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Legislator probes TEC's ventures and workforce

42 MPs urge full execution of Amiri amnesty

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: A total of 42 MPs issued a statement urging the government to complete the execution of the Amiri amnesty decree to cover all the beneficiaries.

They stressed that four months of the parliamentary term have passed since the decree was issued, but there has been no progress.

The MPs affirmed that the execution of the Amiri amnesty decree is part of the requirements for the parliament to cooperate with the government.

Meanwhile, MP Jarrah Al-Fawzan submitted parliamentary questions to the Minister of Finance Fahad Al-Jarallah about whether the Touristic Enterprises Company (TEC) established two touristic companies in 2015. If yes, he wanted copies of the establishment contracts showing the businesses conducted by both

companies, and copies of the recruitment contracts signed by the two companies with Kuwaiti and expatriate workers, along with details about their job titles and salaries.

He said he wanted to know the total number of Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti employees who worked in TEC in the last ten years.

The lawmaker also wanted to know the value and term of the contract related to the establishment of Winter Wonderland in the 2023/2024 fiscal year.

Al-Fawzan also submitted parliamentary questions to the Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Adel Al Mane'e, asking if any of the deans of the colleges of Kuwait University (KU) have been assigned with a grade of "Associate Professor". If any, he wanted copies of their CV and the recruitment decisions.

He asked if any of the associate professors have been assigned as deans, when

there are professors among the staff.

Al-Fawzan also asked if there are any academic programs in English at the College of Graduate Studies, and if the college appointed consultants who know no other languages other than English.

He asked if the College of Graduate Studies receives reports about the academic programs in English. If yes, he wanted verification about the information that claims the dean of the College of Graduate Studies does not know English. He asked for a copy of the CV of the current dean of the College of Graduate Studies, and the documents proving that he knows English.

The lawmaker asked about the reason behind appointing a dean in the College of Graduate Studies from the College of Sharia and Islamic Studies, and ignoring the current professors at the College of Graduate Studies.

Continued on Page 4



Crown Prince Diwan photo
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud at Bayan Palace on Monday.

Crown Prince receives Saudi FM

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Monday Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud, and his accompanying delegation on occasion of his official visit to the country.

His Highness the Crown Prince relayed the greeting of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to King of Saudi Arabia Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, and the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud.

His Highness the Amir wished King Salman and the Crown Prince good health, and the people of Saudi Arabia further progress and prosperity.

Attending the meeting were Acting Amiri Diwan Affairs Minister Mohammad Dhaifallah Sharrar, Head of His Highness the Crown Prince Diwan Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Sabah, Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Sabah, and Director of Crown Prince Office Jamal Al-Thayab.

Also in attendance were Undersecretary at the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs at the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince, Mazen Al-Essa, Assistant Foreign Minister for GCC Salem Al-Zamanan, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Al-Sabah and Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad Al-Saud. (KUNA)

Opinion

Advice ... Israel must realize that abundance overcomes courage

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

LET us start from the end. Would the Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, led by the "Al-Qassam Brigades" take place without the advice of the Hamas leadership residing in Doha and Istanbul hotels? Could its result be the recognition of a Palestinian state next to an Israeli state?

There is no doubt that the operation will remain forever in the Palestinian and Israeli memories. Perhaps for a second, its impact will be greater because it represents an Israeli setback exactly 50 years after the start of the October War in 1973.

It therefore indicates that this state will not rest and stabilize unless there is a neighboring Palestinian state, protected by the world as it protected Israel for 75 years.

The operation came at a politically difficult time for the Tel Aviv government, which was suffering from division, popular unrest as a result of judicial amendments, and unrest that could have toppled the Netanyahu government. It came at a time when the resurgence of Jewish extremist groups intensified, and they brazenly provoked Muslims by storming Al-Aqsa Mosque several times.

Also, if Israeli military power gave an advantage for 50 years and was modernized after the October War, its rapid collapse within three hours brought to Israeli minds the shock of the collapse of the Bar Lev line, let alone the fact that the opponent this time is not a regular army, but an armed faction of a few thousand fighters armed with primitive weapons.

It is true that the timing of the operation is remarkable. We mentioned in the past that Hamas wasn't known for this apart from being in the hotels. This makes us wonder if this may be an indication of the end of the "resistance" of luxury and profiteering, because its leadership was never an actual liberation leadership.

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Firms brace for new tax impact

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: It seems that the path to imposing taxes on Kuwaiti multinational companies moves in one direction, as all indications, whether from the government or from the concerned entities, indicate that the stage of persuasion has been passed, considering that paying locally is preferable to deducting externally.

In confirmation of this, informed sources revealed to Al-Rai that banks and companies with foreign branches are finally preparing and accurate calculations for tax, especially after Kuwait officially submitted a request to join the framework of the draft law of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

It is true to say that the ideal title for the accounting discussions currently open is "Determining the material impact of tax implementation," or in short, how much is the cost of implementing the procedure in the budgets of the coming years?

In this regard, sources reported that major banks and companies formed working teams of their financial employees and discussed with their auditors scenarios of the expected financial impact on their budgets as a result of deducting 15 percent of their profits locally as taxes, in order to avoid falling within the scope of the OECD draft law that imposes tax on multinational companies at least 15 percent if the revenues of the parent group exempt from paying taxes in their countries reach 750 million euros annually.

The sources said that Kuwaiti companies concerned with the new tax recently reviewed with their auditors their expectations for the cost of the new accounting obligation in their budgets as part of their preparations for their financial statements for the fourth quarter of the current fiscal year.

Al-Saadoun urges swift action on Gaza conflict

Kuwait government expresses solidarity with Palestinian people

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun participated in an online meeting of the parliaments of the member states of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation to discuss the ongoing attacks targeting Gaza.



Palestinians wounded in Israeli bombardment of the Gaza Strip arrive at a hospital in Khan Younis Monday, Oct. 16, 2023. (AP)

Kuwait issues warning

Biden decries tragic murder of Palestinian child in Illinois

WASHINGTON, Oct 16, (Agencies): US President Joe Biden on Monday condemned the murder of a Palestinian child and the injury of his mother in Illinois, rejecting Islamophobia and all forms of bigotry and hatred.

"Jill and I were shocked and sickened to learn of the brutal murder of a six-year-old child and the attempted murder of the child's mother in their home yesterday in Illinois," Biden said in a press statement.

"The child's Palestinian Muslim family came to America seeking what we all seek a refuge to live, learn, and pray in peace," he said.

"This horrific act of hate has no place in America, and stands against our fundamental values: freedom from fear for how we pray, what we believe, and who we are," he added.

"As Americans, we must come together and reject Islamophobia and all forms of bigotry and hatred. I have said repeatedly that I will not be silent in the face of hate. We must be unequivocal. There is no place in America for hate against anyone," Biden emphasized.

"We join everyone here at the White House in sending our condolences and prayers to the family, including for the mother's recovery, and to the broader Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim American communities," he noted.

An Illinois landlord accused of fatally stabbing a 6-year-old Muslim boy and seriously wounding his mother was charged with a hate crime after police and relatives said he singled out the victims because of their faith and as a response to the war between Israel and Hamas.

In recent days, police in U.S. cities and federal authorities have been on high alert for violence driven by antisemitic or Islamophobic sentiments. FBI officials, along with Jewish and Muslim groups, have reported an increase of hateful and threatening rhetoric.

In the Chicago-area case, officers found the 32-year-old woman and boy late Saturday morning at a home in an unincorporated

area of Plainfield Township, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) southwest of Chicago, the Will County Sheriff's Office said in a statement on social media.

Authorities did not release the names of the two victims.

But the boy's paternal uncle, Yousef Hannon, spoke at a news conference Sunday hosted by the Chicago chapter Council on American-Islamic Relations where the boy's father was in attendance. There the boy was identified as Wade Al-Fayoume, a Palestinian American boy who recently had turned 6. The organization identified the other victim as the boy's mother.

Also:

WASHINGTON: The Kuwaiti Embassy in Washington on Monday urged its nationals to be cautious, follow local authorities' guidelines and steer clear of any random gatherings only to ensure their own safety following sporadic demonstrations in some US cities.

In a press release, obtained by Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), the embassy asked Kuwaiti nationals to contact it or any of its consulates in the US in case of emergency.



US State Rep. Abdelnasser Rashid, D-21st District, embraces Oday Al-Fayoume, father of Wade Al-Fayoume, 6, during a news conference at the Muslim Community Center on Chicago's North-west Side, Sunday, Oct. 15, 2023. (AP)

Newswatch

LONDON: A British Muslim convert who was convicted in Turkey of being part of the Islamic State group pleaded guilty at a U.K. court Monday to having a firearm for terrorism purposes and two charges of funding terrorism.

Aine Davis, 39, was deported to the U.K. in August 2022 after serving time in prison in Turkey. He was charged and detained by British counterterrorism police upon arriving at London's Luton Airport.

Davis on Monday pleaded guilty by video link from a southeast London prison to possessing a firearm for terrorism purposes and funding terrorism between 2013 and 2014.

British authorities had long suspected that Davis was part of an Islamic State group cell known as "The Beatles" - so called because of the men's British accents - that tortured and killed Western hostages in Syria a decade ago, when IS controlled a large swath of Syria and Iraq. Davis denies being connected to the cell. (AP)

MANILA: Canada will help the Philippines detect illegal fishing with its satellite surveillance system under a new agreement, Philippine officials said Monday.

The arrangement gives the National Coast Watch Center of the Philippines access to data from Canada's "Dark Vessel Detection System," which harnesses satellite technology to track illegal fishermen even if they switch off their location transmitting devices, the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila said.

Illegal and unregulated fishing is a problem across the Philippine archipelago, including in disputed areas of the South China Sea. (AP)

He stressed that words are not enough to express his feelings when he talks about the barbaric crimes committed against the Palestinians, especially women and children.

Al-Saadoun asked again why the world is silent regarding the two million people who are trapped without electricity and water, and are facing severe military strikes.

He said the world is witnessing the biggest massacre committed in Gaza, which is broadcasted live by media, with 2,750 victims so far, most of whom are children and women.

Al-Saadoun concluded by stressing that the voice of parliamentarians in the Arab and Muslim countries must reach the entire world with the support of documents that prove the unprecedented war crimes against Palestinian civilians.

The Kuwaiti government expressed on Monday its unequivocal stance towards the Palestinian people, condemning with the strong words the brutal Israeli military action against the people of the Gaza Strip.

During its weekly meeting chaired by Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Cabinet reviewed the latest developments in the besieged Gaza Strip, which is under continuous assault by the Israeli Zionist regime, expressing utter detest towards the latter party attempts to forcefully displace Palestinians via violence and total destruction.

The Cabinet called on the international community and the UNSC to swiftly intervene and halt the dangerous escalation in the region that led to the loss of lives and the targeting of civilians.

The siege on Gaza must cease to enable humanitarian aid, food, water, and other necessities to enter and save lives through various UN agencies, government, and non-government entities, it reiterated.

Palestinians in besieged Gaza crowded into hospitals and schools on Monday, seeking shelter and running low on food and water. More than a million people have fled their homes ahead of an expected Israeli ground invasion aimed at destroying Hamas after its fighters rampaged through southern Israel.

As the enclave's food, water and medicine supplies dwindled, all eyes were on the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt, where trucks carrying badly needed aid have been waiting for days as mediators press for a cease-fire that would allow them to enter Gaza and allow foreigners to leave. Rafah, Gaza's only connection to Egypt, was shut down nearly a week ago because of Israeli airstrikes.

Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said Israel "has not taken a position to open the crossing from the Gaza side." The Israeli government did not respond to a request for comment.

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Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:30	Asr	14:50
Sunrise ..	05:49	Maghrib ..	17:17
Zohr	11:34	Isha	18:34

Local

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

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:
By Day: Rather hot with light to moderate northerly wind to northwesterly wind with speeds of 08-28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

Weather		
By Night: Mild with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind with speeds of 06-26 km/h.		
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	39	29
Kuwait Airport	40	22
Abdaly	40	24
Jahra	41	27
Salmiyah	34	28
Ahmadi	37	30
Nuwaisib	42	25
Wafra	40	24



Photographers and officials at the (Noor 5) photography exhibition.

KUNA photo

Kuwait Photographic Society holds exhibition at Al-Assimah Mall

Kuwait Photographic Society has organized “Noor-5” exhibition at Al-Assimah Mall displaying 74 photos for 51 photographers. The three-day exhibi-

tion that kicked off on Sunday has already started to lure visitors interested in the art of photographing. The public welfare society was established in

2017. Photographers exchange expertise through the exhibitions organized by the society. (KUNA)



KUNA photo

The Executive Council of the Arab Ministers of Social Affairs meeting in progress.

Palestinian people’s rights for peace, security backed

CAIRO, Oct 16, (KUNA): The Executive Council of the Arab Ministers of Social Affairs affirmed on Monday their firm and unequivocal stand towards supporting the Palestinian people’s right for security and peace.

During their 79th meeting, Arab League Assistant Undersecretary for the Social Affairs Sector Haifa Abu-Ghazaleh said that the current dire situation of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and elsewhere required a strong stance especially in providing humanitarian and social assistance to those affected by the full out brutal assault of the Israeli occupation forces.

She affirmed that the Palestinian’s delegation participation in the current meeting was important to put into actions plans to support the Palestinian people in their current predicament.

Meanwhile, she stressed the importance of partaking in the Arab civil society summit on October 24-25, which will coincide with the youth summit on food security.

The agenda of the meeting also would be discussing preparation for the 33rd Arab summit to be held in Bahrain and the fifth summit of the Arab economic and social development summit to be held in Mauritania.

Abu-Ghazaleh also noted that today’s meeting also prepared a series of proposals and drafts pertaining to the five-year plan of the Arab Social Affairs Ministers’ Executive Council.

Saudi Minister of Human Resources and Social Development Ahmad Al-Rajhi said that the recent alarming developments in the Arab region required reconfiguration in terms of attending to the urgent social needs of the people.

Al-Rajhi welcomed the participation of the Palestinian delegation to the meeting, saying their presence was important to their just cause.

Meanwhile, the Saudi Minister discussed the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), stressing the importance of realizing these goals.

Buses provided for cemetery visitors

‘Can sell flowers, plants with sweets’

By Inass Awad

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The Municipal Council, during its regular session yesterday headed by Khaled Al-Mutairi, declared article 25 twice against the objection of the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Hussam Al-Shoula to the proposal of the Chairman of the Municipal Council Abdullah Al-Mahri for creating a walkway in Qadisiya area, and the proposal of member Alia Al-Faresi for incorporating cleaners in the municipal structure in Kuwait City in Capital Governorate.

The Municipal Council approved the proposal of the Chairman of the Municipal Council Abdullah Al-Mahri, and a member Farah Al-Roumi for adding the activity of selling flowers and plants to the activity of sweets in commercial areas and buildings for commercial use. It also approved the proposal of a member Abdullah Al-Daei to provide buses for visitors to cemeteries.

The proposal of a member Nasser Al-Jada’an was also approved for the establishment of a pedestrian bridge on Al-Aqsa Mosque Street between Salwa and Rumaithiya areas, provided that the approval of the Ministry of Interior is obtained.



Al-Mahri

When the Municipal Council discussed the building regulations, the Acting Director General of the Kuwait Municipality Saud Al-Dabbous urged the joint committee consisting of the technical, legal and financial committees to quickly approve the part related to private housing in the building regulations, and allow the resolution of the problems related to it in order to advance the work within its framework in the municipality. In this regard, the Chairman of the joint committee Dr. Hassan Kamal said, “By discussing and examining the private housing regulations, we balance the actual situation with the chaos in construction, and call for not to rush in discussing the regulations, because they outline the future architectural framework for the country in the next thirty years.”

The Municipal Council approved the proposal of a member Munira Al-Amir for setting a time limit for the period of handing over the privatization sites to government agencies.

After a detailed review of the existing procedures and problems that the parties concerned with the privatization operations may face, the Municipal Council approved an amendment to its previous decision issued on August 27, 2013 regarding privatization by deleting the second item, and its amendment specifies the time period allocated for the implementation of government projects to six years from the date of handover of the site.

‘Kuwait vouches for human rights’

HH Amir felicitated as Kuwait elected UN Rights Council member

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA): The Council of Ministers convened for its regular session on Monday, October 16, 2023, at Bayan Palace. The session was presided over by Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior. Following the meeting, Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, and Acting State for National Assembly Affairs, made the following statement:

The Council of Ministers commenced its session by extending heartfelt congratulations to His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, with prayers for their protection and preservation. The felicitations were extended on the occasion of Kuwait’s election as a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council for a three-year term commencing on January 1, 2024. This remarkable achievement is the culmination of concerted efforts and unwavering dedication, positioning Kuwait on an international stage and symbolizing the international community’s trust in Kuwait’s proactive role in the field of human rights.

In addition, the Minister of Information and Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, Abdul Rahman Baddah Al-Mutairi, apprised the Council of Kuwait’s selection as the Capital of Arab Culture for the year 2025. This recognition was conferred by the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Cultural Affairs in the Arab World. Minister Al-Mutairi emphasized the pivotal role of culture in the development of nations and societies, as it stands as a cornerstone of intellectual, literary, and social progress. Furthermore, culture plays a vital role in the dissemination of knowledge and the diversification of its sources.

Resolved

Consequently, the Council of Ministers has resolved to task the Minister of Information with collaborating with relevant authorities to undertake the necessary measures and preparations for this significant cultural event. The event will span an entire year, encompassing numerous cultural activities and functions, with the overarching goal of accentuating Kuwait’s cultural prominence and its pioneering status within the Arab world.

Meanwhile, the State of Kuwait on Monday affirmed its deep-rooted faith in positively addressing human rights issues since decades ago. Ambassador Nasser Al-Hain, the State of Kuwait Permanent Delegate at the UN and International Organizations in Geneva, made the statement while addressing a session on the fourth report of the international conventions for civil rights.

The State of Kuwait had joined the international convention on civil rights and endorsed it according to constitutional procedures, emanating from its deep conviction of its significance, except for reservations on some terms that contradicted the Kuwait Constitution and Kuwaiti legislations, based on the Islamic Shariaa as a main source for legislation, he said.

He added that the State of Kuwait had faced, along with states of the globe, challenges that required unprecedented constraints amid the corona virus outbreak however it had managed to hold parliamentary elections. The pandemic created new realities globally where bulk of nations had to heavily use digital means amid emerging challenges such as privacy protection thus it scrambled to take special measures such as establishing the national center for cyber security, according to the Amiri Decree 37/2022, Al-Hain said.

Moreover, the State of Kuwait was in solidarity with states of the globe in supporting the efforts to fight the pandemic, contributing with USD 327 million for relevant international agencies. Furthermore in this vein, Kuwait had also set up the national diwan for human rights. The State of Kuwait, he continued, would consider any remarks and examine top international practices at this level “as it is aware that it is part of the international community and our lives are connected.”

Elaborating, he noted that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in 2019, established the bureau for human rights for liaison with international organizations, state departments and follow up on national efforts related to human rights. Kuwait spares no efforts in promoting human rights at the national level, regularly holding educational courses and workshops in addition to including human rights principles in the teaching curricula. In 2018, the Ministry of Justice established the permanent national commission for the international humanitarian law.

At the judicial level, the authority had held courses for educating personnel on human rights. Al-Hain noted that the State of Kuwait devotes special care for the family rights and protecting it in accordance to Islam. In this respect the national committee for domestic violence had been established. In line with the special care for children, an office of the UNICEF was opened in Kuwait in November 2020, he said. A workshop with held in coordination the office in July 2022 for discussing means of boosting child protection. Kuwait has been providing financial contributions to the UNICEF, last batch of which was in February 2023, when the organization was given USD 17 million. At the level of women empowerment, Kuwait joined the international convention to erase all forms of discrimination against the women in 1994 and set May 15 as the Kuwaiti Woman Day.

Other Voices

Due/deserved resignation of ‘Public Works’ minister

By Ahmad alsarraf

In Lebanon, there’s a saying: “Everything in our life is filled with challenges, except for the roads.” However, despite the severe crises, Lebanon’s roads are in better condition than ours.

As winter approaches and the rainy season draws near, the state of the roads is deplorable and expected to worsen. It appears that neither the Ministry of Public Works nor the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transportation (PART) are aware of the citizens’ and residents’ suffering.

The government’s neglect is deeply disappointing. Even if the maintenance process were to commence now, it would be impossible to complete it before the onset of rainfall. This led my colleague Badr Al Bahr, in his recent article, to call for the resignation of Minister of Public Works Amani Bugamaz due to numerous errors.

Al Bahr ridiculed the meetings Bugamaz held with companies from advanced and major countries, as if she were planning a military operation rather than discussing the appropriate asphalt blend necessary for road maintenance.

Bugamaz’s failures and shortcomings were glaring, particularly evident in her meeting with the parliamentary committee for public facilities.

She contradicted her earlier statements when floating road maintenance tenders to companies, most of which had local agents, despite pledging to dismiss any company with a local agent.

Furthermore, she admitted that none of the roads have maintenance contracts at present, despite promising signed contracts by July 2023. We are now in October, and no contracts have been signed.



alsarraf

Bugamaz’s response to a parliamentary inquiry was truly astounding when she mentioned she had no knowledge about the quality of the asphalt blend used by the contractors since 2019.

She added that the same blend was included in the recent tender requirements, and she hadn’t had enough time to review it. When asked about the source of labor and equipment for the new contracts, she astonishingly stated she did not know and suggested that the contractors might hire labor and equipment locally or even bring their own from abroad.

This would significantly delay the process and contradict her earlier commitments, rendering Bugamaz’s promises seemingly unattainable within the defined timeframe.

In response to another question regarding what would happen if the contractors applying for the maintenance tenders did not agree to reduce their offer prices, she mentioned she would cancel the tenders and refloat them.

Additionally, she considered assigning some American companies for emergent cases in different governorates. This approach seems nonsensical and implies a further delay in the process. It’s disheartening that Bugamaz remains in office.

The numerous violations and issues at the Ministry of Public Works make it imperative to reconsider assigning the task to PART for road paving and maintenance, as it is the specialized and competent institution, provided a strong and honest leader is appointed.

I echo the commendations made by Badr Al Bahr in his recent article, especially regarding Kuwait’s history of high-quality asphalt during the tenure of contracting companies like Musaed Al Saleh & Sons, as well as other capable firms, particularly during the term of former Minister of Public Works Humoud Al Nisf. Notably, Musaed Al Saleh’s company is still operational but under a modern approach and a different name.

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‘Stomach Botox’ new technique

‘Get rid of obesity without cut’

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: According to a consultant for Internal Medicine, Gastroenterology and Liver Diseases Dr. Wafaa Al-Hashash, “Stomach Botox” is considered a revolutionary solution to get rid of obesity without surgery, as it is done using a gastroscopie due to which it does not cause incisions or external surgical wounds, the patient does not need full anesthesia or hospitalization, and its side effects are minor.

In a press statement issued yesterday, Dr. Al-Hashash said, “Through this solution, the patient loses 10 to 15 kilograms in just six months. It involves the use of Botox injections in the stomach to relax its muscles, which temporarily leads to reducing muscle contractions and feeling full for a longer period.

This is due to reducing the movement and contraction of the stomach, which prolongs the digestion process and the rate at which food is emptied and pushed from the stomach to the small intestine, sending signals of satiety and fullness to the brain, so the person does not feel hungry for a long

time.” She explained that these injections are not suitable for treating all cases of obesity. People who suffer from significant weight gain and have a body mass of more than 40 are not eligible for this procedure. Also, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and children younger than 18 years are also not eligible for this treatment.

It is suitable for people who are overweight or suffer from first-degree obesity (body mass between 27 and 40), and those who suffer from poor appetite control and have repeatedly tried to follow a healthy lifestyle but to no avail. It is also beneficial for people who binge eat, and suffer from health problems resulting from obesity, such as high blood pressure, bone and joint pain, and spine pain.

Dr. Al-Hashash stressed that this procedure is completely safe, and does not have any side effects, except for some minor symptoms such as exhaustion and fatigue that often occur after a regular gastroscopy, but there is no need to worry about them.

diwaniya



ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

‘Kuwait of tomorrow ... development expectations & fears of recklessness’

“KUWAIT stands on the threshold of a new parliamentary session, brimming with the aspirations of its people. These hopes are anchored in the anticipation of a fruitful collaboration between the two governing bodies, aiming to usher in an era of development,” columnist **Abdullah Bishara** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

“Kuwait envisions aligning itself with technological advancements and executing its development plan, seeking Parliament’s cooperation for this collective vision to materialize.

