



Talks set for Filipino workers' return to Kuwait in 2024

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Assembly flags recruitment irregularities

Kuwait affirms commitment to sovereignty principles

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Chairman of the parliamentary Budgets and Final Accounts Committee MP Osama Al-Zaid disclosed that the representatives of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) recently discussed the comments of CSC on the recruitment procedures in ministries and their subsidiaries.

Al-Zaid said the CSC recorded a total of 1,222 violations; 1,133 of which have yet to be addressed, asserting this is unacceptable. He added that 393 violations were recorded against public institutions and their subsidiaries, 104 of which have yet to be addressed. He was quick to clarify that some public

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New US ambassador arrives in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: The new US Ambassador to Kuwait, HE Karen Sasahara, has arrived in Kuwait and according to diplomatic sources, she is expected to submit her credentials to the Foreign Minister over the next few days, reports Al-Qabas daily.

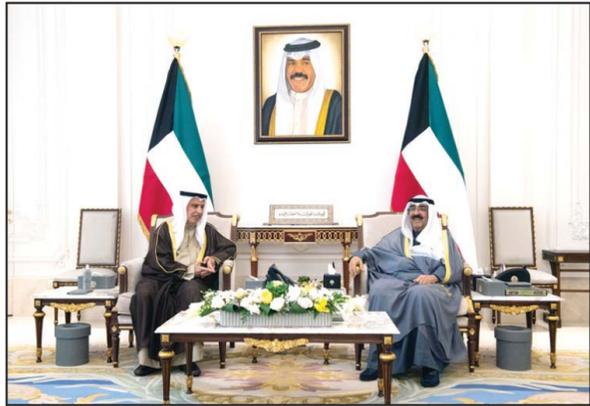
Ambassador Sasahara has held the position of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for North Africa, the position of US



Sasahara

Chargé d'Affaires in Jordan, and before that the position of Consul General in Jerusalem.

She was also Senior Advisor to the Office of Intelligence and Research and served on the Board of Examiners of the Diplomatic Corps, Deputy Head of Mission in Sana'a, and Advisor Foreign policy of the Commander-in-Chief of Special Forces in the US Central Operations Command.



Crown Prince Diwan photo

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Monday at Bayan Palace, Chairman of the Central System for the Remedy of the Situations of Illegal Residents (CSRSIR) Saleh Al-Fedhala.

Opinion

'Kuwait is different'... we build not, but demolish

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

IT is no longer a secret to anyone that the government is in a fix and has no priorities. In fact, the government has not adhered to its program on the basis of which it built confidence.

Therefore, after making a random noise, it leans in accordance with the demands of the parliamentarians, in order to distance itself from the bitter cup of interpellation, through settlements that it knows in advance that will not last long. In the end, it will face the fate that it drew for itself when it abandoned its basic mission.

In this regard, the developments that the country witnessed yesterday may be a warning bell for it, as well as a step on the path to reform, if there is intention to walk the walk despite the anticipation of bumps and potholes ahead. This is the basis for the development of any country whose authorities seek serious development and work to cleanse its institutions of the corrupt and get rid of favoritism.

Similar to what the neighboring countries did, they worked on cleaning their institutions of the corrupt and negligent, and developing their laws in accordance with what is required for development, and not based on the principle of "finders, keepers" like the way it is happening in Kuwait.

The government abandoned its priorities and did not pay sufficient attention to diversifying the sources of income, which was the most urgent task. Rather, it resorted to the easy solution, which is to take advantage of the high oil prices to fill the deficits it generated under pressure from parliamentarians. This happened either by increasing pensions or financial aid in terms of salaries, under the realization that this is a temporary and artificial abundance and not continuous, and therefore there will be a deficit in the future.

Also, the government did not realize that solving the housing issue is much more important than bribing Kuwaitis through financial handouts that will increase the cost of living, because the price-related chaos is overwhelming, and that the solution is by developing economic and investment laws and opening the country to all people, in accordance with what the Gulf Cooperation Council countries worked on including reducing their dependence on oil 90 percent 20 years ago to 30 percent now.

This happened in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the Sultanate of Oman, and the Kingdom of Bahrain, because of the presence of a determination to build and not demolish, which is not the case with Kuwait.

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the most recent issues of CBK Bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KWD (240) millions for (6) months with Rate of Return (4.500%).

TEHRAN: Iran's navy on Monday added a destroyer capable of launching cruise missiles to its Caspian Sea fleet, state media reported.

The 1,400-ton Deilaman destroyer, named for a town in north of Iran, is 95 meters (312 feet) long and 11 meters (36 feet) wide and is able to launch torpedoes while traveling at 30 knots (56 kph, 35 mph), the state-owned IRNA news agency said.

Deilaman can detect more than 100 targets, including vessels, drones, helicopters, submarines and aircraft, simultaneously, the report said. (AP)

AMMAN: An Israeli airstrike on the Damascus International Airport on Sunday put the country's main airport out of service, announced the military.

The attack caused material damage to the airport and put it out of service, a military source told the Syrian News Agency (SANA).

The source added that the Israeli jetfighters also attacked several targets in the Damascus countryside. (KUNA)

ISLAMABAD: The interim Prime Minister of Pakistan, Anwar ul Haq Kakar arrived in the United Arab Emirates on Sunday for a two day bilateral visit.

According to the Pakistan Foreign Office, during the visit, the Prime Minister will meet the President of the UAE Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed.

This engagement will provide an opportunity to advance bilateral ties in all spheres including political, economic, trade, investment, cultural, defense and people-to- people relations. (KUNA)

ISLAMABAD: At least two civilians were killed while 10 others, including soldiers, received injuries in a suicide attack targeting a security forces convoy in Pakistan's northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan, said Pakistan's military Monday.

A statement issued by Pakistan military's media wing Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that a "motorcycle borne suicide bomber" detonated himself on a security forces' convoy in Baka Khel area of Bannu district in KPK.

ISPR confirmed "two innocent civilians embraced martyrdom while seven civilians and three soldiers got injured." (KUNA)

Israel-Hamas truce extended: Qatar



Palestinians displaced by the Israeli bombardment of the Gaza Strip cook in Nusseirat refugee camp, central Gaza Strip, Monday, Nov 27, 2023 on the fourth day of the temporary ceasefire between Hamas and Israel. (AP)

4th swap planned

Missiles fired from Yemen

TEL AVIV, Nov 27, (AP): The spokesman for Qatar's Foreign Ministry said Monday that an agreement has been reached to extend the Israel-Hamas truce for another two days.

Qatar, along with Egypt, has been the key mediator in the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas.

The announcement comes on the final day of a four day truce between the warring sides.

Earlier, Israel has said it would extend the cease-fire by one day for every 10 additional hostages released. Hamas has also said it hopes to extend the four-day truce, which came into effect Friday after several weeks of indirect negotiations mediated by the United States, Qatar and Egypt.

But Israel also says it remains committed to crushing Hamas' military capabilities and ending its 16-year rule over Gaza after its Oct. 7 attack into southern Israel. That would likely mean expanding a ground offensive from devastated northern Gaza to the south, where hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have crammed into United Nations shelters, and where dire conditions persist despite the increased delivery of aid under the truce.

Israel will resume its operations with "full force" as soon as the current deal expires if Hamas does not agree to further hostages releases, with the goal of eliminating the group and freeing the rest of the captives, government spokesperson Eylon Levy told reporters on Monday.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office later said negotiations are still underway over the last planned exchange, expected on Monday, without providing further details.

Two Egyptian officials said talks are aimed at extending the cease-fire for another four days, with one saying that both sides have agreed in principle. But that official added that violence in the occupied West Bank is complicating matters, with Hamas demanding an end to Israeli military raids. Hundreds of Palestinians have been arrested and scores killed in clashes with Israeli forces since the war began.

The officials spoke on condition of

anonymity because they were not authorized to brief the media.

The release of dozens of people - mostly women and children who were among the roughly 240 captured by Hamas and other militants during the Oct. 7 raid that ignited the war - has rallied Israelis behind calls to return the rest of them.

Sixty-two hostages have been released - almost all during the current truce. Previously, one was also freed by Israeli forces and two were found dead inside Gaza.

"We can get all hostages back home. We have to keep pushing," two relatives of Abigail Edan, a 4-year-old girl and dual Israeli-American citizen who was released Sunday, said in a statement.

Hamas and other militants could still be holding up to 175 hostages - enough to potentially extend the cease-fire for two and a half weeks - but those include a number of soldiers, and the militants are likely to make much greater demands for their release.

On Sunday, Hamas freed 17 hostages, including 14 Israelis, and Israel released 39 Palestinian prisoners - the third such exchange under the truce.

Most hostages appeared to be physically well, but 84-year-old Elma Avraham was airlifted to Israel's Soroka Medical Center in life-threatening condition because of inadequate care, the hospital said.

US seizes attackers who held Israel-linked tanker

DUBAI, Nov 27, (AP): Armed assailants seized and later let go of a tanker linked to Israel off the coast of Yemen on Sunday before being apprehended by the United States Navy, officials said. Two ballistic missiles fired from Houthi-controlled Yemen then landed near a U.S. warship aiding the tanker in the Gulf of Aden, raising the stakes amid a series of ship attacks linked to the Israel-Hamas war.

Yemen's internationally recognized government blamed the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels for the attack, though the rebels in control of the capital, Sanaa, did not acknowledge either the seizure or the missile attack.

The attackers seized the Liberian-flagged Central Park, managed by Zodiac Maritime, in the Gulf of Aden, the company, the U.S. and British militaries and private intelligence firm Ambrey said.

The U.S. military's Central Command said in a statement early Monday that its forces and allies, including the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Mason, responded to the seizure and demanded the armed assailants release the tanker.

"Subsequently, five armed individuals debarked the ship and attempted to flee via their small boat," Central Command said. "The Mason pursued the attackers resulting in their eventual surrender."

The Central Command did not identify the attackers, but said a missile launch from Houthi-controlled Yemen followed early Monday morning.

"The missiles landed in the Gulf of Aden approximately 10 nautical miles (18.5 kilometers) from the ships," the statement said.

Day by Day

A WISE man remarked saying, in this world, what matters most is how others perceive your outer self and your financial standing, not the true essence within, as your soul is destined for the grasp of the Angel of Death.

Therefore, safeguard your joy from the clutches of anxiety, shield your mind from the darkness of pessimism, preserve the optimism of those around you by avoiding disappointment, and refrain from tainting your present day by dwelling on the events of yesterday.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



The UAE's frigate Al-Hesen arrives at Kuwait's Shuwaik Port early on Sunday, aiming to strengthen naval relations and facilitate the exchange of skills between the two countries. — See Page 2

'Authentic' crowned word of the year

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## Prayer Timings

Fajr	04:58	Asr	14:30
Sunrise	06:21	Sunset	16:50
Zuhr	11:36	Isha	18:11

# Local

**Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours**  
**By Day:** Mild with light to moderate freshening at times over coastal areas northwesterly wind, with speed of 15-40 km/h.

## Weather

**By Night:** Rather cold to cold and partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speed of 12-45 km/h

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	28	21
Kuwait Airport	28	15
Abdaly	29	14
Jahra	28	17
Salmiyah	27	22
Nuwaisib	28	18
Wafra	28	16

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

## 'Flooding, potholes, bad roads never-ending agony for people'

# 'Resignation of MPW minister should not absolve her of responsibility'

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: The resignation of the Minister of Public Works, Amani Bouqammaz, from her position to escape the two interrogations submitted against her by MPs Daoud Ma'arafi and Mubarak Al-Tasha, and supported by other MPs, raised questions about the political responsibility of the minister resigning from her position, and who is responsible for administrative and legal violations and the obstruction of state projects, especially those related to infrastructure development and addressing road defects, reports Al-Rai daily.

People have suffered for a long time, in addition to repeated flooding of roads during every rainy season following the inability of the drainage network to contain the rain water and other chronic problems that require immediate solutions.

Sources say the government's acceptance of the resignation of the Minister of Works against the backdrop of the two interrogations is "an implicit admission of her failure to perform her duties," stressing the necessity of tracking the topics of the interrogations and working to correct the deficiencies, and holding any negligent official accountable, even after leaving office or resigning from the position.

The sources touched on the topics of the last interrogation presented by Daoud Ma'arafi, after which the minister resigned, most notably pertaining to the Public Au-

thority for Roads and Land Transport (PART), the waste of public money, the failure to implement the law, the failure to perform duties, the failure to perform and follow up on the ministry's work, and the damage it caused to the environment and its repercussions on the nation and citizens.

The sources indicated that the resigned minister misled the government and public opinion regarding the roads issue with her contradictory statements, as she promised, after assuming the ministry responsibility to radically repair the roads in July 2023, despite the announcement of floating the tenders to international companies.

The minister had also spoken about maintenance contracts, while the acting Minister of Public Works, Jassem Al-Ostad, revealed in his first statement that there are no maintenance contracts at all and it became clear from the facts that some contracts were awarded in violation of the conditions and legal and administrative violations which led to the State Treasury losing the public funds.

According to the interpellation submitted by Ma'arafi, the resigned minister is responsible for the delay in the airport project based on the wishes of the contractor, "Limak Company," with regard to the reserve item in the T2 information and communications systems, despite the agreement of the concerned parties, especially the "Government Performance Monitoring Agency, Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation, the Fatwa and Legislation Department, the Kuwait University, and the Ministry of Interior.



Dr. Bouqammaz



The Cabinet meeting in progress.

PM Diwan photo

## Cabinet decree frees minor-crime citizens

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: The cabinet convened its weekly session at Seif Palace under the leadership of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Following the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, as well as Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs, Issa Ahmad Al-Kandari, said that the Cabinet was apprised of the directives from His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may God protect and preserve him. These directives pertained to the pardoning of certain citizens who had received sentences, in accordance with the specified procedure outlined by His Highness the Amir.

With a sagacious, paternal perspective and in adherence to the royal directives, the Council of Ministers has endorsed a draft decree granting clemency for individuals wanted in minor penalties, forwarding it to His Highness the Amir for consideration. On this auspicious occasion, the Council of Ministers expresses profound gratitude to His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. It emphasizes that this noble gesture further solidifies the principles of tolerance and elevation established by the leaders of Kuwait.

Additionally, the Council of Ministers deliberated on matters concerning the National Assembly. In this context, they examined the agenda items scheduled for the upcoming regular National Assembly session, set to take place on Tuesday and Wednesday of the 28th and 29th of November. Concurrently, the cabinet reiterated its commitment to fostering collaboration with the National Assembly, aiming to enhance the relationship between the executive and legislative branches. This commitment is geared towards realizing collective benefits that align with the welfare of the nation, its citizens, and the government.

## 'Cardiovascular disease is most common killer'

'Workshop on imaging heart ailments Sat'

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: According to the Chairman of the Council of Nuclear Medicine Departments and Head of the Nuclear Medicine Department at Al-Amiri Hospital Dr. Al-Shaima Al-Shammari said the workshop addresses the latest developments in imaging heart diseases, such as arterial disease, sarcoidosis, and carditis.

She affirmed that the workshop aims to educate doctors, nuclear medicine technicians, cardiologists, and radiologists about the latest devices and protocols in diagnosing and following up the treatment of patients.

Dr. Al-Shammari explained that aspects related to positron imaging of the heart muscle using radioactive rubidium and ammonia, myocardial imaging after angina pectoris, the latest developments in myocardial imaging in nuclear medicine, and the principles and ethics of nuclear medicine imaging of the heart muscle will be highlighted during the workshop.

He announced that the Ministry of Health will organize a workshop next Saturday on the latest developments in nuclear medicine in imaging heart diseases.

Dr. Abbas explained that the workshop will enable participating doctors to learn about the applications of nuclear medicine in the field of cardiac imaging. The applications of nuclear medicine are carried out in a non-invasive (non-surgical) manner, and have few complications. They are aimed at identifying cardiovascular diseases and determining optimal treatment methods.

The workshop aims to help reduce catheterization operations in light of the presence of large numbers of diabetic and heart patients. Besides cancer, nuclear medicine is also concerned with diseases related to the heart, lungs, bone, and thyroid, and has therapeutic and diagnostic uses.

The workshop revolves around heart diseases and their diagnosis in general, as well as the use of nuclear imaging to perfuse the heart muscle in a way directed at serving the patient according to his circumstances, imaging methods in nuclear medicine, analyzing information, and conducting stress and radiation exposure tests.

### Workshop

The workshop was considered an addition to opening broader scientific and intellectual horizons in the field of using nuclear medicine techniques to diagnose cardiovascular diseases, in addition to expanding the circle of exchanging experiences, obtaining knowledge, and learning about everything that is modern in diagnosing heart diseases using nuclear medicine.

Dr. Al-Shammari stressed that correct diagnosis plays a role in developing the correct treatment plan, and providing the necessary information to help identify patients with an increased risk of a heart attack and determine the extent of the patient's response to treatment.

She said the use of modern technological means greatly helps in developing medical services and speeding up the diagnosis and treatment of heart and chest diseases, and aims to improve the performance of Kuwaiti hospitals, adding that nuclear medicine departments provide specialized, high-quality tests by a high-level medical and technical staff.



KUNA photo

The cake-cutting ceremony on the arrival of the Emirati frigate.

## UAE's frigate docks at Shuwaikh Port

UAE's frigate 'Al-Hesen' docked in Kuwait's Shuwaikh Port earlier Sunday, in a visit to the country to bolster the two navies' relations and exchange of skills.

Kuwait's Rear Admiral Brigadier Hazza Al-Alattai gave a statement during the reception of UAE Ambassador Dr. Matar Al-Nayadi saying, Al-Hesen's visit is a great opportunity for both forces to partake in an exchange of capabilities and to foresee systems and devices of

the latest tech being used. Al-Alattai welcomed Al-Hesen and its crew embodying the essence of comradery and deep-rooted ties between both Fleets.

On his behalf, UAE Ambassador mentioned that bilateral relations are a barrer of cooperative means encompassing the GCC initiative as he looks forward to the launching of the joint Takamul 1 exercise. (KUNA)



Ahmad Al-Nuwaibit and Anfal Al-Kandari with a group of entrepreneurs and Dr. Heba Al-Musallam.

## stc continues its 'stc Diwaniya' sessions at Kuwait University

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, hosted to sessions at the 'stc Diwaniya' in Kuwait University as part of the activities calendar set under the strategic partnership formed with the Mass Communications Department within the College of Arts at Kuwait University. The sessions were organized under the umbrella of stc's 'Weyak' & 'Upgrade' initiatives, as part of stc's extensive CSR program.

The 'stc Diwaniya', a dedicated lounge for student interactions, serves as a hub for discussions on career development and personal growth, bringing together industry experts, professors, and students. Recently, two sessions were held at the 'stc Diwaniya' in collaboration with the Mass Communications Department at Kuwait University.

The sessions aimed to shed light on important topics that could provide students with valuable insights and knowledge that they could apply to their own careers and educational journey.

For the International Day of Tolerance, the session included a lecture titled "Tolerance and the Power of Understanding and Change," which was conducted in collaboration with Dr. Afaf Al-Jassim and the educational platform 'dawrat'. This session was attended by a diverse group of students and faculty members, emphasizing the importance of tolerance, understanding, and change in today's world. Additionally, stc organized weekly draws for students, providing them with a chance to win one of the

valuable prizes provided by stc.

The second session moderated by Ahmad Al-Nuwaibit, PR & Social Media Manager at stc, commemorated International Entrepreneurs Day and brought together a host of Kuwaiti entrepreneurs. The list of entrepreneurs included Eng. Mohammad Al-Surayea - Co-Founder and CEO of dawrat, Shaima Bin Hussein - Chairperson of the Association of Small Medium Enterprises of Kuwait, Ahmad Alansari - Co-Founder and CEO of mubkhar, Abdullah Al-Benayan - Co-Founder and CEO of ROF Group, and Ahmad Alwoqayan - Marketing and Public Relations Manager at ROF Group. These influential figures shared their entrepreneurial experiences and insights, providing a unique learning opportunity for the attending students.

The event highlighted the different journeys the entrepreneurs went through throughout their careers, while providing students with inspiration and practical advice on entrepreneurship.

In a statement released by stc, the company highlighted that the goal of 'stc Diwaniya' sessions in Kuwait University is to empower the youth by providing platforms for learning from accomplished professionals.

These initiatives focus on supporting the ambitions and talents of Kuwait's youth, guiding them through unique insights drawn from the experiences of those who have navigated successful career paths. stc's partnership with Kuwait University is structured to offer students a dynamic learning experience, fostering their motivation and assisting in the realization of their career goals.

## Bid to smuggle family across border foiled

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: An elderly woman was caught in the act of trying to smuggle her son, daughter-in-law and three grandchildren in a vehicle through Salmi border, reports Al-Anba daily.

Salmi border officers got suspicious when they noticed a four-wheel drive vehicle driven by an elderly woman. When they searched the vehicle, the officers were surprised to find the above-mentioned individuals hidden in the vehicle.

Initial investigations revealed that these individuals tried to relocate here from a neighboring country, but they failed due to lack of documents. The elderly woman is now detained at Salmi Police Station in preparation for her referral to the Public Prosecution, while the persons she tried to smuggle were ordered to return to the neighboring country through Al-Raqi border.

**16 held with drugs:** The intensive security campaigns in all governorates led to the arrest of 16 people in possession of narcotics throughout the past week, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The weekly statistics from the emergency police patrols also revealed that 153 people wanted by law for absconding and failure to present valid identification documents were arrested within the above-mentioned period, in addition to recording 4,968 traffic violations.

In a related context, a security source affirmed that the rescue patrols will intensify their security campaigns in all regions in order to arrest persons wanted by law through the deployment of more officers in various areas.

Also, security officers in Fahaeel have arrested an Asian gang trading in narcotics with small bags of shabu and hashish in their possession, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

## Filipino workers could return early next year

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: The Philippines is expected to allow Filipino workers to return to Kuwait in the first quarter of 2024 as talks between Kuwaiti and Filipino authorities are scheduled for early next month, with the goal of lifting the ban that was imposed in May, reports Al-Rai daily.

The discussions will involve the Philippine Ministry of Labor, private employment agencies, and the Kuwaiti side, focusing on reviewing the domestic workers agreement and outlining procedures for the resumption of sending Filipino workers to Kuwait.

Bassam Al-Shammari, a specialist in the field of domestic workers, expressed optimism about this development.

He welcomed the potential return of Filipino workers, emphasizing that the timing aligns well with the upcoming month of Ramadan, during which there is a heightened demand for domestic workers.

This development follows a series of events, including a visa suspension in May 2023, which came after the Philippines temporarily halted sending new domestic workers to Kuwait in February 2023 following the murder of Filipino worker Juliebe Ranara.

The Philippine government announced that it would take steps to assess and prevent abuses, particularly "rape and ill-treatment of Filipina workers" in Kuwait.

## Social protection eyed

# AI challenges tackled: KTUF

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Chairman of the Kuwait Trade Union Federation (KTUF) Ahmad Al-Enezi says artificial intelligence is one of the basic challenges to which the KTUF pays great attention, as it affects the largest segment, namely male and female workers.

During the joint national symposium held by the KTUF in cooperation with the Arab Labor Organization titled "The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Work" yesterday morning, he said, "We are working to secure social protection for all popular groups, create conditions for stability in work and production, and open the doors to areas of economic and social progress for our country's first, and then to advancement, prosperity, and a rise in the standard of living for our peoples.

We are fully aware that we are facing a difficult and complex stage in Kuwait and the Arab world alike, as a result of the difficult social, economic and security conditions that the region surrounding us is suffering from, and the severe political unrest.

In addition, there are many serious challenges that our Arab countries suffer from, primarily the spread of unemployment, economic and social decline, the expansion of labor mobility, and the loss of social protection."

Meanwhile, the Director General of the Arab Labor Organization Faysal Al-Mutairi gave a speech in which he stressed

that, "Gaza has not witnessed in decades such a devastating war, genocide, the spilling of the blood of the martyrs and the wounds of innocent children, women and the elderly, and the supplications to Almighty Allah, which echoes in the skies of Gaza.

This mobilizes our Arabism and our feelings to support our cause, as the oppressors have gone too far with their racist policies, criminality, and tyranny, and are violating all international laws and regulations.

The Kuwaiti government and people responded by being proactive, as usual, in providing humanitarian aid via an air bridge to relieve the Gaza Strip.

We value the position of the National Assembly in adopting the demand to prosecute the leaders of the 'fascist Zionist entity' as war criminals, establish the Gaza Reconstruction Fund, and establish the 'Kuwait Humanitarian City.'

Artificial intelligence has an impact on the present and future of labor markets, imposing a new reality and roles on every party (governments, employers, and workers) in a changing world that puts us in a difficult race against time."

Al-Mutairi called for work to identify gaps, propose solutions, and discuss the best ways to enhance integration between the worker and artificial intelligence, with the aim of creating full and productive national employment within the framework of the eighth goal of the 2030 Sustainable Development Plan.



