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Filipinos in Kuwait welcome new development, express optimism

Crown Prince, Philippine president seek labor resolution

By Michelle Fe Santiago

RIYADH, Oct 21: Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Kuwait Crown Prince His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah have expressed their intent to address the current labor issues between the Philippines and Kuwait.

Marcos said that HH the Crown Prince vowed to fix the labor agreement between the two countries. This came after Marcos' brief meeting with the HH the Crown Prince on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) - Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Marcos disclosed during an interview with the Philippine media after his meeting with thousands of Filipinos in Riyadh that he had a pull aside meeting with HH the Crown Prince, who told him that he is displeased with the present Philippine-Kuwait relation and that the Philippines need not issue an apology. HH the Crown Prince, the President said, apologized to him instead, saying he

disagreed with what his people were doing. "The words that he used, 'Do not listen to them. I do not agree with what they

have been doing.' And, in fact, he said, 'I do not want... There is no reason for you

"We will fix it and we will make it because we love the Philippines.' And he said, 'Because I remember your father,' Sabi niya, (he said)' He always supported Kuwait. He always supported us and we know that you will also always support us, that's why we will fix this," Marcos said of the meeting that was initiated by HH the Crown Prince.

Marcos highlighted that the resolution of the country's disagreement with Kuwait is one of the successes of his trip to Saudi Arabia to attend the 1st ASEAN-GCC Summit.

Marcos expressed optimism that the two nations would be able to resolve the

"Sinasabi ko nga sa ating mga kasamahan na, just for that, worth it na itong biyahe natin dahil naayos natin 'yung problema sa Kuwait, which talagang sumasakit ang ulo namin kung papaano namin gagawin (I tell our colleagues that our trip is worth it just for that because we have fixed the problem on Kuwait, which is really giving us a headache as to how to address it). But that is one of the, shall we say, successes that we can record from this trip," Marcos stressed.

It can be recalled that Kuwait suspended the issuance of new entry and new

work visas to all Filipinos in May this year due to the Philippines' supposed noncompliance with the labor agreement between the two countries.

The Philippine government temporarily banned the deployment of first-time household service workers to Kuwait in February this year following the slaying of Jullebee Ranara, whose burnt corpse was found in the desert, along Salmi road. As of 2022, the estimated number of Filipinos in Kuwait is 279,000. The remittances of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) from Kuwait amounted to US\$576,059 in 2021 and US\$579,186 last year.

Meanwhile, Filipinos in Kuwait welcomed this new development following the meeting of Marcos and HH the Crown Prince.

"This is really good news for us. We remain hopeful that this will be sorted out soon," stated Marilen Santos, a sales associate in Kuwait.

Some also expressed optimism that the bilateral labour agreement between Kuwait and the Philippines will be carefully crafted this time so that it would be mutually beneficial to both countries.

"I believe officials of both countries should focus more on the protection and welfare of domestic workers. This is what we need most," said Rosalie Lina, a



KUNA photo Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is seen during his speech at the Cairo Summit for Peace, Saturday.

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's Embassy in France urged its nationals on Friday to exercise caution, heed local authorities instructions, and steer clear from outgoing protests or rallies.

The embassy, in a statement received by KUNA asked Kuwaiti nationals in France to be cautious for their own safety and to maintain contact with the embassy following emergency numbers:

Emergency number: (+33670673834) Embassy number: (+33147235425). (KUNA)

LONDON: A third person has died as Storm Babet batters Scotland and causes chaos around the UK on Friday.

Earlier a 56-year-old man died after his van hit a tree near Forfar, and a 67-year-old woman was killed after being swept into the Water of Lee.

A red weather warning has been issued in north east Scotland from midnight, while amber and yellow warnings are in place across the UK on Friday. In England, homes have been flooded, train services have

been cancelled and roads and schools have been closed. A holiday jet skidded off a runway as it came in to land at

Leeds Bradford airport amid wet and windy conditions. It is a similar story in Wales, with flooding also closing

schools and causing travel problems. Yousaf said the public must heed whatever official advice was given, especially if they were asked to evacuate from

their homes. He gave assurances that those who had to leave their homes

would be taken care of during the weather warning. On Thursday, the residents of the Angus town of Brechin were asked to evacuate ahead of the red weather warning. (KUNA)

KYIV: At least two civilians were killed and others wounded across Ukraine as Russian forces continued to shell frontline areas and other parts of the country, local Ukrainian officials

In Kryvyi Rih, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's hometown in central Ukraine, a 60-year-old man died on Friday evening when a Russian missile slammed into an industrial facility, according to Telegram posts by Mayor Oleksandr Vilkul. Vilkul added that the man's wife was hospitalized with serious shrapnel wounds.

Early on Saturday, Vilkul reported that Russian missiles and drones overnight hit the same site again, causing unspecified damage and sparking a fire that was put out by morning. Vilkul did not elaborate on the site's nature or whether it was linked to Ukraine's war effort. He said nobody was hurt in the second strike.

Hours later, Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov told reporters that Russian forces destroyed the Ukrainian military's fuel and ammunition depots near Kryvyi Rih's local airport. (AP)

TORONTO: Canada has recalled 41 of its diplomats from India after the Indian government said it would revoke their diplomatic immunity, the foreign minister said Thursday, in an escalation of their dispute over the slaying of a Sikh separatist in Canada.

The moves come after Canada's allegations that India may have been involved in the June killing of Canadian citizen Hardeep Singh Nijjar in suburban Vancouver. India has accused Canada of harboring separatists and "terrorists," but dismissed the allegation of its involvement in the killing as "absurd" and has taken diplomatic steps to express its anger over the accusation.

Foreign Minister **Mélanie Joly** said Thursday that 41 of Canada's 62 diplomats in India have been removed, along with their dependents. Joly said exceptions have been made for 21 Canadian diplomats who will remain in India. (AP)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China have reiterated the resolve to move forward together on the path of development, and accelerate the building of an even closer Pak-China Community with a Shared Future in the new era after the completion of Pakistan's caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq **Kakar**'s visit to **China**.

A joint statement issued after the completion of the visit on Friday said that the two sides reaffirmed their support for each other on issues concerning their respective core interests and major concerns.

During the visit, the two sides signed 20 agreements and MoUs, covering cooperation on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), infrastructure, mining, industry, green and low-carbon development, health, space cooperation, digital economy, development cooperation and export of agricultural products to China. (KUNA)

ISLAMABAD: At least six "terrorists" including a high value target and three soldiers of Pakistan army were killed in a security operation in Pakistan's northern tribal district bordering Afghanistan, said military on Thursday

According to Pakistan military's media wing Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), six terrorists including a high value target named Hazrat Zaman alias Khawarey Mullah have been killed by security forces in an operation at general area of Gharyoum in North Waziristan tribal district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

It further said that the ringleader was actively involved in multiple terrorist activities in the area and was highly wanted by the law enforcement agencies. (KUNA)

Kuwait deeply affected by killing of civilians in Gaza: Crown Prince

Calls for ceasefire intensify as aid trickles in

CAIRO, Oct 21, (Agencies): Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah said that Kuwait was deeply affected by the Israeli occupation forces killing of the innocent in the Gaza Strip.

In his speech to the Cairo Summit for Peace, Saturday, His Highness said that the

continuous air raids killed thousands of men, women and children and cut off electricity, water, food and fuel, while also imposing forced displacement of the people of Gaza Strip.

This humanitarian crisis is caused by the lack of efforts by the international community to resolve the issue and bring violence to an end, said His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, adding that the international community has double-standards when it comes to dealing with Israeli occupation force's violations.



This image provided by the U.S. Navy shows the USS Carney in the Mediterranean Sea on Oct. 23, 2018. The USS Carney, a Navy destroyer, on Thursday, Oct. 19, 2023, took out three missiles that had been fired from Yemen and were heading north, U.S. officials said. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military operations not yet announced. (AP)

Military shoots down missiles, drones

US forces face growing threats in Mideast

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): With tensions spiking in the Middle East, U.S. forces in the region are facing increasing threats, as a Navy warship shot down missiles appearing to head toward Israel Thursday and American bases in Iraq and Syria were repeatedly targeted by drone

The USS Carney, a Navy destroyer in the northern Red Sea, intercepted three land attack cruise missiles and several drones that were launched by Houthi forces in Yemen. The action by the Carney potentially represented the first shots by the U.S. military in the defense of Israel in this conflict.

Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder, Pentagon press secretary, told reporters the missiles were "potentially" headed toward Israel but said the U.S. hasn't finished its assessment of what they were targeting.

A U.S. official said they don't believe the missiles - which were shot down over the water - were aimed at the U.S. warship. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military operations that had not vet been announced.

But an array of other drone attacks over the past three days did target U.S. bases, including one in southern Syria on Thursday that caused minor injuries. The rash of violence comes in the wake of an

explosion at a Gaza hospital that killed hundreds of people, triggering protests in a number of Muslim nations. The Israeli military has relentlessly attacked Gaza in retaliation for the devastating Hamas rampage in southern Israel almost two weeks ago, but Israel has denied responsibility for the al-Ahli hospital blast and the U.S. has said its intelligence assessment found that Tel Aviv was not to blame.

In recent days, however, a number of militant groups across the region - from Hezbolla to the Houthis - have expressed support for the Palestinians and threatened Israel. Since Tuesday, milithe mission to counter the Islamic State group.

and the West that the war in Israel could expand into a larger regional conflict.

tants have launched at least four drone attacks on U.S. military installations in Iraq and Syria where U.S. troops train local defense forces and support The attacks fuel escalating worries in the U.S.

"That's exactly what we are trying to pre-

The most recent drone attack was Thursday at al-Asad Air Base in western Iraq. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq posted a statement claiming responsibility for the attack, saying they had fired a salvo of rockets at the base and "they hit their targets directly and precisely." A U.S. official confirmed the latest attack but said it was

too early to assess any impact. Also Thursday, the al-Tanf garrison in southeastern Syria was struck by drones. U.S. troops have maintained a presence at the base for a number of years to train Syrian allies and monitor Islamic State militant activity.

The Pentagon said one drone was shot down, but another hit the base and caused minor injuries. The garrison is located on a vital road that often used by Iranian-backed militants to ferry weapons to Hezbollah in southern Lebanon - and

Attack

Israel's doorstep.

Syrian opposition activists also said there was a separate drone attack on an oil facility in eastern Syria that houses American troops. Omar Abu Layla, a Europe-based activist who heads the Deir Ezzor 24 media outlet, said three drones with explosives struck the Conoco gas field in the eastern province of Deir el-Zour that borders Iraq. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition war monitor, also confirmed explosions at the site.

On Tuesday, militants launched three drones against two Iraq bases that the U.S. uses to train forces and conduct operations against the Islamic States. During the spate of launches, one warning turned out to be a false alarm at al-Asad, but it sent personnel rushing into bunkers. During that incident, a contractor suffered a cardiac arrest and died, Ryder said.

He said the Pentagon does not yet have confirmation on who launched the drone attacks but said the U.S. "will take all necessary actions to defend U.S. and coalition forces against any threat." He said any military response would come "at a time and a manner of our choosing."