“Acknowledging an undeniable truth, the Council won’t readily embrace the government’s ambitious project without a steadfast government leadership, deeply committed to its duties. This leadership must adeptly defend the plan’s contents and persuade Parliament, emphasizing the essence of participatory action ingrained in Kuwait’s Constitution.

“The essence of meaningful participation hinges upon a resolute stance, assuring all Kuwaitis that the present government fervently pursues its mission. It remains steadfast in adhering to the proposed plan’s path, welcoming representatives’ contributions to expedite its achievements, and resolute against obstruction and delays. Without this well-supported leadership, the realization of aspirations remains elusive, jeopardizing Kuwait’s hard-won stability through inter-authority cooperation.

“In the event that the government leadership fails to secure parliamentary cooperation, it risks eroding the people’s confidence. The parliamentary role may then overshadow the authority, leading to concerns about the government’s diminishing effectiveness and the potential stifling of progress under parliamentary dominance.

“Drawing from international experiences, a gap between the two authorities may lead to resignation of the government or dissolution of Parliament, followed by subsequent elections. The potential divergence could escalate towards confrontation, a risk prevalent in party-based parliamentary systems, causing paralysis, discord, instability, and societal and political divides.

“Prominent among the divisive mechanisms are parliamentary inquiries that, when combined with intense interventions and heated comments, exacerbate differences and divisions. Kuwait, a nation founded on solidarity and communication, devoted to its safety and unity, is not conducive to political confrontations emerging from parliamentary disagreements that sow division and erode trust.

“The Kuwaiti experience, rooted in belief in people’s partnership and historical legitimacy, necessitates overcoming obstacles. It mandates fostering a sense of unity, quelling confrontational tendencies and the burden of democratic fatigue, and focusing on genuine cooperation rather than scoring points.

“Continued parliamentary functioning embodies Kuwait’s resilience, a vital element for ongoing development, stability, and security. This perpetual vitality is safeguarded by unwavering national unity, a healthy affinity, and a deep-rooted connection with historical legitimacy, underscoring the unique Kuwaiti identity.

“The paramount facet of this experience is Kuwait’s unwavering attachment to its homeland, soil, political systems, and the essential cohesion of its populace. Kuwait’s distinctiveness lies in its citizens’ commitment, resilience against geographical challenges, and their resolve, as exemplified during the challenging times of invasion.

“Kuwait’s biggest concern is the infiltration of partisan influence into its democratic framework. Despite Kuwaiti democracy’s unique characteristics and its harmonization with the Kuwaiti reality, the parliamentary conduct often strays from these principles. Striking the right balance and coordination between specialized committees and government authorities is crucial, ensuring harmony in decision-making and aligning actions with the people’s expectations.

“We must not overlook the essential features of Kuwaiti parliamentary governance, underscored by partnership rather than confrontation. The imposition of a party-driven democratic system on Kuwait’s reality yields a natural outcome of conflict, tension, and societal unrest. This approach clearly undermines the Kuwaiti model and disrespects the bilateral partnership vital for political and social stability.

“Turning to the imperative of leadership rationale within Parliament, the government holds the responsibility of spearheading the development initiative. It meticulously scrutinizes the project’s specifics and remains cognizant of potential criticisms from MPs. The public and leadership alike expect the government to communicate with conviction, demand with determination, and lead sessions confidently, unswayed by criticism. Detractors within the assembly might attack, disregarding the necessity for consensus to foster coexistence between Parliament and the government.

“It’s essential to bear in mind that various segments of the Kuwaiti population closely follow Parliament’s interactions with the government. They anticipate consensus with optimism and express approval for such harmony or register severe discontent when the two entities fail to agree. Criticism of the parliamentary experience and frustration with its mechanisms may arise in these situations.

“Perhaps His Highness the Prime Minister comprehends the full spectrum of possibilities and has readied his aides and mechanisms to realize the developmental breakthrough longed for by the Kuwaiti people, perceiving it as the essence of their future aspirations. Failure to achieve this breakthrough may plunge Kuwait into seasons of aridity and estrangement.”

Also:

“In the Western media, the portrayal of the Zionist perpetrator as a victim persists, justifying acts of murder, intimidation, displacement, and the bombing of hospitals, ambulances, UNRWA headquarters, journalists, and media professionals under the guise of fighting terrorism. They label the resistance fighters abandoning their land and people as ISIS,” columnist Dr. **Abdulaziz Ibrahim Al-Turki** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

“The masks have been lifted, revealing a clear criminal landscape and the diabolical Zionist plan linked to the displacement of the people of Gaza, uprooting them from their Gazan roots under the pretext of counter-terrorism.

“Where do international laws and humanitarian norms stand when the enemy government mandates the forced expulsion of northern Gaza residents (more than 1.8 million people) to the Rafah border crossing with Egypt, allowing them only one day to vacate their homes as thousands flee to escape the Zionist bombing, which targeted every shelter and even children’s hospitals, their convoys were mercilessly attacked.

“Despite the staggering numbers of martyred and wounded Palestinian victims, the Zionists persist in blocking the entry of relief aid and humanitarian convoys. Was the recent occurrence a ploy to lure the resistance, as the Zionists sacrificed over 150 settlers (reminiscent of September 11, 2001) in exchange for authorization to exterminate Gaza’s civilian population?

“Does this scheme encompass the elimination of Hezbollah and other factions in the present or upcoming stages if they engage in this battle? Observers anticipate

Hezbollah’s involvement, considering their shared destiny with the resistance factions.

“Regarding the evidence of the planned actions and prior preparation by the Zionist movement, it is evident in the writings of prominent Zionist figure and extreme right-wing ideologue, Benny Morris. In his book, he discussed the perceived need to orchestrate a second catastrophic event for the Palestinian people residing in the Gaza Strip.

“This event would not mirror the 1948 ‘Nakba’ (the Palestinian term for the events of 1948, when many Palestinians were displaced by the creation of the new state of Israel) but rather manifest in a malicious manner, using weak pretexts and legal justifications, such as the fight against terrorism. This would be accompanied by a Western media campaign aimed at persuading global populations of the legitimacy of forced displacement and ethnic cleansing, all under the guise of eradicating supposed terrorists whose goals were deemed unattainable.

“Those advocating for the two-state solution provided apparent legitimacy for the crime of displacing the people of Gaza through horrific means. The belief was that this new second Nakba was deemed essential for the Zionist state to achieve a semblance of peace, as per their claims.

“This perspective was expressed by the Zionist extremist Benny Morris. The brutality of the Zionist war machine against the defenseless Palestinian population, involving unprecedented war crimes and displacement in Gaza, further underscores this existential necessity according to Morris.

“These actions have been displayed for the world to witness, yet the Western media often portrays the Zionist forces as victims, rationalizing their crimes, including murder, intimidation, displacement, and bombing of critical facilities such as hospitals, ambulances, UNRWA headquarters, journalists, and media professionals, all in the name of fighting terrorism. The resistance fighters defending their land and people are often unjustly labeled as ISIS.

“If the Zionists choose to invade the Gaza Strip, launching brutal attacks and horrific massacres before the eyes of the international community and with a tacit approval from the United States, the cycle of war will escalate.

“Defenseless civilian casualties will rise, and popular resistance reactions will intensify. At that point, the Zionists may attempt to manipulate the Western media narrative by invoking the Holocaust to justify both the first and second catastrophic events and equate the criminal with the victim.”

“Last week, the Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled headed a security delegation on an official visit to Riyadh where he met with his brother His Royal Highness Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Naif, Minister of Interior in the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They discussed ways to enhance cooperation in the security field, as well as the security situation that it is witnessing in the region,” columnist **Tariq Hamada** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

“The repercussions of what is happening in Gaza on our countries require studying the security consequences and agreeing on mechanisms to deal with them.

“In this context, we must note the clear Kuwaiti stance in support of the Palestinian right and its attainment of its full rights, the most important of which is an independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. We also appreciate the Kuwaiti rush to donate and provide aid.

“There is no doubt that there are other files that require high coordination between the Interior ministers of the GCC countries, such as drugs, terrorism, electronic fraud, information technology security, and crime in all its forms.

“From the time the First Deputy Prime Minister assumed his duties, the issue of drugs became a priority. The various sectors of the ministry are waging a real war against drug dealers. The smuggling of huge quantities of drugs has been thwarted and many dealers have been arrested. This great interest calls me to assert the fact that this issue was strongly present in the discussions of the two ministers. With more cooperation, we will see fruits.

“Drugs represent a war targeting our countries. The evidence confirms that our Gulf countries are being targeted. Otherwise, how do we explain the ongoing attempts to smuggle tons of narcotic substances and millions of psychotropic substances annually, in addition to their significant connection to crime, because they make the consumer a ferocious and violent person who has an unbridled desire to attack others?!

“Modern drugs have become a major threat to society, not only in their spread among young people, but also in the ease of obtaining them.

“Therefore, it is an issue that deserves continuous security coordination and solidarity to confront it by all means, allocating budgets for prevention, control and treatment, passing strict and rapid laws, and providing ports with the latest detection devices.

“It also requires community solidarity and for families to play an important role. The same applies to the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, by preparing correctional programs and subsequent care for addicts after recovery, adopting a strategy through which supply and demand are reduced, and adopting an awareness strategy in which all Gulf media outlets participate together.”

“Palestine is witnessing the ninth day of the war declared by the occupying Zionist entity, with the random bombing of residential civilian neighborhoods in the besieged Gaza Strip, in light of the interruption of electricity, water, and gas. The Palestinian Ministry of Health system is collapsing and its stocks of medical supplies are running out, such that its hospitals are turning to mass graveyards,” columnist **Fahad Al-Jabri** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

“The occupation forces, in their continuous bombing operations, do not differentiate between a militant barracks, a residential neighborhood, a place of worship, or even a health facility.

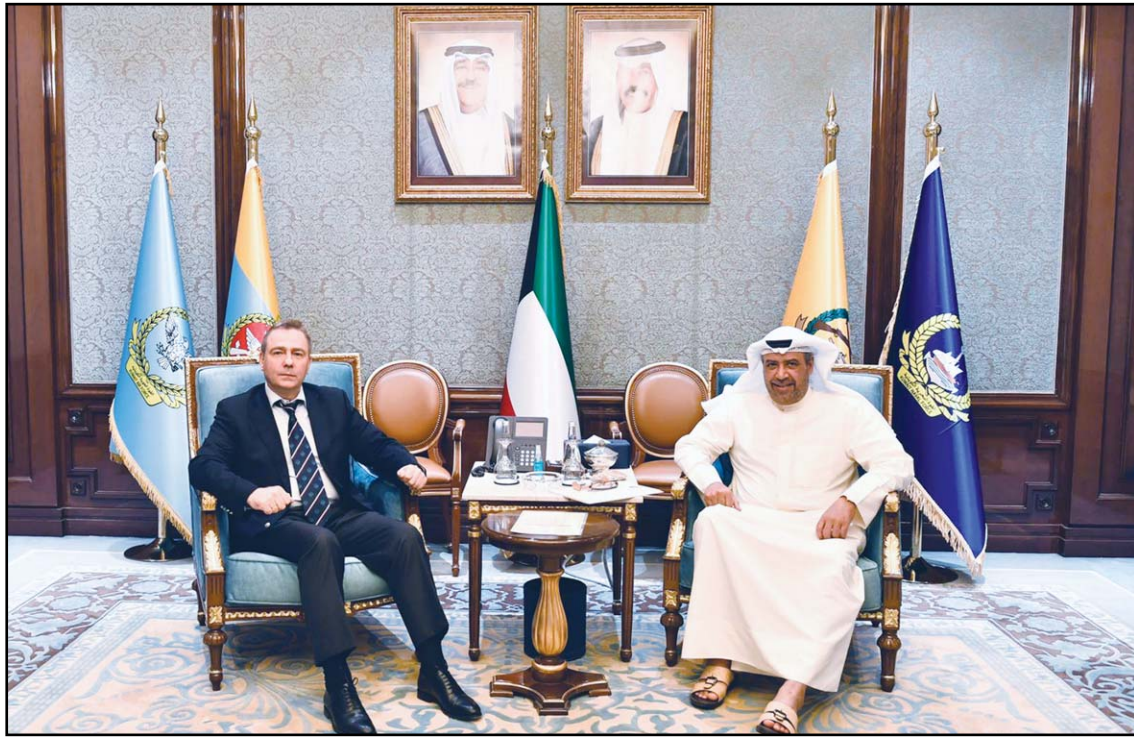
“The health sector is collapsing to a great extent as a result of a complete power outage in all hospitals and centers affiliated with the Palestinian Ministry of Health. Some of the fuel available now can only suffice the hospitals and centers for several hours.

“There is also a problem with a shortage in ambulances that transport the wounded and injured, and the bombing they are exposed to while transporting the injured, not to mention the shortage in blood stocks as a result of the number of casualties, and a shortage of hospital beds, and lack of space in morgues to keep the dead due to the huge increase in the number of martyrs.

“Likewise, the organizations, associations and agencies affiliated with the United Nations were not spared from the brutal Zionist aggression. The shelter schools affiliated with the United Nations Relief Agency (UNRWA), which were supposed to be a safe haven for the displaced, did not escape the bombing by the brutal Israeli forces.

“UNICEF, which is concerned with helping children around the world, announced the killing of a number of its staff members in the besieged Gaza Strip not to mention the deliberate obstruction of the role of relief societies, led by the Kuwait Red Crescent Society.”

— Compiled by **Mai Elsoukary**



KUNA photo

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Ahmad Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives the Russian Ambassador to Kuwait Vladimir Zheltov.

Bilateral ties discussed

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Ahmad Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah discussed, separately, bilateral relations and issues of common interest with the Turkish and Russian Ambassadors to Kuwait.

In a press statement, Ministry of Defense said that Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad received the Turkish Ambassador Tuba Nur Sonmez and Russian Ambassador Vladimir Zheltov at Bayan Palace, separately, and reviewed issues of common interest, ways to boost military cooperation and the latest regional and international developments.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent recently a cable of congratulations to Spain’s King Felipe VI on the occasion of his country’s National Day. (KUNA)



KUNA photo

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Ahmad Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah with the Turkish Ambassador Tuba Nur Sonmez.

KD 50 pay hike for 10,000 expat and Kuwaiti nurses

Minister nods work allowance rescheduling

By **Marwa Al-Bahrawi**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, has approved the reclassification of the nature of work allowance for nurses to be two categories “A-B”, instead of three categories “A-B-C”, in order to provide a suitable work environment for the nursing staff, and in appreciation of the nature of their work.

The reclassification results in an increase in the nature of work allowance for its beneficiaries by an average of 50 dinars per month, for about ten thousand nurses, distributed among 599 Kuwaiti nurses, whose classification will be changed from category “B” to category “A,” and 98 from category “C” to category “B”, bringing the total number of Kuwaiti nurses included in the reclassification to 697 nurses, with an average monthly increase of 50 dinars for all those included in the reclassification.

Regarding the number of non-Kuwaiti nursing staff included in the reclassification from Category “B” to Category “A,” their number reaches 4,200 nurses, with an average increase of 50 per month, in addition to 3,702 nurses whose classification is modified from Category “C” to Category “B,” bringing the total to 7,902, with an average monthly increase of 50 dinars.

The number of non-Kuwaiti nurses subject to reclassification from those whose services are used under the bonus clause is 601 nurses – with 401 nurses reclassified from category “B” to category “A,” and 200 from category

Souk Sharq, Mubarakiya raids

Police nab 212 residence violators

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Members of the Residence Affairs Investigation Department have arrested 212 violators of the residence and labor law during an inspection campaign in Souk Sharq market, Mubarakiya market, stalls in the Mahboula area, fish market in Fahaheel, and Fahaheel markets, reports Al-Rai daily.

The Security Media Department stated that these seizures come within the inspection cam-

paigns organized by the General Department of Residence Affairs Investigations, represented by the Search and Investigation Department, the Supervision and Coordination Department, the Financial and Administrative Services Department, the Tripartite Committee, the General Director’s Division, and the Violators Follow-up Department.

The sources added that legal measures are being taken against all violators.

ry “C” to category “B,” with an average increase of 50 dinars per month.



Bribery, graft case: The Criminal Court has set next November 27 to look into a case in which a senior official in the Ministry of Interior, the secretariat of former MPs, and a former minister are accused of bribery and corruption, reports Al-Rai daily.

The Public Prosecution had earlier charged the suspects with receiving bribes and forging visa applications for expatriates in return for 2,000 dinars for each transaction.

It is worth noting that the case was discovered by the Ministry of Interior, where First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled ordered the formation of an investigation committee to look into the incident, and to refer all parties to the Public Prosecution after completing the investigation.



1 dead in collision: A water tanker and an SUV collided on the Sulaiybiya Farms Road, resulting in the death of one individual, reports Al-Seyassah

daily.

According to a press statement issued by the Public Relations and Media Department of the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate, when the Control Room of KFSD received information about the accident, firefighters from Istiqal Fire Station were dispatched to the location.

Upon arrival, they discovered that a man had died in the accident. The corpse was referred to the concerned authorities. Investigations have been launched in this regard.



Huge fines collected: The Interior Ministry collected a total of KD81,620 within 48 hours of implementing the decision of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled to oblige expatriates to pay traffic fines before leaving the country, reports Al-Qabas daily quoting a source from the security sector.

The source reiterated that no expatriate with unpaid traffic fines will be allowed to leave for whatever purpose — vacation, business or return to their home countries.

Pay worker’s comp – court

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah Staff/Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16 : The Court of Appeals ruled to oblige the Ministry of Health to pay compensation worth KD 4,500 to an employee of a government hospital due to the ministry’s refusal to pay salaries after withdrawing the decision to terminate his services on the pretext that he was absent from work for a period of 15 consecutive days and returned to his job.

During the court session, Lawyer Al-Khabbaz, representing the employee, affirmed that the decision was contrary to reality, as the period was not 15 consecutive days, but was only four days.

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Leadership wishes Solyom's family patience over his demise

HH Amir offers condolence over death of ex-Hungarian leader

Opening of new diwaniya for elderly falls within MoSA's plan: says official

Move aims at providing services to all areas

Bid to encourage employment in private sector

Warba participates in Watheefti confab

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The Chief Human Resources and General Services Officer at Warba Bank, Maali Abdullah Al-Rasheed, stated that Warba Bank is preparing to participate in the Watheefti Conference for the second year in a row, out of the bank's belief in the activities that discuss career guidance and future jobs in the labor market. Also Warba Bank's permanent presence in professional and career fairs is consistent with its strategy of strengthening the foundations of sustainability.

Al-Rasheed added that due to the importance of educating graduates, we announce that we are hosting the international company LinkedIn, at the Watheefti conference for the first time in Kuwait, as it will be an opportunity for everyone to learn about the services and features that LinkedIn provides and to benefit from the expertise of



Al-Rasheed

its team through their presence in the conference.

Warba Bank always seeks to be distinguished through its active participation in job fairs to encourage employment in the private sector in general. Note that the international company LinkedIn will present two workshops at the "Watheefti" conference to better prepare potential candidates to join the private sector. The two workshops will include personal files on LinkedIn and how to apply for jobs.

Warba Bank is one of the banks that has achieved great successes in a short period, as it occupied a leading position in the field of Islamic digital banking services for individuals, and it is one of the largest local banks in the number of shareholders, and these are among the most prominent components that make the bank close to all members of society, in addition Warba Bank is considered among the 50 largest banks in the Middle East in terms of market value for the year 2023 - Forbes Middle East classification.

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Abdulaziz Sari Al-Mutairi affirmed that the ministry, based on instructions from the Minister of Social Affairs Sheikh Firas Al-Malik, is committed to the directives of the Council of Ministers to provide all services to modern areas such as Sabah Al-Ahmad, West Abdullah Al-Mubarak and other areas of Kuwait.

During the opening of the West Abdullah Al-Mubarak diwaniya for the elderly the day before yesterday evening, under the patronage of the Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Sheikh Firas Al-Malik, Al-Mutairi said the opening of the diwaniya falls within the ministry's plan to cover its services to various areas.

He revealed that branch 2 and branch 6 of the West Abdullah Al-Mubarak Cooperative Society were opened in the presence of the acting director Mishal Al-Ghariba and members of the Board of Directors of the Sabah Al-Nasser Cooperative Society, represented by its president Hussein Shabib, who thanked the cooperative society's board of firectors for its keenness to provide services to the people of the area.

Al-Mutairi stressed that the ministry is continuing its plans to provide all its services in various regions of the country and support and care for the elderly, praising the efforts of the Social Welfare sector.

He indicated that the coming period will witness the launch of many diverse projects and services.

In addition, the acting Assistant Undersecretary for the Social Welfare Sector Hamad Al-Khalidi explained that the West Abdullah Al-Mubarak Elderly Diwaniya offers many events and activities for elderly men and women, and provides a space for the people of the region for dialogue and discussion.

He revealed that there is a physical therapy project, along with cooperation with various state agencies to provide the best services.

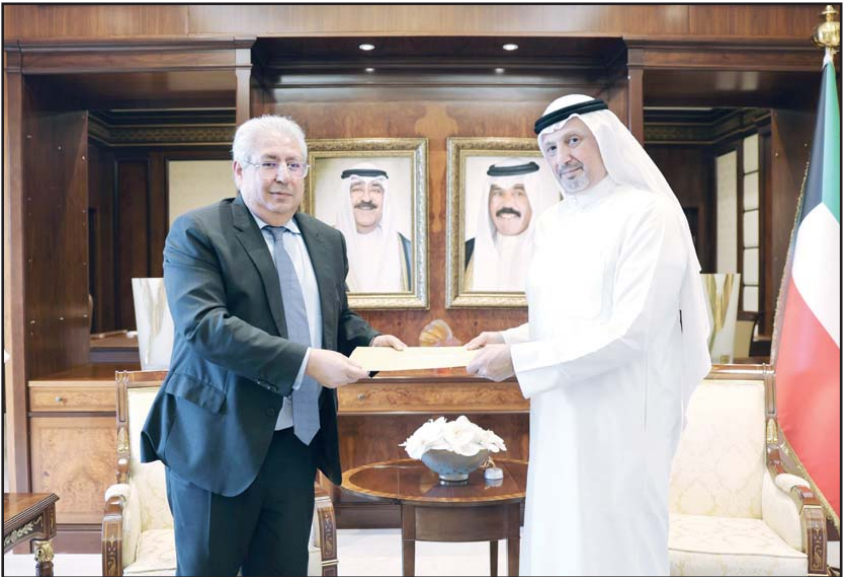
Al-Khalidi said there will be cooperation with craft centers, and periodic meetings with the people of the area to listen to their problems, address them, and provide everything necessary to serve and care for them in the best possible way.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Monday sent a cable of condolence to Hungarian President Katalin Novak over the death of former Hungarian president Laszlo Solyom, wishing his family patience over his demise.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber

Al-Sabah sent a cable to President Katalin Novak over the death of former president Laszlo Solyom, wishing his family and loved ones patience over his demise.

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable to President Katalin Novak over the death of former president Laszlo Solyom.



KUNA photo
Kuwait's FM receives from the Ambassador of Egypt a written message addressed to HH the Amir from the Egyptian president.

Bid to attend int'l-regional summit

FM receives invitation from Egyptian president to Amir

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Monday a handwritten letter from Egyptian President Abdulfattah Al-Sisi addressed to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The letter is an invitation to His Highness

the Amir to attend the international-regional summit aimed at addressing the recent developments relating to the Palestinian issue, to be held in Cairo on October 21st.

The letter was handed over to Kuwait Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah during a meeting today with Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Osama Shaltout.

Advice ... Israel

Continued from Page 1

The tactic of the attack astonished the Hamas leadership just like it astonished all observers in the world, which means this could be the end of the era of the leadership which traded with pain of the Palestinians, especially the people of Gaza.

There is no doubt that the cruelty of the events and the barbaric Israeli reaction will engrave lessons in the memory, and will prompt a change in Israeli and Western approaches towards the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

Hence, just as the world was ready to pressure Tel Aviv in 1973 to accept peace, the same will be exerted on both parties today to accept a peace deal.

It is true that the world today stands with Tel Aviv, but it will not guarantee its stability, which must be in the calculations of its leaders, and they remember the Arab proverb, "Abundance overcomes courage."