Launching of the joint exercise (Takamul/1) with the Peninsula Shield Forces.

KUNA photo

## GCC joint military drill, led by Kuwait Army, kicks off

Kuwait's military kicked off on Sunday a joint ground exercises in conjunction with Gulf Arab forces, sponsored Acting Chief of the General Staff, Major General Engineer Dr. Ghazi Al-Shimmari.

In a press release, Al-Shimmari, expressed admiration for all the attendees and for hosting such drill that brings together army ground

forces from all GCC countries.

Al-Shimmari said Takamul (1) reflects on the continued development of the Peninsula Shield Forces, which is one of the evidences of the success of the joint Gulf action in its military aspect, whether through its operational participation or its implementation of exercises and training at

various levels with the armed forces of the GCC countries.

The exercises are set to take place in the country's northwestern Median Al-Adera and Al-Abraq areas, added the statement, urging the public to steer clear of the designated locations on the day of the drills for their safety. (KUNA)

# Hunt on for arsonists in judge's home blaze

## Officials dismissed in student death

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Less than a week after setting fire to the house of Cassation Court Counselor Sultan Burasli, a security source told Al-Qabas that the Ministry of Interior has obtained information that "is likely to lead to the two masked persons who set fire and escaped on a motorcycle."**

The source explained the investigations (which are ongoing) over the past few days has helped the security authorities to collect important clues and people suspected of involvement in the crime were summoned for interrogation.

The source pointed out many people have been interrogated, in addition to listening to the statements of a number of people -- neighbors of the Counselor -- especially the eyewitness who happened to be passing by when the two masked people poured gasoline and set fire around the house, which also destroyed a car.

According to the source, one eyewitness has provided important information about the physical characteristics of the two people, which matches what has been recorded by the surveillance cameras.

The sources indicated some of the traces removed from the crime scene have been handed over to the forensic department for examination, and the itinerary of these masked people was tracked by surveillance cameras after they fled from the vicinity of the Counselor's house.

The sources stressed that the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled, is personally supervising the investigations and is minutely following up the case on an ongoing basis, and has given strict directives to make

the utmost efforts to arrest the suspects as quickly as possible.

**Officials suspended:** In a significant development, Dr. Adel Al-Manea, the Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, has taken decisive action by suspending several officials at Laila Al-Ghafariya Secondary School for Girls. This suspension will remain in effect until the completion of investigations into the unfortunate death of a student.

In a statement issued on Sunday, the Ministry of Education officially communicated the decision to suspend the implicated officials pending a thorough inquiry.

The Minister's directive aims to ensure a comprehensive and impartial examination of the circumstances surrounding the student's tragic demise.

To maintain the uninterrupted functioning of the school during this period, the Ministry has announced the appointment of new officials to assume the responsibilities of those temporarily suspended. This strategic move seeks to uphold the normalcy of educational and administrative activities at Laila Al-Ghafariya Secondary School.

The statement underscores the Ministry's firm commitment to upholding laws and regulations that prioritize the safety and well-being of all learners. It emphasizes the government's dedication to fostering an educational environment that adheres to the highest safety standards.

Furthermore, the Ministry asserts that the lives and safety of both male and female students are paramount, reinforcing its unwavering commitment to creating a secure learning environment. The statement unequivocally states that the Ministry will not shy away from holding individuals accountable if investigations reveal any lapses or negligence in their duties.



The drug traffickers gang in police custody.

## Drug traffickers nabbed

Personnel from the criminal investigation department have arrested a seven-man gang of expatriates for engaging in illicit trade of narcotics, reports Al-Anba daily. The suspects were seized from Fahaheel after receiving a tip-off from an unidentified police agent. During interrogation the suspects said they targeted young people.

The arrest came in a covert operation when an unidentified police agent was sent to buy narcotic shabu. During the exchange, law enforcement conducted a swift raid, leading to the arrest of the primary suspect in possession of sachets of shabu.

A subsequent search of his residence uncovered an additional bag containing heroin. During interrogation, the suspect confessed to being a member of a larger gang comprising seven individuals.

Following extensive research and investigation, the gang leader was identified in the Farwaniya area. He was apprehended in possession of a substantial quantity of "shabu," meticulously packaged in small bags for sale. The authorities also discovered bags of "hashish," "heroin," and drug paraphernalia in his possession.

## 5 food shops shut

# Accidents caused chaos

By Munaif Nayef

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27:** Major Abdullah Bu Hassan from the General Traffic Department at the Ministry of Interior explained that the traffic congestion witnessed in Shuwaik and the Fourth Ring Road recently was due to the simultaneous traffic accidents -- a truck that overturned on the Fourth Ring Road, another on the Airport Road, one in Hawally and the falling of a load of paints on Canada Dry Street.

Bu Hassan told the daily that the General Traffic Department worked hard to ease traffic movement by dispatching officers to the accident sites quickly, indicating that firefighters from Kuwait Firefighting Force removed the paints from Canada Dry Street.

Meanwhile, Google Maps showed most of the streets in red without any official statement from the ministry; while the 'Shasayer' (What's Happening?) platform served as the mouthpiece of citizens through which they voiced their opinions.

On the X platform (formerly Twitter), some netizens blamed the expatriates amid demands to deprive them of driving licenses; while others blamed the dilapidated streets.

**5 food shops shut:** Mohammad Al-Kandari, inspector at the Hawally Governorate Unit in the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN), revealed that an inspection tour he conducted with the governorate team resulted in the closure of five food establishments and issuance of 33 citations, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a statement to the daily, Al-Kandari confirmed that PAFN is keen on controlling markets and maintaining food security. He disclosed that the recent inspection tour resulted in the discovery of various violations like opening a food establishment without obtaining a health license from the concerned authority, non-compliance with public sanitation regulations as the inspectors found a large number of live cockroaches, and selling adulterated food and 57 kilograms of frozen chicken of unknown origin without the nutritional data label.

He added citations were issued to employees for failure to present a health certificate and the employers who hired these workers even if they have no health certificate.

# diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'Lack of transparency delays political reform'

"THE legislative environments in developed and emerging countries are completely different from their counterparts in our developing countries. The legislative environments in these countries are supported and enhanced by a wide range of regulatory tools that guide the procedures and steps of legislation, and direct them towards meeting the diverse and multi-dimensional needs of their citizens, societies and economies," columnist

**Dr. Abdul Latif bin Nakhi** wrote for Al-Rai daily.

"Among these regulatory tools -- which are missing in Kuwait -- is the 'Legislative Impact Analysis', the legislative tool from which a detailed systematic report emerges, which includes an analysis and evaluation of the potential effects of passing a draft law. This report is prepared and delivered before the draft law is deliberated in parliamentary committees.

"Using the 'legislative impact analysis' tool to rationalize draft laws is a long-standing practice in the West, dating back to 1978, when former US President Jimmy Carter issued Presidential Executive Order No. (12044), according to which he obliged the government to conduct analytical studies for all relevant draft laws of economic impact equal to, or exceeding one hundred million dollars, to determine its impact on local economic inflation, before presenting it to the US Congress.

"Over the course of decades of practicing 'legislative impact analysis' as a tool to rationalize legislation, developed and emerging countries -- in stages -- developed the methodologies of this tool, such that the reports emerging from this tool were required to be approved by independent bodies, and these countries gradually expanded the applications of the tool to include levels of higher and lower regulatory laws such as public policies and regulations.

"Some of these countries also tend to impose penalties in the event of delay in preparing, approving and submitting the tool's reports.

"For example, the British House of Commons is currently considering a draft law requiring the government to submit a 'legislative impact analysis' report certified by an independent body with every draft law -- in both categories -- submitted by the government.

"In the event of a delay in submitting the certified report, the relevant minister is obligated to make statements before Parliament on the reasons for the delay, efforts to expedite its delivery, and developments in the delivery date, in every third parliamentary session until its delivery.

"What is meant is that developed and emerging countries are increasingly keen to employ and develop the 'legislative impact analysis' tool to rationalize their legislation, because it provides decision-makers and stakeholders with important information about the possibility and how draft laws achieve their goals.

"Thus, it helps decision-makers (in the executive and legislative branches) defend their decisions and their individual and solidarity positions towards draft laws, and at the same time it develops parliamentary transparency and enables the people to advance the follow-up and evaluation of their representatives, and in turn 'upgrade parliamentary customs and practices to the desired models,' which is one of the goals.

"The strategy that the representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, called for its implementation, as part of the speech he delivered at the opening ceremony of the second session of the current Parliament.

"Despite repeated calls by the politi-

cal leadership to the people to activate their role in the process of "regulating the political scene and correcting its deviations," as stated explicitly in the last royal speech, this role is still stalled for several reasons, the most prominent of which are ambiguity and the lack or weakness of transparency in the two chambers.

"Therefore, in line with the lofty calls to correct the paths of the executive and legislative authorities and develop the people's participation in the project to correct the distortions of the political scene, I call on the government to assign the Secretariat of Information Systems and Decision Support -- affiliated with the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers -- to prepare "legislative impact analysis" reports for the draft laws it submits to the Council, and also to the proposals for laws submitted by the Council's representatives, provided that these reports are published on the website of the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers after being approved by an independent specialized body."

Also:

"The closer we get to a (government-parliamentary) consensus, the more a (hero) among the nation's representatives emerges, nullifying this joy and disturbing the relationship," columnist **Walid Ibrahim Al-Ahmad** wrote for Al-Rai daily.

"Whenever the government talks about future benefits for citizens, those with 'muscles' emerge as if they intend to sabotage and compete with the wind.

"MP Muhallal Al-Mudhaf's interrogation of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah consisted of three axes -- the first related to retracting the contents of the speech, the second to confusion in the government's general policies, and the third to evading answering parliamentary questions.

"Yes, there are points worthy of attention included in these axes, such as evading answering the representatives' questions, but do these axes as a whole rise to or deserve this interrogation, or give that government enough time to prove its worth after a year since its formation on October 16, 2022, so let's close the door to bidding and playing starring roles!

"MP Muhallal Al-Mudhaf is one of the representatives who won their seat well deservedly. He is a positive energy with firm and honorable positions in the Council. But why this rush to present it when the lines of parliamentary-government understandings have begun to move for the better, especially after the two authorities agreed to increase the salaries of retirees and open the (faucet) of increases to the hardworking and non-hardworking classes?

"From this point of view, we see an error in the timing of submitting this interrogation, and it will not produce the desired results except tension and aggravation, without forgetting to blame the government for "ignoring" the MPs' questions and obstructing many development projects in the country or progress moving like a turtle!

"We repeat that the government deserves (a pinch of the ear) for the slow pace of development, but where is the opportunity and deadline before using the constitutional tool?

"We repeat and reiterate what His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, said when he addressed the representatives of the National Assembly under the dome of Parliament, saying: "You must advance democratic practice, activate its legislative and oversight role, and give the government sufficient time to accomplish this before using constitutional tools with wisdom and reason."

"We do not want more conflicts that have distracted us so much and kept us busy in side battles and forget all the country's issues!

"For example, the amnesty file, which was once at the forefront of MPs' concerns and statements, to the point that some made it among their priorities before winning the elections has been completely forgotten."

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary

## Other Voices

### 'Baisari' ... and class in societies

By Ahmad alsarraf

In many Second and Third World countries, a historical legacy persists, dividing society into upper, middle, and lower classes.

This societal stratification is not exclusive to democratic nations like Britain and India; though it varies in intensity, it persists despite efforts towards education, social justice, and the principles of human rights and democracy. Surprisingly, even in democracies, individuals from humble backgrounds don't often occupy the highest and most critical positions.

The arrival of the 21st-century pandemic, the corona virus, obliterated societal distinctions. It did not discriminate between noble and homeless, rich and poor.

As individuals, regardless of their social status, found themselves in dire need of expertise and assistance, societal differences began eroding rapidly. When faced with a dire situation, titles and pride lost significance.

A person, whether titled or wealthy, readily acknowledged the worth of a doctor, even from the lower classes, who saved their life or alleviated their suffering. They expressed gratitude without hesitation, acknowledging that expertise surpassed social status.

This reality challenges the notion of a superior race, particularly as the crimes of those who once deemed themselves superior come to light. The interdependence of individuals underscores that anyone, irrespective of background, can be indispensable to another's well-being.

The hypothetical "reasonable person" would prioritize a companion with understanding and experience over familial ties or titles on a perilous mission.

In a contemporary society, mere titles, divorced from knowledge, have diminished in value. Instances of acquiring, falsifying, or plagiarizing titles, as exemplified by an individual running a law firm without proper qualifications, have contributed to this devaluation. The emphasis has shifted towards competence and experience, rendering hollow titles obsolete.

The call for humility from those we hold in high regard is not a degradation of the soul but a source of joy. In the modern world, individuals without substantive knowledge behind their titles find little standing, particularly when many have undermined the credibility of titles through unethical practices.

The note on the term "baisari," originating from Persian, highlights its derogatory meaning and emphasizes the importance of law and state protection in civilized societies. In such societies, individuals rely on the impartial application of law and the protection provided by state institutions rather than tribal or familial affiliations.

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## Event to bring together program's commercial and service partners

KIB set to organize PayTally Show, offering customers best financing deals

## 'Al-Mawashi becomes top local and regional livestock supplier'

Co always committed to ensure national food security

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27, (KUNA):** Founded in 1973, Kuwait's Al-Mawashi Livestock Transport and Trade Company, better known as Al-Mawashi, has managed to become a leading livestock supplier locally and regionally.

Marking 50 years since it was established on Tuesday, Al-Mawashi has always committed itself to ensuring national food security and bringing in red meat from different world countries as well as producing processed meat in line with health and environmental safety criteria.

It is a Kuwaiti public joint stock company, with its head office situated in Kuwait and expanded to have more than 33 local offices and 15 local ones.

Since it was founded in 1973, Al-Mawashi Livestock Transport and Trade Company has been seeking hard to become one of the largest carriers of livestock across the world.

It was established during the era of the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, when Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah was the then prime minister.

The company has rapidly become a pioneering company in meat production and trade in livestock fod-

## MEW's transformer station site gets approval

By Inass Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff  
KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Kuwait Municipality approved the request of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to allocate a major transformer station site in Doha next to the Entertainment City site, with dimensions of 50 meters by 60 meters on a total area of 3,000 square meters.

The ministry stressed the need to adhere to the requirements contained in the responses of members of the Subcommittee on Public Facilities and Services at its meeting held on June 13,

der, covering most Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

In 1982, Al-Mawashi launched its first subsidiary in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with a view to meeting the country's market requirements.

Al-Mawashi Company has its own farms for breeding and nurturing the livestock, and accommodates outlets in Kuwait and the UAE.

In 1987, it was listed on the Kuwaiti stock exchange, now known as Boursa Kuwait, with a paid capital of KD eight million (around USD 25.9 million).

By adopting the company's objectives of achieving operational excellence through continuous improvement, Al-Mawashi achieved greater

and to coordinate with them before implementation, in addition to authorizing the concerned departments to modify the dimensions and area of the station without exceeding the specified areas, in the event of conflict with any existing infrastructure services, or any regulatory reasons, during installation.

The municipality also approved the request of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) to allocate the path of the rain drainage network line at 74 meters long and 3 meters wide to serve the location of the main building of the Direct Investment

revenue growth until it reached KD 21.6 million.

It has been continuously developed to become one of the best meat supplying companies in the world with head office located in Kuwait, having subsidiary units located in the UAE, Australia, and South Africa.

It has an outstanding reputation for its largest butchery outlets and its products are processed in state-of-the-art modern facilities conforming to international standards and made available in 36 butchery outlets and showrooms within Kuwait and UAE markets.

Al-Mawashi uses marine and land equipment to produce organic fertilizers which ensure excellent quality green vegetation to nurture the live-

Promotion Authority in Sharq Block 2. This is under the condition of adhering to the requirements contained in the responses of the members of the Subcommittee on Public Facilities and Services at its meeting held on July 11, and coordinating with them before implementation, in addition to authorizing the concerned departments to modify the length and width of the required path and shift its coordinates by no more than its determined length and width, in the event of conflict with any existing infrastructure services or any regulatory reasons during installation.

stock. In 2018, the company launched its largest slaughterhouse in the Middle East region, along with a central livestock market covering a total of 94,000 meters.

It has three giant ships for livestock transport, and the largest shady farm in Kuwait with an area of four million meters, with a capacity of 200,000 heads, as well as a shady farm covering 285,000 meters in the UAE.

In addition, the company has also two farms in Australia and South Africa with a capacity of 100,000 and 70,000 heads respectively.

In April 2022, Al-Mawashi posted KD 42 million (around USD 136.7 million) in operational revenues, up 7.5 percent.



From left to right: Marwa Marafie, Manager of Marketing and Corporate Communication at KIB; Othman Tawfeq, Retail Banking Department General Manager at KIB; Musab Al-Shalan, Deputy General Manager of the Retail Banking Department at KIB; Abdulaziz Al-Shammari, Head of the Central Sales Unit - Retail at KIB.

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27:** Kuwait International Bank (KIB) held a press conference to announce the upcoming PayTally Show, which will be held at The Arena Kuwait - 360 Mall from December 7 to December 9, 2023. This special event will bring together all of the Bank's partners under the umbrella of the PayTally program, including commercial and service institutions.

The exhibition aims to assist both KIB customers and non-customers in obtaining consumer products and services that they desire, by showcasing the strongest financing deals the Bank has to offer. This initiative is in line with KIB's ongoing commitment to providing the best banking experience for its customers.

Commenting on the event, Othman Tawfeq, Retail Banking Department General Manager at KIB, said: "At KIB, we always strive to achieve added value for our customers across all segments. Through this forward-thinking step, we aim to gather all partners within the PayTally program in one destination, making it easier for our customers and all members of the community to access the services and products that meet their needs. The exhibition will allow them to take advantage of the best and most convenient financing offers that fulfill their aspirations and exceed their expectations."

Tawfeq also emphasized that the PayTally program includes a comprehensive and integrated list of the best service providers and consumer goods suppliers in Kuwait from various sectors. He pointed out that during the exhibition, they will offer special and exclusive deals to ensure meeting the diverse needs of customers and enable them to purchase their preferred products and services.

On his part, Abdulaziz Al-Shammari, Head of the Central Sales Unit - Retail at KIB, said: "KIB remains keen on guaranteeing high levels of customer satisfaction and is committed to providing top-tier financing solutions. To this end, the Bank offers a wide range of financing services through PayTally, including consumer financing, medical treatment financing, educational financing, as well as financing for furniture, electronics,

computer equipment, and various types of devices. Additionally, this platform provides financing options for the purchase of marine equipment, heavy machinery, and spare parts, in addition to financing for acquiring the latest cars offered by renowned brands."

Al-Shammari further elaborated that KIB customers can enjoy convenient financing for up to 60 months, ranging from KD 300 to KD 25,000. The application for this exclusive financing can be easily submitted and tracked through the innovative KIB platform, PayTally, which offers a wide range of services and products provided by KIB's commercial and service partners.

Meanwhile, Musab Al-Shalan, Deputy General Manager of the Retail Banking Department at KIB, said: "At KIB, we spare no effort to respond to the growing aspirations of our customers through our special products, services and solutions that elevate their overall banking experience. Since the launch of the exclusive PayTally multi-service digital platform, our financing solutions have become even more popular among our customers and non-customers due to the increasing demand for flexible Islamic financing services offered through digital platforms."

Al-Shalan went on to note that KIB remains dedicated to delivering state-of-the-art digital solutions, such as the PayTally platform, as part of its digitization and innovation efforts. In addition, the Bank continues to grow and expand its diverse portfolio of Shariah-compliant banking products and services that offer customers ease, convenience and flexibility.

It serves to note that KIB has extensive expertise in providing the best specialized and flexible banking solutions in the field of financing, catering to various customer segments, with easy monthly installment payments and grace periods. Moreover, KIB upholds its responsibility to its customers, driven by its steadfast goals and ongoing efforts to enhance their banking journey, especially in the realm of financing, to a more comprehensive and integrated level.

## 'Huge assets difficult to manage'

'MEW to launch tender for taking inventory of all its various assets'

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27:** According to informed sources from the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, the ministry is in the process of launching a tender to take an inventory of all of its various types of assets and to evaluate the state's real estate properties and their accounting records.

The sources explained that the number of assets belonging to the ministry is huge and it is difficult for the concerned departments to take an inventory of them. There are major obstacles in the inventory process that were revealed when the departments began to take inventory of the buildings and land.

The process faced difficulties in inferring the data required to be completed within a period of one year granted by the Ministry of Finance to government agencies, including the Ministry of Electricity and Water, to carry out this work in June 2022. This prompted the ministry to ask the Ministry of Finance, in a letter sent in May this year, to exclude it from the aforementioned period, considering the difficulty of conducting the complete inventory within the given period.

There were decisions to allocate some lands belonging to the ministry, and their locations were not confirmed by the Kuwait Municipality. The concerned departments faced difficulty in inferring the history of their operation and benefiting from them. The same applies to buildings. Due to the age of some of them, the date of their operation is scheduled to be recorded according to the date on which they will be evaluated after the aforementioned tender is issued.

The sources indicated that the concerned departments are currently recording the value of the main transportation stations through contracts, revealing that work will be done to enter the required data through the historical information available to the relevant technical departments, including Street Lighting Department and Construction Department for Electrical Network Projects.

They said it was not possible to determine the total depreciation value of some assets belonging to the ministry because the purchasing value and date of operation were not inferred, so their data will be completed in coordination with the relevant sectors.

The sources affirmed that issuing a tender to take inventory of all assets belonging to the ministry is aimed to preserve public money, given that these assets are state properties that must be preserved by inventorying them and completing all papers,

## Managing, investing endowment 'assets' is about KD 1.47 bln

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27:** The Acting Secretary-General of the Secretariat-General of Awqaf Nasser Al-Hamad announced that the market value of managing and investing endowment assets is approximately KD 1.47 billion. The revenues for the year 2022 amounted to about KD 48 million, which was spent according to the conditions of the Awqaf in various fields, most notably community development, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement issued Saturday, Al-Hamad explained that the secretariat is considered the second largest owner of real estate in Kuwait with a market value of approximately KD 726 million distributed across the country's governorates, including 51 commercial, residential and investment properties. The secretariat also supports economic sectors in the country whose market value has reached approximately KD 589 million. It strives to implement the order regarding its establishment by managing and investing endowment assets to implement the Awqaf's charitable mission, as well as support the development vision of the State of Kuwait for the year 2035 as a strategic supporter of the Kuwaiti economy and community development through its various and diverse projects that can be viewed through the secretariat's website.

For over 30 years, the secretariat has been able to develop endowment assets despite the great challenges and high risks it faces in managing and investing these assets.

documents, and their financial value in implementation of Ministry of Finance circular No. 3/2022 regarding systems and policies for non-current, non-financial assets.

They added that the inventory and evaluation procedures were circulated to all government agencies, and the Ministry of Electricity and Water is one of these agencies, which owns huge assets, including electricity and water production plants, lands, buildings, machinery, and equipment, valued at billions of dinars.

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# Minister Sheikh Firas affirms full support for Kuwaiti farmers



Left: Minister Sheikh Firas tasting dates and (center, left) visits other stalls at the market during the fair.

Photos by Sameer Shiqer

## 'Al-Nuer Market' holds second fair

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Child Affairs Sheikh Firas Al-Sabah affirmed full support for Kuwaiti farmers, indicating that marketing ideas for the Kuwaiti product will be taken into consideration to find points of sale to market their products in a way that ensures easy access to the consumer, reports Al-Rai daily.

The minister said, in a press statement on the sidelines of opening of the 'Al-Nuer Market' fair at the Sabah Al-Salem Cooperative Society, that the Kuwaiti product is of high quality, and said the products displayed by farmers in the market makes Kuwait proud.

He added that launching the market activities for the second year in a row confirms the remarkable success it has made, recalling the former minister of Social Affairs, Mai Al-Baghli, who launched this idea.

For his part, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Sabah Al-

Salem Cooperative Society, Dr. Muhammad Al-Ajmi, went on to say, the market will be held for two days in coordination with the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies.

The "Al-Nuer Market" fair is being held for the second year in a row under the supervision and sponsorship of the Ministry of Social Affairs, without any intermediary or any other party, whether from the private sector or public benefit associations.

The fair aims to encourage local farmers and owners of other local products, and to highlight the quality of the local agricultural produce and other local products such as apiraries, dairy, and others.

One of the goals of the exhibition is to create a direct relationship between producers and consumers that benefits both parties, under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs, through which each party can directly sense the requirements and capabilities of the other party.

## 'Kuwait is

Continued from Page 1

It goes without saying that countries benefit from the experiences of others and work to harmonize themselves with their surroundings and the world in order to enhance their sources of income.

This matter is missing in Kuwait due to the naive vision that controls political and economic behavior. The rule of "Kuwait is different" or "All is well" is a wrong and skewed mentality.