On the intercepts by the Carney, Ryder said the strikes were done because the Houthi missiles "posed a potential threat" based on their flight profile. He added that the U.S. is prepared to do whatever is needed "to protect our partners and our interests in this important region." He said the U.S. is still assessing what the target was, but said no U.S. forces or civilians on the ground were injured.

Iranian-backed Houthi rebels have expressed support for the Palestinians and threatened Israel. Last week, in Yemen's Sanaa, which is held by the Houthi rebels still at war with a Saudiled coalition, demonstrators crowded the streets waving Yemeni and Palestinian flags. The rebels' slogan long has been, "God is the greatest; death to America; death to Israel; curse of the Jews; victory to Islam."

Last week, Abdel-Malek al-Houthi, the rebel group's leader, warned the United States against intervening in the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, threatening that his forces would retaliate by firing drones and missiles.

When approached Thursday, two Houthi officials declined to comment on the incident. One said he was unaware of the incident, while the second said he did not have the authority to speak about it.

Day by Day

THE deceitful person has now realized that his falsifications cannot deceive God's creation, and he will soon face the legal consequences for his thefts from homes he had been entrusted with, violating the sacred bond of trust.

The one who stole planes and homes will see that the forbidden food he has swallowed will become difficult to digest, his countenance will become pale, his organs, including the liver and intestines, will rebel against the ill-gotten spoils, and his children will come to recognize that their father, the

thief, cannot deceive them any longer. As for the cardiologist who, driven by greed, fell for the vile person's lies, he too shall face the consequences of his actions. Such is the unfolding of life's inexorable

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

this displacement. He noted that Kuwait and its people would continue to support Palestinians and their rights of an independent country, with the borderlines of the June 1967 agreement. His Highness added that peace

He renewed Kuwait's con-

demnation of Israel's war crimes,

calling on the international com-

munity to take serious action to

immediately end the attacks and

protect civilians. His Highness

also called for opening safe pas-

sages to deliver humanitarian aid

Meanwhile, His Highness the

Crown Prince affirmed Kuwait's

refusal to any attempts of forced displacement, or putting more

pressure on neighboring coun-

tries to deal with the impact of

to the people of Gaza.

is the only solution for the crisis, underlining the need to commit to the terms of international laws and conventions related to the issue, as well as the Arab Peace Initiative. Jordan's King Abdullah II on

Saturday called for an immediate end to the war on Gaza and to protect civilians, describing the relentless bombing campaign as a war crime, a collective punishment of a besieged and helpless people and flagrant violation of international humanitarian law.

This came during his speech during the Cairo Summit for Peace, hosted by Egypt as part of efforts to stop the war on Gaza. with the participation of world leaders and heads of Arab and international delegations.

"The bloodshed we are witnessing today is the price of failing to make tangible progress towards a political horizon that brings peace for Palestinians and Israelis alike," the King said, adding "this conflict did not start two weeks ago, and it will not stop if we continue down this blood path".

He said that the deeper the crisis cuts of cruelty, the less the world seems to care, noting "the only path to a safe and secure future for the people of the Middle East and the entire world starts with the belief that every human life is of equal value and it ends with two states, Palestine and Israel, sharing land and peace from the river to the sea".

The Israeli leadership must realize that there is no military solution to its security concerns and that it cannot continue to sideline the five million Palestinians living under its occupation, and that "a state can never thrive if it is built on the foundations of injustice", he added.

The King reaffirmed the unequivocal rejection of the forced displacement or internal displacement of Palestinians, describing it as a war crime according to international law, "and a red line for all of us".

He stressed the need for sustained and uninterrupted delivery of humanitarian aid, fuel, food, and medicine to the Gaza Strip.

The King noted that it has been two weeks since the siege on Gaza amidst international silence and warned that this catastrophe must come to an end, adding "our collective and unified message to the Israeli people should be: We want a future of peace and security for you and for the Palestinians, where your children and

Continued on Page 3



Pause on normalization with Israel will buy Saudi time

Bid to 'de-risk' region have taken a hit with Gaza violence

By Kristian Coates Ulrichsen

Rice University

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

 \mathbf{S} audi Arabia and Israel had seemingly been edging closer to a landmark deal to normalize their diplomatic relations - and then the Hamas attack on Oct. 7, 2023, happened.

Since then, thousands have died in Gaza and in Israel. And fears of the conflict spreading across the region form the backdrop to frenzied diplomacy across the region, including a visit to Israel by U.S. President Joe Biden on Oct. 18.

It also threatens to undermine a key pillar of Saudi Arabia's foreign and domestic agenda: the "de-risking" of the region. With Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman set on implementing "Vision 2030" - an ambitious economic, social and cultural program - and developing the kingdom as a destination for tourism and investment, a renewal of regional instability is the last thing the crown prince needs.

Certainly, the escalating violence in the Middle East presents a challenge to the shift toward de-escalation of tensions across much of the broader region in recent years.

This has included the signing of the Abraham Accords in 2020, which established diplomatic relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco. But it goes further, including multiple-state treaties that have healed rifts across the Gulf, culminating in the signing of a deal in March 2023 to restore Saudi-Iranian relations.

These diplomatic breakthroughs opened up a space for greater regional cooperation through initiatives such as the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor unveiled at the G20 meeting in India in September 2023.

The hope of officials across the region was that economic development could integrate the region and move discussion away from the failure to make progress on resolving the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

Violence in Israel and Gaza threatens to knock Gulf states off a delicate balancing act of supporting the Palestinian cause in front of their largely Muslim populations while also making overtures to Israel and the U.S.

Qatar, for example, has long hosted the political leaders of Hamas while remaining on friendly terms with the U.S.. It will now likely face significant Israeli and U.S. pressure to expel Hamas leadership.

The UAE and Bahrain both normalized relations with Israel in 2020, along with Morocco. But public support for the Abraham Accords across the region was always lukewarm at best and may now dwindle away

Meanwhile, Dubai, the UAE's largest city, is gearing up to host COP28, the international climate change conference, starting Nov. 30. The UAE will not want the event overshadowed or put at risk by a new regional war.

But nowhere is the tightrope more delicate than in Saudi Arabia. This is by virtue of the kingdom's religious standing in the Islamic world - it is custodian of the faith's two most holy sites, Makkah and Madinah - and the ambitious raft of economic reforms the kingdom has rolled out as part of Vision 2030.

The campaign for Palestinian statehood has long been a cause célèbre in the Muslim world, and the current king of Saudi Arabia, Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, has been a staunch supporter of Palestine all his life.

But his son and heir, the crown prince, has increasingly shown an interest in dialogue with Israel. This has culminated in the talks to "normalize" relations between the two countries - something that would represent a historic breakthrough in Israel's acceptance within the Arab and Islamic world. As recently as Sept. 20, Crown Prince Mohammed told Fox News that "every day, we get closer" to a deal.

Indeed, a series of leaks to U.S. media in the days and weeks prior to the Hamas attack suggested that the outlines of an agreement were taking shape, driven by the Biden administration.

But the Hamas attack and Israel's response have punctured this momentum. Saudi sources briefed the media on Oct. 13 that talks on normalization had been paused - but not abandoned.

Such messaging is in line with Saudi attempts to balance domestic and external interests. An initial Saudi Foreign Ministry statement on Oct. 7 appealed to both the "Palestinian factions" and "Israeli occupation forces" to de-escalate. But at the first Friday prayer at the Grand Mosque in Makkah after the attacks, Saudi authorities were more forthcoming in taking sides, with the state-appointed cleric urging support for "our brothers in Palestine."

Behind the public shows of support for Palestinians, there is evidence that Saudis are trying to spearhead diplomatic efforts to prevent the war between Israel ad Hamas from developing into a wider conflagration that might bring in Lebanon, Iran and others.

On Oct. 12, Crown Prince Mohammed discussed the unfolding developments in Israel and Gaza with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi - their first conversation since ties between the two countries were restored in March.

Three days later, the crown prince received U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Riyadh amid media reports of differences between the Saudi and U.S. positions on the conflict and the need for de-escalation.

Such diplomatic moves fall in line with the crown prince's desire to "derisk" the region. He is eager to see that nothing jeopardizes a series of "gigaprojects" - such as Neom, the futuristic new city on the Red Sea coastline that have become synonymous with Vision 2030.

The Saudi fear is that a prolonged or regional conflict will deter foreign investment in Vision 2030.

Vision 2030 has become so bound up with Crown Prince Mohammed's pledge to transform Saudi Arabia that he cannot afford for it to fail - hence his determination to reduce sources of regional tension, including with Iran.

Saudi officials also recently revised their plans to attract 100 million visitors a year by 2030 upward to 150 million and launched a bid to host the 2034 FIFA World Cup. Underlying these initiatives is the Saudis' desire to diversify the king-

dom's economy away from an overdependence on oil, turning the kingdom into a destination for capital and people alike. These ambitions would be endangered by another regional war in the Middle East - especially if it drew So where does the "normalization" of Saudi-Israeli relations go from here?

Putting the process on ice - for now - fits Crown Prince Mohammed's careful balancing act. Proceeding at full speed would have risked blowback from other Arab and Middle Eastern states, undermining the process of "de-

It also may provide Saudi Arabia with greater leverage - Israel and the U.S. will be keen that the current violence does not derail the process entirely.

So pausing the process, I argue, now makes tactical sense for Saudi Arabia, given the outpouring of anger in the Islamic world at developments in Gaza - and it provides the Saudi leadership with an opportunity to control the next phase of what remains an extremely delicate endeavor. (AP)



Trucks of Egyptian Red Crecent carrying humanitarian aid for the Gaza Strip cross the Rafah border gate, in Rafah, Egypt, Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023. (AP)

Injecting cash into an economy completely cut off from the world would only stoke inflation

Delivering humanitarian aid in war zone a logistical nightmare

By Topher L. McDougal University of San Diego

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

The 2.2 million people who live in Gaza are facing economic isolation and experiencing incessant bombardment. Their supplies of essential re-

sources, including food and water, are quickly dwindling In response, U.S. President Joe Biden has pledged US\$100 million in hu-

manitarian assistance for the citizens of Gaza. As a scholar of peace and conflict economics who served as a World Bank consultant during the 2014 war between Hamas and Israel, I believe that Biden's promise raises fundamental questions regarding the delivery of humanitarian aid in a war zone. Political constraints, ethical quandaries and the need to protect the security of aid workers and local communities always make it a logistical nightmare.

In this specific predicament, U.S. officials have to choose a strategy to deliver the aid without the perception of benefiting Hamas, a group the U.S. and Israel both classify as a terrorist organization.

When aiding people in war zones, you can't just send money, a development strategy called "cash transfers" that has become increasingly popular due to its efficiency. Sending money can boost the supply of locally produced goods and services and help people on the ground pay for what they need most. But injecting cash into an economy so completely cut off from the world would only stoke inflation.

So the aid must consist of goods that have to be brought into Gaza, and services provided by people working as part of an aid mission. Humanitarian aid can include food and water; health, sanitation and hygiene supplies and services; and tents and other materials for shelter and settlement.