Therefore, it cannot continue in an Arab environment in which it represents less than five percent of the population.

It is true that for 75 years, the Arabs missed one opportunity after another. They did not accept the partition decision, and Israel expanded further at that time. However, after the setback of 1967, the then Egypt president the late Jamal Abdul Nasser rejected the Rogers' initiative, which stipulated holding negotiations to implement resolution No. 242. Abdul Nasser relaunched his slogan of "throwing the Jews into the sea," and thus the war of attrition continued, in which Egypt paid a huge price.

In 1970, Egypt had a leader who calculated gains and losses well; it was the late President Anwar Sadat. He realized that the continuation of the situation in this manner would lead to a doubling of the losses.

In agreement with Syria, he declared war on October 6, 1973, and surprised the world by crossing over, overthrowing the tyranny of the Israeli power, and covering the foreheads of its leaders with the sand of Sinai.

Four days after the start of the battle, the US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger went to Cairo, met with Sadat, and told him one phrase - "The United States will not accept the defeat of its weapons."

The late Sadat then replied, "It means that I am not fighting Israel, I am fighting America." Kissinger replied, "Yes, you are fighting the United States of America."

At that time, tanks were sent to Israel and entered the battle immediately, and the Western world declared its support for Israel, just like how it is happening today.

The late Sadat realized that continuing the war meant losing the gains that had been achieved, so he put on a military uniform, announced a unilateral cessation of the war, and began the "101 Kilometer Tent" negotiations, which ended in a peace agreement at the US "Camp David."

At that time, the world supported this step. The Egyptian army was in the best position, and today it secures Egypt's stability and maintains its national security. Cairo has become the millstone of international diplomacy.

We do not forget that initially this ended with a boycott of Egypt, and the holding of the Baghdad Conference. Despite the Arab sloganeering and brainwashing campaign, everyone returned to Egypt.

Today, the situation may be similar to that stage. There is no doubt that the Arabs will realize that time will not wait. The Palestinians are living this daily flame and massacres, and the world is beginning to wake up to the sound of the blatant war.

Therefore, there is no solution except the establishment of Israeli and Palestinian states living in peace side by side. Perhaps the Israeli leadership will be convinced that a new "Camp David" option is the best for the stability of its state.

Finally, there is no doubt that the Arab and Islamic worlds appreciate the Palestinian sacrifices, but we must be aware that the

war with slogans is what brought all these woes on the Palestinians.

Therefore, the Israelis and Palestinians must take a lesson from the October War.

42 MPs

Continued from Page 1

Al-Fawzan wanted to know why the assistant dean for Academic Affairs at College of Graduate Studies declined to take up the position of the dean, adding that he wanted to know the impact of such procedures on the classification of Kuwait University.

In addition, MP Abdulkareem Al-Kandari submitted parliamentary questions to the Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Adel Al Mane'e about the violation related to appointing an expatriate consultant in the Human Resources Department of Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR). He stressed that the relevant regulations ban the appointment of expatriate consultants in any department except for the Legal Affairs Department.

He asked if it is true that the expatriate consultant spent more holidays in his Arab homeland than what is recorded in the files of KISR due to which he illegally benefited from exchanging his unused holidays for cash.

Al-Kandari asked if the consultant is committed to specific office hours because of the fact that he has a part time job in a law firm. He also wanted details about the expatriate consultant's salary, allowance and bonus.

The lawmaker asked if any investigations have been conducted on the above mentioned violations.

Al-Saadoun urges

Continued from Page 1

With a ground invasion of Gaza expected, Israel was preparing for the potential of a new front opening on its northern border with Lebanon, where it has exchanged fire repeatedly with the Iranian-backed Hezbollah group. The military ordered residents from 28 Israeli communities to evacuate.

Speaking to the Israeli Knesset on Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned Iran and Hezbollah, "Don't test us in the north. Don't make the mistake of the past. Today, the price you will pay will be far heavier," referring to Israel's 2006 war with Hezbollah.

Elsewhere, French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday warned his Iranian counterpart Ibrahim Raisi against any escalation or extension of the conflict, especially to Lebanon.

He called on Iran, given its special relations with the Lebanese Hezbollah group and the Palestinian Hamas movement, to be responsible and do everything possible to avoid any regional conflict, the Elysee said in a statement, citing readout of a phone conversation between both leaders.

Macron stressed the need for "everyone to unequivocally condemn" the terrorist attacks committed by Hamas in Israel and Israel's right to defend itself and to eliminate the terrorist groups that have struck its population.

The statement indicated that Macron told his Iranian counterpart that French men and women were among the victims and hostages held by the terrorist organization. He explained that the latter's release constituted an absolute priority for France.

The two leaders discussed the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Macron referred to France's position on taking all necessary measures to spare civilians in Gaza and respect international humanitarian law.

The statement added that France is also taking steps in cooperation with the United Nations to support humanitarian operations in Gaza. Macron expressed deep concern about the four French citizens still detained in Iran and requested their immediate release.

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Cooperative society’s budget to be approved: Al-Kandari

Rawda & Hawally Co-op organizes ‘Green Kindergarten’ campaign

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: MP Hamad Al-Olayan says the Rawda and Hawally Cooperative Society is distinguished in presenting ideas and events throughout the year for serving the people of the area.

On the sidelines of the “Green Kindergarten” event organized by the cooperative society, in the presence of MP Hamad Al-Olayan, the mayor of the governorate Muhammad Al-Haidar, and a number of school students, he said, “We are keen to attend and support any event organized by the cooperative soci-

ety, as the primary beneficiaries of such events are the people.” Head of the Rawda and Hawally Cooperative Society Muhammad Al-Kandari announced in a similar statement the day before the readiness to approve the cooperative society’s budget.

He indicated that 12 percent prof-

its will be distributed to shareholders, which is the maximum limit specified by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Al-Kandari highlighted the start of the Rawdah camp project, and cultural and educational activities during the winter period.

He explained that the “Green Kindergarten” campaign coincides with

the yellowing of the land and the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources’ avoidance of beautification problems and contracts in the State of Kuwait. Continuous summer plants that last with the weather conditions in the State of Kuwait will be provided, with approximately 2,000 seedlings so far being distributed.

Some of the buildings in Rawda will be beautified, as well as the entrances to the area.

Al-Kandari said, “The celebration was supposed to be huge, but in solidarity with the events in Gaza, we decided to cancel the celebration and limit ourselves to distributing seedlings and planting.”



KUNA photo

FM Sheikh Salem Abdullah receives his Saudi counterpart.

FM receives Saudi counterpart

Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Monday Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, and his accompanying delegation on occasion of his official visit to the country.

The Saudi minister was received at the airport by Assistant Foreign Minister for GCC Salem Al Zamanan, As-

sistant Foreign Minister for Protocol Affairs, Ambassador Nabil Al-Dakhil, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Foreign Minister's Office Minister Plenipotentiary Nawaf Al-Ahmad, Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad Al-Saud and several senior officials. (KUNA)



Training on the thermal frequency device.

7 dermatology clinics open

Radio frequency energy device used to reduce lower nasal corneas: expert

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

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: According to a consultant in Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Surgery and Head of the ENT Department at Farwaniya Hospital Dr. Ahmad Al-Rashidi, 15 surgeries were performed to reduce the lower nasal corneas, using radio frequency energy based devices, under local anesthesia in the outpatient clinics, without the need to enter the hospital or the operating rooms under general anesthesia.

In a press statement issued on the occasion of the launch of the nasal surgery workshop at the outpatient clinics in Zain Hospital, Dr. Al-Rashidi said a radio frequency energy based device is an important technology that contributes to treating the patient within a few minutes, and avoiding many complications.

He revealed that the workshop, which is being held for the first time in Kuwait, is hosting a visiting German consultant to talk about this technology, over a period of two days.

Dr. Al-Rashidi explained that performing these operations in the outpatient clinics spares the patient many complications, reduces hospital stay, and helps save hospital bed capacity. It also has a clear economic impact by reducing the costs resulting from hospitalization.

Radio frequency energy is a modern technology that is used through a device that sends these frequencies in a pulsed frequency manner. It is the latest technology for nasal cartilage reduction operations, and is considered one of the safest and easiest surgical interventions.

The workshop aims to train doctors in various ENT departments and Kuwaiti board doctors from various hospitals on the latest modern medical technologies, which refines their experience in dealing with developments in this field, in accordance with the latest international protocol systems, which contributes to providing medical service in accordance with

quality standards.

The Dermatology Department at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital yesterday inaugurated seven dermatology clinics at the Salwa Specialized Health Center in the presence of the Director of Hawally Health Zone Dr. Mona Abdul Samad, Sheikhah Awrad Al-Sabah, and the Head of Primary Health Care for the Hawally Health Zone Dr. Wafaa Al-Bader.

In a statement issued during the inauguration ceremony, Head of the department Dr. Manar Al-Enezi said the Salwa Specialized Health Center will include seven skin disease clinics, and a private pharmacy to dispense medications for these diseases.

She affirmed that booking of appointments will be done electronically.

Dr. Al-Enezi stressed that dermatology clinics are also present in Nasser Saud Al-Sabah Specialized Center and Salwa Specialized Center, indicating that there is an electronic link between dermatology clinics in primary care centers and Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital.

He revealed the intention to launch dermatology clinics in Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Specialized Center and Salwa Specialized Center during the evening period soon, to accommodate the largest number of patients in the Hawally Health Zone.

She reported that the Ministry of Health, represented by the Council of Dermatology Departments, provided the best modern and biological treatments to treat psoriasis and eczema, which have effective results in treatment.

Dr. Al-Enezi indicated that the Dermatology Department in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital attracted a number of visiting doctors in several specialties to examine difficult cases such as eczema, psoriasis, and hair diseases such as alopecia, adding that workshops were held on the sidelines of their visit to train doctors on the latest developments in the treatment of skin diseases.

PAAET to participate in ‘My Job’ exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The official spokesperson of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) and the Director of the Public Relations and Media Department of PAAET Siham Al-Enezi announced the PAAET's participation, through the Graduate Follow-up Department, in organizing the sixth annual exhibition for career and academic opportunities titled “My Job” to be held at the 360 Mall, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, Al-Enezi affirmed PAAET's keenness to support its graduated and continuing male and female students, and strengthen the relationship between them and labor market entities, through its association with many different state institutions in its governmental and private sectors, which contributes to the development, progress and innovation of many specializations and raises the level of its academic outputs to keep pace with the needs of these institutions and

achieve the country's future vision.

She explained that the exhibition serves as an opportunity for the public to communicate directly with labor market authorities in the government and private sectors, in addition to providing study opportunities for those wishing to complete their studies, by communicating with the leading participating universities and educational institutions to learn about their conditions, requirements and the specializations they offer.

PAAET will participate in the exhibition activities through some training workshops presented by an elite group of specialists in many fields, with the cooperation of the Ibn Al-Haytham Training Center, to qualify the graduates for various jobs and develop their behavioral and social skills.

It should be noted that the exhibition will open at 9:30 am on Thursday, and its activities will continue for three days.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Decisions concerning fresh investments by the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) have come to a halt, both within local and foreign markets, since June 2022. However, there has been a noteworthy surge in liquid assets within the institution’s accounts. These heightened levels of liquidity starkly contrast with the institution’s strategy that has been in effect since 2017, reports Al-Rai daily.

Since 2017, insurance sector officials have embraced a strategy that aims to reduce cash levels in portfolios. The objective was to achieve cash levels amounting to 2 percent of the total value of the institution’s investment portfolio, which stood at approximately 42.5 billion dinars during that time.

The plan was centered around utilizing funds that were not invested, whose proportion had decreased from 41.2 percent of the institution’s total investment portfolio as of March 31, 2016, to less than 4 percent as of March 31, 2021, according to statements by the former Deputy Director General of the institution, Raed Al-Nisf, on August 9, 2020.

Meetings

The sources have emphasized that due to the PIFSS board of directors not convening and subsequent lack of meetings by the Investment Committee for about 16 months, the institution did not agree to engage in any new investments.

Consequently, the absorption of liquidity stemming from subscriptions to pay for pensions beyond previously approved ones was hindered. These subscriptions were limited both in number and value. Additionally, the liquidity of renewable insurance investments from deposits that must be renewed at the end of each term since around June 2022 also played a role.

As a result of this scenario, liquidity rates at the insurance institution nearly doubled from the second half of 2022 until October 2023. The levels of liquid assets within the institution, specifically bank deposits, now stand at approximately two billion dinars. Seventy percent of these assets are deposited in Kuwaiti banks, alongside two deposits reserved in Lebanon with Fransbank, totaling approximately 347 million dollars.

With the prolonged absence of an investment decision at the insurance institution, accounting officials are no longer able to invest excess liquidity in ventures beyond the scope of deposits. The reemployment of accumulated amounts in investments that boost insurance returns is restricted until the institution’s investment committee reconvenes and approves its new strategy, either reverting to the 2017 strategic targets or maintaining the policy of tightening liquidity surpluses scheduled since 2022.

Sources have indicated that the ongoing implementation of the asset distribution strategy devised by Mercer LLC in 2021 requires a comprehensive review to consider developments in global markets, which have recently witnessed significant changes affecting various sectors and once-attractive markets.

Furthermore, the sources have underscored that insurance officials adhere to the best international guidelines and standards in managing insured funds, adopting a conservative approach that aligns with global market developments. Consequently, the institution consistently records investment returns ranking among the best when compared to institutions globally.

PIFSS’ liquid assets doubled since 2nd half of ’22: report

‘Decisions tied to fresh investments come to halt’

Kuwait wins presidency of ASBU permanent panel

TUNIS, Oct 16, (KUNA): Kuwait won on Monday the Presidency of the Permanent Committee for New Media in the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) for a second session in Tunisia.

The Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information for Media Services and New Media Sector, Saad Nafel Al-Azmi represented Kuwait in the meeting.

Al-Azmi received the recommendation of members of Arab bodies for the position of Chairman of the Permanent Committee for New Media in the Arab States Broadcasting Union for a period of two years, which reflects Arab appreciation for the pioneering role of the Kuwaiti media in this field.

He expressed his appreciation to the representatives of the bodies of the Arab member states of the Union for the great confidence they placed in Kuwait in chairing this important committee, which is concerned with keeping up with modern and digital media with its unprecedented tools, techniques, which pose a major challenge



KUNA photo

Part of the meeting of Permanent Committee for New Media in ASBU.

to ASBU.

He added that the next stage will witness a qualitative expansion in media content on the Union’s cloud network by increasing the exchange of visual news via mobile phones and special programs for new media without limitations and also include national social, cultural, creative, sports, tourism, environmental events and other as-

pects.

He stressed the importance of supporting the ASBU to exchange expertise and modern experiences in the field of digital media and content creation, improving mobile journalism, exploiting new media tools, software and platforms in radio and television, and preparing television content to be posted on social media platforms.

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World News Roundup

Obit

Renowned peace broker

Ahtisaari, ex-Finland president dies at 86

HELSINKI, Oct 16, (AP): **Martti Ahtisaari**, the former president of Finland and global peace broker who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2008 for his work to resolve international conflicts, died Monday. He was 86.

The foundation he created for preventing and resolving violent conflicts said in a statement it was “deeply saddened by the loss of its founder and (former) chair of the board.”

In 2021, it was announced that Ahtisaari had advanced Alzheimer’s disease.

“It is with great sadness that we have received the news of the death of President Martti Ahtisaari,” Finnish President Sauli Niinistö said in a statement. “He was president in times of change, who piloted Finland into a global EU era.”



Ahtisaari

Niinistö described Ahtisaari in a televised speech as “a citizen of the world, a great Finn. A teacher, diplomat and head of state. A peace negotiator and a Nobel Peace Prize laureate.” Regular programming on Finnish public broadcaster YLE was interrupted for Niinistö’s speech.

Ahtisaari helped reach peace accords related to Serbia’s withdrawal from Kosovo in the late 1990s, Namibia’s bid for independence in the 1980s, and autonomy for Aceh province in Indonesia in 2005. He was also involved with the Northern Ireland peace process in the late 1990s, being tasked with monitoring the IRA’s disarmament process.

“President Ahtisaari committed all his life to peace, diplomacy, the goodness of humanity, and had an extraordinary influence on our present and the future,” said Kosovar President Vjosa Osmani. “He engraved the frame of our country, and his name will remain forever in the pages of the Republic of Kosovo’s history.”

Champion

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen called him “a visionary” and “a champion of peace” on X, formerly known as Twitter. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair said Ahtisaari made a “vital contribution to the Northern Ireland peace process.”

When the Norwegian Nobel Peace Committee picked Ahtisaari in October 2008, it cited him “for his important efforts, on several continents and over more than three decades, to resolve international conflicts.”

Ahtisaari was the Nordic country’s president for one six-year term - from 1994 until 2000 - and later founded the Helsinki-based Crisis Management Initiative, aimed at preventing and resolving violent conflicts through informal dialogue and mediation.

Born June 23, 1937, in the eastern town of Viipuri, which is now in Russia, Ahtisaari was a primary school teacher before joining Finland’s Foreign Ministry in 1965. He spent about 20 years abroad, first as ambassador to Tanzania, Zambia and Somalia and then to the United Nations in New York.

He then joined the UN, working at its New York headquarters, and in 1978 was appointed as the special representative for Namibia by then-UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim.

He headed the UN peacekeeping operation in the 1980s that led to Namibia’s independence from South Africa in 1990. Ahtisaari had become deeply involved in activities aimed at preparing Namibians for independence during his diplomatic tenure in Africa in the 1970s.

The Namibian government was grateful for Ahtisaari’s work and later made him an honorary citizen of the country.

After returning to Finland in 1991, Ahtisaari worked as a Foreign Ministry secretary of state before being elected president in 1994. He was the first Finnish head of state to be elected directly instead of through an electoral college.

Having lived abroad for so long, he came into the race as a political outsider and was seen as bringing a breath of fresh air to Finnish politics. Ahtisaari was a strong supporter of the European Union and NATO, which Finland joined in 1995 and 2023 respectively.

Negotiated

His international highlight came in 1999 when he negotiated - alongside Russia’s Balkans envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin - the end to fighting in the Yugoslav province of Kosovo. Ahtisaari also hosted Russian President Boris Yeltsin and US President Bill Clinton at a US-Russia summit in the Finnish capital, Helsinki, in March 1997.

Ahtisaari “had a great heart and he believed in the human being,” Niinistö said.

“In his speech at the Nobel celebration, Ahtisaari said that all conflicts can be resolved: ‘Wars and conflicts are not inevitable. They are caused by humans,’” Niinistö said. “There are always interests that war promotes. Therefore, those who have power and influence can also stop them.”

As president, Ahtisaari traveled abroad more widely than any of his predecessors. At home, he often appeared impatient and vexed by media criticism - he was clearly much more comfortable in international circles.

He declined to run for a second term in the January 2000 presidential election, saying he wanted to devote the time he would otherwise have used for campaigning to run the rotating EU presidency, which Finland held for the first time in 1999.

After the Finnish presidency, he was offered several international positions, including in the United Nations refugee agency, but decided instead to open his own office in Helsinki which centered on mediating in international crises.

In May 2017, Ahtisaari stepped down as chairman of the Crisis Management Initiative to help resolve global conflicts but said he would continue working with the organization as an adviser. He was replaced by former Finnish Prime Minister Alexander Stubb, who is now running for president.

Stubb reacted to Ahtisaari’s death on X, saying that “perhaps now more than ever, the world needs people like him.”

On March 24, 2020, amid the large-scale outbreak of COVID-19, it was announced that Ahtisaari had tested positive for the disease. His spouse, Eeva Ahtisaari, was diagnosed with the same virus on March 21. On April 14, 2020 it was announced that Martti and Eeva Ahtisaari were recovering from the coronavirus infection. Ahtisaari is survived by his wife Eeva and their adult son, Markko.

CMi said Ahtisaari will be laid to rest following a state funeral. The date will be announced later.



Prince Christian of Denmark, (center), waves on his 18th birthday, at Frederik VIII’s Palace, Amalienborg Castle, in Copenhagen, on Oct 15 accompanied by Denmark’s Queen Margrethe (left), and Crown Prince Frederik. (AP)

America

Jordan’s rapid rise cheered by Trump, far right

Few Republicans have confidence in poll

SUAMICO, Wis, Oct 16, (AP): Kim Pytleski could barely sleep the night before. She replayed the PowerPoint slides in her head, packed her notebook and took a deep breath.

The clerk from a rural Wisconsin county north of Green Bay was preparing for a public meeting to explain the election process to residents. She didn’t know who she would encounter. Would some deny the results of the last presidential election? Would the conversation get combative? Most importantly, would she get through to anyone?

They were questions Pytleski never expected to ask herself when she started the job in Oconto County more than 14 years ago. But since then, election conspiracy theories have taken root in the rural, heavily Republican county in northeastern Wisconsin. It’s among large swaths of the country where distrust of voting and ballot-counting, fanned by former president Donald Trump’s false claims of a stolen election, maintains a stubborn grasp.

Skeptical

vPytleski, who was born and raised in the county, hears conspiracy theories nearly everywhere she goes: Democrats are paying people to stuff ballot boxes with illegal votes, absentee voting allows rampant fraud, voting machines are hacked by foreign powers. She receives skeptical letters and emails. When she’s defended the election process, Pytleski, a lifelong Republican, has been called a RINO - a Republican in Name Only.

“You know pretty much everyone,” she said of the towns that make up Oconto County, which has consistently leaned Republican in presidential elections over the past two decades, except when former President Barack Obama won here in 2008. “The joke is that if someone moves here, you have to live here 30 years before you’re considered a local. It’s a warm feeling, being in a place like this.”

But, she added, “election denialism has gotten its hold on it.”

For elections officials and grassroots democracy groups in the presidential swing state, it has been an uphill fight to combat the doubts and the people who continue to spread them. They describe grappling with an almost faith-like pull of conspiracy theories perpetuated by online misinformation and far-right figures.

WASHINGTON, Oct 16, (AP): US President Joe Biden and the Democratic National Committee raised more than \$71 million for his reelection in the three months ending Sept. 30, a strong indication that party donors remain united behind him going into a 2024 race that may feature a rematch with Donald Trump.

Sunday’s announcement comes after the Biden campaign and the party reported raising \$72-plus million in the 10 weeks between his official campaign announcement on April 25 and the end of the second quarter on June 30.

Both totals include donations to Biden’s campaign and to a network of joint fundraising arrangements with the national and state parties. The campaign said Democrats had \$91 million in cash on hand through the end of last month, the highest-

ever total by a Democrat at this point in an election cycle.

“This quarter’s fundraising haul and historic cash on hand speak to the very real enthusiasm and support,” Julie Chavez Rodriguez, manager of Biden’s reelection campaign, said in a statement. “These numbers are a testament to one of our core objectives early in this campaign: raise the resources needed to run an aggressive campaign that will win in November 2024.”

Biden’s total has not topped the tally of the last Democratic president, Barack Obama, who raised \$85.6 million with affiliated Democratic entities during the April-to-June quarter in 2011 when he launched his campaign for a second term. Obama did announce his candidacy three weeks earlier that April than did Biden in 2023.

Still, they press on, taking on the issue one community event and one conversation at a time, hoping for a half-step forward.

“This state is vital, and it’s ground zero in this fight to save our republic,” said Reid Ribble, a Republican who represented the area in Congress until 2017 and is an adviser to the nonprofit Keep Our Republic. The group is holding town hall-style forums throughout Wisconsin hoping to restore faith in elections and has plans to do the same in two other states that will be pivotal to next year’s presidential race, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

The group’s efforts come as distrust in elections has gained a persistent foothold across the country, especially in rural areas. That has led to attempts to ditch voting machines in favor of less accurate and efficient hand counts, threats of violence against election workers and the violent Jan 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol.

Also:

WASHINGTON: Rep Jim Jordan has

urday.

Critics have called for authorities to launch an investigation into her remarks, but Komarova hasn’t been detained or

faced any charges so far. (AP)

Conservatives suffer setbacks:



Supporters of the Third Way, a coalition of the centrist Poland 2050 party and the agrarian Polish People’s Party celebrate at the electoral headquarters in Warsaw, Poland, Oct 15. (AP)

Greece’s ruling New Democracy party suffered a setback in Sunday’s runoff elections for regional governors and mayors, losing the country’s two largest cities and five of the six regional contests.

Prime Minister **Kyriakos Mitsotakis** had explicitly said that his goal was to win all 13 regions plus the cities of Athens, Thessaloniki and Piraeus, “13 plus 3,” as he said.