We have said over and over again that this mentality only leads to ruin and demolition of buildings on the heads of its owners, as if development could only occur through freedom of opinion and by insults, and not through hard work.

We reiterate that continuing with a skewed vision of investment, the closure of the country, and the long documentary cycle that was established 50 years ago are today a major obstacle to development. In addition to this is, of course, the corruption that is disguised by laws that aim to benefit one group at the expense of others, and to monopolize commercial, investment, and construction work, which has led to the abnormal situation that the country has been experiencing for years.

There is no doubt that all of this has led to the spread of corruption and the systematic plundering of public funds, to the extent that some officials who were entrusted with it had indulged in it and betrayed.

They, along with other beneficiaries, caused this major decline in the country, which used to be a cultural and economic icon, and has been generous to citizens and residents.

What we fear the most today is that we will wake up one day and find that it is no longer sufficient for its people due to the uncalculated adventures it has witnessed in the past three decades. Is anyone aware of this danger?

## Assembly flags

Continued from Page 1

institutions are committed to the recruitment regulations.

He revealed that the number of recorded violations committed by ministries include 644 by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; 331 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; 75 by the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy; and 35 by the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR).

He confirmed that the committee asked the abovementioned institutions to address the violations, especially those resulting in the illegal payment of cash to certain officials. He made it clear that any institution, which does not correct their violations will be subjected to budget-related decisions. He said a big percentage of the violations include the illegal disbursement of allowances and privileges to the underserving.

The lawmaker went on to say that the committee found out a big number of vacant leadership positions, which require the issuance of special decrees to fill up these posts. He warned that the designation of acting officials, who hold leadership positions for a long time, has negative consequences such as the delayed issuance of urgent decisions. "This happens because the acting official is afraid that the decision he makes might be wrong and lead to his dismissal. Some acting officials tend to cooperate with corrupt parties to obtain certain advantages and privileges," he revealed.

According to Al-Zaid, the committee is keen on determining the powers granted to the CSC; as it seems such powers are unclear, up to the extent that the CSC issues exceptional decisions

concerning recruitment. He cited as an example the attitude of CSC regarding the recruitment procedures, indicating that the Ministry of Education has asked the CSC to appoint a number of officials like the chairpersons of educational districts. He said the CSC replied in 12 pages; explaining that all the nominees did not meet the requirements, so it did not approve the nomination. He added that the CSC later issued a one-page decision to exempt all the nominees from the conditions and approved all of the nominations. He said this example shows that some of the CSC's decisions are taken whimsically rather than being committed to the regulations.

He was quick to stress the fact that the abovementioned decisions were issued in 2017 and 2018, which means they were issued during the term of the previous CSC officials. He emphasized that correcting the path requires the enhancement of transparency, calling for publishing the minutes of the CSC meetings to be available to the ordinary citizens. He said the people's monitoring is essential to deter any senior official from committing violations.

On the other hand, MP Majed Al-Mutairi has forwarded queries to Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of State for National Assembly and Cabinet Affairs Essa Al-Kandari; considering the Amiri Diwan oversees the establishment of major projects including the new Justice Palace.

Al-Mutairi requested for information about the achievement rate of the Justice Palace project, copies of the relevant contracts showing the total value, name of the contractor and the completion date for each phase of the project. He wants to know the variation orders and their value if any, if any observations have been recorded by the relevant monitoring institutions and if they have been addressed. He demanded for copies of all correspondences between the Amiri Diwan and monitoring institutions like SAB, Legal Advice and Legislation Department, Ministry of Finance, and Central Agency for Public Tenders to assign the Amiri Diwan to oversee the project; comments recorded by SAB if any; if they were corrected or not; and if the project includes extension of construction phases and the estimated cost of such extension.

In another development, 20 incoming letters were included in the agenda of the ordinary session scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday as follows:

- Request of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for National Assembly and Cabinet Affairs Essa Al-Kandari for the Parliament to approve Kuwait joining the GCC agreement to impose tax on harmful commodities;
- Request of MP Mehalhal Al-Mudhaf to assign the Human Resources Development Committee to investigate the manipulation of procedures for hiring national workers in private companies to waive off obligating the private sector to recruit a certain number of national workers;
- Request of the Business Environment Improvement Committee to assign it to conduct a study on the consequences of the decision of the Ministry of Interior to suspend the issuance of family visa for expatriates working in the private sector;
- Request of a number of MPs to assign the Public Funds Protection Committee to follow up the cases of Kuwait Army Fund and overseas military offices, as well as to conduct field investigations in and outside Kuwait if necessary.

Meanwhile, the Budgets and Final Accounts on Monday discussed the report of SAB on the budget of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy for fiscal 2022/2023. Representatives of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, Ministry of Finance, SAB, Financial Controllers Bureau and Central

# 'Tender offered tied to studying, designing 1st phase rail project'

'PART studying completion of bids'

By Mohammed Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: At a time when the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) is studying the completion of bids for the tender of study, design and preparation of documents for the railway project in its first phase, a government report stated that the tender No. 1 AH I/I for the project of study work, detailed design and preparation of documents was announced in issue No. 1618 of the official gazette dated January 15 at the request of PART.**

The report explained that the tender being offered is concerned with studying and de-

signing the first phase of the Gulf Track railway project and the facilities affiliated with the project with a length of 111 km.

Kuwait is the northern station of the railway for the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, and the Kuwait section of the network represents about five percent of the total with a length of 111 km and connects directly to Saudi Arabia.

The first phase was subject to a tender in January for a period of one year. It has three phases, with the first phase involving preparatory work and initial design for a period of four months for the consultant, and one month for the entity's review, thus a total of five months. The second phase involves financial modeling and feasibility study, with a working period of 1.5 months for the consultant, half a month for review, and thus two months in total. As for the third phase, it includes the detailed design and tender documents, with a working period of six months for the consultant and

a review period of two months, with a total of eight months. The second and third phases will be implemented concurrently.

The proposed project is a "first phase" study and design only, while construction and implementation will take place in three subsequent phases. The first stage includes appointing an international consultant to provide advisory services related to preliminary design work for railway tracks, developing the necessary solutions to address conflicts, fulfilling the requirements of relevant authorities, and preparing the technical documents for the project.

The second phase is concerned with the work of qualifying, offering and awarding the project work to investors in accordance with the established procedures, in addition to presenting and awarding the work of supervising the implementation to an international consultant. The third phase is concerned with implementing all the work related to the project.

Commerce keen to adopt best practices in markets

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry works diligently to develop commercial oversight and consumer protection work in order to achieve the best oversight practices to protect the rights of all parties in daily commercial transactions, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources asserted that the ministry is keen on adopting the best practices in the markets and it does ignore the ideas that citizens post on social media networks in a bid to realize their aspirations. Sources said the ministry is working on a better mechanism for issuing and renewing licenses to facilitate procedures for following complaints and suggestions circulating on the Internet and social networking sites.

In a related context, the ministry has launched a system for developing and maintaining the commercial control portal -- the Joint Control Platform. This is in addition to the platforms for the issuance of licenses for national holidays activities, renewal of licenses for the operations control system, inspection and monitoring the inspectors' performance, sources added.

Agency for Public Tenders attended the meeting.

In addition, the Public Funds Protection Committee discussed the Malaysian sovereign fund case with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Khalid Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of Finance Fahd Al-Jarallah, Minister of Justice and State Minister for Housing Affairs Fahd Al-Raqabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for National Assembly and Cabinet Affairs Essa Al-Kandari, and representatives of the Legal Advice and Legislation Department, Central Bank of Kuwait and Financial Investigations Unit.

The Human Rights Protection Committee discussed the contribution of Kuwait in supporting the Palestinian issue, as well as the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to enhance human rights in Kuwait through the National Council for Human Rights. They discussed the commitment of Kuwait to the enhancement of human rights as a member of the Human Rights Council, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attended the meeting.

The Health, Social and Labor Affairs Committee deliberated on bills regarding the establishment of the integrated health city; as the Assembly assigned the committee to discuss the problems related to the establishment of the health city. Representatives of the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) and Kuwait Investment Authority, and senior officials at the Ministry of Health attended the meeting.

The Human Resources Development Committee discussed the bill on the establishment of a public authority for recruitment and labor affairs and its task to investigate the rising number of recruitment letters that public institutions send to SAB to nominate individuals for certain positions. The meeting was held in the presence of the representatives of SAB and the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM).

Moreover, Kuwaiti National Assembly sought to bolster its sovereignty rights internationally via submitting draft resolutions to global entities such as Arab Parliament and others, MP Dr. Hamad Al-Matar said on Monday.

Speaking to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) following the coordinative meeting for GCC executive council at the sideline of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) in Ankara, MP Al-Matar stressed the importance of respecting Kuwait's sovereignty over its land and marine borders.

Al-Matar stated, "No one has the right to violate Kuwait's sovereignty by word or deed either about Khor Abdullah issue or Al-Durra offshore gas field".

Al-Matar said Kuwait's National Assembly will always adhered to an important principle of not interfering in other countries' internal affairs; therefore, all countries should also respect Kuwait's sovereignty.



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## World News Roundup

## Europe

## Wilders ally quits

## Russia puts spokesman for Meta on wanted list

MOSCOW, Nov 27, (Agencies): Russia has added the spokesman of US technology company Meta, which owns Facebook and Instagram, to a wanted list, according to an online database maintained by the country's interior ministry.

Russian state agency Tass and independent news outlet Mediazona first reported that Meta communications director **Andy Stone** was included on the list Sunday, weeks after Russian authorities in October classified Meta as a "terrorist and extremist" organization, opening the way for possible criminal proceedings against Russian residents using its platforms.

The interior ministry's database doesn't give details of the case against Stone, stating only that he is wanted on criminal charges. Meta didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.



Stone

According to Mediazona, an independent news website that covers Russia's opposition and prison system, Stone was put on the wanted list in February 2022, but authorities made no related statements at the time and no news media reported on the matter until this week.

In March this year, Russia's federal Investigative Committee opened a criminal investigation into Meta. It alleged that the company's actions following Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022 amounted to inciting violence against Russians.

After Russian troops moved into Ukraine, Stone announced temporary changes to Meta's hate speech policy to allow for "forms of political expression that would normally violate (its) rules, like violent speech such as 'death to the Russian invaders.'"

In the same statement, Stone added that "credible calls for violence against Russian civilians" would remain banned.

Mediazona on Sunday claimed that an unspecified Russian court issued an arrest warrant earlier this month for Stone on charges of "facilitating terrorism." The report didn't specify the source of that information, which couldn't be independently verified.



**Wilders ally quits over fraud allegation:** A party ally of far-right Dutch election winner Geert Wilders on Monday quit his role in the building of a new governing coalition over fraud allegations, throwing the process of creating a new government into turmoil before it had begun.

Gom van Strien, a senator for Wilders' Party for Freedom, was appointed last week as a "scout" to discuss possible coalitions. He was set to meet Wilders and other party leaders on Monday, but those meetings were canceled.

Van Strien has denied wrongdoing after Dutch media reported that he was embroiled in a fraud case. But on Monday morning, he issued a statement saying that "both the unrest that has arisen about this and the preparation of a response to it" hampered his work seeking a coalition.



**French labor minister goes on trial:** French Labor Minister Olivier Dussopt goes on trial on Monday over charges of favoritism related to a 2009 public sector contract passed when he was a mayor.

Dussopt is suspected of having favoured a private company, the Saur group, in the awarding of a water contract when he was the mayor of the small town of Annonay in the southeast of France, France's financial prosecutor's office said.

He has denied any wrongdoing. Speaking on France 3 national television earlier this month, Dussopt said: "I'm going before the court to prove I acted in good faith."

The investigation was launched in 2020 after investigative website Mediapart revealed possible links between Dussopt and a local manager of the Saur company.



**Heavy snowfall leaves 1 dead:** Heavy snowfall and strong blizzards in Romania and Moldova on Sunday left one person dead and hundreds of localities without electricity, as well as forcing the closure of some national roads, authorities said.

A 40-year-old man in Moldova died on Sunday after the vehicle he was in skidded off the road and crashed into a tree, Moldova's national police said, adding that six road accidents had been reported by about midday.

"We repeatedly appeal to drivers not to hit the road with unequipped cars and to drive at low speed," Moldovan police said in a statement posted on Telegram, and warned against driving "without an urgent need."



**Man disoriented, says lawyer:** An Italian man who was extradited from Germany for the kidnapping and slaying of his former girlfriend hasn't yet spoken about the "merits" of the accusations and will appear before a judge on Tuesday, his lawyer said.

The hearing before the judge to decide whether Filippo Turetta should stay jailed while the investigation proceeds will be his first occasion to formally respond to prosecutors' allegations that he kidnapped and killed Giulia Cecchittin, whose disappearance and slaying gripped Italy and fed demands for action to stop violence against women.

Turetta, 21, was flown aboard an Italian air force plane on Saturday from Germany to Italy. He had been held for several days in a German jail after he was found by police a week earlier in his car, out of gas and parked on an emergency shoulder of a German highway after days of an international search.



**6 alleged migrant traffickers arrested:** Greek police have arrested six people who they say are members of a large human trafficking gang that violently extorted money from migrants to assist them in crossing into neighboring Albania and travel to European Union countries to the north.

The six suspects - a Syrian, a Palestinian and four Iraqis - were arrested Saturday at a village less than 10 kilometers (six miles) from the Albanian border, police said Sunday.

Seven more members of the gang were arrested in the same area on Sept. 28. At that time, 11 migrants had been found detained in shacks and abandoned military outposts.

Police had said in September that the traffickers, who had already collected upwards of 1,000 euros (nearly \$1,100) from each of the migrants to help them cross into Albania, had detained them, demanding an additional 1,500 euros (\$1,640).



National Guard members take a staircase toward the US Capitol building before a rehearsal for President-elect Joe Biden's Presidential Inauguration in Washington on Jan. 18, 2021. Experts in constitutional law and the military say the Insurrection Act gives presidents tremendous power with few restraints. Recent statements by Trump raise questions about how he might

use it if he wins another term. Inset: In this June 1, 2020 file photo, Trump departs the White House to visit outside St John's Church, in Washington. Walking behind Trump from left are, Attorney General William Barr, Secretary of Defense Mark Esper and Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. (AP)

## Politics

## Third parties hope they can fill the gap

## Many voters weary about Biden-Trump rematch

PHOENIX, Nov 27, (AP): The 2024 presidential election is drawing an unusually robust field of independent, third party and long shot candidates hoping to capitalize on Americans' ambivalence and frustration over a likely rematch between Democrat Joe Biden and Republican Donald Trump.

Those looking to blaze a new path to the White House range from members of Congress to a prominent academic and a scion of one of the country's most prominent political families.

Their odds are exceedingly long. George Washington was the only person to win the presidency without a party affiliation. An incumbent hasn't lost his party's presidential nomination since Democrats passed over Franklin Pierce in 1856. Abraham Lincoln's election in 1860 marked the last time someone from a new party - in his case, the Republican Party - won the White House.

## Restless

But with the United States deeply divided and somewhat anxious about the prospect of another Biden-Trump campaign, third party candidates insist voters are restless enough to defy history.

"This is really fertile ground now for independent politics," Jill Stein, the Green Party nominee in 2012 and 2016, said in an interview. "There's so much hunger for a principled politics, a politics of integrity, and for options outside of the two zombie candidates that are being forced down our throats, and the two zombie political parties."

Little-known candidates with no chance of victory run every year and sometimes piece together enough votes to make a difference in close races, even if they don't win. But the activity this fall has been notable.

Stein, a physician and environmental activist, announced this month that she will make her third bid for the presidency in 2024, reversing course from her earlier decision to remain

## Trump hints at expanded role for military within the country

WASHINGTON, Nov 27, (AP): Campaigning in Iowa this year, Donald Trump said he was prevented during his presidency from using the military to quell violence in primarily Democratic cities and states.

Calling New York City and Chicago "crime dens," the front-runner for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination told his audience, "The next time, I'm not waiting. One of the things I did was let them run it and we're going to show how bad a job they do," he said. "Well, we did that. We don't have to wait any longer."

Trump has not spelled out precisely how he might use the military during a second term, although he and his advisers have suggested they would have wide latitude to call up units. While deploying the military regularly within the country's borders would be a departure from tradition, the former president already has signaled an aggressive agenda if he wins, from mass deportations to travel bans imposed on certain Muslim-majority countries.

A law first crafted in the nation's infancy would give Trump as commander in chief almost unfettered power to do so, military and legal experts said in a series of interviews.

The Insurrection Act allows presidents to call on reserve or active-duty military units to respond to unrest in the states, an authority that is not reviewable by the courts. One of its few guardrails merely requires the president to request that the participants disperse.

"The principal constraint on the president's use of the Insurrection Act is basically political, that presidents don't want to be the guy who sent tanks rolling down Main Street," said Joseph Nunn, a national security expert with the Brennan Center for Justice. "There's not much really in the law to stay the president's hand."

A spokesman for Trump's campaign did not respond to multiple requests for comment about what authority Trump might use to pursue his plans.

on the sidelines next year and support Cornel West, a scholar and progressive activist with a loyal following on the left. West announced last month that he no longer was running under the Green Party banner, but as an independent.

Stein said she has felt dissatisfaction with the major parties growing steadily since her first presidential campaign and "it's off the charts now."

Seventy-five percent of Americans think Biden should not run for president again, and 69% think Trump should not, according to an August poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Both men are underwater with their

approval ratings, meaning more Americans view them unfavorably than favorably.

Americans think Biden, 81, is too old and they are divided about criminal charges against Trump, 77, who has been indicted four times and is facing trial next year.

Nearly 80% said Biden is too old to be effective for four more years. About half of Americans approved of the Justice Department indicting Trump over his efforts to remain in office after losing the 2020 election to Biden.

Conscious of their candidates' middling approval ratings, Democrats and Republicans are watching the third-party campaigns with wariness.



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak arrives at the Global Investment Summit, at Hampton Court Palace, in East Molesey, Surrey, England on Nov 27. (AP)



Pescatore



Pope

## America

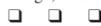
**4 dead near homeless camp:** Deputies responding to a call about shots fired in North Carolina on Sunday found four people shot to death in what appeared to be a campsite for homeless people, authorities said.

An initial review of the crime scene indicated someone killed three people before killing themselves, Sampson County Sheriff's Capt **Eric Pope** told WRAL-TV.

Two men and two women were found dead around a tent at the end of a private road riddled with huge potholes near Autryville, authorities said.

The names of the people killed have not been released and Pope said investigators are still collecting evidence to determine exactly how the shootings unfolded.

Autryville is about 55 miles (90 kilometers) south of Raleigh, the state capital. (AP)



**2 teens shot, suspect held:** Two teenagers were wounded in a shooting in a downtown Cleveland plaza about an hour after an annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony that drew hundreds of spectators, authorities said.

Police said a suspect was quickly arrested after the gunfire at about 8:45 pm Saturday in Public Square that critically wounded a 15-year-old boy and also injured a 13-year-old boy. The teens weren't identified, and no information was immediately released about the suspect.

Police said officers patrolling the area were told that a large group of juveniles had been fighting near the Soldiers and Sailors Civil War monument in the southeast quadrant of the square, and the two wounded teenagers were found in the area and taken to a hospital. (AP)



**Teen murder suspect escapes jail:** A 17-year-old murder suspect who had already escaped from a Louisiana youth jail broke loose again Saturday with another youth suspected of murder, police said.

The two 17-year-olds accused of murder escaped from the East Baton Rouge Juvenile Detention Center. In a news release, officials said they were investigating how the escape occurred. Baton Rouge police and the US Marshals Service have launched a search.

One of the youths, who has been charged with second-degree murder, previously escaped on Nov 13. The teenager and another detainee had fled as guards were putting

prisoners back in their cells after a fight broke out in the facility, The Advocate reported. They were apprehended after a search that lasted more than 24 hours.



Demonstrators follow a pickup truck down Interstate 225 after shutting down the highway during a rally and march over the death of 23-year-old Elijah McClain, June 27, 2020, in Aurora, Colo. The third and final trial over the 2019 death of Elijah McClain after he was stopped by police in suburban Denver involves homicide and manslaughter charges against two paramedics, a prosecution experts say enters largely uncharted legal territory by levying criminal charges against medical first responders. (AP)

The East Baton Rouge juvenile facility has been the target of criticism because of repeated escapes and violent episodes, according to the news outlet.

In 2021, five prisoners escaped after attacking a staffer, taking her keys and locking her inside a cell without a radio. Some of them also attacked staffers with makeshift knives. In February 2022, a fight involving eight teens left three of them injured.

East Baton Rouge Parish set aside \$2 million for security upgrades. After the escape in earlier November, parish officials said those upgrades were still in the planning and design phase. (AP)



**Man gets 24 to 40 yrs in slaying:** A man has pleaded guilty to third-degree murder in the shooting death of a south Philadelphia corner store owner on Christmas Eve nearly seven years ago.

Maurice Green, 38, was sentenced to serve from 24 to 40 years in state prison last week on the murder charge and a related gun offense in the 2016 murder of 81-year-old Marie Buck.

"To shoot an unarmed, helpless 81-year-old woman ... over a fight over a necklace is incomprehensible," said Common Pleas Judge Glenn Bronson, The Philadelphia Inquirer reported.

Prosecutor **Joanne Pescatore** said Green intended to kill another person he blamed for the theft of his \$5,500 gold chain but that person wasn't in the store that morning. (AP)

## Africa

## Attacks leaders held

## 'Consider all options to protect Darfur civilians'

CAIRO, Nov 27. (AP): An international watchdog urged the United Nations Security Council on Monday to consider all options to protect civilians in Sudan's Darfur region after the latest attacks on non-Arabs killed hundreds of civilians.

The paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, which was born out of the notorious Janjaweed militias, has been at war against the Sudanese military since mid-April, when months of tension exploded into open fighting in the capital, Khartoum, and other urban areas in the African nation. The conflict wrecked the country and forced more than 6 million people out of their homes, either to safer areas inside Sudan or to neighboring countries.

In the first week of November, the RSF and their allied Arab militias attacked the town of Ardamata, a few kilometers (miles) north of Geneina, the provincial capital of West Darfur, Human Rights Watch said. After taking over a military base in Ardamata, the attackers rampaged through the camp for displaced people and other nearby residential areas that were all largely inhabited by the African Masalit tribe and other non-Arab groups, according to the rights group.



Harward

More than 800 people were reportedly killed in the multi-day assault, according to the UN refugee agency.

People who fled Ardamata described a spree of killings, shelling, unlawful detentions, sexual violence, ill treatment, and looting in the town, HRW said. The RSF and their allied militias shot at civilians as they fled, and executed people in their homes, shelters, and in the streets, they said. A 45-year-old Masalit farmer said Arab militiamen accompanied by RSF vehicles entered the house where he was sheltering in Ardamata camp on Nov 7. They brought seven men to the front of the house, the man told HRW.

## Executed

"They told me to come out of the house," HRW quoted the man as saying. "The moment I came out, one or two of the Arabs shot at the seven men from close range. They immediately executed them."

Mohamed Osman, HRW's Sudan researcher, said the attack on Ardamata was the RSF's "latest episode of ethnically targeted killings," which bears the hallmarks of "an organized campaign of atrocities against Masalit civilians."

"The UN Security Council needs to stop ignoring the desperate need to protect Darfur civilians," he said. "Regional and international actors have ignored the alarms that survivors have raised for months on the risks of further atrocities in West Darfur."

A spokesperson for the RSF didn't respond to phone calls seeking comment. HRW also said the RSF didn't respond to its findings and questions.

Darfur, which was the scene of a genocidal conflict in the early 2000s, has witnessed some of the worst bouts of violence in the ongoing war. International Criminal Court's prosecutor Karim Khan said in July they were investigating alleged new war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur.

The RSF has stepped up its attacks across the western region in recent weeks, seizing many military bases. Fighting also intensified around a military base outside Khartoum earlier in November.

The RSF reportedly took many people captive in the Ardamata attack. Footage on social media purportedly shows fighters in RSF uniform and militiamen detaining and hitting people.

## Analyzed

HRW said it verified and analyzed five videos uploaded between Nov. 4-5 showing a group of at least 125 men and boys being forced to run toward Geneina Airport, east of Ardamata. Several of the men were visibly wounded, some limping, while one person was carried by four other men, the videos showed.

HRW was not able to determine what happened to any of the 125 people.

"The UN has been sickened by a series of videos on social media which appear to have been made by RSF and allied personnel abusing captives, as well as pictures of dead bodies in the streets of Ardamata," Toby Harward, UN's deputy humanitarian coordinator in Sudan, told The Associated Press on Nov 12.

The UNHCR reported extensive looting in the town, including UN humanitarian aid, and about 100 shelters were razed to the ground. At least 8,000 people have fled the town to neighboring Chad, joining at least 450,000 others, mostly women and children, who were forced out of their homes in similar attacks in West Darfur earlier this year, the agency said.