Due to the closure of the border with Israel, aid can arrive in Gaza only via the Rafah crossing on the Egyptian border.

The U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID, will likely

turn to its longtime partner on the ground, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, or UNRWA, to serve as supply depots and distribute goods. That agency, originally founded in 1949 as a temporary measure until a twostate solution could be found, serves in effect as a parallel yet unelected

government for Palestinian refugees. USAID will likely want to tap into UNRWA's network of 284 schools many of which are now transformed into humanitarian shelters housing twothirds of the estimated 1 million people displaced by Israeli airstrikes - and 22 hospitals to expedite distribution.

Prior to the Trump administration, the U.S. was typically the largest single provider of aid to the West Bank and Gaza. USAID administers the lion's

Since Biden took office, total yearly U.S. assistance for the Palestinian territories has totaled around \$150 million, restored from just \$8 million in 2020 under the Trump administration. During the Obama administration, however, the U.S. was providing more aid to the territories than it is now, with \$1 billion disbursed in the 2013 fiscal year.

But the White House needs Congress to approve this assistance - a process that requires the House of Representatives to elect a new speaker and then for lawmakers to approve aid to Gaza once that happens.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency is a U.N. organization. It's not run by Hamas, unlike, for instance, the Gaza Ministry of Health. However, Hamas has frequently undermined UNRWA's efforts and diverted international aid for military purposes.

Hamas has repeatedly used UNRWA schools as rocket depots. They have repeatedly tunneled beneath UNRWA schools. They have dismantled European Union-funded water pipes to use as rocket fuselages. And even since the most recent violence broke out, the UNRWA has accused Hamas of stealing fuel and food from its Gaza premises.

Humanitarian aid professionals regularly have to contend with these tradeoffs when deciding to what extent they can work with governments and local authorities that commit violent acts. They need to do so in exchange for the access required to help civilians under their control.

Similarly, Biden has had to make concessions to Israel while brokering for

the freedom to send humanitarian aid to Gaza. For example, he has assured

Israel that if any of the aid is diverted by Hamas, the operation will cease. This promise may have been politically necessary. But if Biden already believes Hamas to be uncaring about civilian welfare, he may not expect the group to refrain from taking what they can.

What can be done to protect the security of humanitarian aid operations that take place in the midst of dangerous conflicts?

Under International Humanitarian Law, local authorities have the primary responsibility for ensuring the delivery of aid - even when they aren't carrying out that task. To increase the chances that the local authorities will not attack them, aid groups can give "humanitarian notification" and voluntarily alert the local government as to where they will be operating.

Hamas has repeatedly flouted international norms and laws. So the question of if and how the aid convoy will be protected looms large.

Under the current agreement between the U.S., Israel and Egypt, the convoy will raise the U.N. flag. International inspectors will make sure no weapons are on board the vehicles before crossing over from Arish, Egypt, to Rafah, a city located on the Gaza Strip's border with Egypt.

The aid convoy will likely cross without militarized security. This puts it at some danger of diversion once inside Gaza. But whether the aid convoy is attacked, seized or left alone, the Biden administration will have demonstrated its willingness to attempt a humanitarian relief operation. In this sense, a relatively small first convoy bearing water, medical supplies and food, among other items, serves as a test balloon for a sustained operation to follow soon after.

If the U.S. were to provide the humanitarian convoy a military escort, by contrast, Hamas could see its presence as a provocation. Washington's support for Israel is so strong that the U.S. could potentially be judged as a party in the conflict between Israel and Hamas.

In that case, the presence of U.S. armed forces might provoke attacks on Gaza-bound aid convoys by Hamas and Islamic jihad fighters that otherwise would not have occurred. Combined with the mobilization of two U.S. Navy carrier groups in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, I'd be concerned that such a move might also stoke regional anger. It would undermine the Biden administration's attempts to cool the situation. (AP)

editor's choice



Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

By Day: Rather hot and partly cloudy to cloudy with light to moderate northerly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h. Weather

By Night: Mild and partly cloudy with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h. Station Max Exp Min Rec **Kuwait City**

Kuwait Airport Abdaly 36 25 Jahra Salmiyah Nuwaisib 39 Wafra

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

Financial fraud uncovered in ports authority

Fraudster, aides nabbed for swindling scores via social media

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Criminal Security Sector, through the Cybercrime Department within the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation, successfully cracked the codes of a renowned electronic fraud expert operating within the country, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The culprit and his associates were engaged in a common forgery scheme involving mobile phone number contracts. They registered these numbers under false names and subsequently communicated with their victims through

They deceptively lured people by creating fake commercial profiles offering items such as concert tickets, then sent them fraudulent bank links, ultimately swindling them of their money.

Following extensive search and investigative efforts, it became evident that the perpetrator had duped multiple individuals into establishing bank connections on his behalf in exchange for a commission. Additionally, he exploited individuals with special needs by blackmailing them and, in collaboration with his partners, purchasing phone lines under the identities of others.

After confirming this information, the necessary legal authorization was obtained, and a meticulous operation was set in motion, culminating in the perpetrator's apprehension.

Upon searching his person, authorities discovered over 75 mobile phone lines and five devices for managing fraudulent accounts.

It was revealed that other members of this network were wanted in connection with 22 cases of a similar nature. The accused, along with all of his accomplices and the confiscated items, are being handed over to the appropriate authorities to initiate the requisite legal actions against them.

Cash fraud uncovered in KPA: The Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Communications Affairs Fahd Al-Shuala, has issued a ministerial decree mandating the establishment of an investigation committee with the primary purpose to scrutinize a case of financial fraud, specifically in the disbursement of allowances, within the Kuwait Ports Authority.

The decision to form this committee was made in response to a formal request from the Audit Bureau.

Al-Shoula has appointed a group of advisors who will be responsible for leading the committee's investigation and ensuring that all necessary actions are taken in response to the Audit Bureau's request.

'Check who's taking donations': The Ministry of Social Affairs has issued a cautionary statement to both citizens and residents, urging them to refrain from providing financial contributions to unknown individuals or entities lacking official licenses.

Instead, the Ministry emphasizes that donations should exclusively be channeled towards credible charity organizations which are registered with the Ministry, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a press release, the Ministry underscores the importance of verifying the identity of the fundraiser and their association with authorized parties permitted to solicit donations.

It further underscores that monetary contributions should not be made in cash but rather through approved avenues for donation collection, such as K-Net, bank deductions, electronic payment links, and electronic payment de-

Additionally, the Ministry issues a stern warning against those raising funds without obtaining prior authorization from the relevant administrative bodies. This is vital to prevent legal consequences and ensure compliance with the legislation governing the collection of funds for public causes.

Minister Al-Shuala to 'sponsor' opening ceremony of 10th e-govt forum EGOV10

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The opening ceremony of the 10th e-Government Forum (EGOV10) kicks off today at 6:30 p.m. under the patronage and participation of His Excellency Mr. Fahad Ali Zaied Al-Shuala, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Communications Affairs. EGOV10 convenes in cooperation with the Central Agency for Information Technology.

Dr. Ammar Al-Hus-

saini

This occasion, Dr. Ammar Al-Hussaini, Director General of the Central Agency for Information Technology, said, "We look forward to EGOV10 to support CAIT's digital transformation plans. At this stage, we are adopting the Cloud to connect all government information centers with homogeneous and effective computer infrastructuresupporting our digital transformation plans. A CAIT expertwill introduce CAIT's strategy regarding Cloud Computing in the State of Kuwait." Engineer Bader Al-

Salman

Eng. Bader Al-Salman, Chairman of the Federation of Engineering Offices and Consulting Houses, welcomed the holding of EGOV10 and said, "We extend our thanks and appreciation on this occasion



Fahad Al-Shuala

to His Excellency Brother Fahd Ali Zayed Al-Shula, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Communications Affairs, for sponsoring the forum and attending the opening ceremony. Wealso thank Brother Dr. Ammar Al-Hussaini, Acting Director General of the Central Agency for Information Technology, for supporting EGOV10and allocating a team to help prepare for the event. We hope that EGOV10 will achieve its goals, especially if it coincides with CAIT and Kuwait's Cloud and Kuwait digital transformation

EGOV10 Objectives

EGOV10 aims to keep pace with the State of Kuwait and the Central Agency for Information Technology's strategic



Dr Ammar Al-Hussaini

direction towards adopting cloud computing to develop the information infrastructure, support programs e-government and engage in a world governed by advanced technologies.The also provides an ideal opportunity to discuss all challenges and develop available solutions to contribute to the transition toward Cloud computing.

Acknowledgement

KFEOCH and Razen Events concluded by thanking all the organizations that contributed to EGOV10, particularly the strategic government partner, the Central Agency for Information Technology. They also extended thanks to EGOV10 sponsors. They said, "We highly value and appreciate our Platinum



sponsors Burgan Bank, Kuwait Finance House, Zain Kuwait, and solutions by stc.We also extend our thanks to our Gold sponsors, Amazon Web Services and CISCO Kuwait." EGOV10 organizers also extended their thanks to the participating organizations: Automated Systems Company (ASC), Ministry of Finance, Kuwait Fire Force, Kuwait Municipality, Ministry of Justice, General Secretariat for the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, Public Authority for Civil Information, and the Public Authority for Housing

finally Organizers thankedall participating technology experts and the media and press covering this unique technology

Welfare.

Special session on cards to discuss Israel Gaza attacks

Tel Aviv boycott hot on agenda

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Regarding the intended grilling motion announced by MP Abdul Kareem Al-Kandari for the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Al Sabah and the calls that urge to refuse receiving the new US Ambassador to Kuwait Karen Sasahara, the constitutional expert Professor Ibrahim Al-Hamoud clarified that this matter cannot be part of any grilling motion, as it violates the constitution, and the rulings of the Administrative and Constitutional courts.

Prof. Al-Hamoud stressed that the action of receiving ambassadors is part of the sovereign actions that do not fall under the parliamentary or judiciary oversight, highlighting that Kuwait is a part of the Vienna Convention of Diplomatic Relations.

Meanwhile, during the demonstration organized at Al-Erada Square on Friday evening to express support for the Palestinian people, MP Hani Shams disclosed that the preparations are ongoing to hold a special session to discuss the Israeli attacks on Gaza.

He revealed that the draft bill aimed at amending law No. 21/1964 related to boycotting Israel and imposing tough penalties against the violators is being finalised and will be scheduled to be discussed during the special ses-



Abdullah Al-Harbi

Kuwait lauds UN efforts

All nations must apply rule of law UN's goals is to create the conditions

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait reiterated its full support for UN efforts to promote the rule of law principle, which pushes forward all national, regional and international prosperous world.

This came in a speech delivered by Kuwait's Diplomatic Attaché Abdullah Al-Harbi late Thursday during a meeting of the Sixth Committee of the UN General Assembly on the rule of law principles at both national and international levels.

He stressed that it is incumbent upon all countries to apply the rule of law, and that the common understanding of this principle should be based on compliance with international charters, laws and norms.