The results of the first round, last Sunday, appeared to consolidate New Democracy’s political dominance, already expressed in the double national election, last May and June. Its endorsed candidates won all seven regions whose result was decided in the first round, as well as Piraeus. (AP)

Priest to be extradited: Italy’s top criminal court has confirmed the extradition of an Italian priest sought by Argentina on charges of murder and torture during its last military dictatorship, rejecting the priest’s appeal, a lawyer said Sunday.

Arturo Salerni, who represented Argentina in the case, told The Associated Press that the decision by Italy’s Court of Cassation in the case of the Rev. Franco Reverberi confirms a previous ruling by a Bologna appeal court and is now definitive. (AP)

Europe

Tusk declares win: Polish opposition leader **Donald Tusk** declared the beginning of a new era for his country after opposition parties appeared to have won enough votes in Sunday’s parliamentary election to oust the governing nationalist conservative party.

That party, Law and Justice, has bickered with allies and faced accusations of eroding rule of law at home in its eight years in power. It appeared that voters were mobilized like never before, voting in even greater numbers than when the nation ousted the communist authorities in 1989. Exit poll results pegged it at a record 72.9%. In some places people were still in line when polling officially closed, but all were allowed to vote.

If the result predicted by the exit poll holds, Law and Justice won but also lost. It got more seats than any other party but fewer than in the previous election and not enough to be able to lead a government that can pass laws in the legislature. (AP)

3 dead after boat capsizes: Two men reported missing after a migrant dinghy sank off the coast of an eastern Greek island Monday were found alive, Greece’s coast guard said, bringing the total number of survivors to 10.

The bodies of a woman and two men had been recovered earlier from the sea after the dinghy sank overnight off the coast of the small island of Symi, which lies near Turkey.

Survivors told authorities the boat had been carrying a total of 13 people. Although no further people were reported to be missing, the coast guard said it would continue a search and rescue operation in the area for several hours as a precaution until all survivors had completed their testimonies. (AP)

Russia gov slammed: A Russian governor was accused by critics on Sunday of “discrediting Russia’s armed forces” after telling residents in her region that the country had “no need” for its war in Ukraine.

Natalya Komarova, the governor of the Khanty-Mansiysk region and a member of President Vladimir Putin’s governing United Russia party, made the remarks during a meeting with residents in the Siberian city of Nizhnevartovsk on Sat-

Africa

‘Ban used clothing’

9K killed in 6 months of war in Sudan: UN

CAIRO, Oct 16, (AP): Six months of war between Sudan’s military and a powerful paramilitary group has killed up to 9,000 people and created “one of the worst humanitarian nightmares in recent history,” the United Nations humanitarian chief said Sunday.

Sudan has been engulfed in chaos since mid-April, when simmering tensions between military chief Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan and the commander of the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, Gen Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, exploded into open warfare.

“For six months, civilians ... have known no respite from bloodshed and terror,” UN Undersecretary-General **Martin Griffiths** said in a statement marking the six-month anniversary of the war. “Horrific reports of rape and sexual violence continue to emerge.”

The fighting initially centered in Khartoum, but quickly spread to other areas across the east African nation, including the already conflict-wrecked western Darfur region.

Griffiths said the fighting reportedly killed up to 9,000 and forced millions of people out of their homes, either to safer areas inside Sudan or in neighboring countries.

He said the conflict led to “communities torn apart. Vulnerable people with no access to life-saving aid. Mounting humanitarian needs in the neighboring countries where millions have fled.”

According to the UN migration agency, more than 4.5 million people were displaced inside Sudan, while over 1.2 million others sought refuge in neighboring countries. The fighting also left 25 million people - more than half of the country’s population - in need of humanitarian aid, Griffiths said.

Detected

Adding to the calamity, a cholera outbreak was reported in the capital and other areas in the country, with more than 1,000 suspected cases detected in Khartoum and the provinces of Kordofan and Qadarif, he said.

Since the breakout of the war, the Greater Khartoum area - the cities of Khartoum, Omdurman and Khartoum North - has become a battleground, with airstrikes and shelling taking place in densely populated areas.

There were reports of rape and gang rape in Khartoum and Darfur, mostly blamed on the Rapid Support Forces. The RSF and its allied Arab militias were also accused by the U.N. and international rights groups of atrocities in Darfur, which was the scene of a genocidal campaign in the early 2000s. The recent atrocities in Darfur prompted the International Criminal Court’s prosecutor to declare in July that he was investigating alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in the latest fighting in the region.



Jostling for space, people jam the crowded footpaths crisscrossing a massive open market in Uganda’s capital. They are mostly looking for secondhand clothing, sifting through underwear for pairs that seem new or trying on shoes despite getting pushed around in the crush.

Downtown Kampala’s Owino Market has long been a go-to enclave for rich and poor people alike looking for affordable but quality-made used clothes, underscoring perceptions that Western fashion is superior to what is made at home.

These clothes have been discarded by Europeans and Americans, then shipped to African countries by middlemen. It’s a multimillion-dollar business, with some two-thirds of people in seven countries in East Africa having “purchased at least a portion of their clothes from the secondhand clothing market,” according to a 2017 US Agency for International Development study, the most recent with such details.

Despite the popularity, secondhand clothes are facing increasing pushback. Ugandan President **Yoweri Museveni**, a semi-authoritarian leader who has held power since 1986, declared in August that he was banning imports of used clothing, saying the items are coming “from dead people.”

Gather

“When a white person dies, they gather their clothes and send them to Africa,” Museveni said.

Trade authorities have not yet enforced the president’s order, which needs to be backed by a legal measure such as an executive order.

Other African governments also are trying to stop the shipments, saying the business amounts to dumping and undermines the growth of local textile industries. The East African Community trade bloc - consisting of Burundi, Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda - has recommended banning imports of used apparel since 2016. However, member states have not enforced it at the same pace amid pressure from Washington.

In Uganda, the president’s order has spread panic among traders, for whom such a ban, if implemented, spells disaster. They hawk used clothes in scores of large open-air markets across the country of 45 million people, at roadside stands and even in shops in malls where it’s possible to buy secondhand clothes marketed as new.

The clothes are cheap and drop further in price as traders make room for new shipments: a pair of denim jeans can go for 20 cents, a cashmere scarf for even less.

At one of Uganda’s Green Shops, a chain specializing in used clothes, apparel reseller **Glen Kalungi** shopped for items his customers might want: vintage pants for men and cottony tops for women.

“I am a thrift shopper,” he said. “I usually come to these Green Shops to check out clothes because they have the best prices around town.”

Kalungi likes to visit on clearance days when he can buy clothes for a fraction of a dollar. Then he sells them at a profit.

The chain, whose owners include Europeans, unveils new clothes every two weeks at its three stores. Some of the items are sourced from suppliers in countries including China and Germany, retail manager **Allan Zavuga** said.

“How they collect the clothes, we are not aware of that,” Zavuga said of their suppliers. “But (the clothes) go through all the verification, the fumigation, all that, before they are shipped to Uganda. And we get all documents for that.”

The Green Shops are environmentally friendly because they recycle used clothes in bulk, he said. The association of traders in Kampala, known by the acronym **KACITA**, opposes a firm ban on used apparel, recommending a phased embargo that allows local clothing producers to build capacity to meet demand.



Judges preside over the hearing on a petition seeking to lower the minimum age of presidential and vice presidential candidates at the Constitutional Court in Jakarta, Indonesia on Oct 16. (AP)

Lat/Am

Many Argentines pinning hopes on Milei

Noboa wins Ecuador presidential election

QUITO, Ecuador, Oct 16, (Agencies): Daniel Noboa, an inexperienced politician and an heir to a fortune built on the banana trade, won Ecuador’s presidential runoff election Sunday held amid unprecedented violence that even claimed the life of a candidate.

With more than 97% of the votes counted, electoral officials said Noboa had 52.1%, compared to 47.9% for Luisa González, a leftist lawyer and ally of exiled former President Rafael Correa. González conceded defeat during a speech before supporters in which she also urged Noboa to fulfill his campaign promises.

Noboa, 35, will lead the South American country during a period that drug trafficking-related violence has left Ecuadorians wondering when, not if, they will be victims. Their uneasiness has prompted them to continuously watch their backs and limit how often they leave home.

After results showed him victorious, Noboa thanked Ecuadorians for believing in “a new political project, a young political project, an improbable political project.”

He said his goal is “to return peace to the country, to give education to the youth again, to be able to provide employment to the many people who are looking for it.” To that end, Noboa said, he will immediately begin to work to “rebuild a country that has been seriously hit by violence, corruption and hatred.”

The incoming president’s term will run only through May 2025, which is what remains of the tenure of President Guillermo Lasso. He cut his term short when he dissolved the country’s National Assembly in May as lawmakers carried out impeachment proceedings against him over alleged improprieties in a contract by a state-owned company.

Ecuadorians - young and old, rich and poor, city and rural dwellers - had a universal demand throughout the campaign: safety. Noboa is now expected to meet it, but the magnitude of the problem coupled with the brevity of the upcoming presidential term might prove an impossible task for the US-educated man who will become Ecuador’s youngest president.

“I think there would be a very slim chance that even the best equipped president could reverse Ecuador’s security crisis within 18 months - it’s such a short period of time - and nei-

ther of these candidates was the best equipped. Noboa certainly not,” said Will Freeman, a fellow on Latin American studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. “His proposals on security were erratic, and they gave the sense that he was improvising.”

Violence erupted in Ecuador roughly three years ago with a rise in criminal activity linked to cocaine trafficking, and the government’s inability to tackle it was laid bare in August with the assassination of presidential candidate and anti-corruption crusader Fernando Villavicencio.

Since then, other politicians and political leaders have been killed or kidnapped, car bombs have exploded in multiple cities, including the capital, Quito, and inmates have rioted in prisons. Earlier this month, seven men whom authorities identified as suspects in Villavicencio’s slaying were killed while in custody.

Career

Noboa’s political career began in 2021, when he got a seat in the National Assembly and chaired its Economic Development Commission. The U.S.-educated businessman had opened an event organizing company when he was 18 and then joined his father’s Noboa Corp., where he held management positions in the shipping, logistics and commercial areas.

His father, Alvaro Noboa, is the richest man in Ecuador thanks to a conglomerate that started in the growing and shipping of bananas - Ecuador’s main crop - and now includes more than 128 companies in dozens of countries. The elder Noboa unsuccessfully ran for president five times.

The younger Noboa’s party will not have enough seats in the National Assembly to be able to govern on its own. Garnering support from opposing lawmakers will be key to avoid the difficulties that plagued Lasso’s term.

Lasso, a conservative former banker, clashed constantly with lawmakers after his election in 2021 and decided not to run in the special election. On Sunday, he called on Ecuadorians to have a peaceful election and think about what is “best for their children, their parents and the country.”

Under Lasso’s watch, violent deaths soared, reaching 4,600 in 2022, the country’s highest in history and double the total in 2021. The National Police tallied 3,568 violent deaths in the first

half of 2023.

The spike in violence is tied to the trafficking of cocaine produced in neighboring Colombia and Peru. Mexican, Colombian and Balkan cartels have set roots in Ecuador and operate with assistance from local criminal gangs.

Noboa and González, both of whom have served short stints as lawmakers, advanced to the runoff by finishing ahead of six other candidates in the election’s first round on Aug. 22. The replacement of Villavicencio finished in third place.

Also:

SALTA, Argentina: Javier Milei, a right-wing populist who admires **Donald Trump** and made a name for himself by shouting against Argentina’s “political caste” on television, finds himself the front-runner for this month’s presidential election.

If he emerges as Argentina’s next president, it will be in large part thanks to support from people like **Paola Aguirre**, a mother of two young girls who lives in a makeshift wooden shack near a landfill in the northern province of Salta.

Like many Argentines, Aguirre has been overwhelmed by years of ever worsening economic woes that has her struggling to feed her family and made it impossible to afford the room they used to rent. Just over 40% of the country’s 46 million people live in poverty, a big jump from a little more than 30% in the second half of 2016, according to Argentina’s INDEC statistics agency.

Aguirre sees hope in Milei, a fire-brand economist-turned-lawmaker who describes himself as an anarchist-capitalist and says the answer to reining in annual inflation now running around 140% is to get rid of the Central Bank and dollarize the economy. He also vows to privatize state companies, get rid of public infrastructure programs, change labor rules to make it easier to fire employees and carry out a big overhaul of the government to decrease spending.

“We want a radical change,” said Aguirre, who lives without running water nor electricity with her 6- and 8-year-old daughters. “We’re hopeful that what he promises will come true.” Milei, 52, shocked Argentina’s political class when he unexpectedly received the most votes in August primaries.

than 1,000 containers of equipment and ammunition have been sent to Russia from North Korea.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un traveled to Russia last month to meet President Vladimir Putin and visit key military sites, triggering speculation about a possible North Korean plan to refill Russia’s munition stores that have been drained by the protracted conflict with Ukraine. (AP)



eSafety fines X: Australia’s online safety watchdog said on Monday it had fined X - the social media platform formerly known as Twitter - 610,500 Australian dollars (\$385,000) for failing to fully explain how it tackled child sexual exploitation content.

Australia’s eSafety Commission describes itself as the world’s first government agency dedicated to keeping people safe online. The commission issued legal transparency notices early this year to X and other platforms questioning what they were doing to tackle a proliferation of child sexual exploitation, sexual extortion and the livestreaming of child sexual abuse.

eSafety Commissioner Julie Inman Grant said X and Google had not complied with the notices because both companies had failed to adequately respond to a number of questions.

The platform renamed X by its new owner Elon Musk was the worst offender, providing no answers to some questions including how many staff remained on the trust and safety team that worked on preventing harmful and illegal content since Musk took over, Inman Grant said. (AP)



Presidential candidate Daniel Noboa speaks in Olon, Ecuador, after results show him ahead in a snap presidential runoff on Oct 15. At left is his wife Lavinia Valbonesi. (AP)



Widodo



Lavrov

Asia

Govt to keep allies on its side: Myanmar’s military government hosted representatives from ethnic rebel groups Sunday to mark the eighth anniversary of the signing of a multilateral cease-fire agreement. But the event was boycotted by three of the signatories that oppose the current army-installed regime.

The event in the capital Naypyitaw was the first such formal gathering of the military government and ethnic minority leaders since the army seized power from Aung San Suu Kyi’s elected government on Feb. 1, 2021.

Maintaining a cease-fire with as many groups as possible is crucial for the military government, which for more than two years has been faced with nationwide armed resistance from opponents of its 2021 takeover. Those pro-democracy forces have crucial alliances with, or support from, several ethnic rebel groups. The military has launched offensives in the territory long under the control of the ethnic minority groups.

In order to shake and divide the anti-military rule alliances, the military government has also conducted a series of in-person peace talks with the leaders of ethnic minorities since May last year, with little to show for its effort. Myanmar has 21 established ethnic armed organizations and some of the largest and most powerful groups, including the Kachin Independence Army and United Wa State Army, did not endorse the cease-fire pact, which they viewed as lacking inclusiveness. (AP)



Court rejects ‘petition’: Indonesia’s top court on Monday ruled against lowering the minimum age of presidential and vice presidential candidates as the country gears up for election in 2024.

The court’s decision is final and can’t be appealed.

In August, seven politicians - including from the Indonesian Solidarity Party chaired by the youngest son of current President **Joko Widodo** - filed a petition against the current age limit for candidates, asking it to be lowered to 35 instead of 40, arguing it was discriminatory.

The 7-to-2 decision by the nine-judge panel of the Constitutional Court rejected the arguments, saying it wasn’t the court’s role to change the age limit for candidates and that it was up to the parliament to set such laws.

Two judges argued that while the court should uphold the age limit as is, it could add a special exception to those who “served or been elected as regional leaders.”

Widodo’s eldest son, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, currently serves as Mayor of Surakarta and has not announced that he would run, but politicians publicly backing former



South Sudanese who fled from Sudan sit outside a nutrition clinic at a transit center in Renk, South Sudan, on May 16 2023. Four Western countries have floated a proposal on Oct 4 for the UN’s top human rights body to appoint a team of experts to monitor and report on abuses and rights violations in war-wracked Sudan. (AP)



A group photo from the ABCK – AmCham Kuwait’s Women in Business Focus Group’s final diversity and inclusion Diwaniya event for the year 2023.

Experts advocate embedding diversity and inclusion in organizational culture

ABCK-AmCham Kuwait holds final D&I Diwaniya on sustainability

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The ABCK – AmCham Kuwait’s Women in Business Focus Group hosted its final diversity and inclusion Diwaniya event for the year 2023, with a primary focus on the sustainability and continuity of diversity and inclusion strategies for organizations. This event served as a vital precursor to the final Summit, scheduled for December 6, which will consolidate the diverse topics discussed throughout the Diwaniya series. The event was attended by professionals representing various industries, as well as leaders from different government and private sector executives.

The Diwaniya provided a platform for in-depth exploration of numerous topics crucial for promoting diversity and inclusion within organizations. The agenda for the event included discussions on the importance of inclusion in the workplace, identifying and addressing barriers to women’s career progression and advancement, exploring strategies for women’s capacity building in the workplace, delving into the role of leadership in championing diversity, and inclusion and holding them accountable, strategies for creating a safe and supportive work environment and addressing challenges in sustaining diversity and inclusion efforts within organizations.

The discussions during the Diwaniya also delved into innovation, profitability, and increasing market share due to a diverse workforce. Experts shared invaluable insights on embedding diversity and inclusion into an organization’s culture, setting measurable goals, and fostering an environment in which employees feel safe to model leadership behaviors.

Effectiveness

Additionally, the event also highlighted the following principles for ensuring the continuity and effectiveness of diversity and inclusion efforts within companies. These principles encompass integrating leadership support into existing policies, procedures, and the overarching company strategy to make diversity and inclusion a fundamental aspect of the organization’s culture, implementing measurable metrics to gauge the impact of diversity and inclusion initiatives, and encouraging leadership to take an active role in mentoring female employees.

The event underscored the importance of creating and nurturing peer groups and providing employees with opportunities for mutual learning. Furthermore, the event addressed the availability of resources for training on conscious and unconscious bias, upskilling, and networking. It also emphasized the enforcement of diversity and its significance, particularly with women in leadership positions within both the private and public sectors, along with exploring sustainability commitments, strategic leadership, securing buy-in, educating leaders, and addressing problem areas through internal training, code of ethics, and workshops.

The Women in Business Focus Group of the American Business Council - extended a warm invitation to individuals, organizations, and business leaders interested in advancing diversity and inclusion to participate in this informative and engaging Diwaniya event.

ABCK-AmCham Kuwait: Is a non-profit organization operating since 1985 and is composed of Fortune 500 corporations, small and medium-sized companies, and prominent business leaders and entrepreneurs, both American and Kuwaiti. ABCK-AmCham Kuwait has functioned as an advocate for American interests in the state of Kuwait. For More Information, please visit our website at www.amchamkuwait.org or follow us on the social media channel @abck1985



A flyer of the event.

‘Ready Ka Na Ba?’

Pinoy Arabia ME to mark 9 yrs with an interactive game show

By Michelle Fe Santiago

KUWAIT CITY, October 16: Pinoy Arabia ME, the leading and the only duly licensed online Filipino radio station in Kuwait by the Kuwait Ministry of Information will mark its 9th anniversary with the biggest and first ever interactive game show on online Filipino radio dubbed “Ready Ka Na Ba?” (Are you ready?). A total of KD1,000 cash prize awaits the grand winner while weekly winners also get to take home cash prizes and valuable gifts.

“For the past 8 years, we have done singing contests, DJ Quest and the Talent Quest that have paved the way in discovering and honing Filipino talents in Kuwait which is one of the main thrusts of Pinoy Arabia ME. This year, it will be totally different! We will try to discover those with brains, wits and who have a vast supply of knowledge. This is your time to shine!” stated Ben Garcia, Pinoy Arabia ME General Manager.

The “Ready Ka Na Ba” interactive game show will commence this November and will be aired live on Pinoy Arabia ME every Friday from the Britain International Academy Auditorium in Salmiya, Kuwait. The grand finals will be on December 8, 2023 at a venue to be announced later which will be the highlight of the 9th anniversary celebration of Pinoy Arabia ME.

The game show to be hosted by Pinoy Arabia ME presenters, Red and Kris is open to all Filipinos or anyone of Filipino descent; 15 years old and above; with valid residence in Kuwait; with good moral standing and no police record. To all those who want to join “Ready Ka Na Ba?” should send their details

such as name, age, occupation, email, phone number and address via text message to +96560089662.

“We are calling on all Filipinos in Kuwait to join in this exciting interactive game show that will definitely blow their minds. This is our one way of saying thank you to all our followers and viewers for all the love and support that they have shown us for the past 9 years,” stated Garcia.

Broadcasting live from the Ooredoo Tower in Kuwait City, Pinoy Arabia ME now on its 9th year continues to sizzle. Since its launch on October 30, 2014, Pinoy Arabia ME has generated a sensational following with over 443,000 organic followers on Facebook and a great number of listeners not only in Kuwait but in the GCC countries and beyond.

Pinoy Arabia ME fully supported by the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait and Filipino community organizations, plays Filipino and English current and old hits 24 hours with regular guests from the Philippine Embassy and other visiting Philippine government officials as well as known personalities and dignitaries in Kuwait. It caters to Filipino community events and other vital announcements. Pinoy Arabia has become one of the trusted sources of information among the Filipino community especially at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pinoy Arabia ME has carved its niche not only as a reliable source of information for Overseas Filipinos but a venue of pure entertainment. The Pinoy Arabia ME team is composed of Maxxy Santiago, Ben Garcia, Red, Mark the Spark, Kris, Erika, Mark Neil, Rosie, Juliecioussa and Denzil.

45th IAA World Congress to spotlight sustainability, inclusion

International Advertising Association turns 85

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: This October, the International Advertising Association (IAA), the world’s most influential network of marketing and marketing communications professionals and global umbrella body for the marketing and advertising industry is celebrating 85 years of existence with a series of key events and initiatives aimed at bringing together its thousands of multidisciplinary members.

Among the initiatives are:
■ The official launch of IAA’s new 85 years celebrations logo starting October 3rd 2023
■ 3 October 2023: The IAA Global B2B Brand Summit with a selection of the finest voices in B2B from around the world.

■ 4 October 2023: A gala dinner in New York City, attended by 85 of IAA global leaders and IAA Compass partners from 56 countries around the world.
■ 6-8 March 2024: The 45th IAA World Congress, which takes place every 2-3 years in major cities around the world, will be held in Penang, Malaysia highlighting sustainability, diversity, equity, inclusion and ESG.

Sasan Saeidi, Chairman and World President of IAA Global, said, “Since IAA was founded 85 years ago by Thomas Ashwell and 12 Ad Execs at the New York Harvard Club, much has changed in the industry and in the approach of advertising goods and services. IAA is kicking off celebrations with initiatives which bring together our vast and multidisciplinary members, allowing IAA to tap on global best practice and play a strong role in supporting key industry issues and values.”

Dagmara Szulce, Global Executive Director of IAA Global, said, “The IAA North Star values of creativity, advocacy, education, collaboration, professional development, diversity, equity, and inclusion guide IAA and underscore our 85 years celebrations. IAA is committed to



Sasan Saeidi



Dagmara Szulce



Walid Kanafani

helping the communication industry navigate the implementation of the North Star values in their own company cultures, in a rapidly changing world.”

Walid Kanafani, IAA Kuwait Chapter President – IAA Global Vice President MENA Education, said,

Established in 1938, the IAA is the only global association that represents all the spheres of the marketing and marketing communications industry, reaching across 56 countries

where we serve collective interests of the entire marketing communications profession. For over 85 years the IAA has played a strong role in supporting the key industry issues such as freedom of commercial speech, self-regulation, responsible advertising, DE&I, sustainability and professional development. In 2024 The 45th IAA World Congress will bring all the international players in the industry to Penang (Malaysia).

Back to Kuwait, we will be celebrating our 25th Anniversary this year. We are proud to be one of the oldest in the MENA, reflecting the dynamic growth of the regional marketing communications industries. IAA Kuwait Chapter is uniquely positioned to identify emerging cross-border trends before they become universally apparent and to provide marketing & communications professional, with an international, multi-industry forum of knowledge, best practice, professional development, intelligence, experience and ideas.