Satellite imagery taken the first week of November shows possible new graves and bodies in the street in Ardamata. Other imagery shows looting and arson in and around a camp for displaced people in the town.

"The Security Council needs to take concrete measures to address the gravity of the situation, roll out sanctions against key commanders, seek the release of those unlawfully detained, and support accountability efforts in the region," Osman, the researcher, said.

## Also:

**ABUJA, Nigeria:** Sierra Leone's president said most leaders of attacks on the nation's main military barracks and prisons had been arrested and normalcy had returned across the country after a 24-hour curfew was relaxed to a dusk-to-dawn lockdown.

The attacks early Sunday morning surprised residents and security forces in the West African nation and raised fears of a possible coup in a troubled region. But "most of the leaders" of the attacks now have been arrested and "calm has been restored," President Julius Maada Bio said in a Sunday night address.

Residents in the capital city of Freetown were awoken by sounds of heavy gunfire as gunmen tried to break into the key army in the country's largest military barracks, located near the presidential villa.

They engaged in sustained gunfire with security forces and targeted major detention centers - including the central prison holding more than 2,000 inmates - and freed or abducted an unconfirmed number of people, authorities said.

Videos on social media appeared to show dozens of inmates pouring into the streets to hurriedly escape around the same time that security forces were engaged in a shootout with the attackers on the outskirts of the city.

The attacks deepened political tension in West and Central Africa where coups have surged, with eight military takeovers since 2020, including in Niger and Gabon this year. West Africa's regional economic bloc ECOWAS - of which Sierra Leone is a member - described the attacks as a plot "to acquire arms and disturb the peace and constitutional order" in the country.



New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, (center), stands during the swearing-in ceremony at Government House in Wellington, New Zealand on Nov 27. Luxon, the 53-year-old former businessman, was officially sworn in as New Zealand's 42nd prime minister on Monday, and said his top priority was to improve the economy. (AP)

## Luxon sworn in as NZ premier, says priority is to improve economy

Christopher Luxon was sworn in as New Zealand's prime minister on Monday and said his top priority was to improve the economy.

The 53-year-old former businessman leads a conservative coalition after his National Party struck a deal Friday with two smaller parties following a general election last month.

After the swearing-in ceremony, which was presided over by Governor-General Cindy Kiro, Luxon told reporters the job was an "awesome responsibility."

He said he would hold his first Cabinet meeting

Tuesday and look to quickly finalize a 100-day plan. He said he also planned a visit to Australia before Christmas Day.

Luxon said he needed to get a Treasury briefing on the state of the government's finances.

"We are concerned and worried that it's been a deteriorating picture for a number of months now," Luxon said. Under the coalition agreement, Luxon has promised to deliver tax cuts and train 500 more police officers within two years.

He has also promised less government bureaucracy, including a 6.5% cut to the public service.

Luxon said it would be up to ministry chief executives to figure out how to make the cuts, whether by stopping programs, not filling vacancies or laying off some workers.

The new government also plans to repeal tobacco restrictions approved last year by the previous government, including requirements for low nicotine levels in cigarettes, fewer retailers and a lifetime ban for youth. Luxon said his government disagreed with parts of the policy, including concentrating distribution. He said smoking rates had been coming down for 30 years. (AP)

## Asia

## Philippines, Australia kick off joint patrols off SE Asia Sea

## North Korea restores border guard posts: Seoul

SEOUL, South Korea, Nov 27, (Agencies): North Korea is restoring front-line guard posts that it had dismantled during a previous period of inter-Korean rapprochement, South Korea's military said Monday, after animosities spiked between the rivals over the North's recent spy satellite launch.

The two Koreas previously dismantled or disabled 11 of their guard posts inside their heavily fortified border, called the Demilitarized Zone, under a 2018 deal meant to ease front-line military confrontations. But the deal is now in danger of being scrapped as both Koreas openly threaten to breach it.

The 2018 agreement required the two Koreas to halt aerial surveillance and live-fire exercises at no-fly and buffer zones that they established along the DMZ, as well as remove some of their front-line guard posts and land mines. The deal left South Korea with 50 board guard posts and North Korea with 150.

## Defensive

After North Korea claimed to place its first military spy satellite into orbit on Nov 21, South Korea said it would partially suspend the deal and resume aerial surveillance along the DMZ in response. South Korea said its response was "a minimum defensive measure" because the launch showed the North's intentions to strengthen its monitoring of the South and improve its missile technology.

North Korea immediately slammed South Korea's decision, saying it would deploy powerful weapons at the border in a tit-for-tat measure. The North said it also won't abide by the 2018 deal any longer.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said in a statement Monday that it

detected North Korea building guard posts at border sites where its dismantled guard posts once stood, and that North Korea deployed troops and heavy weapons there.

The ministry distributed to media outlets photos of North Korean soldiers building a guard post and moving a suspected recoilless rifle to a newly built trench.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol ordered the military to keep a close watch on the North and maintain a firm readiness, according to his office. The South Korean Defense Ministry later said it's ready to "promptly and strongly punish" North Korea over any provocation that it launches.

South Korea, the United States and others strongly condemned the North's satellite launch, which they viewed as a provocation that threatens regional peace. United Nations Security Council resolutions ban any satellite launches by North Korea because the world body regards them as covers for testing its long-range missile technology. North Korea says it has sovereign rights to launch spy satellites to cope with what it says are escalating US-led military threats.

## Also:

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr said Sunday that his country along with Australia began a joint sea patrols off the Southeast Asia, near southern China sea, amid rising tension over maritime dispute and after a similar drill taken days ago with the US.

President Marcos Jr said in a statement, on social media, that the two-day joint drill aims "to enhance bilateral interoperability in maritime security and domain awareness; test doctrines, existing protocols, and enhance effi-

ciency; and foster closer cooperation between our countries' armed forces."

"This inaugural Maritime Cooperative Activity and those that may follow are a practical manifestation of the growing and deepening strategic and defense partnership between our countries," Marcos Jr said.

"This highlights our shared commitment to supporting the rules-based international order and a more peaceful, secure, and stable Indo-Pacific region," Marcos Jr added.

**BEIJING:** Beijing called for a ceasefire in Myanmar after a coalition of ethnic fighters seized several crossings along Myanmar's border with China in the past month.

However, China will continue live-firing drills on its side of the frontier aimed at "testing the mobility, border control abilities and firepower capabilities of the military units so that the People's Liberation Army is ready for any emergency," the army newspaper PLA Daily said on Sunday.

Myanmar heavily relies on trade with China, especially for importing manufactured goods and exporting agricultural products. Unrest in Myanmar's border region has been a constant irritant to China, which nevertheless backed the military leaders who seized power in the Southeast Asian nation in 2021 from an elected government.

Yet China is highly wary of conflicts spilling over the shared border that is already rife with drug trafficking and people smuggling. Cybercrime targeting Chinese victims has become a major concern, and China has pushed hard to eliminate the groups based in Myanmar and other countries and to send the perpetrators back to China for prosecution.



The streets of Freetown, Sierra Leone, are empty on Nov 26. Sierra Leone's president said most leaders of attacks on the nation's main military barracks and prisons had been arrested and normalcy had returned across the country after a 24-hour curfew was relaxed to a dusk-to-dawn lockdown. (AP)



Barron



Sandoval

## Lat/Am

**Protesters board mining ship:** Greenpeace activists have boarded a deep-sea mining ship in the Pacific Ocean between Hawaii and Mexico and said Sunday they'll stay to protest exploration the ship is conducting to support activity that would destroy marine life.

Canada-based The Metals Company, whose subsidiary runs the ship, accused the protesters of endangering the crew and breaking international law.

The escalating conflict comes as international demand for critical minerals found on the seafloor grows, but an increasing number of countries say more research is needed into the environmental impacts of deep-sea mining.

Greenpeace began the protest Thursday by positioning kayaks beneath the ship, Coco, for up to 10 hours at a time to block it from deploying equipment to the water.

In response, the company's CEO Gerard Barron threatened an injunction on Saturday afternoon - according to correspondence shared by Greenpeace and reviewed by The Associated Press - alleging protesters broke international law and jeopardized the safety of crew members.

During the protest one kayak was capsized by propeller wash when Coco accelerated without warning, Greenpeace claims. Legal representatives from The Metals Company's subsidiary NORI said this was an example of how the protest was not safe.

No injunction has been filed yet, according to Greenpeace. The company said it would use all legal measures available to protect stakeholders' rights. (AP)

**Anti-mining activist body found:** Authorities in western Mexico said Sunday they have found the body of anti-mining activist Higinio Trinidad de la Cruz.

Prosecutors said De la Cruz's body was found on a rural road in the state of Jalisco

near the border with the neighboring state of Colima. They said de la Cruz appeared to have been shot to death.

The community group Tiskini said in a

statement that de la Cruz had been abducted on Saturday.

The group said he was an environmental and community activist in the Jalisco town

of Ayotitlan. De la Cruz had opposed both illegal logging and iron ore mining that have altered the environment of the rural community.

Jalisco state prosecutors said they were investigating the crime, but Tiskini called on federal prosecutors to take on the case.

The group also demanded protection for the inhabitants of Ayotitlan, saying it is "a community under siege by drug cartels that are plundering its lands and natural resources through illegal mining and logging." (AP)

## Cartel security boss arrest personal:

The US government thanked Mexico for arresting a hyper-violent alleged Sinaloa cartel security chief, but according to details released Friday, the detention may have been highly personal for the Mexican army.

Defense Secretary Luis Cresencio Sandoval said Nestor Isidro Pérez Salas, who was arrested Wednesday, had ordered a 2019 attack on an unguarded apartment complex where soldiers' families lived.

"He was the one who ordered the attack ... against our dependents, our families," Sandoval said.

The Oct 17, 2019 attack was a result of a humiliating failed effort to capture Sinaloa cartel leader Ovidio Guzman, one of the sons of imprisoned drug lord Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzman. Pérez Salas served as head of security for Guzman and his brothers, who are collectively known as the "Chapitos." Soldiers caught Guzman but later were ordered to release him to avoid bloodshed. (AP)



In this photo provided by South Korea Defense Ministry, South Korean army soldiers, wearing helmets, prepare to cross the Military Demarcation Line as North Korean army soldiers stand inside the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to inspect the dismantled North Korean guard post in the central section of the inter-Korean border in Cheorwon, on Dec 12, 2018. The sign read 'The Military Demarcation Line.' North Korea is restoring front-line guard posts that it had dismantled during a previous period of inter-Korean rapprochement, South Korea's military said on Nov 27, after animosities spiked between the rivals over the North's recent spy satellite launch. (AP)

## USD stable

The US Dollar's exchange rate with the Kuwaiti Dinar stabilized at KD 0.308, as did the Euro at KD 0.337 in contrast with yesterday's numbers, said the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) on Monday.

The CBK indicated, in its daily bulletin, that the exchange rate of the Sterling Pound was stable at KD 0.388, Swiss Franc at KD 0.349, and Japanese Yen at KD 0.002. (KUNA)

## Al Hamra Real Estate receives three ISO certifications from Bureau Veritas

Stemming from its ambitious vision and clear strategy, Al Hamra Real Estate was recently honored with three ISO certifications (International Organization for Standardization) from Bureau Veritas (BV), a global authority in testing, inspection, and certification services which is accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). These certifications included ISO 9001:2015 for Quality Management System (QMS), ISO 14001:2015 for Environment Management System (EMS), and ISO 45001:2018 for Occupational Health

& Safety Management System (OHSMS).

The three certifications highlight Al Hamra Real Estate's constant strive for excellence in line with its Enhancement Strategy, which has seen it effectively implement highly efficient and internationally recognized systems across multiple levels. They also signify the culmination of the company's constant endeavor to streamline and refine its internal systems and processes to align with international standards. By demonstrating its strength across the key operational aspects of

Quality, Health and Safety, and Environment (QHSE), Al Hamra Real Estate has demonstrated its corporate excellence, further solidifying its position as a leader in the business sector.

Commenting on this achieved excellence, Abrar Al Habeeb, Chief Administrative Officer and Acting General Manager of Al Hamra Real Estate, said: "As the owner of one of the most prominent and tallest skyscrapers in the region, we are honored by the recognition we have received through these certifications."



Al Hamra Tower

## Market Movements

27-11-2023

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts		
UAE	- DFM	+2.59	3,994.59	SAUDI	- Tadawul	-9.68	11,080.74
EGYOT	- EGX 30	+605.22	25,905.54	JAPAN	- Nikkei	-177.86	33,447.67
PHILLIPINES	- PSEI	+23.30	6,269.50				
PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	+600.71	59,774.05				

# Business

## Bursa Kuwait records 40.9% YoY corporate earnings growth

# Kuwait corporate earnings highlight robust banking sector performance

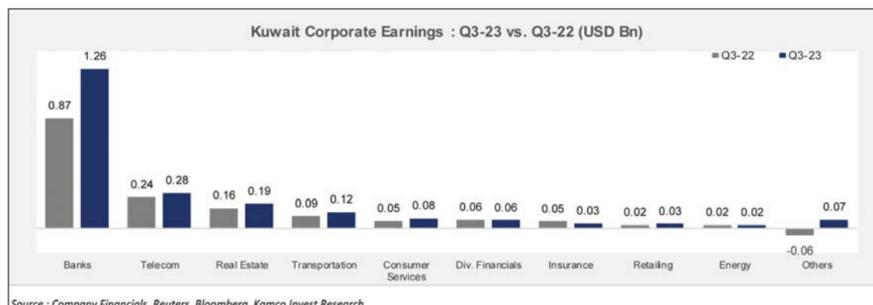
By Kamco Invest

**Banks, Telecoms and RE partially offset y-o-y profit decline in the GCC.**

Quarterly profits reported by GCC-listed companies once again showed a y-o-y decline in profits during Q3-2023 mainly led by a fall in energy and commodity prices. Most global commodity prices witnessed a decline during the quarter that was also reflected in the slide in the Bloomberg Commodity index by around 10% since the start of 2023. Moreover, average Brent spot price was down 14.0% in Q3-2023 as compared to Q3-2022, which was reflected in profits of listed energy companies in the GCC, including Aramco. A fall in profits for the Capital Goods and F&B sectors also added to the decline while profits for the Utilities sector was affected by higher financing costs as declared by the two biggest players in the sector. On the other hand, Banking sector profits once again remained resilient registering healthy q-o-q and y-o-y growth as lending grew in most markets despite higher interest rates. The Telecom sector also showed higher y-o-y profits as did Real Estate during Q3-2023.

Aggregate net profit for GCC-listed companies reached USD 62.3 Bn during Q3-2023 as compared to USD 72.9 Bn during Q3-2022 resulting in a double-digit y-o-y decline of 14.4%. Out of the 22 sectors in the region, profits for 12 sectors showed y-o-y declines while 10 sectors showed higher profits. At the country level, aggregates for Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi showed double-digits declines vs. last year while Bahraini companies showed a decline of 8.3%. On the other hand, Kuwait showed the biggest y-o-y earnings growth of more than 40% during Q3-2023, while Dubai and Omani aggregates showed equally healthy growth of 35.8% and 24%, respectively. Aggregate for Qatari companies was almost flat with a marginal y-o-y growth of 0.3%. In terms of q-o-q performance, aggregate GCC profits increased by 7.7% in Q3-2023 led by double-digit profit growth for companies listed on Oman and Dubai while Saudi and Qatari companies showed slightly smaller growth of 9.8% and 7.2%, respectively. On the other hand, Bahrain, Kuwait and Abu-Dhabi listed companies reported q-o-q decline in profits.

In terms of quarterly sectoral earnings performance, profits for the Energy sector witnessed a steep y-o-y decline of 20.2% or by USD 8.8 Bn to reach USD 34.9 Bn during Q3-2023. On the other hand, in terms of q-o-q performance, the sector witnessed profit growth of USD 4.0 Bn or 12.8% reflecting higher average prices during the quarter vs. Q2-2023. The Banking sector showed



Source: Company Financials, Reuters, Bloomberg, Kamco Invest Research

healthy q-o-q and y-o-y growth in profits during Q3-2023 reflecting higher interest rates in the region as most central banks replicated the rate hikes by the US Fed. The sector witnessed continued lending growth during the quarter despite higher interest rates mainly due to the resilient projects market in the region. Real Estate lending also remained healthy, especially in the UAE.

In terms of 9M-2023 earnings performance, the decline in profits this year was steep at USD 37.8 Bn and was almost completely driven by fall in profits in Saudi-listed companies by more than a quarter or USD 42 Bn while Qatari and Bahraini companies showed relatively smaller absolute decline as compared to 9M-2022. These declines were partially offset by double digit earnings growth in Dubai and Kuwait while Oman and Abu Dhabi aggregates showed slightly smaller y-o-y growth during 9M-2023. In terms of sectoral earnings performance during 9M-2023, the biggest impact came mainly from Energy, Materials and Capital Goods sectors that were partially offset by higher profits mainly in the Banking sector and the Telecom sector. Profits for the Energy sector declined by USD 31.2 Bn or 23.4% during 9M-2023 to reach USD 102.0 Bn while Materials sector showed a decline in profits to the tune of USD 12.1 Bn or 80.4% to USD 2.9 Bn as compared to USD 15.0 Bn during 9M-2022. The Materials sector was directly affected by the global economic slowdown as well as lower volumes in the commodity chemicals business. Utilities and Diversified Financials sectors also showed a sharp fall in profits during 9M-2023 while Real Estate showed y-o-y gains of more than a third as compared to last year. Profits for the Banking sector increased by USD

6.9 Bn or 20.8% to reach USD 40.3 Bn in 9M-2023 while Real Estate and Telecom companies showed profit growth of USD 1.4 Bn and USD 1.3 Bn to reach USD 5.7 Bn and USD 8.1 Bn, respectively.

### Kuwait

Corporate earnings for companies listed on Bursa Kuwait surged 40.9% y-o-y during Q3-2023 to reach USD 2.1 Bn as compared to USD 1.5 Bn in Q3-2022. The biggest impact on higher aggregate profits came from the Banking sector which showed 44.9% growth to reach USD 1.3 Bn in Q3-2023 from USD 0.9 Bn in Q3-2022. Among the banks, NBK reported a net profit of USD 504.2 Mn for Q3-2023 up by 14.6% compared to a net profit of USD 439.9 Mn in Q3-2022 mainly led by higher net operating income which increased by 9.9% to USD 966.7 Mn as a result of significant rise in net interest income and net income from Islamic financing. KFH reported a net profit of USD 414.8 Mn for Q3-2023 up by 90.0% compared to USD 218.3 Mn from the previous year due to the strong growth in both net operating income resulted from the increase in the net finance income as well as a decline in provisions booked during the quarter. The increase was also due to inclusion of earnings from AUB after the acquisition was completed in the last quarter of 2022. Net profit for 9M-2023 was up by 120%, also reflecting the impact of AUB acquisition. CBK turned to net profit of USD 96.9 Mn during Q3-2023 against a loss of USD 8.0 Mn in Q3-2022 led by higher net interest income coupled with reversal of impairment and provisions. Meanwhile, Burgan Bank reported a net profit of USD 38.9 Mn during the quarter as compared to a profit of USD 45.2 Mn during the Q3-2022 down by 13.9%. The

decrease is primarily attributed to the impact of its Turkish subsidiary's hyperinflation-related monetary loss.

Net Profits for the Telecom sector increased by 13.9% y-o-y to reach USD 277.3 Mn for Q3-2023 compared to USD 243.4 Mn for Q3-2022. Zain recorded a net profit of USD 195.8 Mn in Q3-2023 compared to USD 175.0 Mn in Q3-2022 an increase of 11.9%. Zain Group generated consolidated revenue of USD 1.5 Bn, up by 13.4% y-o-y due to the exceptional top-line performance of 11% growth mainly from KSA, Iraq, and Sudan. EBITDA for the quarter reached USD 594 Mn, up 7% y-o-y, resulting in an EBITDA margin of 38%. OOREDOO recorded a net profit of USD 54.5 Mn in Q3-2023 vs USD 38.7 Mn in Q3-2022, up by 41.0%. Meanwhile, STC Kuwait posted a decline of 9.3% in net profit that reached USD 27.0 Mn for Q3-2023 compared to USD 29.7 Mn during the Q3-2022.

Profits for the Real Estate sector reached USD 188.9 Mn in Q3-2023 compared to a net profit of USD 155.5 Mn in Q3-2022. Int'l Financial Advisors Co. posted a net profit of USD 32.5 Mn for Q3-2023 against a profit of USD 8.1 Mn led by the gain on the settlement of a legal case and increase in the share of results of associates of joint venture. Profits reported by Munshaat Real Estate Projects Co. increased multi folds to USD 25.0 Mn against a net profit of USD 1.8 Mn mainly led by an increase in net operating revenue and increase in the net income from investment properties. Similarly, First Dubai for Real Estate Development recorded a net profit of USD 8.8 Mn for Q3-2023 compared to a net profit of USD 2.5 Mn in Q3-2022 led by increase in the gain of investment properties. Meanwhile, Al-Argan International Real Estate Co. posted a net loss of USD 4.4 Mn during Q3-2023 compared to a net profit in Q3-2022 of USD 2.5 Mn in net profit.

The turnaround in profits for the Capital Goods sector from a loss of USD 100.7 Mn in Q3-2022 to a profit of USD 15.8 Mn in Q3-2023 was mainly led by smaller losses of USD 10.4 Mn reported by ALAFCO Aviation Lease & Finance Co. during the quarter as compared to a bigger loss of USD 60.8 Mn during Q3-2022 mainly due to the impairment that was recorded in the previous year. Higher profits for the Gulf Cable & Electrical Ind. Co. that reached USD 5.6 Mn during the quarter as compared to a profit of USD 1.7 Mn in Q3-2022. The increase in profits was due to the increase in the dividend income. Similarly, Food, Beverage & Tobacco sector posted a net profit of USD 7.2 Mn for Q3-2023 compared to a net loss of USD 26.9 during Q3-2022 led by Mezzan Holding Co. which posted a net profit of USD 7.0 Mn vs. a loss of USD 27.1 Mn primarily due to the improvement in gross margin which was up by 21.4%.

# Kuwait's 'startup' ecosystem struggles amid global decline

Startup funding drops by 38.3% to \$25.7 mln

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Prior to the "Corona" pandemic, Kuwait stood at the forefront of establishing startups and small projects, attracting global investors. However, in 2022, Kuwaiti "Startups" faced a decline in attracting investment capital across all sectors, with its share amounting to only \$25.7 million out of the three billion dollars raised by startups in the Middle East and North Africa region. This marked a significant decrease of \$16 million, or 38.3%,**

**compared to the \$41.7 million raised in 2021.**

A report from the Wamda platform, specializing in emerging business incubators in the Middle East, revealed that Qatar and Bahrain surpassed Kuwait in fundraising during the year. Qatar secured \$36.7 million, and Bahrain raised \$124.7 million, while Kuwaiti startups only managed to raise \$5 million. This decline contrasts with the past when Kuwait was seen as a leading incubator for emerging companies in the Gulf, producing strong regional companies like the food delivery platform Talabat, acquired by Delivery Hero for \$170 million. However, recent years have seen Kuwait lag behind its more active neighbors due to a less supportive environment.

The report highlighted the transformation of the startup scene in

the Middle East and North Africa after the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, emphasizing the need for Kuwait to diversify its economy and reduce reliance on oil. The previous government aimed to achieve this through initiatives like the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development and Care, along with the Industrial Bank of Kuwait, as the sole government entities to finance emerging companies.

Hassan Zainal, the founder and managing partner of Arzan Venture Capital, identified three main sources of financing in Kuwait: private equity, the public market, and venture capital. He noted that individual investors in Kuwait prefer investing in public markets, perceiving it as a safer option. Zainal added that the majority of investment capital in the country is concentrated in the real estate sector, given the consistent rise in land value, providing an attractive and less risky return for investors.

## Companies eye upgrade to premier market amid trading dynamics

## Bursa anticipates surge in market upgrades

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: The existing trading dynamics on the Bursa Kuwait suggest a potential surge in companies looking to upgrade from the Main Market to the Market.

This inclination is fueled by the realization of required rates and technical prerequisites well in advance of the annual closings, notably concerning the entity's market value of total issued securities, set at a minimum of 78 million dinars, reports Al-Rai daily.

Examining trading statistics, rates, and daily liquidity volumes in stocks, speculation is mounting about several companies making the transition to the premier market during the upcoming stock exchange annual review.

The opportunity persists for more companies to meet the transition criteria, including specific liquidity ratios for the two preceding years before the annual review.

To facilitate this process, the Bursa Kuwait has established watch lists for companies, designating those eligible for the premier market despite lacking certain requirements.

Simultaneously, reports indicate that some companies will be shifted from the main index to the "Main 50" during the upcoming review, leveraging recent market momentum to meet qualification criteria.

Despite major investors and stock traders maintaining strategic positions in leading stocks, recent market activity, led by medium- and small-cap stocks, has diverted liquidity from this category.

