Al-Arabi's Ali Fereydoun

secured the silver medal, while Kuwaiti player Sultan Al-Nashwan and Al-Qadisiyah's Waseem Al-Ashqar shared the bronze medal.

Hamad Al-Awadhi, Secretary of the Kuwaiti Fencing Federation, highlighted that this championship marked the inaugural event of the season (2023-2024) for adults. The competition included 43 participants in fluorescent weapon contests, 91 in epee competitions, and 33 in saber competitions. Al-Awadhi expressed the federation's aspiration to organize numerous local tournaments to elevate player skills and readiness for upcoming competitions.

Equestrian mastery: Ali Al-Kharafi's 'commanding' performance at Kuwait Show Jumping Champ'ship

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 3: Ali Jassim Al-Kharafi, a rider from the Kuwait Equestrian Club, secured the top spot in the inaugural round of the third edition of the Kuwaiti Show Jumping Equestrian League Championship. The competition, held at the Al-Masila Club track in the Subhan area, witnessed significant participation from local club riders.

In the challenging eighth main round, set at a height of 140 cm for the prestigious "Grand Prize," Ali Al-Kharafi claimed victory with an impressive time of 42.29 seconds, without incurring any penalty points. His distinguished performance surpassed competitors like Al-Subaie and Al-Musallam, with Fawaz Al-Subaie securing the second position, followed by Abrar Al-Musallam, Ghazi Al-Jariwi, Abdul-Rahman Al-Fuzaie, and Antonio Merozzo.

The award ceremony was graced by the presence of Masoud Gohar Hayat, the President of the Federation, and Hamad Al-Musaibih, the Director of the Corporate Relations Department at Zain Telecommunications Company. Hayat expressed gratitude for the generous support of the General Sports Authority, led by Director Yousef Al-Baidan, the Kuwaiti Olympic Committee under the

leadership of Sheikh Fahd Al-Nasser, as well as the sponsorship from Zain Company and KGL Company. He commended the enthusiastic public attendance that filled the stands of Al-Masila Club.

Hayat extended congratulations to all the accomplished riders who excelled in various rounds of the championship. Special acknowledgment was reserved for Ali Al-Kharafi, the victor of the first round, for his outstanding achievement in securing the top spot in the Grand Prize.

In the round featuring a height of 135 cm for the

EQUESTRIAN

"Small Prize," Ali Al-Kharafi once again emerged victorious, outperforming knights Ghazi Al-Jariwi and Fawaz Al-Subaie.

Heading the tournament's refereeing committee was Nadhar Al-Mustafa, with Raghad Al-Dabbous, Ibtisam Al-Arouri, and Dalal Al-Obaid serving as committee members. The course design was expertly crafted by Philip Schwinder.



FC Cincinnati midfielder Álvaro Barreal (31) and Columbus Crew defender Malte Amundsen (18) battle for the ball during the second half of an MLS Eastern Conference Final soccer match in Cincinnati. Columbus Crew won 2-3 in extra time. (AP) — See Page 15

LONDON, Dec 3, (Agencies): Chelsea managed to secure a crucial home victory, overcoming the challenge of Brighton in a 3-2 win despite being reduced to ten men. The Blues dominated early on, capitalizing on two corners that caused significant issues for Brighton. Enzo Fernandez netted his first Premier League goal from the initial corner, while Colwill hammered in his inaugural Chelsea goal, doubling their lead. Just before halftime,

SOCCER

Buonanotte curled in an exceptional strike to reduce Chelsea's lead, and the situation worsened for the Blues as Gallagher received his second yellow card.

Fernandez extended Chelsea's lead in the 65th minute with a penalty after Milner fouled Mudryk. Brighton managed to pull back another goal in stoppage time, with Pedro flicking it in at the near post. In the closing moments, the referee initially awarded a spot-kick



Chelsea's goalkeeper Robert Sanchez catches the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and Brighton and Hove Albion, at Stamford Bridge stadium in London. (AP)

to Brighton for handball, but VAR overturned the decision. The victory propels Chelsea into 10th place, and they aim to build momentum as they face Manchester United on Wednesday. Brighton remains in eighth position, with their next fixture being against Brentford at home.

Anthony Gordon scored for the fourth straight home game for Newcastle to earn a 1-0 win over Manchester United.

The winger tapped in from close range from Kieran Trippier's cross in the 55th minute for the only goal of a game Newcastle dominated at St. James' Park.

It ended a run of three victories in a row without conceding for Man United, which was overtaken by Newcastle and dropped to seventh place.

Already hit hard by a long list of absentees that is into double figures, Newcastle saw goalkeeper Nick Pope helped off in the 86th with a suspected dislocated left shoulder sustained when he dove to stop a ball that was blocked in front of him.

"It's looks bad," Newcastle manager Eddie Howe said. "He's done it before and had it operated on and come back successfully. But I don't know what the future holds for him, I don't know if he will need an operation or not."

Pope's replacement, Martin Dubravka, let in a goal in the 89th from a rare chance for United but it was disallowed for offside against Harry Maguire, who unwittingly deflected home a shot from substitute Antony.

Trippier is contributing as much in attack as he is in defense for Newcastle. It was a league-leading seventh assist of the campaign for the right back, who struck the underside of the crossbar from a free kick in the first half.

Nantes supporter dies 'before' league game

NANTES, France, Dec 3, (AP): A supporter from Nantes died on Saturday following a fight that took place before the club's 1-0 win over Nice in the latest outbreak of violence to mar French soccer this season.

Nantes said in a statement overnight that the fan was "fatally injured" close to the club's stadium. According to the L'Equipe newspaper, the fan was a member of the Brigade Loire, Nantes' main group of diehard fans.