UNESCO collaborates with Morocco for restoration work

Historic sites in Marrakech reopen to visitors after quake

MARRAKECH, Oct 16, (KUNA): Historic sites in the red city of Marrakech, famed for its sandstone buildings, mosques and palaces, have recently reopened to visitors following closure necessitated by the devastating September earthquake.

Concerned Moroccan authorities hurried over to the affected sites in order to account for the damage in preparation for reconstruction efforts.

Marrakech Culture Chief Hasan Harnan explained to KUNA that the Ministry of Culture had put forth an urgent plan aiming to restore affected sites to once

again allow tourists to revel in the beauty and unique architectural identity of the city.

The program enabled opening famed historic sites, including Bahia palace, Badi Palace, Saadian Tombs and Menara gardens.

As for sites that were extensively damaged, Harnan explained, these were closed down and fortified as concerned parties are currently conducting studies to ensure adequate restoration.

The sites in the city of Marrakech were not severely damaged as opposed to sites closer to quake

epicenter, including Tinnel mosque; a 12th century building located in the Atlas mountains.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in the aftermath of the earthquake, hastened to send its experts to estimate damaged affecting the world heritage listed sites.

UNESCO chief Audrey Azoulay expressed in a statement her confidence in Moroccan abilities to reform the damage and affirmed UNESCO’s cooperation with the local authorities.

EcoFlow unveils industry-changing solar energy solutions for Middle East

EcoFlow, a leading eco-friendly energy solutions company, today unveiled three ground-breaking devices for the Middle East region at GITEX Global, taking place at Dubai World Trade Center. The solutions are EcoFlow RIVER 2 Pro, DELTA 2 and WAVE 2. These devices harness the advantages of EcoFlow's battery technology to deliver energy-efficient performance at home and for outdoor adventures.

EcoFlow's RIVER 2 Pro makes grab-and-go power easy through industry-

leading recharging speeds and LFP batteries in a compact form factor. Charging to 100% in just 70 minutes and with an ultra-long lifetime, the product provides the most cost-effective power in its category and offers a reliable energy source for on-the-go lifestyles and emergency home backup. With a product lifetime six times longer than the industry average, the RIVER 2 Pro delivers a new level of long-term value in the portable power station market and ensures as many people as possible can access the very latest in

sustainable energy innovation.

EcoFlow's DELTA 2 is an industry-leading upgrade to the revolutionary DELTA Portable Power Station. DELTA 2 has a 1800W AC output and can power more than 90% of the home appliances. With a recharging speed that is seven times faster than the industry average, up to 3kWh of expandable capacity, the DELTA 2 is a must-have for every family that puts power security and comfort first in the Middle East region.

For users seeking to add indoor luxury

to their outdoor adventures, the EcoFlow WAVE 2 portable air conditioner and heater delivers outstanding comfort during hot summer days and cool winters. The second generation of EcoFlow's WAVE series, WAVE 2, delivers the industry's fastest cooling and heating available in a device of its kind, with 5100 BTU cooling and 6100 BTU heating capabilities with an effective area of 107.6 sq ft (10 sq m).

Joy Wu, Head of LAMEA&APAC at EcoFlow commented: "We are excited to

be back in Dubai at GITEX Global, showcasing our best-in-class solutions in the Middle East. It is a timely opportunity during the Year of Sustainability in the UAE to be announcing the availability of highly sustainable, innovative technologies for consumers in the region. Making life more enjoyable and convenient at home, outdoors and on the go, these creations reflect our commitment to building an ecosystem that reinvents how the world generates, stores and uses energy through meaningful innovation." (AP)

Market Movements				16-10-2023						
		Change	Closing pts			Change	Closing pts			
▲	EUROPE	-	EURO Stoxx 50	+12.81	4,148.93	▼	PHILIPPINES	-	PSEi	-67.51
	PAKISTAN	-	KSE 100	+202.33	49,719.87		JAPAN	-	Nikkei	-656.96
	SAUDI	-	Tadawul	+79.26	10,532.93		DUBAI	-	DFM	-21.70
	EGYPT	-	EGX 30	+707.39	21,032.35					

Business

Bank enjoys a large and growing customer base, streamlined operations and wide geographic reach

Expertise and excellence drive KFH to record results: Al Rushood

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Acting Group CEO of Kuwait Finance House (KFH), Abdulwahab Iesa Al Rushood said that KFH enjoys elements of strength that distinguish it from competitors. These include a large and growing customer base, streamlined operations, geographic reach, innovative solutions and diversified modern products.

In an interview with Global Markets magazine, Al Rushood emphasized that KFH's competitive advantage comes through its highly qualified and experienced staff. This pool of talent helps maintain its position as a world leading Islamic financial institution.

"In addition to its long experience and world leading position in the Islamic finance industry market, KFH is an undisputed leader in innovation, having introduced a wide range of high-end digital services over the past few years. We have also teamed up with financial services technology providers who offer unique solutions and expertise,"revealed Al Rushood.

He added that the leadership in innovation has been instrumental in helping the bank provide incredible value for its shareholders. The record net profits for H1 2023 represented an increase of 73% in earnings per share. The bank's remarkable financial results help support its solid credit ratings, high liquidity ratios and strong capital base.

Al Rushood added: "On such a strong foundation, KFH has excelled in supporting business growth and development plans in Kuwait and the wide range of international markets in which it operates. The successful completion of KFH's acquisition of AUB-Bahrain has further enhanced the group's regional footprint. The firm has a presence in Egypt, Turkey, Germany, the UK and Malaysia among others. Operations across a dozen regions worldwide has helped KFH become not just the largest bank in Kuwait, but the second largest Islamic bank in the world."

Sustainability and Green Finance

"Recognising its responsibility as such a pivotal financial institution across the Middle East, KFH is working hard to



Abdulwahab Al Rushood, Acting Group CEO of Kuwait Finance House

implement an ESG framework. These efforts have seen the firm adopt new internal measurements to improve operational efficiency and lower its impact on the environment. The bank is also adopting an ESG approach in its Internal Capital Adequacy Assessment Process and stress test frameworks."

When it comes to increasing green finance and expanding ESG investments, he emphasized that KFH has made impressive progress, adopting sustainability principles in all its banking and business activities. The bank's environment-friendly auto showroom - KFH Auto - is fully compatible with green building and global sustainability standards.

"This led to KFH becoming the first bank in Kuwait to receive a Global Sustainability Assessment System certification – in this case a gold level award for KFH Auto. In the capital markets, KFH is active on the sustainability front through its issuance of green sukuk. In its effort to contribute to building a low-carbon economy for a sustainable future

the bank has joined multiple initiatives. This includes signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Development Programme to support the UN Sustainable Development Goals." said Al Rushood.

Knowledge economy

Reflecting Kuwait's drive to build a knowledge economy, KFH is highly active in supporting new technology, from AI and machine learning to broader fintech innovations. In its own operations, the bank has launched a variety of high-end services and maintained its reputation for providing high-quality, cutting-edge financial solutions.

With the aim of sustaining growth and expanding its customer base, Al Rushood explained that KFH is focused on automation and digitalization to enhance performance and efficiency.

"KFH has brought customer experience to new levels. We have made great strides in our digital transformation strategy, with customers carrying out more than 135 million e-banking transactions through KFH online on mobile and website in H1 2023 - a growth rate of 40% compared to the same period last year." He added.

It is worth noting that KFH consistently stands out from its peers in terms of size and performance. The largest bank in the country, KFH reported total assets of KD37bn (\$119.6bn) as of June 2023. The first half of this year also saw the bank report the highest-ever quarterly profits recorded in the Kuwait banking sector. Net profit for H1 2023 was up by over 140% to reach KD333.4m (\$1bn). In the rankings of companies listed on Boursa Kuwait, KFH is top with a market capitalization exceeding KD111bn.

■ ■ ■

- Key Data**
- Total assets (H1 2023): KD 37bn
 - Net profit to shareholder (H1 2023): KD 333.4m
 - Capital adequacy ratio (H1 2023): 16.45%
 - Financing to deposit ratio (H1 2023): 83%



Kuwait Finance House headquarters

New strategy to bolster production

Kuwait strives to carve prominent int'l role in the oil and gas market

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: As per reports from the Oil Price website, while several Middle Eastern nations are actively diversifying their energy portfolios, Kuwait stands resolute in achieving its oil and gas ambitions, reports Al-Rai daily.

The Kuwaiti government has set forth an ambitious vision to emerge as a major producer within OPEC, aiming for a substantial surge in production in the years ahead. Despite global forecasts indicating a decline in oil and gas demand, Kuwait is banking on the enduring vitality of this industry. This unwavering commitment is underscored by its ambitious production goals for the upcoming decades, bolstered by significant investments and expansions within the sector, encompassing production and derivatives.

Demand

While many countries are transitioning to green energy, Kuwait is striving to carve a prominent international role in the oil and gas market, leveraging the existing demand for fossil fuels.

An article on the website divulged Kuwait's plans to ramp up oil production over the next four years from its current output of 2.7 million barrels per day to 3.15 million barrels per day. Additionally, Kuwait aims to increase its gas production by a substantial 70 percent during the same period.

Presently positioned as the fifth larg-

est oil producer in OPEC, following Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the UAE, and Iran, Kuwait has remained committed to OPEC Plus production cuts, reducing production by 128 thousand barrels per day. However, Iran, exempted from the cuts, surpassed Kuwait's production. Kuwait's present share of OPEC production stands at 2.676 million barrels per day.

Despite temporary production reductions, Kuwait is optimistic about a significant increase in its oil production in the next decade. This aligns with the objectives of Saudi Arabia and the UAE, both planning to augment production by 1 million barrels per day in the coming years.

The website highlighted estimates suggesting that Kuwait possesses substantial oil reserves, totaling around 100 billion barrels. This positions Kuwait to exploit these resources before global demand declines due to the transition toward clean energy.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Oil, Dr. Saad Al-Barak, announced a new strategy to bolster production by developing the Dorra gas field in collaboration with Saudi Arabia. The Petroleum Corporation aspires to elevate its oil production capacity to 4 million barrels per day by 2035, with investments amounting to a whopping \$410 billion. The proven gas reserves in the Durra field are estimated at 20 trillion cubic feet, with production set to commence by 2029.

CBK's bond issuance sees soaring demand with 6.7% surge in 2023

Banks show strong appetite for investments

By Ahmad Fathi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) witnessed a 6.7% increase in the pace of its bond and corresponding tawarruq issuances during the first nine months of 2023 compared to the same period in the previous year. The total value of these issuances reached 450 million dinars, up from the previous year's 6.72 billion dinars.

During this period, the Central Bank issued 30 bond offerings. In comparison, the first nine months of 2022 saw 26 issuances with a total value of 6.2 billion dinars. Banks covered these issuances by 11.7%, equivalent to 79 billion dinars.

In October 2023, the Central Bank issued a bond with a value of 240 million dinars, featuring a three-month maturity and an interest rate of 4.375%. This marked the second issuance during October, following the issuance of 240 million dinars in bonds with a six-month maturity and a 4.5% interest rate. The total value of these two issuances was 480 billion dinars, which was covered at a rate of 12 times.

Balance

According to the Central Bank's data from August, the balance of its bond and tawarruq issuances with local banks increased by 6% annually, reaching 3.405 billion dinars by the end of August 2023. This was a significant rise from the 3.213 billion dinars recorded at the end of August 2022. It also increased by 1.2% or approximately 42 million dinars from the start of 2023 when it was 3.36 billion dinars at the end of December 2022.

In 2023, the Central Bank issued two bonds in January, with a total value of 440 million dinars. These were covered by more than 5.17 billion dinars, approximately 11.7 times. One of these was a three-month bond with a value of 200 million dinars, featuring an interest rate of 4.125%, while the other was a six-month bond worth 240 million dinars at an interest rate of 4.25%.

The Central Bank also issued two bonds in February with three-month maturities and an interest rate of 4.25%. These had a total value of 400 million dinars and were covered by over 5.43 billion dinars, approximately 13.5 times.

In March, the Central Bank



KUNA photo
United Nation Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) World Investment Forum 2023 kick off in Abu Dhabi.

Shaping sustainable future amid global crises

UN World Investment Forum kicks off

ABU DHABI, Oct 16, (KUNA): The United Nation Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) World Investment Forum 2023 kicked off on Monday in UAE's capital Abu Dhabi, with Kuwait's participation.

The 8th World Investment Forum (WIF) aims to address key investment challenges caused by today's multiple global crises, including the need to invest in food security, energy, health, supply chain resilience and productive capacity growth in the poorest countries, all under the established WIF theme of "Investing in Sustainable Development".

UNCTAD World Investment Forum is a biennial multi-stakeholder gathering at the level of Heads of state and government, CEOs, ministers and heads of international organizations, designed to facilitate dialogue and action on the world's current and emerging investment-development challenges.

Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (ADDED) Ahmad AlZaabi stated in a press release that "hosting the Forum in Abu Dhabi reflects our leadership's vision and unwavering commitment to enhance

international cooperation and collective action to develop innovative solutions benefitting the global community."

He added, "We are leveraging on the strong fundamentals of our soaring 'Falcon Economy' to achieve the UN sustainable development goals and contribute positively to shaping a brighter future for humanity".

The Forum offers diverse opportunities for participants and vibrant global networking environment, allowing them to socialize with top-tier investment professionals, share experiences, and forge potential collaborations.

launched four bond issuances with a total value of 1.07 billion dinars. They were covered by 7.935 billion dinars, approximately 9.5 times. The first issuance was worth 240 million dinars with a three-month maturity and a 4.25% interest rate, and it was covered by 3.042 billion dinars. The second had the same terms and was covered by 2.57 billion dinars. The third issuance was valued at 350 million dinars, with a six-month maturity and an interest rate of 4.375%, and it was covered by 2.57 billion dinars. The fourth issuance had a value of 240 million dinars, a six-month term, and an interest rate of 4.375%.

In April, the Central Bank launched two bond issuances with a total value of 480 million dinars. These were covered by 5.409 billion dinars, at a rate of 11.2%. The first issuance was a six-month bond

valued at 240 million dinars with an interest rate of 4.375%, covered by 2.847 billion dinars. The second bond was also a six-month offering, valued at 240 million dinars, with an interest rate of 4.375%, and it was covered by 2.56 billion dinars.

In May, the Central Bank issued seven bonds with a total value of 1.34 billion dinars, which were covered by 17.995 billion dinars at a rate of 13.4 times. These bonds included three-month bonds valued at 200 million dinars and 160 million dinars, six-month bonds worth 160 million dinars and 240 million dinars, and a one-year bond of 100 million dinars.

In June, the Central Bank issued three bonds, totaling 710 million dinars, which were covered by 7.55 billion dinars at a rate of 10.63 times. These issuances included a six-

Announcement

CBK bonds and related Tawarruq

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: 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%).

Speakers set to explore future of global economy during Dubai Business Forum

DUBAI, OCT 16: Dubai Chambers has announced the first names from the distinguished lineup of guest speakers participating at the Dubai Business Forum, which takes place at Madinat Jumeirah from 1-2 November 2023.

The two-day event will feature high-level plenary sessions and keynote addresses, creating exciting opportunities for participants to hear from influential public sector figures, business leaders, industry experts, investors, and economists as they explore the emerging trends transforming business and shaping the future of global trade.

Key national figures sharing valuable insights include H.E. Abdul Aziz Abdul-la Al Ghurair, Chairman of Dubai Chambers; H.E. Abdullah bin Touq Al Marri, UAE Minister of Economy; H.E. Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and CEO of DP World; and H.E. Helal Saeed Al Marri, Director General of Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism.

The lineup of private sector speakers includes Shamsa Al Falasi, CEO of Citibank; Ronaldo Mouchawar, Vice President of Amazon MENA; Khatija Haque, Chief Economist and Head of Research at Emirates NBD; Prof. Ian Goldin, Professor of Globalisation and Development at University of Oxford; Jane Prokop,

Executive Vice President, Small and Medium Enterprises at Mastercard; and Deepak Bagla, President of the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies. The speakers will be joined by dozens of business leaders, industry experts, and innovators from all corners of the globe.

Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah, President and CEO of Dubai Chambers, commented: "This year's keynote programme and speaker lineup includes vibrant personalities and creative thinkers who will share thought-provoking stories and innovative visions, all designed to spark important conversations that will help us think differently, bring us together, and make us stronger as a global business community."

Dubai Chambers supports Dubai's vision as a global player by empowering businesses, providing innovative value-added services and access to influential networks. In 2021, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, announced the restructuring of Dubai Chamber to create three chambers, namely, Dubai Chamber of Commerce, Dubai International Chamber, and Dubai Chamber of Digital Economy, which operate under Dubai Chambers.

Kenya seeks more Chinese loans

Kenya's President William Ruto sought \$1 billion more in loans from China Monday, despite rising public debt that has now reached \$70 billion in the Eastern African country, according to National Treasury figures for 2022/2023.

President Ruto was one of a number of global leaders in Beijing to attend the tenth anniversary meeting of China's Belt and Road Initiative, the ambi-

tious plan that aims to connect Africa, Asia and Europe through massive infrastructure and energy projects.

A statement from Kenya's State House Spokesman Hussein Mohammed said "the president will deliver a keynote address headlined 'Digital Economy as a New Source of Growth' at the High-Level Forum."

"Additionally, the president will participate in a Kenya-China in-

vestors roundtable to emphasize Kenya's standing as an investment hub for Chinese companies," said the statement.

One of the signature BRI projects in Kenya is the Standard Gauge Railway line, which runs from the port city of Mombasa to the Rift Valley via the capital, Nairobi. It cost \$4.7 billion dollars to build but has faced numerous challenges, including delays and a low uptake of its freight service.

Forbes names Joy Alukkas as India's Richest Jeweller

Joy Alukkas Group proudly announces that the company's Chairman, Mr. Joy Alukkas, has steadily climbed up the ranks to reach the 50th spot in 'Forbes List of India's 100 Richest 2023'. As the only jeweller from India on this prestigious list, Mr. Joy Alukkas displayed an outstanding performance that surpassed even listed peer groups in the industry.

Mr. Joy Alukkas was instrumental in revolutionising Indian

jewellery sector. His pioneering and groundbreaking concepts such as multiple store retail, organized retailing operations, and large format stores have transformed the business landscape of the Indian jewellery sector globally, where it had been fragmented and predominantly family run stores.

India's jewellery market size is projected to grow from US\$76.77 billion in 2023 to cross US\$100

billion by 2027. According to FY 2022 data, 38% of the Indian jewellery market now falls under the organized sector-a testament to Mr. Joy Alukkas' impact-which is projected to rise to 47% by FY 2026.

Besides being a leader in the industry and an innovative game-changer, Mr. Joy Alukkas is celebrated for his inherent qualities as a lifelong learner and a contrarian.

The two countries have forged an informal alliance

Putin's Beijing visit underlines China's economic and diplomatic support for Russia

Leaders visiting China for the 'Belt and Road' forum



The Russian flag is flown near Tiananmen Square ahead of the Third Belt and Road Forum held at the China National Convention Center in Beijing, Monday, Oct. 16, 2023. (AP)

Main events scheduled for Wednesday

BEIJING, Oct 16, (AP): Leaders of emerging market countries are arriving in Beijing for a meeting organized by the Chinese government that will mark the 10th anniversary of its Belt and Road Initiative.

More than a dozen leaders from Africa, Asia and the Mideast were flying into Beijing on Monday, following the arrivals of Chilean President Gabriel Boric and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán on Sunday. Others are coming on Tuesday.

Under the Belt and Road Initiative, a signature policy of President Xi Jinping, Chinese companies have built ports, roads, railways, power plants and other infrastructure around the world in a bid to boost trade and economic growth.

But the massive Chinese development loans that funded the projects have also burdened some poorer countries with heavy debts.

A flurry of diplomacy is expected on the sidelines of the third Belt and Road Forum, whose main events are on Wednesday. Orbán met with Xi and Premier Li Qiang, Hungary's state news agency MTI said. The

forums also were held in 2017 and 2019.

Kenyan President William Ruto will be seeking additional loans for stalled road projects despite the country's already high public debt, and an easing of the repayment of a Chinese loan for a railway project that has not proven commercially viable.

Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to attend the forum, as are representatives of the Taliban government in Afghanistan.

Putin downplayed the idea that China, through its Belt and Road projects in Central Asia, is competing for influence in a region that Russia has long considered its backyard.

"Our own ideas on the development of the Eurasian Economic Union, for example, on the construction of a Greater Eurasia, fully coincide with the Chinese ideas proposed within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative," he told Chinese state broadcaster CCTV, according to a transcript posted on the Kremlin website.

The leaders who arrived on Monday included Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Republic of Congo President Denis Sassou Nguesso, Papua New Guinean Prime Minister James Marape and Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet.

TAIPEI, Taiwan, Oct 16, (AP): Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to meet this week with Chinese leaders in Beijing on a visit that underscores China's support for Moscow during its war in Ukraine.

The two countries have forged an informal alliance against the United States and other democratic nations that is now complicated by the Israel-Hamas war. China has sought to balance its ties with Israel with its economic relations with Iran and Syria, which are strongly backed by Russia.

Putin's visit is also a show of support for Chinese leader Xi Jinping's signature Belt and Road initiative to build infrastructure and expand China's overseas influence.

Putin gave an interview to Chinese state media praising the massive but loosely linked BRI projects.

"Yes, we see that some people consider it an attempt by the People's Republic of China to put someone under its thumb, but we see otherwise, we just see desire for cooperation," he said in the interview with state broadcaster CCTV, according to a transcript released by the Kremlin on Monday.

The Russian leader will be among the highest profile guests at a gathering marking the 10th anniversary of Xi's announcement of the BRI policy, which has laden countries such as Zambia and Sri Lanka with heavy debt after they signed contracts with Chinese companies to build roads, airports and other public works they could not otherwise afford.

Putin's visit has not been officially confirmed, but Chinese officials have suggested he will arrive late Monday.

Asked by reporters Friday about a visit to China, Putin said it would encompass talks on Belt and Road-related projects, which he said Moscow wants to link with efforts by an economic alliance of ex-Soviet Union nations mostly located in Central Asia to "achieve common development goals." He also downplayed the impact of China's economic influence in a region that Russia has long considered its backyard and where it has worked to maintain political and military clout.

"We don't have any contradictions here, on the contrary, there is a certain synergy," Putin said.

Putin said he and Xi will also discuss growing economic and financial ties between Moscow and Beijing.

Beijing and Moscow have financial ties in energy, high-tech and financial industries. China has also grown in importance as an export destination for Moscow.

Alexander Gabuev, director of Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center, said that from China's view, "Russia is a safe neighbor that is friendly, that is a source of cheap raw materials, that's a support for Chinese initiatives on the global stage and that's also a source of military technologies, some of those that China doesn't have."

"For Russia, China is its lifeline, economic lifeline in its brutal repression against Ukraine," Gabuev told The Associated Press.

"It's the major market for Russian commodities, it's a country that provides its currency and payment system to settle Russia's trade with the outside world - with China itself, but also with many other countries, and is also the ma-



Russian President Vladimir Putin, (right), and Chinese President Xi Jinping shake hands after speaking to the media during a signing ceremony following their talks at The Grand Kremlin Palace, in Moscow, Russia, March 21, 2023. Putin is expected to meet this week with Chinese leaders in Beijing on a visit that underscores China's economic and diplomatic support for Moscow during its war in Ukraine. (AP)

ior source of sophisticated technological imports, including dual-use goods that go into the Russian military machine."

Gabuev said that while Moscow and Beijing will be unlikely to forge a full-fledged military alliance, their defense cooperation will grow.

"I don't expect that Russia and China will create a military alliance," Gabuev said. "Both countries are self-sufficient in terms of security and they benefit from partnering, but neither really requires a security guarantee from the other. And they preach strategic autonomy."

"There will be no military alliance, but there will be closer military cooperation, more interoperability, more cooperation on projecting force together, including in places like the Arctic and more joint effort to develop a missile defense that makes the U.S. nuclear planning and planning of the U.S. and its allies in Asia and in Europe more complicated," he added.

China and the former Soviet Union were Cold War rivals for influence among left-leaning states, but have since partnered in the economic, military and diplomatic spheres. Just weeks before Russia's invasion of Ukraine last February, Putin met with Xi in Beijing and the sides signed an agreement pledging a "no-limits" relationship. Beijing's attempts to present itself as a neutral peace broker in Russia's war on Ukraine have been widely dismissed by the international community.