Significant market gains, ranging from 50 to 250 percent since the year's commencement, particularly in the third quarter, have influenced traders' perspectives.

These gains, distributed across various groups of companies, have revitalized activity in both the primary and main markets.

This momentum has prompted a positive outlook among traders, with indicators rebounding and foreign institutions actively participating in the market.

The daily trading pace remains dynamic, subject to occasional corrections and profit-taking, underscoring the finite nature of market rises.

Investment sources reveal that portfolios, funds, and asset management sectors actively participated in daily trading, seizing opportunities for lucrative returns.

Market dynamics reflect a shift in the investment landscape, with speculative liquidity transitioning from short-term to medium- and long-term perspectives.

This change has stabilized the trading of certain stock groups, indicating that these parties, in collaboration with financially solvent owners and companies, are driving market trends.

In a noteworthy development, the Gulf Insurance Group Company's Ordinary General Assembly approved the exit from the Syrian market and the sale of its stake in the Syrian Kuwaiti Insurance Company.

This strategic move is expected to yield a net profit of \$49.08 thousand (15.17 thousand dinars), alongside currency difference losses of 7.5 million dinars, pending completion of the deal after regulatory procedures.

The decision aligns with the company's aim to optimize its portfolio and capitalize on more lucrative opportunities.

## Company sponsors 6th Kuwait Corrosion Conference

## Zain reveals digitization solutions to transform Kuwait's key industries

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: In a move to reflect its role in accelerating the digital transformation of Kuwait's key industries, Zain announced its sponsorship and participation in the 6th Kuwait Corrosion Conference and Exhibition, organized by the Association for Materials Protection and Performance (AMPP) - Kuwait Chapter.

The event hosted some of the country and region's biggest oil, gas, and energy players, and was attended by CEO of the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) Wadha Al Khateeb.

The company's participation in this prominent event reflected the role it continues to play as one of the private sector's main digital transformation enablers, empowering companies and government agencies from across key industries to embrace digitization.

This is especially true within the local oil & gas sector, which is considered the backbone of the nation's economy, as Kuwait is one of the world's biggest oil producers.

Through its dedicated booth at the event, Zain showcased a wide range of digital solutions, cloud services, and other key applications it offers to oil,



Al Khateeb with Zain officials at the company's booth.

gas, and energy companies to digitize their workflows and elevate efficiency.

This includes solutions to monitor and evaluate the integrity of oil assets, reduce risks of corrosion in pipelines and other facilities, and more by using drones and other advanced tech tools.

In recent years, Zain has doubled down on its strategic efforts to digitalize the local oil & gas

industry.

The company heavily invested in tech solutions such as 5G, drones, digital applications, managed cloud services, and more to empower companies to embrace digitalization.

Zain offers a number of key tools to oil & gas companies, including migrating infrastructures to more agile ones on the cloud, leveraging on 5G technologies, as well as a wide range of reliable, secure, and efficient datacenter, cloud, and connectivity solutions.

The company also covers an extensive range of cybersecurity solutions, as well as rig connectivity tools through its UAV division, Zain Drones.

The 6th Kuwait Corrosion Conference and Exhibition covered a wide range of topics that are having an increasing impact on the oil, gas, and energy industries, such as digital transformation, artificial intelligence, big data, and cloud computing.

These technologies and more are paving the way for a new era for this vital industry, helping companies and governments elevate efficiency, increase productivity, reduce risks, and achieve sustainable goals.

## Biden to convene new supply chain council & announce 30 steps to improve US logistics

WASHINGTON, Nov 27, (AP): US President Joe Biden on Monday will convene the first meeting of his supply chain resilience council, using the event to announce 30 actions to improve access to medicine and needed economic data and other programs tied to the production and shipment of goods.

"We're determined to keep working to bring down prices for American consumers and ensure the resilience of our supply chains for the future," said Lael Brainard, director of the White House National Economic Council and a co-chair of the new supply chain council.

The announcement comes after supply chain problems fueled higher inflation as the United States recovered from the pandemic in 2021. While consumer prices are down from last year's peaks, polling shows that inflation

remains a political challenge for Biden going into the 2024 presidential election.

Among the 30 new actions, Biden will use the Defense Production Act to have the Health and Human Services Department invest in the domestic manufacturing of needed medicines that are deemed crucial for national security. The Cabinet agency has identified \$35 million to invest in the production of materials for injectable medicines.

The federal government will also improve its ability to monitor supply chains through the sharing of data among agencies. The Commerce Department has developed new tools to assess risks to the supply chain and has partnered with the Energy Department on the supply of renewable energy resources.

## BUSINESS

### Day of action

Labor unions staged a day of protests and strikes across the Czech Republic on Monday to voice their opposition to the government's package of cuts and austerity measures meant to keep the ballooning deficit under control.

The unions are also demanding more money for the education and healthcare sectors and are protesting proposed changes to the pension system.

Prime Minister Petr Fiala said his government was not ready to give in because the measures are "absolutely necessary." (AP)

Facebook parent Meta Platforms deliberately engineered its social platforms to hook kids and knew - but never disclosed - that it had received millions of complaints about underage users on Instagram but only disabled a fraction of those accounts, according to a newly unsealed legal complaint described in reports from The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times.

The complaint, originally made public in redacted form, was the opening salvo in a lawsuit filed in late October

by the attorneys general of 33 states.

According to the reports, Meta said in a statement that the complaint misrepresents its work over the past decade to make the online experience safe for teens and said it doesn't design its products to be addictive to younger users. Meta didn't immediately provide a comment on the unredacted complaint following a request from The Associated Press.

Company documents cited in the complaint described several Meta of-

ficials acknowledging that the company designed its products to exploit shortcomings in youthful psychology such as impulsive behavior, susceptibility to peer pressure and the underestimation of risks, according to the reports. Others acknowledged that Facebook and Instagram were also popular with children under age 13, who, per company policy, were not allowed to use the service.

One Facebook safety executive alluded to the possibility that cracking down on younger users might hurt the

company's business in a 2019 email, according to the Journal report. But a year later the same executive expressed frustration that while Facebook readily studied the usage of underage users for business reasons, it didn't show the same enthusiasm for ways to identify younger kids and remove them from its platforms.

The complaint noted that at times Meta has a backlog of up to 2.5 million accounts of younger children awaiting action, according to the reports. (AP)

### 'Meta knowingly designed its platforms to hook kids'

### Zhongzhi says it's insolvent

# Beijing police investigate major Chinese shadow bank

HONG KONG, Nov 27, (AP): Police are investigating suspected crimes of a Chinese wealth company owned by Zhongzhi Enterprise Group, according to the Beijing Public Security Bureau, days after the firm told investors it was insolvent.

In a statement published on the social media platform WeChat over the weekend, the police said they had taken "criminal enforcement measures" against several suspects to investigate and had urged affected investors to lodge a complaint.

"Investors are requested to actively cooperate with the police in investigating and collecting evidence and safeguard their rights and interests through legal channels," the statement said.

Authorities did not specify what crimes they were investigating. In the past, defaults or other troubles in the financial sector have prompted protests by aggrieved investors.

Zhongzhi, which is based in Beijing, did not immediately respond to an email for comment and phone calls to a number listed for the company did not connect.

The investigation came after media reports last week that Zhongzhi had apologized to investors in a letter, saying it was insolvent with up to \$64 billion in liabilities. That far exceeds its total assets of about \$28 billion.

Zhongzhi is one of China's largest shadow banks, companies that provide financial services similar to banks while operating outside of banking regulations. It began showing signs of trouble in August when its subsidiary Zhongrong International Trust missed payments on some of its investment products.

As one of the major Chinese shadow banks, Zhongzhi has lent billions of yuan (dollars) for real estate dealings. The property sector is currently embroiled in a debt crisis, with many of China's big developers having either

defaulted or remaining at risk of default after the government restricted borrowing beginning in 2021.

To prevent troubles spilling into the economy from the property sector, Chinese regulators have drafted a list of 50 developers eligible for financing support, according to a Bloomberg report last week that cited unnamed people familiar with the matter.

Real estate drove China's economic boom, but developers borrowed heavily as they turned cities into forests of apartment and office towers. That has helped to push total corporate, government and household debt to the equivalent of more than 300% of annual economic output, unusually high for a middle-income country.

Zhongzhi Enterprise Group has investments spanning real estate, mining, semiconductors and vehicle manufacturing. It was founded in 1995 in north-eastern China's Heilongjiang province.

### Turned down for a loan

Business owners looking to family and 'crowdsourcing' to get money to grow

NEW YORK, Nov 27, (AP): Among the many challenges small businesses face as they try to grow these days, getting a loan is right near the top.

Banks big and small have tightened lending standards as the Federal Reserve hiked up interest rates the past two years. The collapse of three regional banks this spring and the possibility of stricter regulations have likely made some banks more cautious as well.

So, business owners are having to make sacrifices, from turning to crowdsourcing instead of lenders, borrowing from family or friends, or simply forgoing expansion plans that would have been funded by more capital.

According to the Federal Reserve, which surveys senior bank loan officers quarterly, about 49% of banks said they had tightened lending standards for small firms - those with less than \$50 million in annual sales - during the July to September quarter, up from 22% in the same period last year. Loan officers cited an increasingly uncertain economic outlook as one reason for the tightening.

Biz2Credit data tells a similar story. Back in June 2022, big banks approved 15.4% of small business loan applications. The figure has dipped every month since and was at 13% in October. At smaller banks, about one in five funding requests were approved - far from the 50% approval rate pre-pandemic.

Meanwhile, interest rates have jumped. The average interest rate paid on short term loans was 9.1% in October, up sharply from 6.7% in the same period a year ago, and 4.9% the year before that, according to the National Federation of Independent Business.

All those factors have added up to a grim environment if you're a small business seeking a loan.

Cheyenne Smith in Salt Lake City, Utah, founded Dakota Ridge, which makes cowboy rain boots for kids, in 2021 with savings from a previous corporate job and money borrowed from her 401(k) retirement plan, about \$80,000 total.

### Inventory

Smith quickly realized she needed more money up front than she'd originally thought to build up her inventory. Without two years of tax returns, however, she didn't qualify for many small business loans. Online lenders were quick to offer their services, but the terms were too strict, requiring weekly repayments or interest rates up to 40%. Online lenders approve more loans than traditional banks, but often at higher interest rates.

"It was a nightmare to try and access funding," she said. With no other options, she borrowed about \$30,000 from her mother at the end of 2022.

"A lot of people don't have that opportunity," she said. "And I'm very lucky, and I'm aware of that privilege to have that opportunity, not only for the cash up front from my 401(k), but also to have family members that are willing to invest."

Higher interest rates have proven nearly insurmountable for Shantell Chambliss. She owns Non-profitability, a consulting firm in Richmond, Va., that works with nonprofits and faith-based organizations to grow their business.

She started her business in 2017 and grew it without outside financing. This May, Chambliss came

up with an expansion plan for her business that would require hiring more people and investing in technology. She realized she needed a loan to get the plan going.

Her goal was to get a \$25,000 loan. Her bank, Capital One, denied her the loan but did give her a small increase for her credit card that provided \$3,000 in available credit. "Not nearly enough," she said. Her personal bank similarly turned her down.

Chambliss tried to go the non-traditional route and was approved for a larger loan of \$11,500 at an online lender, but the interest rates were so high it didn't make sense to accept, she said. The lowest rate she was quoted was 27%.

"For a small business that is not only intimidating, it's almost impossible," she said.

For now, she's paused the expansion plan. She's putting plans in place for a crowdfunding effort in January, calling it the "only logical next step."

"We're going to keep working, but right now it really just feels like being a hamster in a wheel," she said. "And I don't feel like anyone is coming to save us."

### Investments

Some small businesses are putting off projects because of the environment. Nate Hodge co-founded Raaka Chocolate in 2010 by seeking funding from long-term investors. He's relied on them for working capital investments since.

But post-pandemic, Hodge and his partner started seeking funding from banks and online lenders instead of their investors to do some remodeling. He was shocked by the lending environment. From online lenders, he was seeing interest rates of 19%-plus.

He turned back to his investors for private loans instead. Still, the loans weren't enough for some renovation plans they had for their warehouse space, including putting in flooring and removing some walls.

"We had to put that off because we couldn't find good financing," he said. "It's definitely frustrating. It feels kind of predatory the way that some of these (online) lenders present loans to small businesses."

Jen Rose started her business, Bee Cups, which sells small garden installations that capture water to feed pollinators, in Dallas, Texas, out of her garage during the pandemic.

She has found loans, but it has been a struggle - and she's seen first-hand the effect of rising rates. Seeking a \$350,000 loan to buy a warehouse after she outgrew her garage, she was turned down by two banks, despite having enough money for a down payment.

She sought recommendations for other banks to try, and had success at Comerica Bank, inking a deal with an enviable 3.8% interest rate at the end of 2021.

In August she closed on a second loan with Comerica for about \$400,000 for an adjoining property. But this time, credit rates had tightened and the interest rate nearly doubled to 7%.

Still, Rose said she felt like she didn't have much choice in taking the loan, particularly since the rate is still lower than the average.

"If I could have waited a little while longer, I would have," she said. "(But) the space came available and it was kind of like I needed to grab it if it was ever going to happen."

# Kyiv shipping more grain through the Black Sea despite threat from Russia



A farmer operates a tractor at a cornfield in Sumy region, Ukraine, on Friday, Nov. 24, 2023. A local agricultural company operating just a few kilometers from the border with Russia continues to grow grains despite facing dangers of shelling and mines. (AP)

## Over 300,000 metric tons of grain shipped

**KYIV, Ukraine, Nov 27, (AP): Grain thunders into rail cars and trucks zip around a storage facility in central Ukraine, a place that growing numbers of companies turned to as they struggled to export their food to people facing hunger around the world.**

Now, more of the grain is getting unloaded from overcrowded silos and heading to ports on the Black Sea, set to traverse a fledgling shipping corridor launched after Russia pulled out of a U.N.-brokered agreement this summer that allowed food to flow safely from Ukraine during the war.

"It was tight, but we kept working ... we sought how to accept every ton of products needed for our partners," facility general director Roman Andreikiv said about the end of the grain deal in July. Ukraine's new corridor, protected by the military, has now allowed him to "free up warehouse space and increase activity."

Growing numbers of ships are streaming toward Ukraine's Black Sea ports and heading out loaded with grain, metals and other cargo despite the threat of attack and floating explosive mines. It's giving a boost to Ukraine's agriculture-dependent economy and bringing back a key source of wheat, corn, barley, sunflower oil and other affordable food products for parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia where local prices have risen and food insecurity is growing.

"We are seeing renewed confidence among commercial operators keen to take Ukrainian grain cargoes," said Munro Anderson, head of operations for Vessel Protect, which assesses war risks at sea and provides insurance with backing from Lloyd's, whose members make up the world's largest insurance marketplace.

Ihor Osmachko, general director of Agroprosperis Group, one of Ukraine's biggest agricultural producers and exporters, says he's feeling "more optimistic than two months ago."

"At that time, it was completely unclear how to survive," he said.

Since the company's first vessel departed in mid-September, it says it has shipped more than 300,000 metric tons of grain to Egypt, Spain, China, Bangladesh, the Netherlands, Tunisia and Turkey.

After ending the agreement brokered by the U.N. and Turkey, Russia has attacked Ukraine's Black Sea ports - a vital connection to global trade - and grain infrastructure, destroying enough food to feed over 1 million people for a year, the U.K. government said.

The risk to vessels is the main hurdle for the

new shipping corridor. Russia, whose officials haven't commented on the corridor, warned this summer that ships heading to Ukraine's Black Sea ports would be assumed to be carrying weapons.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that allies had agreed to provide ships to help his country protect commercial vessels in the Black Sea but that more air defense systems were needed. "Air defense is in short supply," he told reporters Saturday at an international food security summit in Kyiv. "But what's important is that we have agreements, we have a positive signal and the corridor is operational."

While a deadly missile strike on the port of Odesa hit a Liberian-flagged commercial ship this month, not long afterward, insurers, brokers and banks teamed up with the Ukrainian government to announce affordable coverage for Black Sea grain shipments, offering shippers peace of mind.

Despite such attacks, Ukraine has exported over 5.6 million metric tons of grain and other products through the new corridor, U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Bridget Brink tweeted Friday. Before the war, it was nearly double that per month, Ukrainian Deputy Economy Minister Taras Kachka said.

"The way that they're transporting right now, it's certainly much more expensive and time consuming," said Kelly Goughary, a senior research analyst at agriculture data and analytics firm Gro Intelligence.

"But they are getting product out the door, which is better than I think many were anticipating with the grain initiative coming to an end," she said.

Farmers also are facing low prices for their grain, which makes sending trucks to Odesa's often-attacked port not worth the risk for one agricultural company near the front line.

Instead, Slavhorod, which farms near the border with Russia in the Sumy province that faces daily shelling, has chosen to store its peas, wheat, soybeans, sunflower and corn in warehouses.

There's risk in keeping the 3,500-hectare (8,650-acre) farm running at all: Signs warned of explosive mines near where workers were collecting corn in a field 3 kilometers (nearly 2 miles) from Russia.

But "who, if not us? It's the only industry that brings some income to the country," said Slavhorod's chief agronomist, Oleksandr Kubrakov, who survived driving over a mine last year.

But it's becoming increasingly challenging to maintain morale.

"This year, there is less enthusiasm because grain prices are low, the product remains near the border and at any moment" it could be destroyed, he said. "It's a big risk."

Since the war started, Ukraine has struggled to get its food supplies to countries in need. Even during the yearlong U.N. deal, when Ukraine shipped nearly 33 million metric tons of food, Russia was accused of slowing down ship inspections required to be done by all sides.

"That corridor worked in an unpredictable way for us," said Mykola Horbachov, president of the Ukrainian Grain Association.

Now, the Ukrainian military decides when it's safe to sail.

"This may incur additional costs, but it is still more predictable than it was before," Horbachov said.

Osmachko of Agroprosperis Group agrees. Before the invasion, the exporter paid \$50 per metric ton to ship grain through the Black Sea. Alternatives since the war - including river routes through Europe - cost the company nearly three times more, Osmachko said. Under Ukraine's new corridor, the company pays \$70 to \$80 per metric ton. "It's more efficient, more profitable," he said.

Plus, Ukraine's shipping corridor allows vessels to travel less in dangerous areas compared with the grain deal and avoid those often-delayed inspections, said Anderson of Vessel Protect.

Agroprosperis Group no longer needs to pay for ships to wait around. Inspection delays cost the company \$30 million in losses during the yearlong grain deal, Osmachko said.

While the delays are gone, there still "is military risk, safety risk, war risk. And not all of the insurance companies are ready to take this risk," Osmachko said.

To ease that hurdle, an insurance program launched this month to provide affordable coverage to shippers carrying food from Ukraine's Black Sea ports. The partnership between insurance broker Marsh McLennan, Lloyd's, two Ukrainian state banks and the government offers up to \$50 million for each of two types of coverage protecting against damage and other losses.

In another boost, a humanitarian program was extended Saturday that donates Ukrainian grain to nations facing food shortages with support from countries worldwide. Next, it will bring enough grain to help nearly 400,000 people in Nigeria, Zelenskyy said.

The goal for the new shipping corridor is to export at least 6 million metric tons of grain a month, Ukrainian Agriculture Minister Mykola Solskyi said. It has a lot of work to do: Ukraine exported 4.3 million metric tons of grain in October through all routes, the ministry said.

"We maintain cautious optimism, based on the fact that we have been fighting before and will continue to fight further," he said.

## PHILANTHROPY

## Business Plus



Mixed signals in landscape of charitable giving

## Nonprofits struggle with declining donations, seek support



Sgt. Kevin Fowler organizes food at a food bank distribution by the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, on Jan. 7, 2021, in Cleveland. Supporting nonprofits on GivingTuesday this year could have a bigger impact than usual as nonprofits and industry groups say donations so far are down compared with previous years. (AP)

Supporting nonprofits on GivingTuesday this year could have a bigger impact than usual. Why? Because nonprofits and industry groups say donations so far are down compared with previous years.

‘We are super, super optimistic about what the year-end is going to look like’

Many organizations will look to make up the difference on GivingTuesday, the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, which started as a hashtag in 2012 and has grown into one of the biggest fundraising dates on the calendar. Many nonprofits will run matching campaigns, meaning a supporter has pledged to double or sometimes triple the donation of other, smaller donors.

Combine that boost with businesses that match employee donations and it can really add up, said Tim Pries, who runs a small production studio in the Bay Area matching employee gifts to nonprofits of up to \$1,000.

“It’s just kind of exponential, which makes me happy in my heart that a little bit goes a much longer way, especially on that day,” Pries said.

A large amount of charitable giving happens at the end of the calendar year, coinciding with the holidays and the time when some donors will consider the tax benefits of giving.

Large organizations offering donor-advised funds, which are financial vehicles for charitable giving, host webinars and put out reports to encourage their account holders to consider where and how much they want to give while they are gathered with their families before Thanksgiving, said Amy Pirozzolo, head of donor engagement at Fidelity Charitable.

Her organization forecasts grants from their donors will increase compared to last year, saying \$9 billion has been granted as of the end of

October, before the end-of-year bump which can account for 30% of the total. Last year, some \$11.2 billion was granted from its DAF accounts.

“We are super, super optimistic about what the year-end is going to look like,” Pirozzolo said.

The rosy forecast for end-of-year giving from organizations like Fidelity Charitable contrasts with warnings from organizations like the National Council of Nonprofits, which said in an August report that many organizations anticipate falling financial support this year. That would follow the trend of charitable giving in 2022, which dropped for only the fourth time in 40 years.

Perhaps more concerning for nonprofits, the Giving USA report found fewer people are donating at all, with less than half of Americans giving to charity in 2022 compared with more

than two-thirds who gave in 2000.

The trend, though, is different for affluent Americans, whose charitable contributions have made up a larger and larger share of overall donations. The recent 2023 Bank of America Study of Philanthropy found households with a net worth of more than \$1 million or annual income of more than \$200,000 are still giving 19% more than before the pandemic.

The bifurcated trends mean many organizations will target their wealthiest supporters, though the harsh reality is that even they may pull back on donations because of larger economic forces, like high interest rates, a dragging stock market and persistent inflation.

Other nonprofits, though, aim to rally support from the communities they seek to serve, and GivingTuesday can help with that. Board member

Natasha Andrews, of LIVE; Indiana, a nonprofit in Fort Wayne, which focuses on suicide prevention among young people, said they’ve been preparing for months for GivingTuesday and will launch social media campaigns and reach out to former donors by email.

“We like to really bring out a lot of the statistics at that time,” she said. “A lot of the information to really, truly educate people on why it’s important to give their money to our organizations.”

But they also run regular events throughout the year to raise their profile as a place where teenagers can seek help and to spread awareness of emergency resources, she said.

Ciara Coleman, who works for a large philanthropic foundation, approached the fundraising problem from the angle of a donor when she started a giving circle in New Orleans to support women and girls in her city. Her professional experience had taught her that too often, decision-makers in philanthropy overlooked her community.

“I gathered nine of my friends at the time and just had this conversation about reshaping philanthropy because I was frustrated with the roles being dominated by white men,” Coleman said. Since it was founded in 2021, the giving circle, Geaux Girl Giving, has donated \$50,000 to 30 organizations in grants that range from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

She and the other members also volunteer, serve as mentors and open their networks to their grantees and the people those organizations serve, which she sees as embodying the original, Greek meaning of the word philanthropy. That is, “the love of humanity, which never was, I think, intended to mean solely those who write a large check,” Coleman said. “But those who really have a love for people and tap into all of their resources in order to exude that love for others.”

Ultimately, many donors are motivated to give by deep personal connections to causes or issues or because someone they know asks them.

When asked how he decides where to give, Jacob Qualls, a business consultant in Chicago, grabbed a manilla envelope on his desk and sifted through his giving receipts from the past year. Many of his donations have supported education in some way, though he’s also supported disaster relief and medical research.

Qualls wasn’t planning to donate specifically on GivingTuesday, though he said if an organization or person he knows reaches out to him, he may respond. There are other occasions that move him more, he said, like the 100th anniversary of his fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha, which he gave to this year, or his alma mater, Morehouse College, which fundraises at other times of the year.

“It can be anchored towards our founding date, it can be anchored towards, yes, GivingTuesday and or homecoming and or other things that are relevant to potential donors,” he said. (AP)

## Why do they give?

## Donors speak about what moves them and how they plan end-of-year donations

What motivates people to donate to charities or causes they care about is often deeply personal. Donors name relatives or friends who have survived or died from illnesses. They recount tearful conversations with their children. They point to their aspirations for how their communities and the larger world could be improved.

In advance of GivingTuesday, The Associated Press interviewed people from across the country with a variety of life experiences about why they give, which organizations they choose to support and how they plan their giving throughout the year.