He added that the rule of law is a well-established concept in the UN Charter which states that one of the

'PAHW refused West Hadiya, lies in Burgan field'

for attaining justice and respecting commitments enshrined in treaties. The Kuwaiti diplomat underlined

that the significance of the rule of law at the local level reflects th communities that are ruled by constitutions and laws that ensure equality, justice, respect of human rights and enact national laws that meet relevant international commitments.

In this context, he pointed out the Kuwaiti Constitution that has established institutional action and promoted democracy, freedoms and civil rights as well separation of powers.

However, the Kuwaiti diplomat lashed out at the using of double standards in addressing serious violations of people's self-determination right, citing response to the Israeli occupation's recent aggression on the Gaza

Kuwait deeply

Continued from Page 1

Palestinian children should no longer

"It is our duty as the international community to do whatever it takes to restart a meaningful political process that can take us to a just and sustainable peace on the basis of the two-state solution", he concluded.

On his part, Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa stressed in his speech, during the summit, that the suffering of Palestinians underlines the urgent need to contain the crisis, calling for stopping the military escalation and providing protection for civilians on both sides

King Hamad said that there will be no stability in the Middle East without securing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and achieving just comprehensive and sustainable peace in the region.

He confirmed Bahrain's firm position in support of the legitimate rights of Palestinian people to establish their independent sovereign state, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with the two-state solution and UN

resolutions. Bahrain has made its strategic choice for peace to achieve greater security and stability in its call for the peaceful approach as the only way to settle disputes and provide opportunities for security, development and prosperity

for the region, said King Hamad. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres Saturday stressed the necessity of ceasefire in the Gaza Strip for humanitarian reasons.

Speaking at Cairo Summit for Peace, Guterres said while focusing on ending the bloodshed, a two-state solution must not be ignored as it the only real basis for peace and stabil-

He said that the grievances of the Palestinian people are legitimate and long, but nothing can justify the reprehensible assault by Hamas that terrorized Israeli civilians. At the same time, these abhorrent attacks can never justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.

He elaborated that he observed a humanitarian disaster during his visit to Rafah crossing border yesterday.

Guterres noted that hundreds of trucks "teeming with food and other essential supplies" were on the Egyptian side while across the border, two million people in were going without water, food, fuel, electricity and medi-

The people of Gaza need constant humanitarian to meet their needs, he said, stressing that the UN should work constantly with all parties to achieve this goal.

He stressed that the near-term goals must be clear, repeating his call for immediate, unrestricted and sustained humanitarian aid to Gaza, the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages by Hamas, and a humanitarian ceasefire now.

The UN chief called for respecting international humanitarian law, including the Geneva conventions, and protecting civilians and not targeting hospitals, schools and the UN premises that are currently sheltering half a million people

He also called for the immediate and unconditioned release of all hostages, and making sincere, urgent efforts to

prevent the spread of violence. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas stressed that peace and security can be achieved only by implementing the two-state solution and resolving the refugee issue based on United Nations Resolution 194.

This came during his speech before the Cairo Peace Summit that kicked started Saturday in Cairo.

Abbas said that the meeting being held today in extremely difficult and cruel circumstances, as the defenseless Palestinian people face brutal and barbaric aggression by the Israeli war machine, which violates prohibitions and international humanitarian law by targeting thousands of civilians.

The President condemned Israel's "barbaric aggression" on Gaza Strip, calling for an immediate halt to the aggression and opening humanitarian corridors to allow food, medicine and other necessities into the besieged Gaza Strip, warning against attempts to displace the Palestinian people in Gaza out of it, and against the continuation of occupation forces' attacks against defenseless civilians in the West Bank and Jerusalem, and attacks by extremist groups on Islamic and

Christian sanctities.
Abbas stated, "We have called from day one to stop this barbaric aggression immediately, to open humanitarian corridors to bring in relief and medical supplies, and to provide water and electricity, but the Israeli occupation government did not allow

He called on the for the Security Council to assume its responsibilities to protect the Palestinian people, for the State of Palestine to gain full membership, for the rest of the world to recognize the State of Palestine, and to convene an international peace conference under international sponsorship to achieve the desired goal of peace.

Elsewhere, the border crossing between Egypt and Gaza opened on Saturday to let a trickle of desperately needed aid into the besieged Palestinian territory for the first time since Israel sealed it off in the wake of Hamas' bloody rampage two weeks ago.

Just 20 trucks were allowed in, an amount that aid workers said was insufficient to address the unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Gaza. More than 200 trucks carrying roughly 3,000 tons of aid have been positioned near the crossing for days.

Gaza's 2.3 million Palestinians, half of whom have fled their homes, are rationing food and drinking dirty water. Hospitals say they are running low on medical supplies and fuel for emergency generators amid a territory-wide power blackout. Israel is still launching waves of airstrikes across Gaza that have destroyed entire neighborhoods, as Palestinian militants fire rocket barrages into Israel.

The opening came after more than a week of high-level diplomacy by various mediators, including visits to the region by U.S. President Joe Biden and U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Israel had insisted that nothing would enter Gaza until Hamas released all of the captives from its attack, and the Palestinian side of the crossing had been shut down by Israeli airstrikes.

"The situation is catastrophic in Gaza," the head of the U.N.'s World Food Program, Cindy McCain, told The Associated Press. "We need many, many, many more trucks and a continual flow of aid," she said, adding that some 400 trucks were entering Gaza daily before the war.

The Hamas-run government in Gaza also said the limited convoy "will not be able to change the humanitarian catastrophe," calling for a secure corridor operating around the clock.

Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, an Israeli military spokesman, said "the humanitarian situation in Gaza is under control." He said the aid would be delivered only to southern Gaza, where the army has ordered people to relocate, adding that no fuel would enter the ter-

Guterres meanwhile gave voice to growing international concern over civilians in Gaza, telling a summit in Cairo that Hamas' "reprehensible assault" on Israel two weeks ago "can never justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Kuwait Mu-

nicipality has refused to hand over to the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) the West Hadiya site, which contains plans for 4,000 housing units, the reason being it is located within the Burgan field. In a letter sent to PAHW, the mu-

By Abdul Nasser Al-Aslami

Al-Seyassah Staff

nicipality stated that the site could not be approved because it is located within the boundaries of the Burgan

field and it conflicts with the northern tank farm, gravity lines (oil), gas lines, communications station, and cathodic cables belonging to the Ministry of Oil. The site also includes the Oil Facilities Protection Department's building, Ahmadi Center, and the Antiquities Department's building of the Ministry of Interior, as well as the sectors of the Martyrs' Reforestation Project, affiliated with the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR).

The site contains sewage lines for Al-

Dhahr residential area, and treated water lines implemented on the site, as well as medium voltage services and overhead lines, high-pressure lines, tanks and oil transportation lines. They are affected by odors resulting from the Ahmadi slaughterhouse and Raqqa wastewater purification and treatment plant.

The municipality affirmed that the site is considered an extension of the geological structure of Al-Dhahr area.

It highlighted the possibility of the same problem occurring in Al-Dhahr

'2 road repair projects valid'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: In an official communication addressed to the Audit Bureau, the Ministry of Public Works has affirmed the validity of the procedures followed in the proposal and awarding of two road maintenance projects in the Jahra and Hawalli governorates, reports Al-Rai daily.

Meanwhile, Dr. Bougmaz, the Minister of Public Works, has issued a directive to retire 25 employees who hold supervisory positions within the ministry, including assistant undersecretaries on assignment, effective November 30. Informed ministry sources have informed the daily that this retirement decision came following the completion of the practical service period for these employees. The move is aimed at creating opportunities for emerging talent to assume leadership roles and leverage their vigor for the

greater good.



diwaniya وانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Correctional institutions ... a significant shift towards rehabilitation'

"HISTORICALLY, prior to 1955, Kuwaiti prisons lacked organized regulations aimed at disciplining or deterring lawbreakers. Furthermore, there were no separate facilities for women or juveniles. As the population grew and society evolved, there emerged a pressing need to modernize the prison system, establish distinct laws, and regulations," columnist **Naif Sunihit Sharar** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"The objective was to transform prisons into institutions that could rehabilitate, educate, and refine those who had transgressed the law, ultimately reintegrating them as productive, law-

abiding citizens.

"More recently, detainees within the Central Prison have been grappling with severe overcrowding and perilous conditions. This dire situation is primarily attributed to the inadequacy of regulatory frameworks and laws governing correctional institutions.

"To mitigate the detrimental consequences of the current environment, detainees should be categorized based on predefined criteria following comprehensive psychological assessments. Their rights, barring exceptional circumstances, must remain intact, safeguarding their physical well-being and dignity.

"Detainees should also be allowed access to communication tools, with expenses borne by the correctional facility. Additionally, the establishment of vocational or trade-based prisons is crucial to prepare inmates for reentry into the job market post-incarceration, aligning with the vision of a "New Kuwait."

"To ensure the welfare of detainees, comprehensive medical units should be integrated into correctional institutions, upholding their right to healthcare. Furthermore, an educational institution should be established to elevate the educational levels of those who wish to pursue further academic endeavors.

"The detainee's medical records should comprehensively document their

physical, mental, and psychological condition to facilitate appropriate classification within correctional facilities, ensuring that those with medical needs are separated from the general population while considering their family and social circumstances.

"It is imperative that the objectives of correctional and disciplinary centers be clearly defined and kept distinct from other penitentiaries, especially for the benefit of juveniles. Detainees must not be deprived of their right to stay informed about current affairs, allowing them access to newspapers, books, and media.

"This commitment to information access is vital in preserving freedom of thought, complemented by modern electronic surveillance methods that facilitate oversight and inspection.

"The evolution of prisons into correctional institutions signifies a significant shift towards rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates into society. It is accompanied by a reduction in punitive measures that deprive individuals of their freedom and undermine their dignity. Instead, these measures can be replaced with alternatives such as travel restrictions, limitations on holding leadership positions, or temporary suspension of the right to run for office, while still enabling detainees to participate in elections."

Also:

"Governments and populations are increasingly recognizing the risks associated with the strategies devised by American decision-makers, influenced by Israeli agendas, aimed at fulfilling the aspirations of global Zionism," columnist **Abdullah Khalaf** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

Abdullah Khalaf wrote for Al-Rai daily.

"The future of the outwardly unified but internally divided Arab world appears to be molded by the visions of those who consider themselves 'God's chosen people'. The nation had placed its hopes in the United States to achieve justice, secure its rights, and reclaim what was unjustly taken from it.

"Some superpowers exhibit disregard for international laws, treaties, customs, and human rights, resulting in a series of international crimes perpetrated

against humanity. This has empowered global Zionism to unleash prohibited weapons against various nations.

"During the trial of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, he shed light on contracts he had entered into with the United States, bearing the signature of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. These contracts involved the supply of chemical weapons to Iraq for use in the tragic Halabja massacre against the Iraqi people. Regrettably, such actions were sanctioned by international agreements under the guise of joint contracts.

"The Arab world is acutely aware of the narratives found in books and newspapers, detailing human atrocities and conflicts instigated by foreign rulers and leaders. When French President Charles de Gaulle assumed power, he recognized the extent of corruption that had seeped into various facets of the state apparatus, beginning his reforms with the judiciary, acknowledging that corruption within the judiciary is the pinnacle of misconduct.