Xi visited Moscow in March as part of a flurry of exchanges between the countries. China has condemned international sanctions imposed on Russia, but hasn't directly addressed an arrest warrant issued for Putin by the International Criminal Court on charges of alleged involvement in the abductions of thousands of children from Ukraine.



Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni speaks during a press conference at the end of the Council of ministers, as, (from left), Giancarlo Giorgetti Matteo Salvini and Antonio Tajani sit next to her, in Rome, Italy, Monday Oct. 16, 2023. Italy's far-right-led government on Monday approved the 2024 budget that aims to bolster public health services, encourage families to have more children and put more money in the pockets of low-and-medium wage earners. (AP)

Italy okays 24 bln-euro budget that aims to boost household spending and births

ROME, Oct 16, (AP): Italy's far-right-led government on Monday approved a budget for next year that aims to bolster public health services, encourage families to have more children and put more money in the pockets of low-and-medium-wage earners.

Premier Giorgia Meloni said the 24 billion-euro (\$25 billion) budget, which includes 5 billion in spending cuts, is in line with the government's priorities. She described it as both "serious" and "realistic," even as Italy faces an expected increase of 13 billion euros in payments to service its public debt as interest rates increase.

The budget was approved by Meloni's cabinet in a one-hour meeting before being sent for EU approval. Italian Finance Minister Giancarlo Giorgetti expressed confidence that the budget would be accepted by both the EU and markets.

A cut in payroll taxes will put 100 euros a month in the pockets of 14 million Italians, aimed at boosting spending power in the face of higher inflation, Meloni said.

The budget also includes payroll tax breaks to women with at least two children and will guarantee free nursery school from the second child onward in a bid to "undo the story that having children is a disincentive to work."

Some 3 billion euros has been earmarked for Italy's public health services, with a goal of reducing wait times for services in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani, head of the Forza Italia party, called the waiting lists "a national shame. ... You can't die of cancer because they do a scan when you are no longer there."

The budget also raises the minimum pension, while cutting from 90 euros to 70 euros the annual fee assessed to households to support Rai state television.

Meloni's Cabinet approved funds to build a long-discussed bridge connecting mainland Italy to Sicily, a pet project of League leader Matteo Salvini, who is the infrastructure minister. Salvini said work would begin next year.

Single market partly opened

EU offers a new growth plan to W. Balkans

TIRANA, Albania, Oct 16, (AP): Leaders from the European Union offered a new growth plan to the Western Balkans at a summit in Albania's capital on Monday, opening parts of the EU single market and asking for deep-rooted reforms ahead of membership in the bloc for the six countries of the region.

The main topics at the annual talks - called the Berlin Process - are the integration of the Western Balkans into the single market and supporting their green and digital transformation. The nations in the region are Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

The senior EU officials attending the summit in Tirana were European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Charles Michel. They were joined by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

French President Emmanuel Macron did not join the summit, due to the recent incident when a teacher was fatally stabbed and three people wounded in a school attack in northern France. He was represented by State Secretary Laurence Boon.

Macron was due to begin an official visit to Tirana later on Monday.

The six Western Balkan countries are at different stages of integration into the bloc. Serbia and Montenegro were the first Western Balkan countries to launch membership negotiations a few years ago, followed by Albania and Macedonia last year, while Bosnia and Kosovo have only begun the first step of the integration process.

Scholtz said "the Berlin process is the best instrument to not only unleash the full potential of regional cooperation, but also to speed up the integration of all Western Balkan countries."

The economies of the Western Balkan countries are 25% of the size of the EU average, according to Von der Leyen.

Russia's war in Ukraine has put integration of the Western Balkans into the EU at the top of the 27-nation bloc's agenda. The EU is trying to reinvigorate the whole enlargement process, which has been stalled since 2013, when the Croatia became the last country to join.

The EU made it a requirement for Western Balkans to reform their economies and political institutions before joining.

Von der Leyen mentioned a new growth plan for the Western Balkan countries: opening new trade routes in specific areas of the EU's common market for the Balkan countries such as the free movement of goods and services, road transport, energy, electricity and the digital single market. The six countries need to implement quick reforms that in turn will be accompanied by investment.

The EU has already mobilized 16 billion euros (\$16.8 billion) for investment in the region out of 30 billion euros (\$31.5 billion) pledged three years ago.

"We really have to tap into the potential that is here in the Western Balkans and get it closer to the European single market," she said.

The six countries need to move with deep-rooted reforms to improve the business climate, make the regulatory environment more attractive and access to each other's markets, she added.

"If there are blockages, the only one you can block is yourself," said von der Leyen.

A bitter dispute between Serbia and Kosovo, a former Serbian province that declared independence in 2008, remains a great concern for the EU.

Holiday Ecommerce sales growth won't be enough to top European inflation, study says

LONDON, Oct 16, (Business Wire): While inflation is slowing across Europe, the deceleration in price hikes won't be dramatic enough to turn merchants' fortunes around, says a new analysis by commerce protection provider Signifyd.

Signifyd projects that online sales will finish up 3% over last holiday season, with a 2% increase in sales during what's known as the Cyber Five, the shopping festival centered on Black Friday and anchored by Cyber Monday. The growth predictions for EMEA, based on transaction intelligence from Signifyd's Commerce Network of thousands of merchants, fall below the current inflation rate.

"In Europe, we're gonna see very similar trends to ev-

erywhere else in Western economies," said Signifyd Chief Customer Officer J. Bennett. "So, the same trends of high fuel prices. Right? Winter's coming. People are saving up for that. Groceries are up. Consumers will continue to be cautious spenders throughout the holiday season, looking for the right promotions and the best value for their money."

Signifyd will provide live data updates on holiday sales throughout the season - including overall sales, sales by device, fraud trends and revised season sales projections - on its Holiday Season Pulse tracker.

Signifyd's prediction shows the Christmas season getting off to a solid start with October sales coming in 5.5%

ahead of a year ago, before cooling off considerably. In fact, sales will remain flat (+0.5%) in November and rebound in December, up 4.6% year-over-year, according to Signifyd's data analysis.

While the sales numbers for the season overall are less than spectacular, Signifyd Data Analyst Phelim Killough said the figures should be viewed in a bigger context.

"They're perhaps underwhelming from a year-over-year perspective when compared to the double-digit, year-over-year growth from seasons past," said Killough, who conducted Signifyd's analysis. "But we're building off a higher foundation. We haven't seen a decline in year-over-year

sales since the onset of COVID. We've simply seen a slowing in growth."

Despite the muted projections, European merchants can take some comfort in September's online performance. Sales in EMEA were up 9% in September over year-ago figures, according to Signifyd's Ecommerce Pulse data.

Signifyd's projections are based on recent transaction and growth trends and seasonality factors. Its pulse data is derived from transactions on Signifyd's Commerce Network of thousands of brands and merchants. For a tutorial explaining the methods and meanings behind Signifyd's Holiday Season Pulse Tracker visit Signifyd's YouTube channel.

Television

LOS ANGELES, Oct 16, (AP): While John Carpenter has become synonymous with fictional horror storytelling, the 75-year-old director and composer is dipping his toe into true life terrors with his new show, “John Carpenter’s Suburban Screams.”

The legendary director, known for genre-defining classics including “Halloween” and “The Thing,” sat down with The Associated Press for a wide-ranging interview ahead of the release of the unscripted anthology series, which fittingly hit Peacock on Friday, Oct. 13. The interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: I know you’ve talked about how film school helped you understand the plumbing of making movies. But it’s interesting because now with education we have so much more access to information thanks to the internet.

Carpenter: Tell me about it. It’s all different now. Oh, everything is different. The technology of the business is different. The business is different. I would be starting over completely green if I had to right now. I learned everything about the camera and editing and sound and all that stuff. All that stuff has changed. It’s all different. The sound now is like, ‘What the hell is that? Where’s the NAGRA?’ At USC, we had a lab where you could do processing. We don’t process any more. It’s all digital.

AP: I’m curious if you had any reluctance at the time about dropping out or if it was like full steam ahead.

Carpenter: No, I knew what I was doing. I just wanted to get out of there, get on with my career.

AP: I have noticed that a lot of recent academic literature has been written about horror movies, even outside of film studies. For so long it was thought of as kind of low brow. Now, scholars are writing about it. And we’re seeing this interest in elevated horror, directors like Jordan Peele.

Carpenter: His movies are pretty damn good. The UFO movie is great. I loved it. I see horror as a genre that gets reinvented by every generation to fit their generation. You know, I did it with mine. Tobe Hooper and George Romero reinvented it for theirs. It always happens.

AP: But some people still turn their nose up at it.

Carpenter: They still look down on it, don’t they? We’ve always been looked down on. We’re close to being pornographers. Just a little above, you know? Just a bit.

AP: Have you been playing any good video games lately?

Carpenter: I’ve been playing one for a long time, the “Fallout” game. I’m looking forward to the new “Assassin’s Creed” game. I don’t know if it’s going to be any good, but I’ll check it out.

AP: I think video games are having a similar kind of moment. They were written off for a long time, and now they’re having a kind of renaissance.

Carpenter: Roger Ebert said video games will never be art. And I

thought, “Wait a minute now. It is.” In its own way, it’s art.

AP: So now you are pivoting to real scary stories — things that actually happened. Can you talk a little bit about what prompted you to make this sort of shift in your storytelling?

Carpenter: Well, I’ve never done this before - true stories that involve frightening things. True stories of killers are a staple of television. But what we’re concentrating on in this series are the survivors. You know, we don’t care so much about the perpetrators. The thing about “Dahmer,” the character that I remember the most is Niecy Nash - the character from the survivor’s point of view. And that’s something I haven’t done. I also haven’t done a true-life deal, except for Elvis, which - that doesn’t count. But I also remote directed this series and that’s fantastic. The cast and crew were in Prague, and I’m sitting in my living room. I have a full cup of coffee in my hand saying, “Do this, do that.” That’s fabulous. I cannot wait to do it again that way.

AP: And how did the stories come to you? Were they pitched to you and then you vetted them?

Carpenter: Yeah, that’s it. We have researchers who find the stories out there and we pick the ones that are the most interesting. I picked the phone stalker because I couldn’t believe that this woman was being stalked for six years and they couldn’t catch this guy. What the hell is that? It’s crazy.

Variety



This image released by Amazon shows Licurtis Reels, (left), and Melvin Davis from the documentary, ‘Silver Dollar Road.’ (AP)

Film

‘Silver Dollar Road’ captures a legacy of struggle, resilience

Peck spotlights land dispute in new film

TORONTO, Oct 16, (AP): The filmmaker Raoul Peck was sitting in a Toronto hotel lobby talking to a reporter when Barry Jenkins beelined over to embrace him.

The two know each other, though it had been years since they saw one another. They also share a mutual affection for James Baldwin. Peck made the incisive, incendiary Oscar-nominated 2017 documentary “I Am Not Your Negro.” Jenkins, following his “Moonlight,” made the 2018 Baldwin adaptation “If Beale Street Could Talk.”

“Anytime you make work,” Jenkins told Peck, “I will see it.”

The latest from Peck is “Silver Dollar Road,” which opened in US theaters Friday and streams Dec. 19 on Prime Video. In it, the Haitian-born filmmaker of “Lumumba,” “Sometimes in April” and some of the most thoughtful, prodding essay-film documentaries, chronicles the story of the Reels family in North Carolina.

For generations, the Reels have owned and lived on 65 waterfront acres along Adams Creek in Carteret County. The land, known as Silver Dollar Road, has been in the family since the days of Reconstruction, when their ancestors were freed from slavery. Elijah Reels officially took ownership in 1911, but when he died without a will, the land became what’s called heirs’ property, with ownership shared among a large group of Reels descendants.

When one distant relative sold off 13 acres, some of the most sought-after property along the waterfront fell into the hands of developers. Licurtis Reels and Melvin Davis found themselves accused of trespassing on the land they grew up on. After extensive legal battles, the two were jailed for eight years for refusing to obey a court order to stay off the land.

In Peck’s hands, the film stays close to the

Reels’ experience and to the land; images of vines that wrap the family tree seem to grow out of the forests of Silver Dollar Road. The story is specific but reverberates with a much larger history of Black landownership and exploitation. Between 1910 and 1997, Black Americans are estimated to have lost 90% of their farmland, with the heirs’ property system often playing a role.

“Documentary, for me, is about creating much more than a story,” Peck says.

But the 70-year-old Peck sees his kind of documentary filmmaking as growing obsolete. Streaming platforms, where documentaries have proliferated, have led to increasingly formulaic approaches to nonfiction filmmaking, he says.

“We are in format more and more. Some companies are using algorithms for documentaries,” says Peck. “The whole filming is being transformed almost as we speak. I almost think it’s too late for the kind of documentary I make.”

Passionate

“It’s not impossible,” he adds. “But the mainstream, they’re going to a place that I think is not that interesting. So I have to fight against all that.”

Peck, who was Haiti’s Minister of Culture from 1996 to 1997, has long approached cinema through political and historical lenses. His films, personal and passionate, rigorously engage with stories of injustice and atrocity that often go unexamined in popular culture. His four-part 2021 HBO documentary “Exterminate All the Brutes” connects the enslavement of Africans with the genocide of Indigenous peoples in North America, along with other historical connections.

“I came to filmmaking out of politics,” Peck says. “I grew up around liberation movements. I went to Berlin when I was 17. I grew up in a collective. And my country was a dictatorship until

1986. Cinema was a way of expression or another way to fight. All the films I’ve made could have been easier films, they could have been comedies. But I knew I had to fight my own way. What I did was coherent. There was no ‘Scary Movie 2’ somewhere.”

“Silver Dollar Road,” which is based on a 2019 ProPublica article by Lizzie Presser, focuses primarily on Mamie Reels Ellison and Kim Renee Duhon, two women who have spent decades working to protect their ancestral home.

“I wanted to put the family at the center and not the drama. The drama happened to a family that could be yours, it could be mine,” says Peck. “The usual format would have asked me to let the audience know from the get-go that they’re victims. Then you lose. There’s no way you can recover.”

Instead, any villain in “Silver Dollar Road” is faceless. There is the sense of how identity is bound up in home, and the feeling of invasion when forces gather to dispossess the Reels of their land.

“You don’t see the other side. It’s danger. It’s money. It’s power. We never put them in human form. It’s a system,” Peck says. “A decision I made very early on was that I wanted Black and minority audiences to feel at ease every minute of this movie. To feel at home and to feel at ease, not to be afraid that there would be something that would aggress them.”

Peck was in Toronto to premiere “Silver Dollar Road” at the Toronto International Film Festival. But screening it for Ellison and Duhon was the more meaning experience for him. Afterward, Ellison told him: “Now I feel like I don’t have everything on my shoulders anymore because the story exists.”

“There’s no happy ending. This isn’t Hollywood. That’s our lives,” Peck says. “We’ll survive. Those two women, they’re still standing.”

partners Variance Films, Trafalgar Releasing, Cinepolis and Cinplex to show the film in more than 8,500 movie theatres globally in 100 countries.

The spotlight on Swift has been especially intense lately as a result of her relationship with Kansas City Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce. The two made separate



Swift



Beyoncé

surprise appearances on “Saturday Night Live” this weekend and were also photographed holding hands in New York.

Elizabeth Frank, the executive vice president of worldwide programming and chief content officer for AMC Theatres, said in a statement that they are grateful to Taylor Swift.

“Her spectacular performance delighted fans, who dressed up and danced through the film,” Frank said. “With tremendous recommendations and fans buying tickets to see this concert film several times, we anticipate ‘Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour’ concert film playing to big audiences for weeks to come.”

The stadium tour, which continues internationally, famously crashed Ticketmaster’s site and resale prices became astronomical. Pollstar projects that it will earn some \$1.4 billion. The concert film offered fans both better seats and a much more affordable way to see the show for the first or fifth time. (AP)

People & Places

Film

Unionization expands

‘Barbenheimer’ a bane for US theater workers

NEW YORK, Oct 16, (AP): For movie theater owners around the US, the same-day release of “Barbie” and “Oppenheimer”, starring **Cillian Murphy** as J. Robert Oppenheimer, this summer meant record box office sales and a gratifying sign that the public still craved entertainment on the big screen.

But for some employees at the Alamo Drafthouse in Manhattan, “Barbenheimer” was the breaking point.

“That really pushed us to the edge,” says Maggie Quick, a guest attendant. “It was just the constant understaffing and the emotional exhaustion.”

“People were waiting longer than usual for their food and that makes them short-tempered and impatient,” recalls Tyler Trautman, a shift leader. “We’re the ones facing customers. It takes a toll, a mental toll, to be yelled at by guests because their drink has been taking an hour.”



Murphy

Quick and Trautman were among dozens at the Manhattan theater who decided it was time to form a union. Alamo employees worked with United Auto Workers Local 2179 and this week voted to unionize, with nearly two-thirds in favor. They join Alamo employees at the Brooklyn theater, who voted last month to become part of Local 2179.

“We’re very excited to be moving forward in solidarity with Brooklyn,” Quick said after the vote was announced. “We have strength in our numbers and hope to see some real change.”

An Alamo spokesperson said the company would decline comment.

At a time of labor action in the movie industry and beyond, union activity is expanding at movie theaters themselves, a trend which began during the pandemic. Over the past two years, employees have formed or attempted to form unions at the Film Forum and Anthology Film Archives in New York, the Amherst Cinema in Massachusetts and Alamo Drafthouses in San Francisco and Austin, Texas, home to Alamo’s company headquarters.

Transition

The transition to a union shop went smoothly at some theaters. The owners in Amherst voluntarily agreed to recognize the union and a contract was reached earlier this year. Film Forum workers, who unionized in 2022, agreed last summer to a 5-year contract that raises salaries by an average of 12%. Anthology Film Archives employees went on strike for a day last year, but have since agreed to terms.

“Overall, it’s been fairly peaceful,” says Olga Brudastova, president of UAW Local 2110, which represents the Film Forum and Anthology Film Archives unions. In a statement, Chad Bolton, the Film Forum general manager, said the contract was born from “a thorough and thoughtful process.”

But at Alamo Drafthouse, the chain known for its eclectic offerings of films and in-theater food and drink service, employees speak of ongoing resistance from the company. According to images and audio recordings obtained by The Associated Press, Alamo management in New York has posted flyers urging workers not to unionize and brought in speakers from Texas, including Alamo co-founder Tim League.

“We appreciate everything you do for our venue and believe we can work better together to solve problems without the need of a third-party like a union to come between us and charge you dues,” one flyer reads.

Alamo held meetings in Manhattan and Brooklyn in the weeks leading up to union votes. In each gathering, management officials acknowledged discontent among staff members, while reiterating that any issues were better worked out entirely within the company.

In Brooklyn, per the recordings, League reflected on the company’s history, dating back to its origins in the 1990s. He spoke of his dedication to Alamo and of his own progressive affinities, including his “passionate” support for Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont. Both League and his wife and Alamo co-founder Karrie League have contributed to various Democratic Party candidates. Tim League has publicly praised the pro-labor senator’s 2016 presidential run, telling a CNBC interviewer in 2016 that “Bernie is going to be good for America.”

League emphasized that he “understood” why Hollywood actors and writers were striking, and why auto workers went on strike. But for Alamo, he said, unions would be a step back, a “communication block.”

“I fully recognize my own personal bias here,” he said. “I don’t think that forming a union is the right solution for Alamo, that is my personal opinion. I’m concerned that a union is going to drive a wedge between us.”

Striking

Only 6% of private US sector workers belong to unions today, a fraction of the 35% represented in the 1950s. But more workers in numerous industries have begun organizing lately and their actions have public support. According to Gallup, approval of stronger unions stands at 67%, down slightly from the 71% approval seen last year, but mirroring levels last seen in the 1960s. A recent AP-NORC poll found that a majority of US adults sympathized with the striking Hollywood workers.

The Leagues were recent graduates of Rice University when in 1997 they opened the first Alamo, a single-screen venue in Austin. They soon established a word-of-mouth following among movie lovers and within the next few years had opened several other locations around Texas. In 2005, Entertainment Weekly named Alamo Drafthouse the country’s best cinema venue, calling the experience “movie geek heaven.”

The company now has dozens of theaters around the US, but endured financial struggles during the pandemic. In March 2021, the company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, closed some locations and cancelled plans to open new ones. Alamo emerged from bankruptcy at the end of May 2021, under the ownership of League. Altamont Capital Partners and Fortress Investment Group. Michael Kusterman, a former executive at Caveman Foods, has been Alamo CEO since replacing the retiring Shelli Taylor in July.

League, who in 2020 became executive chairman of Alamo, said in the recordings he was “disappointed” Brooklyn workers wanted to unionize, while adding that the company couldn’t meet his high standards for Alamo without a happy staff. He acknowledged past errors, including a “troubling lack of communication,” but said that Alamo was committed to moving forward. He asked the staff to give the management team a year to prove itself.



Mumford and Sons performs on the American Express stage during the second weekend of Austin City Limits at Zilker Park in Austin, Texas, Sunday, Oct. 15. (AP)

Obituaries

‘Three’s Company’ star battled breast cancer

Actress Suzanne Somers dies at 76

LOS ANGELES, Oct 16, (AP): Suzanne Somers, the effervescent blonde actor known for playing Chrissy Snow on the television show “Three’s Company” and who became an entrepreneur and New York Times best-selling author, has died. She was 76.

Somers had breast cancer for over 23 years and died Sunday morning, her family said in a statement provided by her longtime publicist, R. Couri Hay. Her husband Alan Hamel, her son Bruce and other immediate family were with her in Palm Springs, California.

“Her family was gathered to celebrate her 77th birthday on October 16th,” the statement read. “Instead, they will celebrate her extraordinary life, and want to thank her millions of fans and followers who loved her dearly.”

In July, Somers shared on Instagram that her breast cancer had returned.

“Like any cancer patient, when you get that dreaded, ‘It’s back’ you get a pit in your stomach. Then I put on my battle gear and go to war,” she told Entertainment Tonight at the time. “This is familiar battleground for me and I’m very tough.”

She was first diagnosed in 2000, and had previously battled skin cancer. Somers faced some backlash for her reliance on what she’s described as a chemical-free and organic lifestyle to combat the cancers. She argued against the use of chemotherapy, in books and on platforms like “The Oprah Winfrey Show,” which drew criticism from the American Cancer Society.

Tumultuous

Somers was born in 1946 in San Bruno, California, to a gardener father and a medical secretary mother. Her childhood, she’d later say, was tumultuous. Her father was an alcoholic, and abusive. She married young, at 19, to Bruce Somers, after becoming pregnant with her son Bruce. The couple divorced three years later and she began modeling for “The Anniversary Game” to support herself. It was during this time that she met Hamel, who she married in 1977.

She began acting in the late 1960s, earning her first credit in the Steve McQueen film “Bullitt.” But the spotlight really hit when she was cast as the blonde driving the white Thunderbird in George Lucas’s 1973 film “American Graffiti.” Her only line was mouthing the words “I love you” to Richard Dreyfuss’s character.

At her audition, Lucas just asked her if she could drive. She later said that moment “changed her life forever.”

Somers would later stage a one-woman Broadway show entitled “The Blonde in the Thunderbird,” about her life, which drew largely scathing reviews.

She appeared in many television shows in the 1970s, including “The Rockford Files,” “Magnum Force” and “The Six Million Dollar Man,” but her most famous part came with “Three’s Company,” which aired on ABC from 1977 to 1984 - though her participation

NEW YORK, Oct 16, (AP): Stephen Rubin, a longtime publishing executive with an eye for bestsellers and a passion for music and public life who helped launched the career of John Grisham, among others, and released such blockbusters as “The Da Vinci Code” and “Fire and Fury,” has died. He was 81.

Rubin died Friday at a hospital in Manhattan after “a brief and sudden illness,” according to his nephew, David Rotter.

Book publishing is hard to imagine without the raspy-voiced Rubin, a powerful and colorful presence for decades with his tortoiseshell glasses, stylish suits and wide range of friends and colleagues, from Jacqueline Kennedy to Beverly Sills. He hosted memorable parties at his spacious West Side apartment and was a prime source of gossip and alternately profane and loving assessments of friends, colleagues and the greater world.

“He would enter a room and immediately fill it,” close friend Jane Friedman, the former CEO of HarperCollins Publishers, told The Associated Press via email. “He had very strong likes and dislikes and he NEVER changed his mind.”

Rubin was a former New York Times journalist who broke into publishing in the 1980s and rose to top positions at Doubleday, where Kennedy worked for a time as an editor, and Henry Holt and Company. Most recently he was a publishing consultant for Simon & Schuster.