While not all will participate in GivingTuesday, which started in 2012 as a hashtag, the date has become a central part of nonprofit fundraising and a kind of last chance to meet their budget goals for the following year.

These interviews have been edited for length.

**HOUSTON:** A longtime resident of Houston, Monica Fulton, 51, prioritizes giving to organizations serving the city’s residents. She’s volunteered with the Houston Food Bank for decades, doing “everything except the cold room. Because I don’t like the cold,” she joked.

Fulton, who is originally from Panama, sees her giving and volunteering as a way to make a difference, something

she has tried to pass on to her children, who are now 18 and 20 years old.

“You look at what’s happening in the world and you tend to feel helpless. And what I try to teach my kids instead of feeling helpless is find one little patch of grass that you can make better,” she said.

Usually, at the beginning of the year, Fulton sets aside the funds that she intends to give to nonprofits, with the majority going to the food bank, a homeless shelter, a women’s fund and an arts education organization. But she keeps aside a portion to respond more flexibly, including on GivingTuesday when she seeks out nonprofits that are running matching campaigns.

“My advice for people for Giving Tuesday is, do a little bit of research and see who needs help, who has matching challenges,” she said. “And that makes it kind of fun and exciting to think that even though you give something small, it gets doubled or tripled.”

**CHICAGO:** Alicia Bailey said her philanthropic giving was not always intentional.

A former producer who now works in real estate, Bailey would give \$5 when checking out a store or attending a charity gala when invited by a relative. That changed in 2018 when she helped organize a group of donors

who pool their funds to support small organizations serving women and girls on Chicago’s South Side.

Bailey’s involvement with philanthropy has since grown to the point where she joined the board of the Chicago Foundation for Women, which hosts her giving circle and also makes its own grants.

“To go through the process of understanding and getting educated about the grantmaking process, all the way through to deciding and doing site visits, and seeing and hearing the work that’s actually happening in the Chicago area and being able to put faces and names and sounds to these women who are making things possible with very little,” Bailey said was incredibly beneficial to her.

The giving circle makes relatively small grants to organizations that have budgets of less than \$500,000, where those grants can make a big difference.

“People may have an idea of like, ‘My dollars are too small, they wouldn’t matter, right?’ Bailey said. “But in these cases, we know that it is because of people giving what they can that it literally has changed the way that organizations are able to do their work. And then that changes lives in the community.”

She doesn’t plan to mark GivingTues-

day specifically for donations because she’s already found, through the foundation and the giving circle, ways to pursue her mission of improving the lives of women, girls and gender-nonconforming people in her area.

“I will be doing much of the same work that I’ve been doing every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,” Bailey said, though she is glad the date will prompt many people to consider how they can make a difference in a cause they care about.

**ATLANTA:** The amount that Ruben Brooks, 56, will give each year varies, but what doesn’t change are the causes he supports: financial literacy, scholarships and mentoring for young people in the African American community.

“If you want a healthier society, if you want a more productive society, a safer society, then it probably behooves all of us to give in an effort to effectuate the desired result,” said Brooks, who is the chief operating officer of Atlanta Beltline.

Years ago, he volunteered as a mentor for Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, an organization that he continues to support financially, along with Junior Achievement of Georgia, where he is now a board member. While he has less time to volunteer nowadays, he has extended his network

to students who receive scholarships through another nonprofit, the Ezekiel Taylor Foundation, sometimes hosting them at his home.

“Hearing the stories, hearing the challenges, providing solutions, letting them know I’m available, my friends are available, and there are solutions to the problems that they will encounter,” Brooks said of his time with those students.

He usually makes his donations in November and December when he has a sense of his income for the year, in part because he will claim tax advantages. While he may donate on GivingTuesday, it’s not a priority, Brooks said.

“I want to give on my own terms and what I think is appropriate and not sort of with a commercial date that’s sort of put out there,” he said.

**LAFAYETTE, Co:** Lynne Garfinkel, 55, and Pam Lowy, 58, met through a mutual friend when they both moved to Lafayette, near Boulder, Colorado, several years ago. During the height of the pandemic, they took an online training through the organization Philanthropy Together about how to run a giving circle. They eventually decided to co-lead a new group, Moving Mountains, in part to deepen their connection to the area. (AP)

editor’s choice



# Picasso's sketchbooks show whimsy, humor, determination

NEW YORK, Nov. 27, (AP) — He was a giant of 20th-century art, but that doesn't mean Pablo Picasso needed a big canvas.

Matchbook covers, postcards, restaurant napkins — they all served as makeshift sketchpads for the artist at moments of inspiration.

And so it should perhaps not be surprising that some of Picasso's actual sketchpads were well smaller than, say, a compact disc cover — like the tiny one now on display at Manhattan's Pace Gallery as part of "Picasso: 14 Sketchbooks," a new exhibit marking 50 years since the legendary artist's death.

A stunningly complete self-portrait in pencil peeks out of that little book, with deep and piercing eyes, all 3 3/4 by 5 1/2 inches of it. It was 1918 and Picasso, then in his mid-30s, had just married ballet dancer Olga Khokhlova. During a summer in balmy Biarritz, he painted on canvas but also kept this tiny notebook around, filling it with scenes of their villa, the beach and the town, and sketches of upcoming paintings. He also drafted a letter to his wife's doctor and listed addresses of friends.

The exhibit, which opened Friday, is a collaboration with the Madrid foundation run by a grandson of Picasso's, Bernard Ruiz-Picasso. It comes nearly 40 years after the gallery's initial 1986 show of Picasso sketchbooks, called "Je Suis le Cahier (I am the Sketchbook)" after a notation Picasso made on one of his pads — which subsequently toured the globe.

The show comes at a busy time for Picasso developments — even in New York this very week, where the artist's famed 1932 "Femme à la montre" ("Woman with a Watch"), portraying his muse Marie-Thérèse Walter, sold for \$139.4 million at Sotheby's on Wednesday evening, making it the second most valuable Picasso ever sold at auction.

"He is the greatest artist of the modern period, and in many ways he thought of himself as a sketchbook," said Pace CEO Marc Glimcher, speaking to a crowd at a preview Thursday, referring to Picasso's efforts to refine his work through copious sketching.

He sounded almost evangelical when he urged the young people present to recognize that "everyone in this room sees the world differently because of Pablo Picasso."

## Achievements

In an interview, Glimcher explained that he feels the world needs to be reminded of Picasso's achievements at a time in our culture where, he said, it seems everything and everyone is being questioned anew. He also noted what he called the icon effect: "When something becomes so iconic it becomes by necessity oversimplified," he said. "People say, 'Oh, Picasso, got it.' We have to make sure they DO get it."

The show, in one large gallery, is organized chronologically, spanning the years 1900-1959, most of Picasso's career (he died in 1973). Each of the 14 sketchbooks is presented in context with what was going on in his life — including in his romantic relationships, which figured so prominently in his artwork.

Many of the sketches are early versions of famed paintings like "Les Femmes d'Alger" (1907), for which one sketchbook tests out various figure renderings; "Dora Maar in an Armchair" (1939); and his "War and Peace" murals, for a chapel in southern France, that were finished in 1952.

There is also a film of Picasso, shirtless and in shorts, preparing for

those giant murals, needing a ladder to reach the top of his canvas — and reminding us of the dimension of some of his masterworks.

But elsewhere in the show, the gems are in miniature size. Some of the images are fanciful, like the monsters and clownlike figures, some in bright blue and red pencil, from a 1956-1957 sketchbook that resembles a whimsical children's book.

Others feel precise and more technical like the ink drawings in his Juan-les-Pins sketchbooks, from 1924, in which he experiments with shapes of guitars and other objects through patterns of dots and lines, known as "constellations." A long poem also appears in one of the sketchbooks, translated in an accompanying catalog.

With each sketchbook open to only one page, how to uncover the rest? The gallery's solution is to provide subsequent pages in video displays on a loop.

Ruiz-Picasso, the artist's grandson and son of Paul Picasso, said the sketchbooks deserve a fresh look because much has happened in the past few decades in terms of research into Picasso's work and the context in which it was produced.

"We have better information now about what he was doing," Ruiz-Picasso said in an interview. "It's a kind of archaeological dimension, where we can go more deeply."

Ruiz-Picasso, who was 13 when his grandfather died, remembers children not being entirely welcome in the studio where the artist painted in Mougins, France, where he lived out his later years. But elsewhere in the home, he remembers him always sketching "until the last piece of paper available."

Art

## Variety



This image released by Lionsgate shows Tom Blyth, (left), and Rachel Zegler in a scene from 'The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes.' 'The Hunger Games' leads ticket sales for the second weekend with \$28.8 million in the US. (AP)

## Books

'2023 word of the year reflects a 'crisis of authenticity'

# 'Authentic' tops Merriam-Webster's list

NEW YORK, Nov. 27, (AP) — In an age of deepfakes and post-truth, as artificial intelligence rose and Elon Musk turned Twitter into X, the Merriam-Webster word of the year for 2023 is "authentic."

Authentic cuisine. Authentic voice. Authentic self. Authenticity as artifice. Lookups for the word are routinely heavy on the dictionary company's site but were boosted to new heights throughout the year, editor at large Peter Sokolowski told The Associated Press in an exclusive interview.

"We see in 2023 a kind of crisis of authenticity," he said ahead of Monday's announcement of this year's word. "What we realize is that when we question authenticity, we value it even more."

Sokolowski and his team don't delve into the reasons people head for dictionaries and websites in search of specific words. Rather, they chase the data on lookup spikes and world events that correlate. This time around, there was no particularly huge boost at any given time but a constancy to the increased interest in "authentic."

This was the year of artificial intelligence, for sure, but also a moment when ChatGPT-maker OpenAI suffered a leadership crisis, Taylor Swift and Prince Harry chased after authenticity in their words and deeds. Musk himself, at February's World Government Summit in Dubai, urged the heads of companies, politicians, ministers and other leaders to "speak authentically" on social media by running their own accounts.

"Can we trust whether a student wrote this paper? Can we trust whether a politician made this statement? We don't always trust what we see anymore," Sokolowski said. "We sometimes don't believe our own eyes or our own ears. We are now recognizing that authenticity is a performance itself."

Merriam-Webster's entry for "authentic" is busy with meaning.

There is "not false or imitation; real, actual," as in an authentic cockney accent. There's "true to one's own personality, spirit or character." There's "worthy of acceptance or belief as conforming to or based on fact." There is "made or done the same way as an original." And, perhaps the most telling, there's "conforming to an original so as to reproduce essential features."

"Authentic" follows 2022's choice of "gaslighting." And 2023 marks Merriam-Webster's 20th anniversary choosing a top word.

The company's data crunchers filter out evergreen words like "love" and "affect" vs. "effect" that are always high in lookups among the 500,000 words it defines online. This year, the wordsmiths also filtered out numerous five-letter words because Wordle and Quordle players clearly use the company's site in search of them as they play the daily games, Sokolowski said.

## Rebranding

Sokolowski, a lexicologist, and his colleagues have a bevy of runners-up for word of the year that also attracted unusual traffic. They include "X" (lookups spiked in July after Musk's rebranding of Twitter), "EGOT" (there was a boost in February when Viola Davis achieved that rare quadruple-award status with a Grammy) and "Elemental," the title of a new Pixar film that had lookups jumping in June.

Rounding out the company's top words of 2023, in no particular order:

**Rizz:** Slang for "romantic appeal or charm" and seemingly short for charisma. Merriam-Webster added the word to its online dictionary in September and it's been among the top lookups since, Sokolowski said.

**Kibbutz:** There was a massive spike in lookups for "a communal farm or settlement in Israel" after Hamas militants attacked several near the Gaza Strip on Oct. 7. The first kibbutz in Israel was founded circa 1909.

**Implode:** The June 18 implosion of the Titan submersible on a commercial expedition to explore the Titanic wreckage sent lookups soaring for this word, meaning "to burst inward." "It was a story that completely occupied the world," Sokolowski said.

**Deadname:** Interest was high in what Merriam-Webster defines as "the name that a transgender person was given at birth and no longer uses upon transitioning." Lookups followed an onslaught of legislation aimed at curtailing LGBTQ+ rights around the country.

**Doppelgänger:** Sokolowski calls this "a word lover's word." Merriam-Webster defines it as a "double," an "alter ego" or a "ghostly counterpart." It derives from

German folklore. Interest in the word surrounded Naomi Klein's latest book, "Doppelgänger: A Trip Into the Mirror World," released this year. She uses her own experience of often being confused with feminist author and conspiracy theorist Naomi Wolf as a springboard into a broader narrative on the crazy times we're all living in.

**Coronation:** King Charles III had one on May 6, sending lookups for the word soaring 15,681% over the year before, Sokolowski said. Merriam-Webster defines it as "the act or occasion of crowning."

**Deepfake:** The dictionary company's definition is "an image or recording that has been convincingly altered and manipulated to misrepresent someone as doing or saying something that was not actually done or said." Interest spiked after Musk's lawyers in a Tesla lawsuit said he is often the subject of deepfake videos and again after the likeness of Ryan Reynolds appeared in a fake, AI-generated Tesla ad.

**Dystopian:** Climate chaos brought on interest in the word. So did books, movies and TV fare intended to entertain. "It's unusual to me to see a word that is used in both contexts," Sokolowski said.

**Covenant:** Lookups for the word meaning "a usually formal, solemn, and binding agreement" swelled on March 27, after a deadly mass shooting at The Covenant School in Nashville, Tennessee. The shooter was a former student killed by police after killing three students and three adults.

Interest also spiked with this year's release of "Guy Ritchie's The Covenant" and Abraham Verghese's long-awaited new novel, "The Covenant of Water," which Oprah Winfrey chose as a book club pick.

More recently, soon after US Rep. Mike Johnson ascended to House speaker, a 2022 interview with the Louisiana congressman recirculated. He discussed how his teen son was then his "accountability partner" on Covenant Eyes, software that tracks browser history and sends reports to each partner when porn or other potentially objectionable sites are viewed.

**Indict:** Former President Donald Trump has been indicted on felony charges in four criminal cases in New York, Florida, Georgia and Washington, D.C., in addition to fighting a lawsuit threatening his real estate empire.

# Features

ARABIC TIMES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2023

NEW YORK: The Walt Disney Co.'s "Wish" had been expected to rule the Thanksgiving weekend box office, but moviegoers instead feasted on leftovers, as "The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes" led ticket sales for the second weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Neither of the weekend's top new releases — "Wish" and Ridley Scott's "Napoleon" — could keep up with Lionsgate's "Hunger Games" prequel. After debuting the previous weekend with \$44.6 million, the return to Panem proved the top draw for holiday moviegoers, grossing \$28.8 million over the weekend and \$42 million over the five-day holiday frame.

In two weeks of release, "Songbirds and Snakes" has grossed nearly \$100 million domestically and \$200 million globally.

The closer contest was for second place, where "Napoleon" narrowly outmaneuvered "Wish." Scott's epic outperformed expectations to take \$32.5 million over the five-day weekend and an estimated \$20.4 million Friday through Sunday. The film, starring Joaquin Phoenix as the French emperor and Vanessa Kirby as his wife Joséphine de Beauharnais, was also the top movie globally with \$78.8 million.

Reviews were mixed (61% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes) and ticket buyers were non-plussed (a "B-" CinemaScore), but "Napoleon" fared far better in theaters than its subject did at Waterloo.

"Napoleon," like Martin Scorsese's "Killers of the Flower Moon," is a big-budget statement by Apple Studios of the streamer's swelling Hollywood ambitions. With an estimated budget of \$200 million, "Napoleon" may still have a long road to reach profitability for Apple, which partnered with Sony to distribute "Napoleon" theatrically. But it's an undeniably strong beginning for an adult-skewing 168-minute historical drama.

"Wish," however, had been supposed to have a more starry-eyed start. Disney Animation releases like "Frozen II" (\$123.7 million over five days in 2019), "Ralph Breaks the Internet" (\$84.6 million in 2018) and "Coco" (\$71 million in 2017), have often owned Thanksgiving moviegoing. But "Wish" wobbled, coming in

with \$31.7 million over five days and \$19.5 million Friday through Sunday. It added \$17.3 million internationally. It had been forecast to debut closer to \$50 million.

"Wish," at least, is faring better than Disney's Thanksgiving release last year: 2022's "Strange World" bombed with a five-day \$18.9 million opening. But hopes



Phoenix



Scott

had been higher for "Wish," co-written and co-directed by the "Frozen" team of Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee and featuring the voices of Ariana DeBose and Chris Pine. "Wish," a fairy tale centered around a wished-up star, is also a celebration of Disney, itself, timed to the studio's 100th anniversary and rife with

callbacks to Disney favorites. Critics weren't impressed, saying "Wish" felt more like a marketing than movie magic. So instead of righting an up-and-down year for Disney, "Wish" is, for now, adding to some of the studio's recent headaches, including the underperforming "The Marvels." The Marvel sequel has limped to \$76.9

million domestically and \$110.2 million overseas in three weeks. "Wish" also faced direct competition for families in "Trolls Band Together." The DreamWorks and Universal Pictures release opened a week prior, and took in \$17.5 million in its second frame (\$25.3 million over five days.) (AP)

## People &amp; Places

## Film

## Gifts for movie buffs

## Oppenheimer in 4K hits home screens

By Lindsey Bahr

It's been a wonderful year at the movies for cinephiles, but what do you get for the film lover who has seen everything already?

The holidays always bring anniversary releases of tried-and-true classics, like the 4K Ultra HD 25th Anniversary Titanic re-release, as well as tricked-out 4K sets of the year's biggest hits, like "Barbie" of course. But there are plenty of more unique options, at all price points, from a high-roller ticket to the Sundance Film Festival in January to a Criterion Channel subscription and more.



Coppola

**Sofia Coppola book**  
Sofia Coppola dug into her personal photos from 25 years of filmmaking for her first book, "Sofia Coppola Archive 1999-2023." In the 479-page book, Coppola takes you on a visual journey from "The Virgin Suicides" through "Priscilla," including intimate behind-the-scenes photos with all the famous faces she's worked with, from Kirsten Dunst to Bill Murray. There are inspiration boards, script pages with handwritten annotations, correspondence with collaborators, as well as personal introductions to each film.

**Polish film posters**

Whether you're trying to upgrade a loved one's movie poster collection from whatever was in their college dorm room or just trying to find something a little off-beat, this delightful collection of Polish Film Posters is a great place to start. There is a long, rich history to these artistic interpretations of Hollywood marketing materials. Some are surreal, some abstract, and all are reflective of the individual artist. The prices are all over the place depending on whether you choose vintage or reprint: An original "Godfather" poster designed by Tomasz Ruminski will set you back some \$912, but Leszek Cebrowski's haunting "Eyes Wide Shut" design is only \$40 and Andrzej Krajewski's pop-inspired "Pulp Fiction" piece is \$43.

**Criterion Channel subscription**

Streaming options can be a treacherous place for classic and indie film fans, but thankfully the Criterion Channel is still going strong with thoughtfully curated selections every month. The format is easy to use, and spotlights which movies are new and which will expire at the end of the month. They even have a section where you can choose films based on running time: Only have 90 minutes or less? There's a section for that. Their December lineup includes a spotlight on Parker Posey; retrospectives dedicated to Yasujiro Ozu and Ousmane Sembène; and some holiday noir, MGM musicals and "Hitchcock for the Holidays."

**Oppenheimer 4K**

Can you hear the music? Christopher Nolan's "Oppenheimer" will finally be available to watch in your living room over the holidays (after Nov. 21). The 4K Ultra HD, Blu-ray and DVD will include over three hours of special features, including a 70-plus minute making-of documentary, with new interviews with Nolan, the cast and crew. Another special feature looks at the development of black and white 65mm film stock they pioneered for the film. And you can also watch a panel conversation, held earlier this summer, between Nolan, author Kai Bird, and physicists like Kip Thorne.

**Sundance Film Festival pass**

This is a pricier one, but it is possible to get access to the 40th Sundance Film Festival in January with an in-person or virtual pass. For \$850 (not including travel and lodging in Park City, Utah), you could be among the first to see the next "CODA," "Beasts of the Southern Wild" or "Past Lives." Or for \$225, you can get virtual access to the award winners, and let the juries sift through the gems and duds for you.

**A book about Siskel and Ebert**

The longtime film critic and editor Matt Singer takes a look at the importance and impact of Roger Ebert and Gene Siskel in his book "Opposable Thumbs: How Siskel & Ebert Changed Movies Forever." It's full of anecdotes about their infamous, ever-watchable sparring, and the ways in which they were able to champion small films like "Hoop Dreams" for a mass audience. Singer writes that the two Chicago critics "democratized criticism" and "turned it into mass entertainment."

**Cinephile game**

Described as "the ultimate game for movie geeks, film nerds and cinephiles" this set includes five levels of varying difficulties. The filmography level, for instance, asks players to name more films than their opponent for whatever name comes up on the card (like, say, Samuel L. Jackson, which could keep things going for a while.) If you need more of a challenge, the expert level tests your ability to connect two actors in fewer than six degrees (like, Cillian Murphy and Jason Momoa... go!). You can play many of these alone, or with a crowd.

**Steven Soderbergh's storefront**

Did you know Steven Soderbergh has an online marketplace with art and clothes and swag? Or, sorry, it's "the artist formerly known as Steven Soderbergh," according to the website. These are delightful deep cuts, but he biggest seller on extension765.com is a soft, black, vintage-inspired, cotton T-shirt designed by Joanna Bush with 18 LU 13 printed in bold white letters. Soderbergh comments, "Our biggest seller. Why? No idea. But I know this: if you work on the set of a movie or a series or anything that involves Teamsters and you wear this hat (t-shirt) backpack, at some point, someone who drives a vehicle will come up and say Nice Hat or Nice T-Shirt. Because this license plate has serious movie cred." It's easily google-able, but we won't spoil it here.

**Home Alone cookbook**

You don't need to make your family disappear or defend your home from gold-toothed bandits to enjoy the silliness of "The Unofficial Home Alone Cookbook." Recipes - there are 75 of them -- include a "lovely cheese pizza," and "junk & rubbish sundaes." It just might not be for foodies. (AP)



Zeng Fanzhi, a retired architect turned artist, points to his art work depicting a Covid testing scene, during the Beijing art exposition in Beijing, Friday, Sept. 8, 2023. Zeng painted stark, realist portrayals of life in China under zero-COVID, saying he did so to capture a unique moment in history. (AP)

## Art

## Fanzhi's paintings mark China's extraordinary era

## 'Zero-COVID' art honors sacrifice

SHENZHEN, China, Nov 27. (AP) - In one painting, a child sits, mouth wide open, as a worker in white medical garb extends a long cotton swab toward her tonsils. In another, a masked officer and medical workers stand guard in front of an apartment cordoned off with ropes and seals reading "Closed," as residents look on with frustration and despair.

These are some of the portraits that Zeng Fanzhi, 85, has painted to commemorate three years of China's strict "zero-COVID" controls, which sparked nationwide protests a year ago. But Zeng, a retired architect living in Shenzhen, is not a harsh critic of the measures, under which millions of people were tested, locked in apartments, or carried off to quarantine centers.

Zeng has spent much of his life in service to the Chinese state, designing monuments in Beijing's Tiananmen Square and coal plants for the Ministry of Coal. He's a member of Shenzhen's state-sponsored artist's association and his paintings feature on stamps and win prizes.

The artist has a different perspective from the young protesters - one shaped by early years in China living through war and revolution, and later years witnessing decades of prosperity and growth. To Zeng, China's adherence to "zero-COVID" controls was necessary, and its people's adherence to it heroic.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping "says that artistic creation must be from 'The People's Standpoint,'" Zeng says, explaining his focus on ordinary people. "This means art should reflect the reality of people's lives. The subjects of my paintings are aligned with this direction."

**History**

Growing up, Zeng lived through some of the most tumultuous periods in Chinese history. Born to civil servants who fled for Chongqing, China's wartime capital in World War II, Zeng grew up moving from city to city, fleeing the invading Japanese and the Chinese civil war that followed.

The Communist Party's victory in 1949 ended decades of strife in China, bringing some stability to the country. Zeng aspired to be an artist and took art school entrance exams in 1957, but failed twice. His parents encouraged him to study architecture instead.

Soon after, the founder of Communist China, Mao Zedong, launched the Great Leap Forward, an ambitious but disastrous campaign to transform the impoverished country into an industrial power. Millions starved to death, and Zeng and other students across China spent much of their time in political study sessions.

In 1962, fresh from college, Zeng was assigned to work for an architectural team in Beijing, designing stadiums and theaters around Tiananmen Square as well as the Avenue of Heavenly Peace.

A few years later, Zeng and his wife, a fellow architect, decided to move to

Pingdingshan - home to one of the largest coalfields in China, nestled among mountains in the heart of the country.

There, for 20 years, they designed coal separation plants, from coal crushers to worker's dorms.