"Professor Imran Adham, in his book "American Hypocrisy," tirelessly searches for the truth behind the ongoing crises that have plagued the Arab and Islamic regions. Since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire nearly a century ago, the Arab world has faced a persistent era of setbacks.

"Some leaders who rose to prominence a century ago espoused the cause of "Palestine liberation," yet unjust imprisonments persist without trials or judicial orders.

"It is indeed paradoxical that individuals can transgress divine religious principles with impunity, while political infractions are met with fear and retribu-

tion, causing individuals to forfeit their standing and reputation.

"An American politician once remarked that Arab countries are more affluent but thirstier, though it can also be said that their progress has stagnated over the centuries. Their infrastructure and landmarks remain outdated, and connectivity between these nations is underdeveloped and neglected, much like the conditions before World War I."

— Compiled by Mai Elsoukary

Jail, fine upheld for judges in bribery case

'No more jobs, return cars taken as gifts'

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Nearly two years after it was brought to light, the Court of Cassation brought down the curtain on the case known as 'bribery of judges', and during its session Thursday, headed by Counselor Saleh Al-Muraishid, upheld the ruling issued by the Court of Appeal to imprison and fine 7 judges to varying degrees,

and ordered their removal from their positions and seized the vehicles they had received as gifts, while one judge was acquitted.

The court also ruled to uphold the imprisonment for various periods against others, some of whom were employees, and ordered their dismissal from their jobs, and put behind bars businessmen, in addition to acquitting a number of defendants.

Against the first judge, the Cassation Court upheld the verdict of the lower court and sentenced him to 7 years in prison, imposed a fine of 232,000 dinars, confiscated two vehicles, and cancelled the first-degree ruling (15 years with hard work, a fine of 64,000 dinars,

and acquittal of one of the

charges).

Regarding the second defendant, the court upheld the appeal ruling sentencing him to 7 years in prison, a fine of 674 thousand dinars, and confiscation of two vehicles, and overturned the first-degree ruling (a fine of 5 thousand dinars and acquittal of the charges)

charges).

The same applies to the third accused, as the court upheld the appeal ruling against him of 7 years in prison and the cancellation of the first degree ruling (10 years, a fine of 4,000, and dismissal from the job).

Regarding the fourth defendant, it upheld the appeal ruling, imprisoning him for 7 years and a fine of 170,000 dinars, and canceling the first-degree sentence (7 years with had work, a fine of 50,000, dismissal from the job, and acquittal of one of the charges).

As for the fifth accused, the court ruled to uphold the two appeal rulings and the court of first instance (7 years with hard work, a fine of 30 thousand dinars, dismissal from the job, and acquittal of two charges). The same applies to the sixth accused, as it upheld the two prison sentences (7 years with work, a fine of 109 thousand dinars, and dismissal from the job).

As for the seventh defendant, the court upheld the two appeal rulings, acquitting him of the charges against him. As for the eighth defendant, it upheld the appeal ruling, sentencing him to 7 years in prison, a fine of 55,000 dinars, confiscating a vehicle, and canceling the first-degree ruling (5 years with hard work, a fine of 27,000 dinars, dismissal from the job, and acquittal of some charges).

The Court of Cassation upheld the appeal ruling by canceling the appealed ruling against accused and ordering the court again to abstain from pronouncing the punishment for the accusation against him, provided that he submits a pledge of financial bail of 500 dinars in which he commits to observing good behavior for a period of two years, and upheld the ruling by rejecting the Public Prosecution's appeal of the ruling issued against the accused and upholding the appealed ruling of his acquittal.

of his acquittal.

It also upheld the appeal ruling by amending the sentence and deciding to refrain from pronouncing punishment, provided that he submits a pledge of financial bail of 500 dinars in which he commits to observing good behavior for a period of two years, and to uphold the ruling in his acquittal.



Mol photo

24 held in drugs cases

The Ministry of Interior announced the arrest of 24 people of different nationalities in 16 cases, in possession of about 16 kilograms of various narcotic substances and 10,000 psychotropic pills.

Drug smugglers in police custody

The General Department of Security Relations and Media said in a press release that these seizures come as a continuation of the efforts of the men of the criminal security sector to implement the law, intensify the security presence, and arrest outlaws, promoters and dealers in these poisons, to protect everyone, reports Al-Rai daily.

The department added 80 bottles of imported alcohol, and 3 unlicensed weapons and ammunition were found, along with sums of money resulting from the sale were found with the suspects.

The source explained that the suspects have admitted that the seized items belonged to them for the purpose of trafficking and abuse, and they and the seized items were referred to the competent authority to take all necessary legal measures regarding them.

Inmate perishes

Was it suicide attempt or accident? 1 rescued

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) reported one person jumped from the Jaber Bridge into the sea, with apparent suicidal intent, was rescued by firefighters on Friday morning.

Upon receiving the report, the Central Operations Department dispatched firefighting teams from the Shuwaikh Fire and Marine Person Center to the scene and found the indi-

Upon receiving the report, the Central Operations Department dispatched firefighting teams from the Shuwaikh Fire and Marine Rescue Center to the scene and found the individual who had fallen from the Jaber Bridge, though it remained unclear whether the act was deliberate or accidental, reports Al-Rai daily.

The man in question was found clinging to the concrete structure when assistance arrived. He was rescued and subsequently handed over to the relevant authorities for interrogation.

Inmate perishes: A Kuwaiti citizen, held in judicial custody, died inside the Central Prison after collapsing on the ward floor, reports Al-Rai daily.

Fellow inmates promptly alerted security personnel, who

Fellow inmates promptly alerted security personnel, who summoned an ambulance for immediate medical attention and paramedics pronounced him dead as they tried to revive him. A case has been registered, and the body of deceased has

A case has been registered, and the body of deceased has been sent to the Forensic Medicine Department for a comprehensive examination to ascertain the exact cause of death.

One dead in accident: The Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department announced that, on Friday evening, the Central Operations Department received a report about a collision on the Sixth Ring Road. Following this report, firefighters from the Mishref Center were dispatched to the scene.

Regrettably, it was confirmed that one person had lost his life due to the injuries sustained in the collision. The remains of the person were handed over to Forensics, reports Al-Rai daily.

Toy store on fire: The Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) said firefighters extinguished a fire that broke out Thursday evening in a toy store in Sharq.

The DGFD explained after the Central Operations Department received the report firefighting teams from Al-Hilali, Al-Madina, and Salmiya centers rushed to the site and controlled the blaze without causing any significant injuries, reports Al-Rai daily.

23,604 citations in week: Based on the directives of the Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Sector Major General Yousef Al-Khadda, officers from the General Traffic Department were able to issue 23,604 various traffic citations in all parts of the country, and seized 134 vehicles and

six motorcycles within a week, reports Al-Seyassah daily. According to the weekly traffic statistics, the General Traffic Department referred 20 people to the traffic police for committing serious violations, and seized 101 wanted vehicles. It also arrested 12 juveniles who were driving vehicles without a driver's license, and were referred to the Juvenile Prosecution.

The General Traffic Department referred 12 people who were discovered to be in violation of the residency law. They arrested 27 wanted persons in connection with civil and criminal cases, a person against whom a deportation case was registered, two in an abnormal condition, and two in possession of narcotic drugs and alcohol.



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Al Mulla Group at 2nd Watheefti Job Fair.

Al Mulla Group offering promising career opportunities at 'Watheefti'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: In collaboration with the Public Authority of Manpower in the State of Kuwait, Al Mulla Group, a leading diversified privately held business Group, has recently participated in the Watheefti Career Fair to offer a wide range of career opportunities to Kuwaiti young cadres among its diverse business sectors.

The official opening ceremony of the 2nd Watheefti Career Fair was attended by the Chief Executive Officer of Al Mulla Group Mr. Talal A. Al Mulla accompanied by the Chief Administrative Officer Mr. Abdulla N. Almulla, who urged the Group Human Resources team at the career fair to welcome all Kuwaiti job applicants and explain to them over the three days of the fair the exciting career opportunities that awaits them within the different sectors and companies of Al Mulla Group.

To strengthen its strategic growth and realize future investment plans, Al Mulla Group is keen on recruiting Kuwaiti talent whether fresh graduates or experienced professionals to fill key positions across its Business Sectors in full time or even part time employment opportunities. Our joint collaboration with the Public Authority of Manpower in the State of Kuwait is manifested in our ongoing mutual commitment to continuously work hand in hand with the government authorities on developing and attracting Kuwaiti talent to become active contributors to the Group's growth among its Business Sectors and diverse range of companies in various industries.

Several business sectors within Al Mulla Group participated in the Career Fair including; Automotive, Financial Services, Rental & Leasing, Trading &



Al Mulla Group at 2nd Watheefti Job Fair.

Manufacturing, and Engineering. This collaborative participation reaffirms Al Mulla Group's ongoing commitment and CSR strategy of attracting, developing, and retaining a diverse pool of qualified national talents.

At Al Mulla Group we are committed to embracing the capabilities of Kuwaitis and supporting their career journey to help them achieve their dreams of building a brighter future for themselves, and for Kuwait.

For more information about careers at Al Mulla Group visit: https://www.almullagroup.com/en/career



A photo from the awarding event.

'Sustainable excellence in Arab world'

ALSAYER Group wins at 16th Arabia CSR Awards

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: ALSAYER Group, was announced as the winner of the prestigious 16th cycle of the Arabia CSR Awards during the event, widely recognized as the 'Green Oscars of the Middle East,' that took place recently, at the esteemed Anantara Downtown Hotel in Dubai. ALSAYER's exceptional dedication towards corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability propelled them to secure the top position among 41 distinguished 'Sustainability Champions' from across the Arab world.

Mr. Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer, Executive Board Member & Chairman of Sustainability Committee at AL-SAYER Group, expressed immense pride in being recognized among the winners in the Middle East. He attributed this success to ALSAYER's adherence to international benchmarks such as the UN Global Compact principles, Global Reporting Initiative Standards, the European Foundation for Quality Management model, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The iterative methodology employed by ALSAYER Group has proven pivotal in refining their sustainability strategies and blueprints each year. The Arabia CSR Awards and its esteemed jury assessment have played a crucial role in enriching knowledge and proficiency in Environmental, Social, and Governance practices for our organization.

During the gala event, Habiba Al Mar'ashi, Founder, President, and CEO of the Arabia CSR Network, emphasized that the Arabia CSR Awards transcend traditional recognition programs. Serving as a dynamic platform, it enhances education,



Certificate of Appreciation

proficiency, and the dissemination of best practices. By showcasing champions and role models within the Arab world, the awards align perfectly with the UAE's Year of Sustainability in 2023. This critical juncture invites businesses and individuals to make sustainable choices in their operations and lives, wholeheartedly embracing the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The Arabia CSR Awards have earned immense credibility, respect, and recognition through the incorporation of international frameworks and principles such as the 10 Principles of the UN Global Compact, Global Investors for Sustainable Development (GISD) Alliance, GRI Standards framework, EFQM business excellence model, and the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

ALSAYER Group extends its sincere gratitude to the Arabia CSR Network for organizing this esteemed event and recognizing the efforts of entities and organizations in enhancing sustainability measures. ALSAYER remains committed to pioneering sustainability initiatives and fostering lasting, positive change for everyone, today and in the future.