Rubin’s many notable projects included the million-selling “Killing” history series by Bill O’Reilly and Martin Dugard, Laura Esquivel’s “Like Water for Chocolate,” Mitch Albom’s “Tuesdays With Morrie,” Hilary Mantel’s “Bring Up the Bodies” and

former President George W. Bush’s “Decision Points,” a million seller which Rubin helped sign at a time Bush was widely unpopular in the publishing world and beyond.

Book executives dream of over-seeing even one phenomenon: Rubin scored at least three times.

In the early 1990s, he was just starting out at Doubleday when the publisher was set to release a thriller by a little-known author, John Grisham’s “The Firm.” The novel helped make Grisham synonymous with courtroom drama and marked the beginning of a long friendship between him and Rubin, who would acknowledge taking advantage of the author’s good looks and featuring them in promotional ads (Grisham would rebel for a time by appearing at photo shoots unshaven).

“Steve Rubin was a great publisher,” Grisham said in a statement. “He loved books, especially those on the bestseller lists, and he knew how to get them there. He was a writer’s dream - loyal, generous, and never shy with his opinions. He was seldom wrong, but never in doubt.”

A decade later, Doubleday took on a then-obscure author who had sold few copies for Simon & Schuster but now had a promising manuscript for a religious/art thriller set in Europe. With a relentless promotional campaign, including thousands of advance copies sent to booksellers and others in the business, Dan Brown’s “The Da Vinci Code” was an immediate and lasting sensation. Sales topped 70 million copies, even as some critics and fellow authors despised it and some religious officials thought it blasphemous.

soon fired; Her character was replaced by two different roommates for the remaining years the show aired. It also led to a rift with her co-stars; They didn’t speak for many years. Somers did reconcile with Ritter before his death, and then with DeWitt on her online talk show.

But Somers took the break as an opportunity to pursue new avenues, including a Las Vegas act, hosting a talk show and becoming an entrepreneur. In the 1990s, she also became the spokesperson for the “ThighMaster.”

The decade also saw her return to network television in the 1990s, most famously on “Step by Step,” which aired on ABC’s youth-targeted TGIF lineup. The network also aired a biopic of her life, starring her, called “Keeping Secrets.”

Somers was also a prolific author, writing books on aging, menopause, beauty, wellness, sex and cancer.

quest to find her missing brother.

“This Great Hemisphere” is a novel about the nature of power, the lengths people will go to in order to gain and maintain it, as well as the almost biological compulsion we all possess to protect those we love,” Askaripour said in a statement. “It is a call to arms for the unseen, a rallying cry for those who are tired of being ignored and forgotten. And, of course, it’s a hell of an adventure.” (AP)



Suzanne Somers is seen during the funeral services for Merv Griffin at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Beverly Hills, Calif., Aug. 17, 2007. Somers, the effervescent blonde actor known for playing Chrissy Snow on the television show ‘Three’s Company,’ as well as her business endeavors, died early Sunday, Oct. 15, her family said in a statement provided by her longtime publicist R. Couri Hay. She was 76. (AP)

Variety

LOS ANGELES: **Mark Goddard**, an actor best known for playing Major Don West in the 1960s television show “Lost in Space,” has died. He was 87.

He died Tuesday in **Hingham, Massachusetts**, of pulmonary fibrosis, his son told John The New York Times.

Bill Mumy, who played Will Robinson on “Lost In Space,” wrote a tribute to his “beloved friend and brother” for 59 years on Facebook. Mumy said he spoke to Goddard on his birthday in July and realized he’d likely never see or speak to him again.

“Mark was a truly fine actor. Naturally gifted as well as trained. I know he sometimes felt constricted by the campy frame that LIS constrained him within, but he also embraced and loved it,” Mumy wrote. “There’s a part of me that envisions him having a drink in Heaven right now with **Jonathan Harris, Kevin Burns, Guy Williams** and other comrades who left this world of woe before him.”

In the show, which ran from 1965 to 1968 on CBS, Goddard’s character was the pilot of the Jupiter 2 carrying the Robinson family on a mission to colonize space. He wrote a memoir in 2008 memoir called “To Space and Back.”

Goddard was born on July 24, 1936, **Charles Harvey Goddard in Lowell, Massachusetts**. He left college in his junior year, in 1958, to pursue acting, putting himself through the American Academy of Dramatic Arts by working evenings at Woolworths.

When he made it to Hollywood, he appeared on an episode of “The Rifleman” and in a Dick Powell-directed television movie “Woman on the Run,” starring **Joan Crawford**. He also had roles on “Johnny Ringo,” “The Detectives” and appeared in “The Beverly Hillbillies” and “Perry Mason.” (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Living for the Dead,” a new Hulu series executive produced and narrated by **Kristen Stewart**, is like “Queer Eye” meets “Ghost Hunters.” It follows a group of five queer ghost hunters who travel to haunted locations and use their individual skills to confront the spirits and clear the space. There’s Ken, who specializes in tarot, Juju the spiritual expert, Logan the psychic, a researcher named Roz and Alex who does the ghost hunting. The series debuts Wednesday

Comedian **Heather McMah**an debuts her first network comedy special called “The Son I Never Had” on Tuesday. If you haven’t followed McMahan, she’s got a popular podcast called “Absolutely Not” and a hilarious Instagram account that caught on during the pandemic, and led to sold-out comedy dates. McMahan’s schtick is both relatable and outrageous.

The sweet and smart comedy “Upload” is back on Prime Video for a third season. Created by **Greg Daniels** (“The Office”), the series takes place in the (near) future where one can opt to be uploaded to a virtual afterlife. The more money you have, the better the second life is. It stars **Robbie Amell**, a computer programmer, who was uploaded in season one - and falls for his still-living digital concierge, Nora (Andy Allo.) The first two episodes drop Friday, Oct. 20. (AP)

NEW YORK: **Mateo Askaripour**’s follow-up to his acclaimed debut novel “Black Buck” is a look into the distant future.

Dutton, a Penguin Random House imprint, has announced that Askaripour’s “This Great Hemisphere” is scheduled for release next summer. The novel is set 500 years from now and tells of a society in which some people are born invisible and consigned to second-class citizenship. One invisible person, Sweetmint, embarks on a



Goddard



Stewart

Study sees hope for a promising new obesity treatment

Diabetes drug Mounjaro helped dieters shed 60 pounds

NEW YORK, Oct 16, (Agencies): The medicine in the diabetes drug Mounjaro helped people with obesity or who are overweight lose at least a quarter of their body weight, or about 60 pounds on average, when combined with intensive diet and exercise, a new study shows.

By comparison, a group of people who also dieted and exercised, but then received dummy shots, lost weight initially but then regained some, researchers reported Sunday in the journal Nature Medicine.

"This study says that if you lose weight before you start the drug, you can then add a lot more weight loss after," said Dr. Thomas Wadden, a University of Pennsylvania obesity researcher and psychology professor who led the study.

The results, which were also presented Sunday at a medical conference, confirm that the drug made by Eli Lilly & Co. has the potential to be one of the most powerful medical treatments for obesity to date, outside experts said.

"Any way you slice it, it's a quarter of your total body weight," said Dr. Caroline Apovian, who treats obesity at Brigham and Women's Hospital and wasn't involved in the study.

Demand

The injected drug, tirzepatide, was approved in the US in May 2022 to treat diabetes. Sold as Mounjaro, it has been used "off-label" to treat obesity, joining a frenzy of demand for diabetes and weight-loss medications including Ozempic and Wegovy, made by Novo Nordisk.

All the drugs, which carry retail price tags of \$900 a month or more, have been in shortage for months.

Tirzepatide targets two hormones that kick in after people eat to regulate appetite and the feeling of fullness communicated between the gut and the brain. Semaglutide, the drug used in Ozempic and Wegovy, targets one of those hormones.

The new study, which was funded by Eli Lilly, enrolled about 800 people who had obesity or were overweight with a weight-related health complication - but not diabetes. On average, study participants weighed about 241 pounds (109.5 kilograms) to start and had a body-mass index - a common measure of obesity - of about 38.

After three months of intensive diet and exercise, more than 200 participants left the trial, either because they failed to lose enough weight or for other reasons. The remaining nearly 600 people were randomized to receive tirzepatide or a placebo via weekly injections for about 16 months. Nearly 500 people completed the study.

Participants in both groups lost about 7% of their body weight, or almost 17 pounds (8 kilograms), during the diet-and-exercise phase. Those who received the drug went on to lose an additional 18.4% of initial body weight, or about 44 pounds (20 kilograms) more, on average. Those who received the dummy shots regained about 2.5% of their initial weight, or 6 pounds (2.7 kilograms).

Overall, about 88% of those taking tirzepatide lost 5% or more of their body weight during the trial, compared with almost 17% of those taking placebo. Nearly 29% of those taking the drug lost at least a quarter of their body weight, compared with just over 1% of those taking placebo.

That's higher than the results for semaglutide and similar to the results seen with bariatric surgery, said Apovian.

"We're doing a medical gastric bypass," she said.

Side effects including nausea, diarrhea and constipation were reported more frequently in people taking the drug than those taking the placebo. They were mostly mild to moderate and occurred primarily as the dose of the drug was escalated, the study found. More than 10% of those taking the drug discontinued the study because of side effects, compared with about 2% of those on placebo.

Lilly is expected to publish the results soon of another study that the firm says shows similar high rates of weight loss. The US Food and Drug Administration has granted the company a fast-track review of the drug to treat obesity, which Eli Lilly may sell under a different brand name. A decision is expected by the end of the year.

Also:

BRUSSELS: The European Commission, the European Investment Bank and the **Bill & Melinda Gates** Foundation announced a new financing partnership in Brussels Wednesday to address critical global health opportunities: eradicating polio and ensuring that innovations in health are more accessible to the people who need them most.

The World Health Organization and UNICEF, as implementing partners for the polio funding, will deploy the resources to eradicate polio, support the distribution of other childhood immunizations and strengthen health systems so they are better able to respond to emerging health threats, they said in a joint press release.

President of the European Commission **Ursula von der Leyen** said: "We are about to wipe polio off the face of the Earth. The European Commission, the EIB and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation are partnering to get through the final stretch."

"With 1 billion euro (USD 1.06 billion) supported by our European investment strategy Global Gateway, we will invest in stronger health systems globally and local vaccine and medicines production, manufacturing and administration, where it is most needed. Global co-operation has helped us put an end to the COVID-19 pandemic. Now it will help us get rid of polio once and for all," she said.

On his part, Bill Gates said "thanks to medical innovations, the world eradicated one human disease, smallpox. Today we're on the verge of ending another, wild poliovirus."

"I am also optimistic that we will eradicate polio once and for all and make health innovations more accessible for everyone, particularly those in the poorest countries," he added.

The partnership aims to deliver 500 euro million (USD 530 million) in payments to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, specifically the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

"These new funds will not only help to drive us towards a polio-free world, but will also help to build more sustainable and resilient health systems to protect the same children and communities who are at risk of polio against the many other health threats they face," added **Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**, WHO Director-General.

Telecom to expand its digital transformation services

ZainTECH enters deal to acquire STS to boost the region's tech landscape

DUBAI, UAE, Oct 16: ZainTECH, the integrated digital solution provider of Zain Group, announces it has entered an agreement for the complete acquisition of Specialized Technical Services Company (STS), one of the pioneering and largest digital transformation solutions providers in the region and the Kingdom of Jordan. This strategic move enables ZainTECH to expand its service offerings to enterprises and government bodies, access top talent, foster innovation, and enhance its competitive position across the region.

Since its establishment in 1989, STS has been a key player in the digital transformation landscape across Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Iraq. As one of the pioneer players in the industry, STS also stands as a forward-thinking, tech-savvy entity that has consistently fueled the digital transformation journey of the entire region. The company is renowned for its advanced hybrid multi-cloud solutions, robust managed cloud services, and comprehensive cybersecurity offerings, backed up by a state-of-the-art security operations center (STS SOC), infrastructure and system integration capabilities, along with licensing solutions.

Partnerships

With a dedicated team of over 350 professionals, STS has built long-standing partnerships with industry leaders such as Cisco Systems, Dell Technologies, IBM, Microsoft, Oracle, among others. STS serves over 500 customers across industries, including banking and financial, governmental, health, education, and telecommunications sectors across the Middle East and North Africa.

Commenting, Bader Al-Kharafi, Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO said, "This deal comes 20 years after Zain's first regional expansion into Jordan and is a testament to our commitment to driving the Kingdom's and the region's digital transformation journey. Innovation has always been a catalyst for driving regional economies and improving the lives of citizens across our markets. The current roll-out of the state-of-the-art 5G services across the Kingdom and the acquisition of STS by ZainTECH will further consolidate Jordan's position as a leading digital hub and a key enabler of innovation and entrepreneurship in the region."

Andrew Hanna, ZainTECH CEO commented, "The agreement to acquire STS, with its talented team, years of expertise and impressive customer base, will amplify ZainTECH and Zain B2B teams' capabilities to



Standing: Bader Al Kharafi, Zain VC and Group CEO (left) and Ahmad Al Hanandeh, Jordan Minister of Digital Economy & Entrepreneurship. Sitting: Ramzi Zeine, Co-Founder and Executive Chairman of STS (left), Andrew Hanna, CEO of ZainTECH (middle), Aiman Mazahreh, Co-Founder and CEO of STS.

provide clients with cutting-edge and comprehensive digital transformation solutions, solidifying our position as leaders in the industry and driving digital transformation in Jordan and across the region."

Ramzi Zeine, Co-Founder and Executive Chairman of STS said: "The momentum gained by ZainTECH since its launch in October 2021 has been nothing but remarkable, and we are excited to collaborate and support its growth and development from our standing point in Jordan and from our regional operations in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, and Iraq. The Jordanian ICT sector is undoubtedly a key

pillar in the national economy."

Aiman Mazahreh, CO-Founder and CEO of STS said: "Today we witness a strategic leap in the history of STS, and we are extremely proud to join forces with ZainTECH. We look forward to leaving noticeable marks on the digital transformation scene in Jordan and the region."

PWC-Strategy & advised ZainTECH and Lumina Capital Advisers advised STS on this transaction. DLA Piper was the legal advisor for ZainTECH and Clyde & Co was the legal advisor for the shareholders of STS. This acquisition is subject to regulatory approvals.

Approval withdrawn

US doctors group calls 'excited delirium' paper outdated

NEW YORK, Oct 16, (AP): A leading doctors group has formally withdrawn its approval of a 2009 paper on "excited delirium," a document that critics say has been used to justify excessive force by police.

The American College of Emergency Physicians in a statement called the paper outdated and said the term excited delirium should not be used by members who testify in civil or criminal cases. The group's directors voted on the matter recently in Philadelphia.

"This means if someone dies while being restrained in custody ... people can't point to excited delirium as the reason and can't point to ACEP's endorsement of the concept to bolster their case," said Dr. Brooks Walsh, a Connecticut emergency doctor who pushed the organization to strengthen

its stance.

Earlier this week, California became the first state to bar the use of excited delirium and related terms as a cause of death in autopsies. The legislation, signed Sunday by Gov. Gavin Newsom, also prohibits police officers from using it in reports to describe people's behavior.

In March, the National Association of Medical Examiners took a stand against the term, saying it should not be listed as a cause of death. Other medical groups, including the American Medical Association, had previously rejected excited delirium as a diagnosis. Critics have called it unscientific and rooted in racism.

The emergency physicians' 2009 report said excited delirium's symptoms included unusual strength, pain tolerance and bizarre behavior and

called the condition "potentially life-threatening."

The document reinforced and codified racial stereotypes, Walsh said.

The 14-year-old publication has shaped police training and still figures in police custody death cases, many involving Black men who died after being restrained by police. Attorneys defending police have cited the paper to admit testimony on excited delirium, said Joanna Naples-Mitchell, an attorney and research adviser for Physicians for Human Rights, which produced a report last year on the diagnosis and deaths in police custody.

In 2021, the emergency physicians' paper was cited in the New York attorney general's report on the investigation into the death of Daniel Prude, a 41-year-old Black man. A grand jury rejected charges against

police officers in that case.

Excited delirium came up during the 2021 trial of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who was later convicted in the death of George Floyd. This fall, the term resurfaced during the ongoing trials of police officers charged in the deaths of Elijah McClain in Colorado and Manuel Ellis in Washington state. Floyd, McClain and Ellis were Black men who died after being restrained by police.

The emergency physicians group had distanced itself from the term previously, but it had stopped short of withdrawing its support for the 2009 paper.

"This is why we pushed to put out a stronger statement explicitly disavowing that paper," Naples-Mitchell said. "It's a chance for ACEP to really break with the past."

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No space for breakdance after making debut in Paris next year

Cricket, flag football among 5 sports given Oly status for 2028 LA Games

MUMBAI, India, Oct 16, (AP): Cricket is an Olympic sport again. Flag football gets in for the first time.

Five sports were finally added to the 2028 Los Angeles Games by the International Olympic Committee on Monday with baseball-softball, lacrosse and squash also confirmed for the program.

The slate of sports cleared a final hurdle from the Olympic body’s full membership after being proposed by Los Angeles officials one week ago and recommended by the IOC executive board on Friday.

All five were voted in as a single package with two “no” votes from about 90 IOC members in the room in Mumbai, India.

The decision to elevate cricket to Olympic status for the first time since 1900 was made in one of the hotpots of the sport where the IOC is meeting while India hosts the sport’s

World Cup.

Adding cricket to the Olympic program is expected to raise the value of India’s broadcasting rights for the IOC by more than \$100 million. The Olympic tournaments for men and women should each have six teams playing the shortened

OLYMPICS

and dynamic Twenty20 format.

Flag football and baseball-softball could put NFL and MLB players on the Olympic stage in five years’ time.

Football in its full-contact form was a demonstration sport at the 1932 Olympics when Los Angeles first hosted the

Summer Games.

“We want L.A. 2028 to have the same springboard effect for our five sports,” organizing committee chairman Casey Wasserman told IOC members. “In L.A. we are dreamers and doers.” Lacrosse was hailed as the first game played on the American continent by its native people. The sport has been played twice at the Olympics, though not since 1908. In L.A., lacrosse will be played in a six-a-side format.

Squash will make its debut after several previous applications to get Olympic status failed.

There was no space for breakdance, which will not return after making its Olympic debut in Paris next year.

The importance of team sports in American culture and building stronger bonds to professional leagues and tours was stressed to IOC members before they voted.

Two members from Africa, Tidjane Thiam of Ivory Coast

and William Blick of Uganda, expressed concern about how the fact that the sports added Monday are not played much on the continent.

They were told by L.A. official Niccolo Campriani that flag football is “the future and the tip of the spear for American football’s international growth.”

“NFL’s commitment on this journey is total, not a one-and-done,” said Campriani, sports director of the 2028 organizing committee and a former IOC staffer.

On the issue of immigration to the U.S., Los Angeles officials were asked to give assurances that athletes of all passports and nationalities would be allowed in for the Summer Games. “That is our commitment,” Wasserman said, citing talks with state and federal authorities. “We are proud of our ability to make sure that our country is accessible to every athlete on earth.”

Resilient Springboks ruin France’s dream

England end Fiji’s crowd-pleasing run

PARIS, Oct 16, (AP): Defending champions South Africa dug deep for one of its most resilient performances at the Rugby World Cup to knock highly rated France out of their home tournament by a riveting 29-28 in front of nearly 80,000 baying French fans.England await South Africa in Paris on Saturday after beating Fiji 30-24.

France played all of the attacking rugby for the first 60-plus minutes, and South Africa clung on for much of that

RUGBY

before suddenly turning the momentum of the game thanks to lock Eben Etzebeth’s barging run and try beside the posts in the 67th minute.

Replacement flyhalf Handre Pollard stretched South Africa’s late lead to 29-25 with a penalty from his own half.

Thomas Ramos made it a one-point game late on with his third penalty for France.

France attacked relentlessly and brilliantly for the majority of the match, but couldn’t find another score in a desperately tense final seven minutes of the last quarterfinal.

No. 2-ranked France had a two-year, 18-test winning streak at home and was the highest-ranked team left in the tournament at kickoff, but their Rugby World Cup dream on home soil slipped away. The French are

still without the title and this failure will perhaps hurt more than any of the others.

France President Emmanuel Macron went into the French dressing room after the game to console the players.

Both teams scored three tries in a breathless first 26 minutes at Stade de France. Two of the French scores came from prop Cyril Baille, who had them ahead as early as the fourth minute. France looked world-class in those opening minutes and South Africa a little shell-shocked.

All of South Africa’s three tries in that first 40 came against the run of play, with Kurt-Lee Arendse profiting off a French mistake from a high kick to break away and reply to Baille’s opener in the eighth minute. Damian de Allende’s score for the Springboks, again from a turnover, put them 12-7 up.

France scrumhalf and captain Antoine Dupont, back from a broken cheekbone three weeks ago, set up hooker Peato Mauvaka for France’s second and it was 12-12.

South Africa’s other wing, Cheslin Kolbe, ran onto a kick to again put the Springboks ahead despite France being totally dominant. Baille’s second try again pulled France back.

Etzebeth was yellow-carded just before halftime for a head-on-head tackle on France prop Uini Atonio, and Ramos kicked France 25-19 ahead with goals just before and after the break.

Despite a narrowish lead, France appeared in control, with Dupont pulling the strings, and the home fans driving Les Tricolores on.

But the Springboks kept grinding despite a big territorial disadvantage and Etzebeth’s powerful run to crash over on a rare Springboks visit down the other end of the field suddenly swung the game in favor of the reigning champions with Pollard’s conversion.

Pollard’s penalty from inside his own half in the 69th gave the Springboks a critical four-point advantage.

France kept coming and South Africa, which defended for most of the game, held out this time, allowing Ramos only one more penalty.

South Africa finally found a territorial foothold in the final minutes and France had to attack from deep in the last play of the game after the final hooter.

After 10 phases, the ball was stripped by RG Snyman and Faf de Klerk and Arendse scooped it up and hoofed it out to confirm a semifinal against England next weekend.

The lead was 14 points, the Rugby World Cup semifinals were in sight and there was a celebratory feel to England fans’ booming rendition of “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” that swirled around Stade Velodrome with a little over 20 minutes left.

Then Fiji finally turned up.

The World Cup quarterfinals delivered another heart-stopper as England held on in the face of a valiant fightback from the Flying Fijians to end the crowd-pleasing run of the tournament darlings by a tense 30-24.



France’s Louis Bielle-Biarrey (left) and South Africa’s Kurt-Lee Arendse leap for a loose ball during the Rugby World Cup quarterfinal match between France and South Africa at the Stade de France in Saint-Denis, near Paris. (AP)

Truex continues to struggle

Larson earns spot in NASCAR’s championship race

LAS VEGAS, Oct 16, (AP): Kyle Larson used a spectacular mid-race save, got a lightning fast final pit stop from his Hendrick Motorsports crew, then held off Christopher Bell at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway finish line to become the first driver locked into NASCAR’s championship finale.

The 2021 Cup champion earned the first of four spots in the Nov. 5 title-deciding finale with his win in Sunday’s opening race of the round of eight of NASCAR’s playoffs.

CAR RACING

Larson’s fourth win of the season was the most important: Hendrick Motorsports could theoretically coast through the next two weeks and focus mostly on preparing for the finale at Phoenix Raceway. Joey Logano won Las Vegas last year and parlayed the two weeks of prep time into a championship-clinching win at Phoenix.

There won’t be any rest for the No. 5 team, though.

Larson led 133 laps and beat Bell by 0.082 seconds.

He needed a pretty remarkable save in the second stage when his Chevy wiggled and Larson somehow escaped with only denting the rear corner of the car into the wall. It was a save that Daniels believes only Larson could pull off.

It kept him in contention and Larson claimed the lead on pit road when his crew had the fastest stop following a caution with 57 laps remaining. Bell had control of the race

at that point but Larson was first off pit road.

Bell, who started on the pole in a Toyota for Joe Gibbs Racing, was third after the pit stop. Passing seemed particularly difficult Sunday at Las Vegas, and Bell was sort of stuck following Larson for the rest of the race.

But he made a run at Larson over the final handful of laps, closing the gap each time by the flagstand. As they closed in on the checkered flag, Bell gave it one furious push inside of Larson but couldn’t beat him to the line.

Larson praised Bell, his long-time sprint car rival, for racing him cleanly to the finish line.