By the 1980s, the couple was getting antsy. Mao had died and a new reformist leader, Deng Xiaoping, was in charge. China was opening up, and opportunity beckoned on the coasts. They begged to be relocated.

"We felt like we weren't being put to our best use, so we want to jump ship," Zeng said.

College graduates like them were in scarce supply, and jobs were easy to find. They moved to Shenzhen, an experimental economic zone located next to Hong Kong in China's south. The '90s saw China's leaders experimenting with capitalism, and Shenzhen was rapidly developing. Zeng began working at Shenzhen University, which back then was located in the distant suburbs and built among fields with muddy roads winding up to the entrance.

In the years that followed, Shenzhen boomed, and Zeng's family prospered. Millions came to Shenzhen to work in factories that exported goods to overseas markets. Zeng and his wife designed dozens of Shenzhen's apartments and office towers, which rose like reeds out of empty fields.

**Passion**

Newly affluent, they bought an apartment near the center of the city, while their children went overseas for study. Today, Shenzhen has more skyscrapers than New York or Tokyo.

"We've seen a lot of ups and downs in our life," says his wife, Zhao Sirong. "Shenzhen was a fledgling city, and we were pioneers."

It wasn't until Zeng turned 80 that he retired from architecture. Finally, Zeng was able to pursue his true passion: painting.

Despite his old-school training, he learned his new trade in a distinctly 21st-century fashion. Day by day, he watched tutorials of master artists online.

Zeng's art is informed by socialist realism, a style he encountered growing up in Maoist China. He cites works by famed Russian realist painter Ilya Repin as inspiration, such as "Barge Haulers on the Volga," which shows 11 men dragging a barge, exhaustion on their faces. It's an unflinching depiction of backbreaking labor, the quiet heroism of ordinary people in harsh conditions.

"It left a deep impression on me," Zeng said.

Zeng found himself drawn to similar themes. One of his early paintings, "Life is Not Easy," portrays a migrant worker bundled in scarves, selling vegetables and shivering as snow swirls around her.

Zhao, Zeng's wife, complains about his rigorous painting routine. Zeng drives to his studio every morning, painting till late afternoon. The octogenarian works weekends, leaving his wife with only her plants to keep her

company.

"What I want from my husband is that he walks slower and stops acting like a young man," Zhao said, chuckling and sighing. "Why is he working so hard? I don't understand."

But Zhao still supports her husband's craft because she believes regular activity is key to preventing mental decline. They wonder at young people who spend their days idle, swiping endlessly on cellphone videos and whiling away their savings on outdoor games of mahjong in steamy Shenzhen.

"My life is still very fulfilling," Zeng says. "Some say painting must be tiring for you. OK, sure, but is gambling tiring for you?"

**Online**

As the coronavirus spread, Zeng was fascinated by how it upended daily life around him.

First he painted nurses swabbing residents, then children attending online classes. Then, last year, as controls grew strict and Zeng's compound was locked down, he spent his days sitting on his balcony, painting residents locked in their complexes, guards standing sentry, and masked delivery drivers tossing groceries over fences.

"This was an unimaginable event that's never happened before in the whole world," Zeng says.

Zeng and his wife caught the virus last winter, when controls were abruptly lifted. Though his wife recovered quickly, Zeng spent weeks recuperating. Across China, hundreds of thousands perished as the infected overran hospitals and medication ran out of stock.

"We were all infected," Zhao said. "We struggled through the past three years, and then things suddenly opened up. We weren't psychologically prepared."

Despite the pandemic's historic nature, few depictions of the era exist in China outside official exhibits and state television glorifying the government's role in combatting the virus. Under Xi, the state has tightened controls on artist expression, leading to an exodus of artistic talent abroad.

At a Beijing art exposition this fall, one of Zeng's paintings was tucked away behind a column. The censors, he said, deemed it too negative, as it depicted sprawling residents locked inside their homes.

"We couldn't put it on display," he said with a chuckle, walking out of his booth and gesturing to the painting.

But Zeng sees his art as commemoration, not criticism. He lived through a "great historical event," he says, and he sees his artwork as an observation honoring all the sacrifice and difficulty endured by ordinary people.

For Zeng and Zhao, their government benefits - including public medical care, subsidized food, free public transit, and a pension of 10,000 yuan (\$1,400) a month - is well beyond what they imagined having when they were younger, growing up in a China scarred by war.



Paul Lynch, winner of the 2023 Booker Prize, poses with his book as he arrives at the Booker Prize award dinner, in London, Sunday, Nov. 26. The Booker Prize is awarded to the best sustained work of fiction written in English and published in the UK and Ireland, in the opinion of the judges. (AP)

## Variety

**LONDON:** Irish writer Paul Lynch won the Booker Prize for fiction on Sunday with what judges called a "soul-shattering" novel about a woman's struggle to protect her family as Ireland collapses into totalitarianism and war.

"... Song," set in a dystopian fictional version of Dublin, was awarded the 50,000-pound (\$63,000) literary prize at a ceremony in London. Canadian writer Esi Edugyan, who chaired the judging panel, said the book is "a triumph of emotional storytelling, bracing and brave" in which Lynch "pulls off feats of language that are stunning to witness."

Lynch, 46, had been the bookies' favorite to win the prestigious prize, which usually brings a big boost in sales. His book beat five other finalists from Ireland, the UK, the US and Canada, chosen from 163 novels submitted by publishers.

"This was not an easy book to write," Lynch said after being handed the Booker trophy. "The rational part of me believed I was dooming my career by writing this novel, though I had to write the book anyway. We do not have a choice in such matters."

Lynch has called "... Song," his fifth novel, an attempt at "radical empathy" that tries to plunge readers into the experience of living in a collapsing society.

"I was trying to see into the modern chaos," he told the Booker website. "The unrest in Western democracies. The problem of Syria - the implosion of an entire nation, the scale of its refugee crisis and the West's indifference. ... I wanted to deepen the reader's immersion to such a degree that by the end of the book, they would not just know, but feel this problem for themselves."

The five prize judges met to pick the winner on Saturday, less than 48 hours after far-right violence erupted in Dublin following a stabbing attack on a group of children. Edugyan said that immediate events didn't directly influence the choice of winner.

Lynch said he was "astounded" by the riots "and at the same time I recognized the truth that this kind of energy is always there under the surface."

He said "... Song" - written over four years starting in 2018 - "is a counterfactual novel. It's not a prophetic statement."

"I wrote the book to articulate the message that the things that are happening in this book are occurring timelessly throughout the ages and maybe we need to deepen our own responses to that," he told reporters. (AP)

**NEW YORK:** Marty Krofft, a TV producer known for imaginative children's shows such as "H.R. Pufnstuf" and primetime hits including "Donny & Marie" in the 1970s, has died in Los Angeles, his publicist said. Krofft was 86.

He died Saturday of kidney failure, publicist Harlan Boll said. Krofft and his brother Sid were puppeteers who broke into television and ended up getting stars on the Hollywood Walk of

fame. Along the way, they brought a trippy sensibility to children's TV and brought singling siblings Donny and Marie Osmond and Barbara Mandrell and her sisters to primetime.

The Osmonds' clean-cut variety show, featuring television's youngest-ever hosts at the time, became a lasting piece of '70s cultural memorabilia, rebooted as a daytime talk show in the 1990s and a Broadway Christmas show in 2010. The Kroffts



Edugyan



Krofft

followed up with "Barbara Mandrell and the Mandrell Sisters," centered on the country music star; it ran from 1980-82.

Like the Osmonds, "H.R. Pufnstuf" proved to have pop culture staying power. Despite totaling just 17 episodes, the surreal show, featuring an island, a witch, a talking flute, a shipwrecked boy and a redheaded, cowboy boot-wearing dragon, came in 27th in a 2007 TV Guide poll ranking of all-time cult favorites. (AP)

## Hamed Al-Issa Center leads Gulf region with pioneering organ transplant services

## Kuwait records 119 kidney transplants in 11 months: Dr Saja Sorour

Breakthrough study

## New drug lowers 'heart' risk by 20% in overweight adults

CLEVELAND, Nov 27: Findings from a multi-center, international clinical trial reported by a physician from global health system Cleveland Clinic show that semaglutide reduced cardiovascular events by 20% in adults with overweight or obesity and established cardiovascular disease who don't have diabetes.

Semaglutide is primarily prescribed for adults with type 2 diabetes but is also approved for chronic weight management in adults with obesity or overweight and who have at least one other health issue. In the trial, patients treated with semaglutide lost an average of 9.4% of their body weight and experienced improvements in other risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

Results from the "Select - Semaglutide and Cardiovascular Outcomes in Patients with Overweight or Obesity Who Do Not Have Diabetes" trial were presented during a late-breaking science session of this month's American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2023 and published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

Diabetes

In the trial, for patients with pre-existing cardiovascular disease and overweight or obesity but without diabetes, weekly injections of semaglutide at a dose of 2.4 mg were superior to placebo in reducing the risk of death from cardiovascular causes, nonfatal heart attack, or nonfatal stroke over an average follow-up of 40 months.

"It is known that overweight and obesity increase a person's risk of cardiovascular events. Yet while reducing cardiovascular disease by treating high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and diabetes is standard practice, the concept of treating obesity to reduce cardiovascular complications has been hampered by the lack of evidence that lifestyle or pharmacologic interventions for overweight or obesity improve cardiovascular outcomes," said Michael Lincoff, M.D., Select's lead author and vice chair for research in Cleveland Clinic's Department of Cardiovascular Medicine. "This marks the first pharmacologic intervention for overweight or obesity that's been shown in a rigorous fashion to reduce the risk of cardiovascular events."

Management

More than half the world population is projected to have overweight or obesity by the year 2035. High body-mass index (BMI) is estimated to have accounted for 4 million deaths globally in 2015, more than two thirds of which were caused by cardiovascular diseases.

Semaglutide, a GLP-1 receptor agonist medication initially approved and most frequently prescribed for adults with type 2 diabetes, was also FDA-approved in 2021 for chronic weight management in adults with obesity or over-

weight with at least one weight-related comorbidity. While the weight loss effects of semaglutide appear to occur primarily through appetite suppression, this drug has other actions which may reduce cardiovascular risk, including improvements in glucose levels, decreases in blood pressure and cholesterol levels and reductions in inflammation, and beneficial effects on heart muscle and blood vessels.

Methodology

In the SELECT trial, which ran from October 2018 through June 2023, researchers enrolled patients 45 years of age or older who had pre-existing cardiovascular disease and a body mass index of 27 or greater but no history of diabetes. Over 17,000 patients in 41 countries who had previously experienced a heart attack, stroke and/or had peripheral artery disease were enrolled and followed for an average of 40 months after being randomly assigned to receive once weekly injections of semaglutide 2.4 mg or placebo.

In addition to taking either semaglutide or placebo for the trial, all participants also received standard-of-care treatment for cardiovascular disease, such as cholesterol-modifying medications, antiplatelet therapies, beta blockers or other treatments.

Death from a cardiovascular event, nonfatal myocardial infarction (heart attack), or nonfatal stroke occurred during the trial in 6.5% of patients who were treated with semaglutide versus 8.0% of patients who received placebo - a 20% reduction in relative risk by semaglutide. Risk reductions were similar in men and women and across different ethnicities, patient ages and baseline levels of bodyweight.

There were no unexpected safety issues with semaglutide in this trial. More patients discontinued semaglutide (16.6%) than placebo (8.2%), due primarily to gastrointestinal symptoms including nausea and diarrhea. These gastrointestinal symptoms are not uncommon with this class of medications, particularly when the drug is started, or the dose is increased. There was a slightly higher rate of gallbladder disorders in the semaglutide vs. placebo group (2.8% vs. 2.3%, respectively), which has also been previously reported in other studies with GLP-1 agents. Importantly, semaglutide was not associated with higher risks for severe gastrointestinal disorders, pancreatitis, psychiatric disorders or kidney injury.

"There's growing recognition that obesity and overweight are really metabolic diseases, and yet, effective therapies have been quite limited," said Dr. Lincoff. "This study of semaglutide demonstrates the effectiveness of a new pathway to reduce the excess risk associated with obesity of important and potentially deadly cardiovascular complications."

One limitation of the trial is that only patients with pre-existing cardiovascular disease were included. The effects of semaglutide on primary prevention of cardiovascular events in persons with overweight or obesity, but without previous cardiovascular disease, were not studied.

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Head of the organ transplantation department at the Hamed Al-Issa Center Dr. Saja Sorour says organ transplant services in the country have witnessed a qualitative shift and a major renaissance in recent years.

In a special press statement issued yesterday, she said the Hamed Al-Issa Center has become the second largest center in the Middle East after Iran in terms of the number of kidney donations from brain-dead patients.

Dr. Sorour explained that the number of kidney transplant operations in Kuwait this year increased by 19 percent over last year. The number of organ transplant operations from the beginning of the year until the end of November reached 119 operations, an increase of 19 operations over last year. These numbers are expected to increase to about 131 operations by the end of December 2023.

The number of kidney transplant cases from living donors reached 67 cases, or 56 percent. The number of kidney transplant cases from brain-dead donors reached 52 cases, or 44 percent, an increase of about 4 percent over last year.

Operations

The annual average of kidney transplant operations in the country from living and brain-dead donors is 100 cases, with an average of two operations per week. Thanks to the efforts of the doctors and those in charge of the center, kidney transplant operations have witnessed an unprecedented major shift and the number of cases has risen to three operations per week.

Dr. Sorour confirmed that the Hamed Al-Issa Center is one of the most important organ transplant centers in the Gulf region and the Middle East, noting the basic and secondary services provided by the center, including the service of natural and artificial arteriovenous connections, and peritoneal dialysis connections for dialysis patients.

She revealed that the center has performed about 270 dialysis services from the beginning of the year until now, including 193 hemodialysis services and 77 peritoneal dialysis services. Dr. Sorour praised the specialized medical staff, particularly the surgeons, internal medicine doctors, pharmacists, and members of the nursing staff.

She highlighted the effective presence of the Hamed Al-Issa Center in international forums and conferences by participating in working papers and many studies and research related to kidney diseases and surgeries, which places it among the ranks of global centers for kidney transplantation.



Dr Saja Sorour



A file photo of the kidney transplantation operation being performed at Hamed Al-Issa Center.

## Workshop highlights risks, complications and treatments

## Prostate enlargement affects 85 pct of men over 50, warns urology expert Dr. Al-Ghanim

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Head of the urology unit at Jaber Armed Forces Hospital Dr. Muhammad Al-Ghanim says, "Prostate enlargement affects about 85 percent of men over the age of fifty years. The older a man is, the higher his probability of contracting this disease, as the probability of contracting the disease reaches about 90 percent after the age of seventy."

In a statement issued following his participation in the "Scientific Solutions via Laser for the Prostate" workshop, which was held within the activities of the 16th conference of the Kuwait Urology Association with the cooperation of the Arab Association, Dr. Al-Ghanim said, "The complications of prostate enlargement vary between infections, pain, and urinary symptoms such as weak urine flow, interruption of urine, and frequent urine, with the possibility of urinary retention. The risks of



Dr. Muhammad Al-Ghanim

this condition include weakness of the bladder muscle, which leads to permanent retention, the formation of urinary bladder stones, and some patients develop kidney failure, due to urinary retention."

Regarding treatment methods, Dr. Al-Ghanim explained that they are either conservative, medicinal, or surgical. This is done at the discretion of the treating physician and the degree of the disease.

After diagnosing the patient and knowing his medical history, the doctor requests an ultrasound of the urinary bladder and the prostate to determine its size. He then asks the patient to undergo a kidney and urine function analysis to ensure that there are no urine infections.

Al-Ghanim revealed that he also participated in a dialogue session about the treatment of sexual impotence, the latest operations, as well as other therapeutic methods.

He stressed that erectile dysfunction affects men due to many factors including aging, accompanying diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, irregular blood sugar levels, and some other conditions that are caused by injuries such as accident injuries and others.

## WHO urges transparency

## Respiratory illnesses surge caused by flu, pathogens: China

BEIJING, Nov 27, (AP): A surge in respiratory illnesses across China that has drawn the attention of the World Health Organization is caused by the flu and other known pathogens and not by a novel virus, the country's health ministry said Sunday.

Recent clusters of respiratory infections are caused by an overlap of common viruses such as the influenza virus, rhinoviruses, the respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, the adenovirus as well as bacteria such as mycoplasma pneumoniae, which is a common culprit for respiratory tract infections, a National

Health Commission spokesperson said.

The ministry called on local authorities to open more fever clinics and promote vaccinations among children and the elderly as the country grapples with a wave of respiratory illnesses in its first full winter since the removal of COVID-19 restrictions.

"Efforts should be made to increase the opening of relevant clinics and treatment areas, extend service hours and increase the supply of medicines," said ministry spokesman Mi Feng. He advised people to wear masks and called on local authorities to focus on preventing

the spread of illnesses in crowded places such as schools and nursing homes.

The WHO earlier this week formally requested that China provide information about a potentially worrying spike in respiratory illnesses and clusters of pneumonia in children, as mentioned by several media reports and a global infectious disease monitoring service.

The emergence of new flu strains or other viruses capable of triggering pandemics typically starts with undiagnosed clusters of respiratory illness. Both SARS and COVID-19 were first

reported as unusual types of pneumonia. Chinese authorities earlier this month blamed the increase in respiratory diseases on the lifting of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. Other countries also saw a jump in respiratory diseases such as RSV when pandemic restrictions ended.

The WHO said Chinese health officials on Thursday provided the data it requested during a teleconference. Those showed an increase in hospital admissions of children due to diseases including bacterial infection, RSV, influenza and common cold viruses since October.

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Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo (34) drives to the basket against Portland Trail Blazers' Shaedon Sharpe (17) during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Nov. 26, 2023, in Milwaukee. (AP)

### Cardinals women win Betty Chancellor Classic

## Hawkeyes bag Gulf Coast Showcase title

ESTERO, Florida, Nov 27, (AP): Caitlin Clark scored 32 points, and No. 5 Iowa survived wasting a pair of double-digit leads before rallying to finally beat No. 16 Kansas State 77-70 in the championship game of the Gulf Coast Showcase on Sunday night.

Clark made seven 3-pointers, the last coming with 47 seconds left, to help ensure the Hawkeyes (7-1) would win and avenge a Nov. 16 loss to Kansas State. The Wildcats also beat Iowa last season.

### BASKETBALL

Molly Davis added 13, while Kate Martin had 11 points and 10 rebounds for Iowa.

Serena Sundell and Ayoka Lee each scored 18 for Kansas State (6-1), and Zyanna Walker finished with 11. The Wildcats - who didn't trail by more than 12 in either of their two wins over Iowa in the last two seasons - got themselves into a 13-point hole early, but used a 19-7 run to pull into a tie late in the half.

### Ohio State 83, Cornell 40

In Columbus, Ohio, Rebeka Mikulasikova and Cotie McMahon both scored 14 points and No. 15 Ohio State coasted to an 83-40 win over Cornell.

Taylor Thierry added 13 points for the Buckeyes (5-1) and Jacy Sheldon had 12. Reserve Taiyier Parks had eight rebounds and Celeste Taylor had seven assists as Ohio State had 24 helpers on 32 baskets.



Iowa's Caitlin Clark looks pass the ball during the final game of the NCAA college basketball Gulf Coast Showcase, Sunday, Nov. 26, 2023, in Estero, Fla. (AP)

Summer Parker-Hall scored 13 points for the Big Red (2-4), which had 26 turnovers that were turned into 33 points.

### FGCU 65, North Carolina 64

In Estero, Florida, Kierra Adams got to the basket for a layup with seven seconds left to lift Florida Gulf Coast to a 65-64 upset win over No. 18 North Carolina Sunday as the Eagles claimed third place at the Gulf Coast Showcase tournament.

North Carolina lost a 63-56 showdown with No. 16 Kansas State in the tournament semifinals.

The Eagles took a four-point lead to start the fourth quarter, but Deja Kel-

ly scored six straight points on two jumpers and a pair of free throws and the Tar Heels led 58-55 with 7:32 left.

### Louisville 81, Gonzaga 70

In Katy, Texas, Kiki Jefferson scored 21 points, Nina Rickards added 16 on 8-of-8 shooting and No. 20 Louisville pulled away for an 81-70 win over Gonzaga to win the Betty Chancellor Classic.

The Cardinals outscored the Bulldogs 20-6 in the first 5 1/2 minutes of the fourth quarter to pull away.

The Bulldogs were 1 of 4 with six turnovers while Rickards scored six turnovers and Jefferson five. Jayda Curry and Merissah Russell combined for the last nine points for a 79-62 lead with 4:33 to play.

The Cardinals won the tournament because of a point differential tiebreak as Alabama also went 2-1 in the four-team round-robin.

### Mississippi State 102, Tulsa 58

In Katy, Texas, Darrione Rogers hit 7 of 10 shots from 3-point range and scored 25 points to help power No. 25 Mississippi State to a 102-58 rout of Tulsa, the final day of the Van Chancellor Classic.

Mississippi State (8-0) matched its 2019-20 season start and topped 100 points for the first time since beating Mississippi Valley State 104-47 to open the 2022-23 season.

The Bulldogs jumped to a 26-15 lead after a quarter by hitting 4 3-pointers and held a 50-32 advantage by half-time. They shot 50.7% from the field (35 of 69), including 14 of 29 from distance, and were 16 of 18 from the line.

### Mississippi State 102, Tulsa 58

and were 16 of 18 from the line.

# Bucks 'overcome' 26-point deficit to beat Trail Blazers

Booker leads Suns past Knicks 116-113

MILWAUKEE, Nov 27, (AP): Giannis Antetokounmpo made a tiebreaking tip-in with 18.5 seconds left, Damian Lillard scored 31 points against his former team and the Milwaukee Bucks overcame a 26-point deficit to beat the Portland Trail Blazers 108-102 on Sunday.

Lillard played the first 11 seasons of his career with the Trail Blazers before requesting a trade over the summer and eventually landing in Milwaukee just before the start of training camp. He faced Portland for the first time.

The Bucks trailed 81-55 early in the third quarter, the largest deficit overcome by a winning team in the NBA this season.

Antetokounmpo had 33 points. Jerami Grant led Portland with 22 points, and Malcolm Brogdon had 18 points and 12 assists.

### Suns 116, Knicks 113

In New York, Devin Booker made a tiebreaking 3-pointer with 1.7 seconds remaining and finished with 28 points and 11 assists to lead Phoenix past New York for its seventh straight victory.

### BASKETBALL

With Kevin Durant out for a second straight game because of a sore right foot, Booker shot the winner from behind the arc, right in front of New York's bench.

Eric Gordon added 25 points for the Suns, who were also without guard Grayson Allen. He had started all 16 games before feeling ill Sunday.

Jalen Brunson had 35 points, eight assists and six rebounds for the Knicks. Julius Randle added 28 points, 17 in the third quarter.

### Nets 118, Bulls 106

In New York, Spencer Dinwiddie scored 24 points and Brooklyn made an NBA season-best 25 3-pointers to beat Chicago.

Lonnie Walker IV and Royce O'Neale each made six 3-pointers and Mikal Bridges had four. The previous high this season was 23 by Dallas at Memphis on Oct. 30.

The Nets set a franchise record for any quarter with 11 3-pointers in the second and made 16 in the first half. They finished 25 of 52, falling short of the franchise record of 27 and the NBA mark of 29.

Walker and O'Neale each scored 20 points and Bridges had 15 to help Brooklyn improve to 8-8 and follow its 112-97 victory over Miami on Saturday night with its second straight win. DeMar DeRozan led Chicago with 27 points.

### Nuggets 132, Spurs 120

In Denver, Nikola Jokic had a season-high 39 points to go with

## Burmester wins Joburg Open for his 3rd European tour title

JOHANNESBURG, Nov 27, (AP): South African golfer Dean Burmester took advantage of a final-round meltdown by overnight leader Thriston Lawrence to win the Joburg Open by three strokes on Sunday for his third European tour title, and first in 2 1/2 years.

### GOLF

Burmester made six birdies in a bogey-free round to finish on 18-under 262 for the tournament that came in the opening week of the 2024 season. Compatriot Darren Fichardt also shot 64 to finish second, two strokes ahead of defending champion Dan Bradbury in third place.

"I was a little rusty coming in but my team did such a great job getting me ready for this week ... and it paid off," said Burmester, whose previous win was at the Tenerife Open in May 2021. "I knew I had to do something special and fortunately I was able to

do that."

It was South African-dominated leaderboard, with eight of the top 11 being home players.

Lawrence, who led after the first round and by three shots after Saturday's third round, dropped four strokes in his first five holes and also had a double-bogey coming home in shooting 5-over 75. That was eight shots worse than any of his first three



Burmester

rounds and he finished in a tie for seventh on 10 under.

The 2024 European tour season began with the Joburg Open on Thursday, only four days after the 2023 one finished in Dubai.

The event marks the start of three straight tournaments taking place in South Africa and co-sanctioned with the country's Sunshine Tour.