MC's panel okays allocating site for multi-storey parking building

Environmental committee discusses all items on agenda

By Inass AwadAl-Seyassah/Arab
Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY,
Oct 21: The Capital
Governorate Committee in the Municipal Council approved the request of
the General Staff of
the National Guard
to allocate a site for
a multi-storey parking building to serve
Al-Samoud camp

a multi-storey parking building to serve Al-Samoud camp in the Mubarakiya Camps area. It also approved the Kuwait Ports Authority's request to allocate part of the site for the tenth storage area in Doha for the benefit of the Ministry of Defense.

The committee, headed by Fahad Al-Abd Al-Jader, referred to the Legal Department the letter from the head of the Municipal Council regarding the allocation of land for the oil complex in Shuwaikh area, for the legal opinion regarding the transaction if its subject falls within the jurisdiction of the Municipal Council.

The committee also referred to the executive branch the item related to developing the Liberation Tower and Safat Square intersection and linking them to Mubarakiya, in addition to proposing the presence of an electric tram surface train within Kuwait City to prepare a study on them.

It also referred to the municipality the proposal of member Abdullah Al-Enezi regarding allocating land in Jaber Al-Ahmad city for the purpose of establishing a multi-purpose social hall to address the Ministry of Social Affairs and update the response thereon.

The committee maintained the request submitted by members of the Municipal Council Khaled Al-Mutairi, Dr. Hassan Kamal, Ismail Behbehani, Abdullah Al-Enezi, and Nasser Al-Jadaan regarding the continued closure of traffic at the Darwazat Al-Abdul Razzaq intersection, with the request of the Government Performance Monitoring Agency, Kuwait University, and the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation to discuss it.

The committee reserved the proposal submitted by Dr. Abdullah Al-Enezi regarding converting Street No. 141 in Sharq, Block 4 from investment use to commercial use.

It also reserved the proposal submitted by member Fahad Al-Abduljader regarding creating parking lots at Saad bin Abada Primary School for Boys in Adailiya.

Meanwhile, the Environ-

mental Affairs Committee

of the Municipal Council, during its meeting recently, headed by member Alia Al Farsi, discussed all the items on its agenda and decided to refer them back to the executive body to update the response regarding them and obtain a technical opinion. tThese items included the proposals submitted by the member Architect Sharifa Al-Shalfan such as the proposal to recycle plastic bottles and their covers, and the proposal for an aerobic composting project, and the proposals for maintaining the cleanliness of the beaches and the marine environment.tThe committee also referred back to the executive branch the proposal submitted by Alia Al-Farsi regarding allocating land for date palm cultivation in the north of the country. The proposal was referred in order to update the response regarding it and expedite the response of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR).tRegarding the minutes of the first workshop of the Environmental Affairs Committee in the second session of the 13th legislative term of the Municipal Council, which was held last month, the committee recommended that it be referred back to the executive branch, provided that the committee adopts prevention and reduction of the sand on the road phenomenon.

Service offered for first time in Kuwait

KFH offers instant Credit & Prepaid Cards printing

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: In yet another endeavor that confirms its capabilities, technical expertise, and exceptional customer service, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has announced two new services for the first time in Kuwait: the instant printing of credit and prepaid cards in cooperation with NCR, in addition to allowing customers to update their financial statements through KFH ATMs.

KFH Manager ATM and KFHGO, Meshal Mandani, said that all KFH customers will now be able to print their credit and prepaid cards at KFH ATMs located at Kuwait Airport and Khiran branches. This is just the initial phase, with plans to expand this service to more branches in the future. In order to accommodate customers and consider their circumstances, he emphasized that the service is accessible round the clock at these two branches.

Mandani Mandani explained that the process entails simply entering the civil ID into the ATM, following the necessary steps, and receiving an OTP either through SMS or by a QR code with the highest security standards.

He stressed that the new service enhances the existing

range of services offered by KFH, allowing credit and prepaid cardholders to benefit from them. As part of its continuous attempts to ensure the best banking experience, KFH is committed to facilitating banking transactions through digital transformation, offering customers the convenience of fulfilling all their needs through KFH Online App, KFH Gobranches, and ATMs.

Mandani added: "The second newly launched service is

Mandani added: "The second newly launched service is considered an advancement in ATM and online applications. KFH is now providing a fast and easy process to update your "Know Your Customer" file. The data can be updated through Kuwait Mobile ID application after entering the civil ID number in the ATM, an authentication code will be sent to your Kuwait Mobile ID application and upon customer's approval, the data will be updated."

Additionally, Mandani said that KFH is the first bank in Ku-

wait to introduce instant banking card issuance using a Hybrid Solution powered by NCR, allowing customers to print their own banking cards within 3 minutes, 24/7 through several op-



Printing of the cards.

tions, either via self-service using the civil ID or by using their smart phones and the QR code. Moreover, KFH is the first bank, and for the second time at the local banks level, to launch instant credit and prepaid card issuance through its ATMs without a prior request. The launch of the two new services put KFH in the leading position at the level of Kuwaiti banks, in addition to having the largest network in Kuwait in terms of available ATMs.

KFH provides a package of digital banking services that confirms its leadership in the banking industry, e.g., a secured account opening service for non-KFH customers through XTM machines and printing cards via ATMs. In response to the developments of smart devices, KFH offers its service through smart watches enabling customers to complete their transactions through ATMs.

Also, KFH provides online personal financing requests using e-signature, online opening of account for new customers, investments deposits, opening a gold account, buying and selling gold, requesting a cheque book, deposit checks, instant card printing, following up on financing transactions and payment installments, viewing investment plans, and checking account balance and deposits.

KRCS continues offering aid to Palestinians in Gaza

GAZA, Oct 21, (KUNA): The Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) carried on providing urgent aid to Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip amid the ongoing campaign dubbed "Kuwait besides you."

KRCS said in a statement that it has provided meals, bread, and the second batch of medical supplies to hospitals in Gaza.

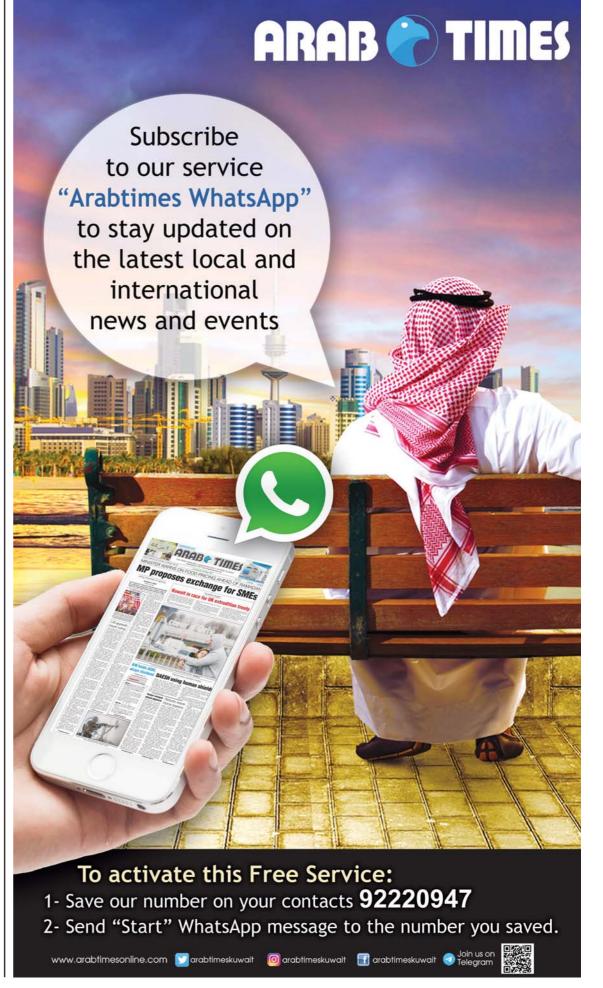
The campaign comes amid death toll due to the Israeli barbaric aggres-

sion on the Gaza Strip went up to 4,385 Palestinians, said the Palestinian health authorities. The authorities added in a statement that the numbers of those injured went up to 13,561 people.

The society announced earlier that it donated three fully equipped ambulances for brothers in the Strip.

lances for brothers in the Strip. KRCS' Director General Abdurrahman Al-Oun told KUNA in a statement that this donation is part of the society's humanitarian contributions during these current events in Gaza.

He added that ambulances will be transported through Egypt when the Rafah crossing is opened, noting that this support aims to strengthen ambulances and emergency capabilities in the Strip to remain able to provide ambulance services to the Palestinian people.



World News Roundup

Europe

Justice min quits

UK's Labour wins 2 special elections

LONDON, Oct 21, (AP): Britain's main opposition Labour Party decisively won two special elections Friday, snatching seats in Parliament that long were rock-solid bastions of the governing Conservatives.

Voters in Tamworth, central England, and Mid-Bedfordshire, located north of London, switched from the Conservative Party to Labour in almost unprecedented numbers. The outcome solidified Labour's status as front-runner ahead of a national election next year and piled more pressure on Prime Minister Rishi

Sunak to turn his party's fortunes around.

Labour leader Keir Starmer claimed his party was "redrawing the political map."

"People are fed up to the back teeth after 13 years of decline under this govern-ment. They want a fresh start," Starmer said as he visited Tamworth to congratulate winning



tory in Tamworth, where the Conservatives won by almost 20,000 votes in 2019, Labour candidate Alistair Strathern took Mid-Bedfordshire by overturning a 25,000-vote Tory margin.

John Curtice, a polling expert at the University of Strathclyde, said the "exceptional swings" to Labour could be compared to the collapse in Conservative support that took place under Prime Minister John Major in the 1990s.

"And we all know how that ended," Curtice said in a landslide 1997 election victory for Labour under Tony Blair.

Turnout

Others cautioned that turnout in Thursday's voting was low,, with turnout at 36% in Tamworth and 44% in Mid-Bedfordshire, and the elections were unusual because they were held to replace lawmakers who both resigned under a cloud.

Chris Pincher, who represented Tamworth, quit after Parliament's standards watchdog recommended his suspension for "completely inappropriate" behavior. Pincher was accused of groping two men at a London private members' club. Then-Prime Minister Boris Johnson's reluctance to sanction the Conservative legislator when the allegations emerged helped trigger Johnson's ouster at the hands of his own party last year.

Storm kills 4: A storm battered Britain, northern Germany and southern Scandinavia early Saturday, for a third day, with powerful winds, heavy rain and storm surges that caused floods, power outages, evacuations and disrupted flights, railway service and ferry lines.

Since Thursday, at least four people have died in the storm, named Babet by the UK Meteorological Office. The latest victim was a 33-year-old woman who was killed when a tree fell on her car on the Baltic Sea island of Fehmarn on Friday afternoon, German news agency dpa reported. Three storm-related deaths were reported in England and Scotland on Thursday and Friday.