Kyle Busch, a Las Vegas native, finished third in a Chevrolet. He was followed by Brad Keselowski in a Ford and Ross Chastain in a Chevrolet. All three were eliminat-

ed from the playoffs last Sunday at Charlotte.

The next five spots went to play-off drivers as Ryan Blaney was sixth for Team Penske but was disqualified after the race because the left front shock on his Ford did not meet the overall specified length.

That moved Larson teammate William Byron to sixth and he was followed by Tyler Reddick in a Toyota for 23XI Racing, JGR drivers Martin Truex Jr. and Denny Hamlin. Chris Buescher, in a Ford for RFK Racing, was the lowest-finishing playoff driver in 10th.

Blaney dropped to last in the race.

A win in any of the three playoff races this round earns an automatic berth into the championship finale. The remaining slots are filled based on the points standings.

Bell, Reddick, Blaney and Buescher are the four drivers below the

cutline.

The win capped a week for Larson in which he won a sprint car championship and began his preparations for next year’s Indianapolis 500. Larson plans to run both the Indy 500 and NASCAR’s Coca-Cola 600 next May and on Thursday completed the rookie orientation program at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

He’s entering the Indy 500 in a joint entry between Hendrick Motorsports and McLaren and with boss Rick Hendrick looking on, Larson turned 72 laps with a fast lap of 217.89 mph.

Before he got to Indy, Larson on Tuesday night won the inaugural High Limit Sprint Car Series championship at Lincoln Park Speedway in Greencastle, Indiana. Larson founded the series with his brother-in-law Brad Sweet, the four-time World of Outlaws Series champion.

Truex won the regular season title but has had a terrible playoffs and is barely hanging on to a shot to win a second Cup title.

His ninth-place finish Sunday was his best through seven playoff races. Prior to Las Vegas, he didn’t finish higher than 17th in the first six playoff races.

He started the day slumping with seven consecutive finishes outside the top 15, his worst streak since 2009, and Truex at first seemed destined to another miserable race.

Truex said he struggled with his Toyota in traffic, and when a strategy not to pit at the end of the first stage with the rest of the field backfired, he found himself mired deep in the field.



England’s Ben Earl, (left), runs with the ball during the Rugby World Cup quarterfinal match between England and Fiji at the Stade de Marseille in Marseille, France. (AP)

Thompson ‘upsets’ Zverev in 1st round of Japan Open as Zvonareva wins in Jiangxi

TOKYO, Oct 16, (AP): Jordan Thompson upset ninth-ranked Alexander Zverev 6-3, 6-4 in the opening round of the Japan Open on Monday for his second win over a top-10 opponent this season.

The 29-year-old Australian saved four of the five break points he faced to claim his first career win

over Zverev after losing their only previous meeting six years ago. He also beat seventh-ranked Stefanos Tsitsipas at Indian Wells in March.

“I fought off 0-40 first game and I really got into the match after that,” the 60th-ranked Thompson said. “But I held on, I was playing an unpredictable

Aliassime defeated Aleksander Vukic 7-6 (3), 6-7 (2), 6-2, while Mackenzie McDonald beat Max Purcell 7-5, 6-4 and Sebastian O’Connell outlasted Christopher O’Connell 6-7 (2), 7-6 (5), 7-5.

Fifth-seeded Tommy Paul plays Daniel Altmaier in a late match.

Top-seeded Taylor Fritz plays his first-round match against Cameron Norrie on Tuesday, while second-seeded Casper Ruud meets wild-card entry Yosuke Watanuki.

Shanghai Masters winner Hubert Hurkacz is also in the draw. He opens against Zhang Zhizhen on Wednesday.

Tour veteran Vera Zvonareva beat Arianne Hatano 6-1, 6-2 in her opening match of the Jiangxi Open.

The 39-year-old Zvonareva, who made her tour debut in 2000, broke her 166th-ranked opponent’s serve six times as she cruised to victory in 61 minutes. Zvonareva next plays fifth-seeded Zhu Lin or Diana Shnaider.

Also, eighth-seeded Sara Sorribes Tormo beat wild-card entry Jiang Xinyu 6-4, 6-0. The Spaniard will next play Camila Osorio, who beat Ma Ye-Xin 6-1, 6-0.

Other winners included Amina Anshba and Kimberly Birrell.

Change Name

I. SAJERA BANO WASIM
AHMED KHAN
Holder of Indian Passport
No.P2836715
having permanent address R No. 403 Ititelaque SRA CHS Samrat Ashok Kurla East Mumbai pin : 400070, Maharashtra,INDIA
Residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as under: Given name SAJERA BANO WASEEM AHMED and Surname KHAN

TENNIS

style of tennis, and I think he didn’t handle it that well in the first set and adapted in the second. But I somehow hung around.”

Thompson will next play either Shanghai Masters semifinalist Ben Shelton or qualifier Taro Daniel.

The other three Australians in action Monday all lost as eighth-seeded Felix Auger-

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Hornets hold off Thunder

Lillard scores 14 points in debut as Bucks beat Lakers

Raptors 134, Taipans 93

Scottie Barnes scored 14 points,

BASKETBALL

and Chris Boucher and Pascal Siakam each had 12 as Toronto beat

Australian-based Cairns Taipans. Javon Freeman-Liberty led the Raptors with 15 points. Patrick Miller scored 22 points for the Taipans.

Heat 132, Grizzlies 124

Tyler Herro scored 30 points and Bam Adebayo scored 26 points and Miami beat visiting Memphis.

Herro finished 11-for-19 shoot-

ing including 4 for 7 from 3-point range. Adebayo was 12 for 20 and blocked four shots. Jimmy Butler didn’t play for the Heat.

Desmond Bane scored 26 points and Ziaire Williams had 19 on 7-for-10 shooting for the Grizzlies.

Nuggets 116, Bulls 102

Rookie Julian Strawther scored 25 points in 25 minutes and Denver beat visiting Chicago as the Bulls rested most of their starters.

Jamal Murray added 21 points and Nikola Jokic scored 15 for Denver, which shot 52.7%.

Coby White and Patrick Williams scored 20 points apiece and Andre Drummond grabbed 10 rebounds for Chicago. Demar DeRozan, Zach LaVine, and Nikola Vucevic did not play for the Bulls.



Milwaukee Bucks guard Cameron Payne (left), and Los Angeles Lakers guard Scotty Pippen Jr. go after a loose ball during the second half of an NBA preseason basketball game in Los Angeles. (AP)

Hornets 117, Thunder 115

P.J. Washington scored 31 points shooting 13 for 18 and Terry Rozier scored 19 and host Charlotte beat Oklahoma City.

LaMelo Ball scored 16 points as the Hornets shot 52.3%.

Jaylin Williams scored 18 points and Aaron Wiggins had 16 for Oklahoma City, which did not play its starters.

Kim ‘wins’ in Vegas for the second time

LAS VEGAS, Oct 16, (AP): Tom Kim now has something in common with Byron Nelson as the only players to have won the same PGA Tour event twice in the same season.

Kim successfully defended his title Sunday in the Shriners Children’s Open when he closed with a 5-under 66 to emerge from a pack of a dozen players who had a chance in the final hour. Kim wound up winning by one shot over Adam Hadwin, who birdied the final hole for a 67.

Kim now has three PGA Tour titles in the last 15 months, at 21 the youngest player since Tiger Woods in 1997 to have three tour wins.

“I really felt confident in myself,” Kim said. “I knew that if I did me I was going to be able to do it. I’m stoked to get this one.” He won in Las Vegas a year ago, beating Patrick Cantlay in a playoff at the TPC Summerlin, when the Shiners Children’s Open was early in the season. Now, the Las Vegas event is still part of the same season because the PGA Tour goes to a calendar season starting in 2024.



A file photo of equestrians celebrating their victory.

Al-Jariwi ‘applauds’ Authority’s role in equestrian development

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Ghazi Al-Jariwi, a Kuwaiti Olympic Committee Board Member, commended the impressive evolution of Kuwaiti equestrian sports, attributing this progress to the unwavering support extended by the Public Authority for Sports. He also acknowledged the commendable efforts of the Kuwaiti Equestrian Federation, led by Masoud Johar Hayat. Their combined dedication has

EQUESTRIAN

led to the organization of a local league championship featuring Kuwaiti clubs over the past two seasons, marking a historic first for Kuwaiti equestrianism. Moreover, this fruitful collaboration has resulted in the successful hosting of several international tournaments, including two- and three-star categories, with the presence of representatives from the International Equestrian Federation.

Al-Jariwi further disclosed that discussions took place with the Director General of the General Sports Authority, Yousef Al-Baidan, alongside the Chairman of the Equestrian Committee and fellow Board Member of the Equestrian Federation, Ali Al-Kharafi, and Equestrian Sheikh Yousef Al-Sabah. Their deliberations underscored the pivotal role of the General Authority for Sports in bolstering Kuwaiti equestrianism and propelling this sport forward. Al-Jariwi noted that equestrianism, with its recent technical advancements, has been attracting a growing number of new riders.

He emphasized that the substantial development in equestrianism would not have been possible without the state’s support, embodied by the General Sports Authority. The meeting concluded with preliminary solutions to ensure ongoing support for equestrian sports in the upcoming period, enabling the Federation to swiftly organize the current season’s schedule.

Al-Jariwi also expressed his appreciation for the dedication of Mr. Yousef Al-Baidan, the Chairman of the General Sports Authority, in endorsing accomplished sports that enhance Kuwait’s standing on the global stage.

Messi remains doubtful starter for Argentina

Neymar under fire in Brazil

SAO PAULO, Oct 16, (AP): Lionel Messi’s involvement in a 1-0 win over Paraguay last week doesn’t necessarily mean he’ll be fit for Argentina’s next game in World Cup qualifying against Peru.

Messi played most of the second half against Paraguay last Thursday despite struggling with muscular pains in the weeks leading up to the game.

But there’s no certainty he’ll play against Peru on Tuesday despite practicing with the squad.

Meanwhile in Brazil, Neymar is under fire for his lackluster performance in a 1-1 draw against Venezuela last week that ended with some fans throwing popcorn at the Arena Pantanal in Cuiabá. He will have a tough challenge at Uruguay to show he is back in form.

The next World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada is expanding to a 48-team format, meaning direct entry to the top six teams in South America. The seventh-place team will contest an intercontinental playoff for a berth.

World Cup winners Argentina lead continental qualifying with 9 points, followed by Brazil (7), Colombia (5), Uruguay, Chile and Venezuela (4), Ecuador (3), Paraguay and Peru (1), and Bolivia (0).

The fourth match day in South American qualifying also features

Ecuador against Colombia, Paraguay against Bolivia and Venezuela taking on Chile.

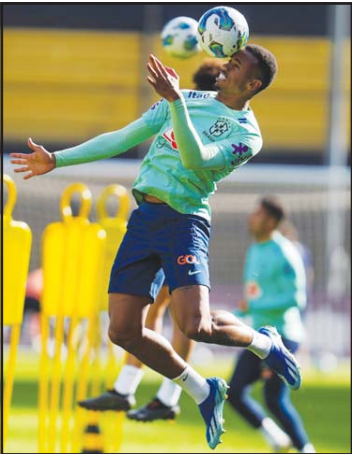
Argentina’s practice on Sunday didn’t show whether the 36-year-old Messi will play against Peru. He took part of the morning session at his national team’s training ground, but has recently felt muscular pains in his right leg that have sidelined him for several MLS matches for his club, Inter Miami.

If Messi plays at Peru, coach Lionel Scaloni might have to remove either Julián Álvarez or Lautaro Martínez from the lineup that beat Paraguay. Keeping the captain in the starting lineup will likely mean Argentina playing Nico Gonzalez again in Lima.

Messi substituted Julián Álvarez in the 52nd minute against Paraguay, when Argentina were already in the lead. He hit the post twice, but had a low key performance overall at the Monumental de Nuñez Stadium in Buenos Aires.

Peru have lost their latest two qualifying matches in South American qualifying. The squad arrived in silence shortly before dawn so no fans could be at the airport protesting after their 2-0 loss at Chile. Players and coach Juan Reynoso know they will face a much tougher challenge against

SOCCER



Brazil's Gabriel Magalhaes heads the ball during a training session in Montevideo, Uruguay. (AP)



Meshal Al-Fajji

The fourth Kuwait Martial Arts Champ’ship scheduled for Nov

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Meshal Al-Fajji, the proprietor of the sports promotion company KSP and the representative of the World Boxing Council (WBC) in Kuwait, has officially announced the upcoming Fourth Kuwait International Professional Martial Arts Championship. This exciting event is set to take place on the evening of

MARTIAL ARTS

November 4 at the Arjan Complex hall in Sabah Al-Salem suburb.

The Fourth Kuwait International Championship will feature a total of nine fights across various weight categories, encompassing five boxing matches and four in Muay Thai. Among the highlights are two main fights; the first is for the KSP Middle East Boxing belt, showcasing boxers Adnan Al-Qazwini and Jarrah

Al-Anazi, while the second is a clash for the KSP Middle East Muay Thai belt, featuring Lebanese fighter Muhaanad Al-Maghribi and Tunisian contender Hatem Jouaa. The competition will be overseen by international judges in accordance with the rules and regulations set by the World Boxing and Muay Thai Council.

Al-Fajji underlined that the Fourth Kuwait International Martial Arts Championship serves as a platform to support young martial artists, foster the technical abilities of Kuwaiti and Arab champions, and open doors for their participation in global professional competitions. He expressed his ambition to build upon the success of the previous three international tournaments and highlighted the novelty of having a boxing fight for the KSP Middle East belt and another for the KSP Middle East Muay Thai belt, a first in the history of the tournament.



Kuwaiti players defend as Saudi makes a goal attempt.

Friendly match against Saudi Arabia is a crucial part of Kuwait preparations for Asian qualifiers

By Khaled El Anzi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 16: Abdulaziz Al-Zaabi, the director of Kuwait national handball team, affirmed that the Algerian coach, Saeed Hegazy, introduced innovative tactics and strategies in the recent trial match between Kuwait and

HANDBALL

Saudi Arabia, with a score of 21-28 favoring the Saudi team. This match is a crucial part of Kuwait’s preparations for their participation in the Asian qualifiers for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. These qualifiers are set to take place in Doha, Qatar, from the 18th to the 28th of this month.

Al-Zaabi emphasized the significant learning opportunity

that facing formidable teams like the Saudi national squad provides, particularly in terms of player development and performance enhancement.

In the qualifying draw, Kuwait find themselves in the second group, sharing the stage with Bahrain, Iran, Uzbekistan, Japan, and Kazakhstan. The first group comprises the teams of Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Korea, the Emirates, India, and China. As per the qualification process, the champions of the qualifiers secure a direct spot in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, while the second and third-place teams get a chance to participate in the Olympic qualifying playoff.

Notably, the Kuwaiti national team demonstrated remarkable performances at the 19th Asian Games held in China this month, ultimately earning a well-deserved bronze medal.

Additionally, a refereeing team, including Al-Enezi and Dalal Al-Naseem, has journeyed to Qatar to officiate several matches in the Asian qualifiers.

Kuwait debut at UAE International Championship

‘We’ve got to do it again’

Jones, Stewart help Liberty avoid sweep, take Game 3 Finals

NEW YORK, Oct 16, (AP): Jonquel Jones and the New York Liberty wouldn’t let the season end just yet.

She scored 27 points and Breanna Stewart added 20 to help the New York Liberty beat the Las Vegas Aces 87-73 on Sunday in the WNBA Finals and force a Game 4.

“I was doing whatever I can to make sure this team gets the win,” Jones said.

New York struggled in the first two games against the Aces in Las Vegas, but the Liberty found their shooting touch in Game 3 behind Jones, who hit four of the team’s 13 3-pointers.

“She was huge for us,” Liberty coach Sandy Brondello said of Jones, who came to the Liberty in a trade in the offseason. “Those 3’s changed the moment of the game a bit. The ball went in. Other games the ball weren’t going in for us. We got back to our identity. Proud of the effort and commitment and connection we had. Now we’ve got to do it again.”

This was the Liberty’s first win in the WNBA Finals since Teresa Weather- spoon’s half-court shot in Game 2 against Houston in 1999. The Aces are up 2-1 in the best-of-five series and Game 4 is Wednesday night in New York.

The Liberty led by three at halftime before scoring the first eight points of the third quarter to take a double-digit lead, bringing the crowd of 17,143 to its feet. They led 61-50 after three quarters.

Behind A’ja Wilson, the Aces got to within six before Stewart hit a turnaround jumper and Betnijah Laney stole the ball from Jackie Young at half court and made a layup to extend the lead back to 10.

Las Vegas didn’t challenge the rest of the way and star guard Chelsea Gray went back to the locker room midway through the fourth quarter after incurring her foot.

Kelsey Plum scored 29 points and

BASKETBALL

Wilson added 16 points and 11 rebounds for the Aces, who are looking to become the first team to win consecutive titles since the 2001-02 Los Angeles Sparks. That came on the heels of the Houston Comets winning the WNBA’s first four championships.

The Aces had won their first seven games this postseason by an average of 17.3 points. They were looking to become the first team to go 8-0 in a WNBA postseason and the first to not lose a game since Seattle in 2020.

The first two games of the series, as well as the four regular-season meetings, were all blowouts, with the closest game being a nine-point win by New York on Aug. 28. That was the last loss the Aces had until Sunday.



President of the Kuwaiti Winter Games Club Fahid Al-Ajmi.



Australia's Marnus Labuschagne plays a shot during ICC Men's Cricket World Cup match between Australia and Sri Lanka in Lucknow, India. (AP)

Sports

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Sri Lanka beaten by 5 wickets

Five-time champions Australia get first win at Cricket WC

LUCKNOW, India, Oct 16, (AP): Five-time champions Australia secured their first win at the Cricket World Cup with a five-wicket victory over Sri Lanka on Monday and almost 15 overs to spare.

Adam Zampa spun out Sri Lanka with 4-47 in eight overs as he helped

trigger a Sri Lankan batting collapse. Cruising at 125-0 at one point, the 1996 champions crashed to 209 all out in 43.3 overs, losing all 10 wickets for just 84 runs. Openers Pathum Nissanka (61) and Kusal Perera (78) were the only significant scorers.

In reply, Australia rode on half-

centuries from Josh Inglis and Mitch Marsh, as they reached 215-5 in 35.2 overs. Inglis top-scored for Australia with 58 runs off 59 balls, including five fours and a six.

After straight losses to host India and South Africa, Australia moved off the bottom of the 10-team table to eighth.

They are level on two points with fifth-place England, Afghanistan and Bangladesh but trail those teams on net run-rate.

Sri Lanka are ninth after its seventh consecutive loss to Australia in World Cups, and a third straight loss in this edition.

Kusal Mendis called correctly as Sri Lanka won the toss and opted to bat.

CRICKET

Mendis took over captaincy duties from Dasun Shanaka, who has been ruled out

of the tournament with a thigh injury. Sri Lanka have lost to South Africa and to Pakistan in high-scoring games. The match started in Lucknow with in hours of the International Olympic Committee voting in Mumbai to include cricket on its sports program for the 2028 Los Angeles Games.

Spain, Scotland qualify for European Champ'ship

Turkey book place as Croatia making hard work of qualification for Euro 2024

MADRID, Oct 16, (AP): Gavi's winning goal for Spain against Norway in a European Championship qualifier will likely have been cheered as wildly in Glasgow as it was in Madrid.

The Barcelona midfielder's strike at Ullevaal Stadium in Oslo secured a 1-0 win that means both Spain and Scotland have qualified for Euro 2024.

Gavi's goal came in the 49th minute and ensured the three-time European champions will be at next year's tournament in Germany when they will be among the favorites to lift the trophy for the first time since 2012.

Scotland might not harbor realistic ambitions of winning Euro 2024, but they have arguably exceeded expectations by qualifying from Group A. Indeed, until losing to Spain on Thursday, the Scots had made a 100% start to qualifying.

SOCCER

Scotland have now qualified for back-to-back Euros, having failed to reach the finals from 2000-2016. In Germany they will be aiming to advance from the group stages for the first time in their history.

Turkey also qualified with a 4-0 win against Latvia at the Konya Metropolitan Municipality Stadium, while Croatia made it back-to-back losses in Group D after a surprise 2-1 defeat to Wales.

Less than a year after a third-place finish at the World Cup in Qatar, Croatia are making hard work of qualification for the European Championship.

The Croatians went into this latest batch of qualifiers atop Group D, with the chance to put daylight between them and Turkey. But a 1-0 loss to Turkey on Thursday has now been followed by defeat to Wales.

Even with stars like Luka Modric, Josko Gvardiol and Marcelo Brozovic in the team, Croatia were trailing 2-0 to goals from Harry Wilson in each half.



Wales' Harry Wilson (right), scores the team's first goal of the game, during the Euro 2024 Qualifying Group D match between Wales and Croatia at the Cardiff City Stadium in Wales. (AP)

Mario Pasalic halved the deficit, but it wasn't enough to spark a comeback. Wales moved up to second in the group ahead of Croatia in third, with both teams on 10 points.

Yunus Akgun set Turkey on course for victory against Latvia, with substitute Cenk Tosun scoring two and Kerem Akturkoglu also grabbing a goal. Four teams are separated by four

points in Group E as results on Sunday meant Albania was left waiting to seal qualification. Czech Republic's 1-0 win against Faroe Islands leaves them two points

behind leaders Albania in second place. Poland drew 1-1 with Moldova to leave those teams three points and four points off the top respectively. Romania are top of Group I after a

4-0 win against Andorra - ahead of second-place Switzerland, which needed goals in the 89th and 90th minutes to draw 3-3 with Belarus. In Group A, Georgia beat Cyprus 4-0.

Sheikh Talal praises success of tournament

Al-Bannai stands out with exceptional performance

Kuwait dominate IBF World Bowling Championships



Sheikh Talal Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah poses with South Korea after the awarding ceremony.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 15, (KUNA): Kuwait's male and female bowling teams showcased remarkable performances in the singles, doubles, trios, and quintuples events at the conclusion of the 2023 IBF World Bowling Championships.

This championship, held at the Kuwait Bowling Sporting Club in Al-Salmiya, Kuwait, from October 3 to 15, was a collaborative effort between Kuwait and the International Bowling Federation (IBF).

The Canadian men's team secured the championship title in the quintuples event, triumphing over their Korean counterparts in the final. China and Lithuania claimed a shared third place by advancing to the semifinals.

In the women's quintuples competition, Korea's team clinched the top position, defeating Malaysia, while China and Singapore reached the semifinals, sharing the third-place

honors.

Sheikh Talal Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, the Chairman of the organizing committee and president of Kuwait Bowling Sporting Club, praised the success of the championship. He commended the participating teams for their high-level expertise.

BOWLING

In a significant gesture of solidarity, Sheikh Talal noted that the organizing committee decided, in accordance with government directives, to cancel all planned closing ceremony celebrations to stand with the people of Palestine, who are facing severe aggression from the Israeli occupation forces.

Kuwait gymnastics team shine at Croatia International Champ'ship

ZAGREB, Oct 16: Kuwait's talented rhythmic gymnastics team shone brightly at the "Croatia International" Championship, a multi-country event held from the 12th to the 15th of this month. With participants from 15 nations, the Kuwaiti girls made their mark with remarkable achievements.

Sarah Al-Bannai stood out with her exceptional performance, clinching two silver medals in both hoop and pole competitions. She also secured a commendable fourth place in the overall individual competition within the "Pole" category, which featured 24 participants. Meanwhile, Nour Al-Ruzaihan showcased her prowess in the "Junior" category, delivering an outstanding performance in the face of stiff competition among 31 athletes.

GYMNASTICS

Among the participants at the "A" level freestyle performance competition, Raya Al-Qassar displayed her skills and landed in the fourth position, competing against 14 other athletes. Nabila Al-Kharafi matched this feat by securing fourth place in the ball performance competition at the same "A" level.

The Kuwaiti Gymnastics Federation lauded the dedication and hard work of the female athletes at this prestigious international tournament. They emphasized that the primary goal of participation is to elevate the skill levels of these talented athletes and facilitate exposure to diverse and advanced rhythmic gymnastics techniques from around the world.

Notably, the Croatia International Championship witnessed substantial participation from countries such as

Slovakia, Italy, Georgia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Slovenia, Luxembourg, Latvia, Austria, Bosnia, Moldova, Australia, Canada, Kuwait, and the host country.



Raya Al-Qassar and Nabila Al-Kharafi.