"In circumstances which are the subject of an ongoing judicial investigation, the 31-year-old collapsed, hit in the back," the club said. "Despite the intervention of emergency services, the fan could not be saved."

Nantes said the public prosecutor's office has launched an investigation into voluntary manslaughter.

Nantes public prosecutor Renaud Gaudeul said the incident took place shortly before 8 p.m. local time, when several private hire vehicles carrying Nice fans on their way to the match were attacked by groups of Nantes supporters.

"The very first forensic investigations show that the victim had a wound on his back, possibly caused by a bladed weapon," the prosecutor said, quoted by French media.

Local newspaper Ouest France said the suspected assailant initially fled the scene before turning himself in at a police station.

French sports minister Amélie Oudéa-Castéra expressed her "great sorrow" in a message posted on X, the social network formerly known as Twitter.

Bucks win seventh straight at home

Clippers, Warriors split home-and-home series

LOS ANGELES, Dec 3, (AP): Paul George made a 3-pointer with nine seconds remaining, giving the Clippers their first lead of the game, and Los Angeles hung on beat the Golden State Warriors 113-112 on Saturday.

George led the Clippers - who avenged a 120-114 loss to Golden State two days earlier in San Francisco - with 25 points, six rebounds and six assists. James Harden added 21 points and Kawhi Leonard had 20.

After a timeout, Draymond Green missed a potential-winning 3-pointer at the buzzer. The Warriors made 17 3-pointers, four each by Green, Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson.

Curry led the Warriors with 22 points and 11 assists in his 900th NBA game. Green had 21 points and nine rebounds, and Moses Moody added 21 points and made 9 of 10 free throws.

Bucks 132, Hawks 121

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 32 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for his first triple-double of the season and 36th overall, helping Milwaukee beat Atlanta.

BASKETBALL

Damian Lillard added 25 points and nine assists, and Cameron Payne had 18 points in 20 minutes off the bench. Milwaukee won its seventh straight at home and avenged its only loss in 10 home games this season, a 127-110 setback to the Hawks in late October.

Trae Young led Atlanta with 32 points and 12 assists. Dejounte Murray added 30 points, and Clint Capela had 10 points and 17 rebounds.

Nets 129, Magic 101

In New York, Mikal Bridges scored 26 of his 42 points in the first quarter and Brooklyn ended Orlando's winning streak at nine.

Orlando was trying for first 10-game winning streak in franchise history, but had little hope after Bridges outscored them by himself as the Nets ran out to a 43-22 lead after 12 minutes.

Kings 123, Nuggets 117

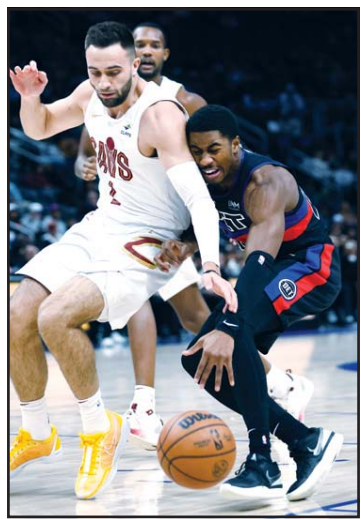
In Sacramento, De'Aaron Fox had 26 points and a career-high 16 assists, Malik Monk made a clutch 3-pointer late in the fourth quarter and Sacramento beat Denver to spoil Nikola Jokic's NBA-leading eighth triple-double.

Jokic finished with 36 points, 14 assists and 13 rebounds, the 114th career triple-double for Denver's big man. The rest of the NBA had eight triple-doubles combined going into the night.

Suns 116, Grizzlies 109

In Phoenix, Devin Booker returned after missing a game because of a sprained right ankle and had 34 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists to lead Phoenix past Memphis.

Booker hit a 3-pointer to start the fourth quarter and put the Suns up by 15, their biggest lead of the game to that point. He was also 13 for 13 from



Detroit Pistons guard Jaden Ivey collides with Cleveland Cavaliers guard Max Strus (1) while chasing the ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Detroit. (AP)

the free throw line.

Thunder 126, Mavericks 120

In Dallas, Jalen Williams scored 23 points and Oklahoma City rallied after allowing Dallas' NBA-record 30-0 run in the fourth quarter to beat the Mavericks.

The spurt took the Mavericks from a 111-87 deficit to a 117-111 lead with 4:18 to play. The NBA said the previous record in the play-by-play era was a 29-0 run by Cleveland against Milwaukee on Dec. 6, 2009. Dallas led 120-118 before the Thunder scored the game's final eight points.

Lakers 107, Rockets 97

In Los Angeles, Anthony Davis had 27 points and 14 rebounds and Los Angeles kept Houston winless on the road.

Austin Reaves added 18 points off the bench and LeBron James had 16 points and seven assists.

Fred VanVleet scored 22 points for Houston. The Rockets dropped their third in a row overall and fell to 0-8 away from home.

Pacers 144, Heat 129

In Miami, Bruce Brown scored 30 points, Obi Toppin added 22 and Indiana overcame scoring leader Tyrese Haliburton's absence to beat Miami.

The Pacers shot 66%, the second-best rate in franchise history. They shot 67% against Minnesota on Oct. 24, 2017. And it was the best percentage ever against a Heat team; the Los Angeles Lakers shot 64% against Miami on Nov. 23, 1988.

Timberwolves 123, Hornets 117

In Charlotte, Karl-Anthony Towns scored 28 points, Rudy Gobert had a season-high 26 and grabbed 12 rebounds and Minnesota beat Charlotte.

West-leading Minnesota improved to 15-4. Naz Reid scored 23 points and Mike Conley had 14 points and 10 assists. Terry Rozier scored 23 points for Charlotte.