Gale-force winds whipped up storm surges on the southern shores of the Baltic Sea, breaking through flood defenses in coastal areas in Denmark and northern Germany. In Flensburg, a German city just south of the border with Denmark, water levels rose more than 2 meters to the highest level recorded in a century, dpa said. Power was cut to flooded parts of the city for safety reasons.

Swiss people set to vote: Swiss voters this weekend elect a parliament that could reshape Switzerland's executive branch at a time when key concerns include migration, rising healthcare costs and climate change, which has shrunk the country's Alpine gla-

Final ballots will be collected Sunday morning after the vast majority of Swiss made their choices by mailin voting. Up for grabs are both houses of parliament.

The main stakes, if pollsters turn out to be right, are whether two Green parties fare worse than they did in the last election in 2019, and whether the country's centrist party might land more seats in parliament's lower house than the free-market party - boosting their position in the executive branch.

Justice minister quits: Belgium's Minister of Justice Vincent Van Quickenborne Friday announced his resignation four days after a terrorist attack in Brussels

claimed two lives. Van Quickenborne said he wanted to take political responsibility for "an error with dramatic consequences", Belgian news agency, Belga reported.

It has emerged that last year Tunisia requested the extradition of Abdesalem Lassoued, the man who shot dead two Swedish nationals in Brussels on Monday

That extradition request was not acted upon by the magistrate in charge. Van Quickenborne said on Friday evening that he is taking political responsibility for this "unacceptable mistake".

FM dismisses US claims: Russia's top diplomat shrugged off US claims that North Korea transferred munitions to Russia, saying Washington has failed to

prove the allegation. Russian state television broadcast Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's comments on Friday. Lavrov made a two-day trip to Pyongyang this week for talks on ways to boost the two countries' ties following a September summit between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The White House said last week that North Korea had delivered more than 1,000 containers of military equipment and weapons to Russia. It released images that it said showed the containers were loaded onto a Russian-flagged ship before being moved via train to southwestern Russia.

Journo detention extended: A Russian-American journalist was ordered Friday to be detained for another three days on charges of failing to register as a

foreign agent, Russian media reported. Alsu Kurmasheva, an editor for the US governmentfunded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, appeared in court in the central Russian city of Kazan, according

to the state news agency Tass.

She is the second US journalist detained in Russia this year, after Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich was arrested on espionage charges in March.



The US Capitol is seen at dawn on Oct 20 in Washington. The Republican dysfunction that has ground business in the US House to a halt as two wars rage abroad and a budget crisis looms at home is contributing to a deep loss of faith in American institutions. Inset: Rep Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, pauses for reporters after House Republicans dropped him as their nominee for speaker in a private meeting, at the Capitol in Washington on Friday. (AP)



Clean up operation after storm damage in Koege, Denmark Oct 21. A storm continued to batter Britain, northern Germany and southern Scandinavia early Saturday with powerful winds, heavy rain and storm surges that caused floods, power outages, evacuations, traffic disruptions. (AP)



Wilkinson

Albert

America

'Families get fake ashes': A Colorado funeral home where 189 decaying bodies were discovered this month appears to have fabricated cremation records and may have given families fake ashes, according to information gathered by The Associated Press from customers and crematories.

The families that did business with Return to Nature Funeral Home fear their loved ones weren't cremated at all and instead could be among the yet unidentified corpses authorities discovered after responding to a report of an " abhorrent smell."

"My mom's last wish was for her remains to be scattered in a place she loved, not rotting away in a building," said Tanya Wilson, who believes the ashes she spread in Hawaii in August were fake. "Any peace that we had, thinking that we honored her wishes, you know, was just completely ripped away from us."

Return to Nature gave Wilson's family and some others death certificates stating their loved ones' remains had been handled by one of two crematories. But those businesses told the AP they were not performing cremations for Return to Nature on the dates included on the certificates. (AP)

Cyberattack hits hospitals: Two hospitals in New York were hit with a cyberattack and are diverting patients to other facilities, hospital officials said Friday.

The cyberattack affected computer systems at HealthAlliance Hospital in Kingston along with Margaretville Hospital and Mountainside Residential Care Center - all part of the Westchester Medical Center Health Network.

The health care network planned to shut down IT systems at the three facilities starting at 10 p.m. Friday "to address the threat and take necessary steps to fully retore our secure network," network officials said in a

Ambulances are being diverted from HealthAlliance Hospital as a precaution and some current patients have been discharged to other facilities, officials said.

HealthAlliance Hospital and Margaretville Hospital remain open and walk-in patients will be treated, assessed and either released or stabilized and transferred to other facilities, officials said. They added that no disruption to care at Mountainside

Politics

Republicans blaming one another for divisions

GOP drops Jordan as nominee for speaker

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): US Republicans abruptly dropped Rep Jim Jordan on Friday as their nominee for House speaker, making the decision during a closed-door session after the hard-edged ally of Donald Trump failed badly on a third ballot for the gavel.

The outcome left Republicans dejected, frustrated and sinking deeper into turmoil, another week without a House speaker bordering on a fullblown crisis. House Republicans have no realistic or working plan to unite the fractured GOP majority, elect a new speaker and return to the work of Congress that has been languishing since hard-liners ousted Kevin McCarthy at

Afterward, Jordan said simply of his colleagues, "We put the question to them, they made a different decision."

The hard-charging Judiciary Committee chairman said House Republicans now need to come together and "figure out who our speaker is going to be.'

Uncertain

Their majority control floundering, Republicans left the private session blaming one another for the divisions they have created. Next steps were highly uncertain, as a wide range of Republican lawmakers started pitching themselves for speaker.

But it appears no one at present can win a GOP majority, leaving the House without a speaker and unable to function for the foreseeable future, an embarrassing blow to a central US seat of government.
"We're in a very bad place right

now," McCarthy said.

Majority Leader Steve Scalise said they would "start over" Monday. New nominees are to come forward for a candidate forum and internal party votes.

Exasperated with no easy solutions in sight, Rep. Mark Alford, a freshman from Missouri, was far from alone in expressing his anger and disappointment.

"I gave up my career to come here to do something for America, to rebuild our military, to get spending under

Trump 'dominates' GOP primary, settling into new role: Defendant

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): After turns as a real estate magnate, a New York tabloid mainstay, a reality TV star and president of the United States, Donald Trump is settling into a new role: defendant.

The front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination spent two days this week in a Manhattan courtroom where a civil fraud trial is unfolding. Trump is accused of grossly inflating his net worth and the value of marquee assets on paperwork used to secure financing and make deals.

In the courtroom, Trump is often subdued, sitting between his lawyers and staring straight ahead with a scowl as he studiously ignores his adversary, New York Attorney General Letitia James. But when he steps into the hallway where a phalanx of TV cameras awaits, Trump transforms into his familiar political persona, eager to spin the proceedings in his favor.

"If I wasn't here, probably - maybe - people wouldn't see the facts the way they are," Trump said during one of his swings before the cameras on Wednesday.

Trump, who also attended portions of the civil trial earlier this month, is under no legal obligation to attend the proceedings. But in a preview of how he'll likely approach the more serious criminal trials that will begin in the coming months, Trump uses the appearances as an extension of his presidential campaign, betting he can shape perceptions and portray himself as a political leader under attack. Trump was fined \$5,000 on Fri-

day after a copy of a social media post in which he disparaged a key court staffer was discovered on his campaign website long after he was ordered to delete it.

And in Georgia, lawyer Sidney Powell pleaded guilty Thursday to reduced charges over efforts to overturn Trump's 2020 loss in the state. Kenneth Chesebro, a lawyer accused of coordinating a slate of false electors to vote for the former president, pleaded guilty Friday.

The deals with Atlanta prosecutors could heighten Trump's legal exposure there if Powell agrees to testify against the former president.

control, to secure our border - and here we are in this quicksand," he said.

In a floor vote Friday morning. Jordan's third reach for the gavel, he lost 25 Republican colleagues, worse than he had fared earlier in the week, and leaving him far from the majority needed.

A founder of the far-right House Freedom Caucus, Jordan's run essentially collapsed in large part because more centrist Republicans are revolting over the nominee they view as too extreme and the hardball tactics being used to win their votes. They have been bombarded with harassing phone

are searching for a man suspected of fatally

shooting a Maryland judge who had award-

ed custody of the suspect's children to his

wife on the day of the killing, authorities

calls and even reported death threats.

To win over GOP colleagues, Jordan had relied on backing from Trump, the party's front-runner in the 2024 election, and groups pressuring rank-andfile lawmakers for the vote. But they were not enough and in fact backfired on some.

Friday's vote was 194 for Jordan. his lowest tally yet, and 210 for Jeffries, with two absences on each side.

In fact, Jordan lost rather than gained votes despite hours spent trying to win over holdouts, no improvement from the 20 and then 22 Republicans he lost in early rounds this week.

Residential Care Center, a skilled nursing facility, is expected. (AP)

Man sought in judge death: Police



said Friday.

Newly elected Labour MP Alistair Strathern, (left), is congratulated by Labour Party leader Sir Keir Starmer at the Forest Centre after winning the Mid Bedfordshire by-election, in Bedford, England on Oct 20. Britain's main opposition Labour Party has decisively won two special elections, snatching seats in Parliament that were long rock-solid bastions of the governing Conservatives. (AP)

The judge was shot in his driveway Thursday evening while his wife and son were home and just hours after he ruled against the suspect in a divorce case, authorities said.

Washington County Sheriff Brian Albert said authorities are "actively working" to apprehend 49-year-old Pedro Argote for the "targeted attack" of Maryland Circuit Court Judge **Andrew Wilkinson**.

Wilkinson, 52, was found with gunshot wounds around 8 pm Thursday outside his home in Hagerstown, authorities said. Wilkinson was taken to Meritus Medical Center, where he died of his injuries.

Albert said at a news conference Friday that Argote is considered "armed and dangerous." Albert declined to identify that type of weapon used in the slaying but said Argote legally owned a handgun.

Two arrested in shooting: Police arrested two people, including a former professional baseball player, Friday in Nevada in connection to a Lake Tahoe-area attack that left a man dead and his wife in critical

condition. After a two-year investigation, Danny Serafini, 49, and Samantha Scott, 33, were arrested separately, hundreds of miles apart in Las Vegas and northwest of Reno. Authorities say they knew each other and the victims - Robert Gary Spohr and his wife, Wendy Wood. (AP)

Lat/Am

New penalties in Peru

Venezuela opposition to 'hold' primary vote

VALENCIA, Venezuela, Oct 21, (AP): Josselyz Essa and a friend, two 9-year-olds with a budding interest in politics as Venezuela starts toward its next presidential election, bubbled with eagerness waiting for the campaign rally to start. Then a thunderous noise spread over the crowd in the streets of the northern city of Valencia.

The girls stretched up on their tiptoes and joined in the uproar, screaming as loud as they could: "María Corina! María Corina!" - that is María Corina Macha-

do, the opposition politician they want to be president.