11 rebounds and nine assists and Denver sent San Antonio to its 12th straight loss.

Wembanyama, the top pick in the June draft, had 22 points, 11 rebounds and six steals for San Antonio. The losing streak is the third longest in franchise history. The Spurs lost 13 in a row in the 1988-89 season and 16 in a row last season.

Michael Porter Jr. added 25 points to help Denver improve to 8-0 at home.

### Celtics 113, Hawks 103

In Boston, Jayson Tatum scored 34 points, Jaylen Brown had 21 and injury-depleted, NBA-leading Boston beat Atlanta.

Kristaps Porzingis and Jrue Holiday were sidelined with injuries for Boston (13-4). Holiday was out for the second straight game because of a sprained right ankle and Porzingis strained his left calf in a loss at Orlando on Friday.

Trae Young had 33 points and

seven assists for Atlanta.

### Magic 130, Hornets 117

In Orlando, Florida, Franz Wagner and Cole Anthony each 30 points and Orlando beat Charlotte for its seventh straight victory.

Anthony scored 17 points in the fourth quarter, helping the Magic stretch their lead as many as 16 points. He also had seven rebounds and seven assists. Paolo Banchero had 23 points and eight assists.

Miles Bridges led Charlotte with 23 points and 10 rebounds.

### Timberwolves 119, Grizzlies 97

In Memphis, Tennessee, Anthony Edwards scored 24 points, Karl-Anthony Towns and Mike Conley each had 18 and Minnesota routed Memphis.

Rudy Gobert added 13 points to help Minnesota win for the fourth time in the last five games. Conley added a season-high 10 assists and was 6 of 9 from 3-point range.

Jaren Jackson Jr. led Memphis with 18 points. Memphis lost its fourth straight dropped to 0-8 at home as it deals with injuries and the 25-game suspension of Ja Morant.

### Cavaliers 105, Raptors 102

In Cleveland, Darius Garland had 24 points and eight assists and Max Strus all 20 of his points in the third quarter, helping Cleveland beat Toronto.

Strus added 11 rebounds and five assists. Jarrett Allen scored 18 points and Evan Mobley had 12 points and 14 rebounds for Cleveland, coming off a loss to Los Angeles Lakers on Saturday night.

Toronto center Jakob Poeltl set season highs of 18 points and 13 rebounds, and Pascal Siakam had 18 points, eight rebounds and six assists.



Phoenix Suns guard Devin Booker (1) shoots over New York Knicks guard Quentin Grimes (6) during the second half of an NBA basketball game in New York, Sunday, Nov. 26, 2023. (AP)

## Shiffrin wins WC slalom in Killington for record-extending 90th career win

KILLINGTON, Vt., Nov 27, (AP): Mikaela Shiffrin built on her first-run lead to win a women's World Cup slalom Sunday for her record-extending career victory No. 90.

The American two-time Olympic champion pleased the home crowd by posting the fastest time in both runs and beating her Slovakian rival Petra Vlhova by 0.33 seconds.

Shiffrin gathered her 90 wins from 254 starts on the World Cup since her 2011 debut on the circuit two days before her 16th birthday.

She won her first race at a slalom in Sweden in December 2012 and set the record for most World Cup wins across genders when passing Swedish great Ingemar Stenmark's mark of 86 last March.

On Sunday, Shiffrin was put to the test by a frenetic second run from Vi-

hova, the Olympic champion who led the race by more than a second with only the American left in the start gate.

Shiffrin lost half of her first-run lead of 0.28 seconds at the first split, but she gradually gained time on Vlhova again.

### SKIING

Vlhova had won the first slalom of the season in Finland two weeks ago and held a clear lead over Shiffrin in the second race the next day, but then straddled a gate and handed victory to the American.

Shiffrin has won six of the seven slaloms at the annual World Cup weekend on the East Coast and her series only interrupted last year, when she led after the first run but finished fifth as Wendy Holdener and Anna Swenn Larsson shared the victory.



Mikaela Shiffrin, of the United States, celebrates her victory in a women's World Cup slalom skiing race with second place finisher Petra Vlhova, of Slovakia, left, and third place Wendy Holdener, of Switzerland, Sunday, Nov. 26, 2023, in Killington, Vt. (AP)

## Abmas leads Longhorns to 86-63 win over Wyoming

# Washington, Taylor help Texas A&M beat Iowa State

KISSIMMEE, Florida, Nov 27, (AP): Solomon Washington had 18 points, Wade Taylor IV scored 12 of his 14 points in the second half and No. 12 Texas A&M rallied from a 21-point deficit to beat Iowa State 73-69 in the third-place game at the ESPN Events Invitational on Sunday night.

Taylor, who averaged 29 points in the first two games of the tourney, hit a jumper from the foul line to make it 66-60 with 1:18 to play.

Texas A&M (6-1) forward Henry Coleman III, who left Friday's loss to No. 19 Florida Atlantic late in the first half with an ankle injury, didn't play. Guard Tyrece Radford, limited to 18 minutes against the Owls due to breathing issues, also sat out.

### BASKETBALL

Iowa State (5-2) got 15 points from Milan Momicilovic. Keshon Gilbert scored 14 points and Tamin Lipsey had 10 points, 14 rebounds and four assists.

### Texas 86, Wyoming 63

In Austin, Texas, Max Abmas scored a season-best 23 points to lead Texas past Wyoming for its fifth win in six games.

Abmas, a former star at Oral Roberts, shot 8 for 14 from the



Texas A&M guard Manny Obaseki (35) goes up to shoot while defended by Iowa State forward Milan Momicilovic (22) during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game, Sunday, Nov. 26, 2023, in Kissimmee, Fla. (AP)

field, 3 for 6 from long distance and hit all four of his free throws.

Kadin Shedrick added 17 points, two blocks and two steals for the Longhorns (5-1). Tyrece Hunter and Dillon Mitchell scored 12 apiece and Mitchell had nine rebounds.

Texas, which was coming off a loss to No. 5 UConn on Monday at the Empire Classic at Madison Square Garden, was 12 for 13 from the line and shot 55.7% overall, while Wyoming shot 39%.

Brendan Wenzel, Sam Griffin, who averages 20.4 points, and Cam Manuawu each scored 12 points to lead Wyoming (4-2).

Manyawu had 10 rebounds.

### Colorado 85, Iona 68

In Boulder, Colorado, Tristan da Silva scored 17 points to go over the 1,000-point mark for his career and Colorado shook free in the second half from the relentless pressure of Iona.

Da Silva scored 14 of his points in the first half as he became the 39th member of the school's 1,000-point club.

KJ Simpson had 15 points for Colorado (5-1), which used an 11-0 run midway through the final half to pull away.

Greg Gordon led Iona with 19 points while Idan Tretout finished with 18 for Iona. Freshman Jeremiah Quigley had 11 points. Wheza Panzo, the Gaels' second-leading scorer, was held to three points.

### Florida Atlantic 84, Virginia Tech 50

In Kissimmee Florida, Alijah Martin scored 17 points, Vladislav Goldin had 14, and Florida Atlantic beat Virginia Tech to win the ESPN Events Invitational championship.

Johnell Davis had 12 points for FAU (5-1). Martin (eight) and Davis (seven) combined for 15 rebounds.

Virginia Tech (5-2) got 11 points from both Hunter Cattoor and Sean Pedulla. Lynn Kidd had nine point

## Bagnaia clinches 2nd straight MotoGP title

VALENCIA, Spain, Nov 27, (AP): Francesco Bagnaia won the Valencia GP and clinched his second straight MotoGP title on Sunday.

Bagnaia finished the race ahead of fellow Italian Fabio Di Giannantonio and Frenchman Johann Zarco.

### MOTOR CYCLING

The 26-year-old rider from Ducati finished the season with 467 points, 39 points ahead of Spaniard Jorge Martin.

It was the seventh win of the season for Bagnaia, who was ahead in the riders' championship for most of the season.

Martin, who did not finish Sunday's race, won four races this season.

Bagnaia would have won the title regardless of his position because Martin failed to earn any points.

and seven rebounds.

FAU broke the game open late in the first half and early in the second with a 19-0 run to go up 44-24 with 16 1/2 minutes remaining.

## Football fever meets annual athletic triumphs

## From kick-off to photo finish: Dual delight of IDAK-KDD's Sports Championship

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Indian Dentists' Alliance in Kuwait (IDAK) conducted the IDAK-KDD Men's Football & Women's Handball competition on 10th November at Al Sahel Sports Club at Abu Halifa and the IDAK-KDD Annual Sports Day on 17th November at Aquamarine Resort at Nuwaiseeb.

For the Men's Football, Mighty Mustangs (MM) was led by Dr. Joju and Power Panthers (PP) was led by Dr. Jal James. Dr. Ranjitha (MM) and Dr. Remya (PP) captained their respective Women's Handball teams. The competition promised to be fierce, as players from both teams had been training rigorously in preparation for this event. IDAK President, Dr. Thomas Thomas inaugurated the event. The matches were officiated by the match referee Mr. Irshadul Haq, Physical Education Teacher, Indian Public School, Salmiya. In the tightly fought handball match, MM defeated PP (12-3). Dr. Ranjitha from MM was awarded the best player trophy for scoring 8 goals for her team. Brilliant efforts of Dr. Bankima (MM) who scored 4 goals and Dr. Parvathy (PP) who scored 3 deserves a special mention. This was followed by the Men's football championship match. MM reigned supreme again and defeated PP 1-0. The match winning goal was scored by Dr. Ranjith, who was also declared the best player. The prizes were distributed by the Chief Guest for the event - Mr. AnandHarith, Business Systems Manager of KDD and by Mr. Sreeraj from Al Mullah Exchange who was the Guest of Honor.

The much-awaited Annual sports day was held at the beautiful venue by the sea-side at Aquamarine resort. This unique venue brought out the best from all the participants, which guaranteed a day of friendly competition, camaraderie, and, of course, smiles. The day's events included a variety of sports, from traditional favorites like athletics and short-put to more unconventional competitions like the tug-of-war. Laughter and cheers echoed throughout the venue as colleagues showcased their athletic abilities and teamwork.

The highlight of the day was undoubtedly the awards ceremony, where participants were recognized for their achievements on the field. Trophies and medals were presented to winners in various categories, including Men's 50 meter race (First place - Mr. Aneef, Second Place - Dr. Aslam and Third Place - Dr. Christy), Women's 50 meter race (First place - Dr. Bankima, Second Place - Dr. Parvathy and Third Place - Dr. Sushma), Men's short-put (First place - Mr. Aneef, Second Place - Dr. Sabisabah and Third Place - Dr. Christy) and Women's short-put (First place - Dr. Bankima, Second Place - Dr. Anjana and Third Place - Dr. Sharon). PP won both the Men's and Women's Tug-of-war matches. At the end of the IDAK-KDD Sports Championship 2022-23, Power Panthers were declared the IDAK-KDD Sports champions with 158 points and Mighty Mustangs were declared runners-up with 122 points. The captains of PP, Dr. Bobby and Dr. Remya received the championship trophy and captains of MM, Dr. Noufal and Dr. Amrita received the runners-up trophy from Mr. Anand (KDD).

In addition to the intense matches, the event offered a range of activities for children and adults alike. The swimming pool, beach volleyball court and trampolines were the main attractions for the families present which added to the festive atmosphere. Dr. Thomas, President of IDAK and the driving force behind the sports day, expressed excitement about the event, saying, "It's fantastic to see our dental community come together in such a lively and spirited way. While we are usually focused on our patients, it's equally important to prioritize our own well-being. The Annual Sports Day provides a platform for us to do just that." IDAK members and families came in good numbers and cheered their respective teams. The sports committee headed by Dr. Anjana, under the guidance of Dr. Rahul was praised for conducting all the sports events in the previous two years in grand fashion. Dr. Jijan, Dr. Santhosh and Dr. George were thanked for the stunning action snaps covering the whole event.

IDAK's commitment not only dental excellence but also to fostering a healthy lifestyle among its members were showcased in these two weekend events. As IDAKians and their families dispersed, the echoes of cheers and the memories of a day filled with magic lingered, creating anticipation for next term's events.



Participants of IDAK-KDD's Sports Championship pose for a group photo.



Top and above: Some participants celebrate while others prepare for their events.

## Sinner leads Italy to first Davis Cup title since 1976

Australia beaten 2-0

MALAGA, Spain, Nov 27, (AP) — Jannik Sinner capped his perfect week by leading Italy to its first Davis Cup title in nearly five decades.

Sinner took his record to 5-0 this week by beating Alex de Minaur of Australia 6-3, 6-0 in the second singles match final, giving Italy a 2-0 win over Australia for its first Davis Cup title since 1976.

Matteo Arnaldi had given Italy the first point with a 7-5, 2-6, 6-4 win over Alexei Popyrin.

The No. 4 Sinner beat top-ranked Novak Djokovic in the singles and doubles matches in Saturday's semifinal showdown against Serbia.

The 22-year-old Italian needed 1 hour, 21 minutes to seal Italy's victory against Australia.

"We are all very young. We are really hungry to try to win it one more time for our life, but having this feeling at least once, it is a really special feeling," said Sinner, who has beaten nine top-10 players since September, though he lost to Djokovic in the ATP Tour Finals a week ago.

Arnaldi earlier saved eight break points before getting a break of his own to close out the first match in the decisive third set.

"I think I won one of the most important matches of my life," the 44th-ranked Arnaldi said.



Jannik Sinner of Italy returns the ball to Alex de Minaur of Australia during a Davis Cup final tennis match between Australia and Italy in Malaga, Spain. (AP)

The Italians, who had never won the title other than in 1976, had lost the three finals it played against Australia, which was last year's runner-up to Canada.

Australia eliminated Finland in the last four this year. The Aussies are 28-time champions but haven't lifted the trophy at men's tennis top team event since captain Lleyton Hewitt was on the winning squad as

a player in 2003.

"There hasn't been another nation that's gone back-to-back in the last two years, so we are showing a pretty good effort collectively," De Minaur said. "We are very, very close. It stinks like hell. We'll be back. We'll get this. I mean, we've got a very, very strong future ahead

## TENNIS

of us." Australia this year became just the second nation to win 200 Davis Cup ties, with the United States being the other.

Matteo Berrettini was not in the Italian team because of an injury but he was in Malaga supporting his countrymen.

"Thanks to Matteo," Sinner said. "He has had a very tough year (with) a lot of injuries. For all of us, that he came here, it means a lot. He gave us a lot of positive energy." The final 8 of the Davis Cup Finals will stay in Malaga for another year.

Spain was awarded a wild card Sunday for the group stage in Valencia.

This year's finalists, Italy and Australia, also go straight through to the group stage in September. So does Great Britain, which lost to Serbia in the quarterfinals.

The women's Billie Jean King Cup Finals will remain in the southern Spanish city of Seville next year.

## Al-Jahra Club accused of statutory violations

## Lawyer urges enforcement of Sports Arbitration ruling

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Lawyer Mutlaq Al-Jadei, representing the General Authority for Sports, has urged the enforcement of a ruling by the National Authority for Sports Arbitration that invalidated the Al-Jahra Club's Board of Directors elections held on January 12. The invalidation is based on the violation of Article 20 of the statute, which prohibits a resigned member from running in the next session after resignation. This rule was breached by Sorour Al-Ajmi, the current Secretary of the Jahra Club, who resigned in the previous session. Additionally, the club is accused of failing to promptly publish the names of the Electoral Committee members in the Official Gazette after approval by the General Assembly.

This call to action was made during a press conference at the Diwaniya of Youssef Karim, the leader of the Jahra list in the recent elections, with Al-Jadei in attendance.

At the conference, Al-Jadei advocated for the removal of Youssef Al-Baidan, the Director General of the General Sports Authority, and threatened to file a complaint with the Public Prosecution if Al-Baidan fails to implement the National Arbitration Authority's decision and its appendix in an executive form through the Supreme Court's Enforcement Department.

Al-Jadei emphasized, "Baidan has 30 days to implement the ruling, and any transfer of the file to the Fatwa and Legislation Department would be seen as government interference in sports, causing potential harm to Kuwaiti sports."

He added, "We will escalate the matter to the political leadership, specifically the office of His Highness the Crown Prince, to take action on this issue."

Youssef Karim revealed that, since



Ahmed Rashwan receives his certificate.

## Swimming coach Rashwan completes Special Olympics swimming program

SAUDI ARABIA, Nov 27: Ahmed Rashwan, the swimming coach for the Kuwaiti Special Olympics team, successfully completed the regional training course for senior swimming coaches organized by the International Special Olympics. The course concluded in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, with the active participation of coaches representing 15 Arab countries.

Spanning five training days, the comprehensive course encompassed both

theoretical and practical components. Dr. Mustafa Majed Khalil and Dr. Aya Muhammad Hussein played pivotal roles in delivering the course, contributing significantly to the transfer of essential knowledge and skills. The training aimed to equip coaches with the expertise needed to train athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities, ensuring their familiarity with the regulations governing swimming in the Special Olympics.

the Sports Arbitration Authority's ruling, they approached Youssef Al-Baidan, who promised positive outcomes after consulting the Authority's

legal experts. They requested a halt to financial support for the current club management while ensuring salaries for employees, coaches, and those not at fault continue.

Despite the Legal Department's advice to cease all transactions with the Jahra Club due to its invalid status, Al-Baidan or his deputy, Bashar Abdullah, did not implement this decision, according to Karim. He expressed frustration, stating, "Al-Baidan procrastinated and requested an executive formula. When presented with one, he claimed there was a problem. Now that the problem has been resolved, he must apply the law equally to all sports bodies without favoritism."

Karim affirmed their commitment to escalate the matter to the highest levels nationally and internationally, vowing not to relinquish their rights.



Winners receive trophy.



The Italian Davis Cup team celebrate with the trophy after defeating Australia during the Davis Cup final tennis match in Malaga, Spain. Italy are the 2023 World Champions Davis Cup winners. (AP) — See Page 15

# Sports

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Al-Qurain champions display their trophies as they pose with officials.

## Al-Qurain win Al-Ittihad Open Squash Championship

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 27: Al-Qurain Club emerged as the victor in the sixteenth edition of the Al-Ittihad Open Squash Championship, at the Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah International Complex in South Surra. Accumulating a total of 1,590 points, Al-Qurain secured three points in the General Excellence Cup. Khaitan claimed the second position with 1,110 points and earned two points in the Excellence

Cup, while Yarmouk secured the third spot with 905 points and one point in the Excellence Cup. Following the final match, Secretary General Hamed

### SQUASH

Al-Omran awarded cups and medals to outstanding players and federation members, including Adel Al-Gharib

and Ahmed Al-Adwani.

Ammar Muhammad from Yarmouk clinched the championship title, Abdul Rahman Al-Maghribi of Al-Qurain emerged victorious in the under-19 category, and Abdullah Hani, also from Al-Qurain, claimed the top spot in the under-17 category.

In the U-15 category, Abdullah Hani and Mahdi Osama of Al-Qurain secured the first position. Saleh Al-Kandari from

Khaitan took the title in the 13-year-old category, and in the U-11 category, the promising Al-Qurain player, Salman Muhammad Al-Saleh, showcased his talent and earned the gold.

In the women's category, Basmala Al-Shami of Al-Arabi won the gold, Aisha Al-Mithen from Al-Qurain secured the second position, while the bronze went to Sarah Al-Ali (Kuwait) and Wasan Al-Aoun (Al-Qurain).



Bronze medalists pose with officials.

## Kuwaitis stand out in Karate Championship

PORTUGAL, Nov 27: The Kuwaiti karate team secured a bronze medal in the 2023 Karate 1 Series A Championship held in Portugal by the International Karate Federation. The tournament, featuring participants from 72 countries over three days, witnessed outstanding performances by Kuwaiti players Sayed Salman Al-Moussawi, Sayed Muhammad Al-Moussawi, and Muhammad Hussein in the group kata competition.

Kuwait's Ambassador to Portugal, Hamad Al-Hazeem, conveyed his

congratulations on the team's achievement. He interacted with the players, urging them to exert their best efforts to bring honor to Kuwait.

### KARATE

Al-Hazeem attended the competitions to closely monitor the Kuwaiti players' performance, provide encouragement, and offer support, aligning with the directives of officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait.

## 'Spoils' shared between Juventus, Inter in season 1st Derby d'Italia

Martínez scores again

MILAN, Nov 27, (AP): Lautaro Martínez scored again but Inter Milan had to be content with a share of the spoils as the Serie A leader drew 1-1 at second-place Juventus.

Martínez's 13th league goal of the season canceled out Dušan Vlahović's opener in the Derby d'Italia.

### SOCCER

Inter remained two points above Juventus. Third-place AC Milan is six points behind its city rival, with defending champion Napoli two points further back in fourth. Both Milan and Napoli played on Saturday.

Inter faces another tough trip next weekend when it visits Napoli.

It was a matchup in Turin between two fierce rivals occupying the top two spots. Inter was looking to move five points clear while Juventus knew it

Barca look to regain best form and secure return to KO stage

MADRID, Nov 27, (AP): A win against Porto will be enough to put Barcelona back in the knockout rounds of the Champions League after two consecutive group-stage eliminations.

It may not be enough to ease the pressure on coach Xavi Hernández, who has struggled to get his team to play well recently.

Barcelona is coming off a stretch that includes a 1-0 loss to Shakhtar Donetsk in its last Champions League game, and a 1-1 draw at Rayo Vallecano in its previous Spanish league match. The team has even produced lackluster performances when winning recent matches.

"Things did not go as expected lately," Xavi said. "Against Rayo it was better, but we have lacked continuity. Tomorrow is a great opportunity for us. It can be a turning point. I really

could leapfrog into the lead.

Both sides had early chances in a match that was intense and entertaining from the start.



Barcelona's Robert Lewandowski (right), duels for the ball with Rayo's Unai Lopez during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Rayo Vallecano and Barcelona at the Vallecas stadium in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

believe we will be playing better again. If I didn't, I wouldn't even be here."

Barcelona will advance with a win, or with a draw if Shakhtar doesn't beat Antwerp in the other Group H match on Tuesday. The Catalan club failed to reach the knockout stage in the two seasons after Lionel Messi left the club.

### SOCCER

"There's always pressure at Barça," Xavi said. "It's always been like this and that won't change. You have to win at this club."

Xavi said he feels the full support from the club despite the recent struggles. "We all believe in the project and there is total trust," he said.

then sent Federico Chiesa down the left before racing into the area to collect the ball back and steer it into the bottom right corner.

The home side's advantage lasted just six minutes, however, before Marcus Thuram and Martínez - who have become one of European soccer's most dangerous attacking duos - combined again for the equalizer.

The move began with Inter goalkeeper Yann Sommer and quickly moved forward where Thuram crossed from the right and Martínez got in front of Juventus defender Federico Gatti for an angled drive into the bottom left corner.

Former Juventus winger Juan Cuadrado was brought on in the 69th minute to loud boos from the home fans and he was jeered every time he touched the ball.

Cuadrado joined Inter on a free transfer in July after eight seasons at Juventus, where he won a number of trophies including five Serie A titles.

Paulo Dybala and Stephan El Shaarawy scored late as Roma beat lowly Udinese 3-1 and closed the gap on the top four.

Roma - which had a poor start to the season - moved up to fifth, three points behind Napoli and 11 points behind Inter.

It was Udinese's first defeat in nearly two months and left it a point above the relegation zone.



Inter's Denzel Dumfries, (left), and Juventus' Filip Kostic vie for the ball during the Italian Serie A soccer match between Juventus and Inter Milan, at the Allianz stadium in Turin, Italy. (AP)



KUNA photo

Kuwaiti athlete Nawaf Al-Shamroukh displays the national flag on the podium.

Al-Shamroukh clinches bronze in javelin throw

TEHRAN, Nov 27, (KUNA): Kuwaiti athlete Nawaf Al-Shamroukh secured the bronze medal in the Javelin throw competition for the deaf at the ongoing Asia Pacific Athletics Games in Tehran on Sunday. This achievement marked the first day

of the tournament, which is being hosted for the first time in the Iranian capital. The competition features teams from Iran, Kuwait, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Japan, and Malaysia in this inaugural edition of the continental championship.

### Best of the Rest

**De Ligt nears comeback:** Bayern Munich defender Matthijs de Ligt is nearing a comeback from the right knee injury which ruled him out for most of the last month, the club indicated Monday.

Bayern said the Netherlands center back was back on the field and "completed an individual session at the training ground on Monday morning." (AP)

**LAFC knocks out Seattle:** Denis Bouanga scored his fourth goal

of the MLS Cup playoffs in the 30th minute, goalkeeper Maxime Crepeau made seven saves, and defending champion Los Angeles FC advanced to the Western Conference final with a 1-0 win over the Seattle Sounders on Sunday night.

Bouanga got one chance at goal and didn't miss, scoring in his sixth straight game and sending LAFC home for the conference championship game against the Houston Dynamo next Saturday. (AP)