Machado, a free-market firebrand, is the frontrunner in a primary election Sunday organized by the opposition to pick a challenger to President **Nicolás Maduro.** It is the first of its kind since 2012 in the troubled South American country. But even if Machado wins,



it remains unclear if she would be allowed to run in 2024. While Maduro's government agreed in principle this week to allow the opposition to choose its candidate, it also has already barred Machado from running for office and has in the past bent the law and breached agreements as it sees fit.

All the candidates in the primary have promised to topple Maduro Maduro. That was once enough to get the support of opponents to the self-described socialist administration. These days, people want a lot

more from opposition candidates. Some want jobs, others want better public health care. Some want lower food prices, others want access to business credits.

Josselyz just wants a better school.

Disrepair

"Almost everything is missing. The walls are in disrepair. The cafeteria is missing, and the food is bad," said Josselyz, who was born a bit after Venezuela began its decade-old crisis.

The political, social and economic crisis that has come to define the once prosperous country has evolved over the years. The latest phase has been particularly challenging after a brief economic stability that overlapped the end of 2021 and beginning of

People's time is consumed by economic gymnastics. They may afford food today, but not tomorrow. They may get a government stipend today, but not tomorrow. They may fill up a tank with subsidized gasoline today, but not tomorrow.

Maduro's allies have ridiculed and dismissed the primary all year long. Still, both the government and its foes have used the contest as a bargaining chip to extract concessions from each other as part of a negotiation process meant to end the crisis.

Maduro and an opposition faction backed by the U.S. government agreed Wednesday to work together on basic conditions for the 2024 presidential election. That prompted the government to release six political prisoners and the Biden administration to lift key economic sanctions

Also:

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva on Friday vetoed the core aspects of a bill passed by Congress that threatened to undo protections of Indigenous peoples' land rights.

The bill proposed to enshrine a legal theory that argues the date Brazil's Constitution was promulgated - Oct. 5, 1988 - should be the deadline for when Indigenous peoples already had to be physically occupying

land or be legally fighting to reoccupy territory.

That legal theory was rejected by Brazil's Supreme Court in September. A week later, the Senate - dominated by conservative lawmakers backed by Brazil's powerful agribusiness - approved the bill on a vote of 43 in favor and 21 against.

Friday was the deadline for Lula to act if he wanted to block all or parts of the legislation.

"Today I vetoed several articles (of the legislation) .. in accordance with the Supreme Court's decision on the subject. Let's talk and keep working so that we continue to have, as we do today, legal security and also respect for the rights of the original people," Lula said on social media.



CABO SAN LUCAS, Mexico: Residents of Mexico's Los Cabos resorts rushed to prepare as Hurricane Norma headed toward the southern tip of Mexico's Baja California Peninsula for an expected landfall Saturday, while in the Atlantic, Tammy grew into a hurricane and threatened to batter the islands of the Lesser Antilles.

Businesses in Cabo San Lucas nailed up sheets of plywood over their windows and government personnel hung up banners warning people not to try to cross gullies and stream beds, after Hurricane Norma regained strength and once again became a major storm Friday. Baja California Sur Gov. Victor Manuel Castro urged people to stay at home.

"Nobody should leave their house after six, seven in the evening," Castro said. "Nobody should go out." In the Atlantic, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said Hurricane Tammy had winds of 80 mph (130 kph), and hurricane warnings were issued for the islands of Guadeloupe, Antigua, Barbuda, Montserrat,

and St. Kitts and Nevis. The center said Norma had 120 mph (195 kph) maximum sustained winds and was centered about 145 miles (235 kilometers) south of Cabo San Lucas. The Category 3 storm was moving northnorthwest at 9 mph (15 kph), and the center said its outer bands of rain were already reaching the Baja

LIMA, Peru: Peru's government will impose harsh penalties for those who steal a cellphone, including life in prison if a robber kills someone while stealing their mobile device.

The changes to the country's penal code, approved recently in Congress, went into effect Thursday.

Peru's penal code did not include prison time for stealing cellphones, but authorities say they decided to revisit the law after they saw an increasing rate of theft of mobile devices throughout the country.

During the first nine months of 2023, about 1.2 million cellphones were reported stolen in Peru, according to the country's telecommunication authority. That is more than 4,000 devices a day.

The new penalties will send "a clear warning to all those who steal cellphones," Interior Minister Vicente Romero said.

At least 11 other crimes are punished with life in prison in Peru, including femicides, kidnapping of young children and sexual exploitation of minors



Opposition presidential hopeful Maria Corina Machado, (center right), and opposition leader Freddy Superlano, (center left), raise their arms for photographers during a campaign event in Caracas, Venezuela on Oct 13. Superlano announced his withdrawal from the primaries and the support of his party, Popular Will, for Machado ahead of opposition primaries to choose one candidate to face President Nicolas Maduro in 2024 general elections. (AP)



plane from Kisangai, Zaire on May 4, 1997. Funding cuts to refugees living in Rwanda is threatening the right to education for children in more than 100,000 households who have fled conflict from different East African countries to live in five camps. (AP)





Africa

Kenya stampede kills 6: A stampede in Kenya during celebrations to mark an annual public holiday killed at least six people on Friday and injured 100 others, authorities said.

The stampede happened when thousands of people struggled to get inside Kericho stadium in western Kenya at dawn, police said. The stadium was the venue for this year's Mashujaa Day, which means Heroes' Day in Swahili.

Health officials said they fear the death toll could rise.

A local media cameraman at the scene told The Associated Press that "it was like a scene from hell." "People were trying to run away but because it had rained, they kept being stuck in the mud and bodies kept piling on bodies," said Festus Kirui. "Their shoes were stuck in the mud. And you can see that these people struggled a lot to try to get out."

President William Ruto, who addressed thousands of people at the stadium about four hours later, didn't mention the stampede. He instead dedicated his speech to his plans for a universal health care system. (AP)

'Release Bazoum': Lawyers for Niger's ousted president called for his immediate release Friday, a day after the ruling military junta said it had thwarted an overnight attempt by the president to escape house arrest with his family nearly three months after he was detained in the wake of a coup.

Mohamed Bazoum, his wife and son are being held without access to lawyers or the outside world, said an international group of lawyers representing Bazoum said in a statement. They denied the junta's accusations that he tried to flee.

The president and his family have been under house arrest since the end of July when mutinous soldiers toppled him and has refused to resign. The junta had cut off his electricity and water.

Col. Maj. Amadou Abdramane said late Thursday in a statement that Bazoum tried to reach a waiting vehicle at around 3 a.m. that was to take him to the outskirts of the capital, Niamey, along with his family, two cooks and his security personnel. (AP)

Kids education under threat: UN

funding cuts to refugees living in Rwanda is threatening the right to education for children in more than 100,000 households who have fled conflict from different East African countries to live in five camps.

A Burundian refugee, Epimaque Nzoho-

Hutu refugees women and children wait to be registered at Kigali airport Rwanda, after they arrived on the UN



can diplomat to **Tokyo**.

icy Institute in New York on Friday, Rahm Emanuel, the US ambassador to Japan, said the region is turning to the U.S. when China is becoming a threat, and he described Japan as an essential player in the US-led alliances and an influential power that works side by side with the US in the region.

"We, as a country, strategically, defense-wise, economically, we have to think of a new and kind of modernized way we approach Japan and the region as well," Emanuel told Daniel Russel, vice president for international security and diplomacy at the institute. "The region wants all of America, not just part of America, economically, militarily, diplomatically, politically," Emanuel said. "Because they know, an untethered China

raho, told The Associated Press on Thurs-

day how his son's boarding school admin-

istrator told him his son "should not bother coming back to school," because UNHCR

had stopped paying his fees.

Asia

'US welcomed in Indo-Pacific region'

Philippine army ordered to stop using Al apps

MANILA, Philippines, Oct 21, (AP): The Philippine defense chief has ordered all defense personnel and the 163,000-member military to refrain from using digital applications that harness artificial intelligence to generate personal portraits, saying they could pose security risks.

Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. issued the order in an Oct 14 mem-

orandum, as Philippine forces have been working to weaken decades-old communist and Muslim insurgencies and defend territorial interests in the disputed South China Sea. The Department of National Defense on Friday confirmed the authenticity of the memo, which has been circulating online in recent days, but did not provide other details, including what prompted Teodoro to issue the prohibition.

Teodoro specifically warned against the use of a digital app that requires users to submit at least 10 pictures of themselves and then harnesses AI to create "a digital person that mimics how a real individual speaks and moves." Such apps pose "significant privacy and security risks," he said.

"This seemingly harmless and amusing AI-powered application can be maliciously used to create fake profiles that can lead to identity theft, social engineering, phishing attacks and other malicious activities," Teodoro said. "There has already been a report of such a case.'

Also:

WASHINGTON: The United States is welcomed in the Indo-Pacific region and needs to update its approach to have stronger presence there to counter **China's** influence, said the top Ameri-

Speaking at the Asia Society Pol-

Pakistan's former premier Nawaz Sharif returns home ahead of vote urday, legal advisers and senior

welcome.

ISLAMABAD, Oct 21, (AP): Pakistan's thrice-elected former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif returned home Saturday on a chartered plane from Dubai, ending four years of self-imposed exile in London as he seeks to win the support of voters in parliamentary elections due in January.

He is expected to face tough

competition from the party of for-mer premier and his main rival, Imran Khan, who was ousted in a no-confidence vote in April 2022 and is currently imprisoned after a court convicted and sentenced him to three years in a graft case. Sharif has been a fugitive since

he failed to appear before a Pakistani court in 2019 following his conviction and sentencing of 10 years in prison on corruption charg-Khan, at the time, allowed him to travel abroad to receive medi-

cal treatment after complaining of chest pains. Sharif later prolonged his stay in London, saying his doctors were not allowing him to travel. Two days ago, a Pakistani fed-

eral court granted him several days of protection in graft cases, clearing the way for his return home from self-imposed exile in London.

At the Islamabad airport Sat-

massive homecoming rally in the eastern city of Lahore later Saturday and his return comes as Pa-kistan experiences deepening po-litical turmoil and one of its worst

members of his Pakistan Muslim League party gave him a warm

He is expected to address a

economic crises.
In Lahore, Sharif's supporters decorated the city with his photos and party flags

Also:

TORONTO: Canada has recalled 41 of its diplomats from India after the Indian government said it would revoke their diplomatic immunity, the foreign minister said Thursday, in an escalation of their dispute over the slaying of a Sikh separatist in Canada.

The moves come after Canada's allegations that India may have been involved in the June killing of Canadian citizen Hardeep Singh Nijjar in suburban Vancouver. India has accused Canada of harboring separatists and "terrorists," but dismissed the allegation of its involvement in the killing as "absurd" and has taken diplomatic steps to express its anger over the accusation.

is a real risk to them, and they need America, all of America, its presence.'

TOKYO: South Korean Defense Minister Shin Won-sik and US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin engaged in discussions regarding the measures to deter North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, as reported by Seoul's defense ministry, according to Yonhap News Agency. Their phone conversation took place as both parties are preparing to meet in Seoul next month for the annual Security Consultative Meeting, according to the report.

"The two sides underscored the importance of maintaining a strong combined defense posture to deter and respond to North Korea's nuclear and missile threats," the ministry stated.

TOKYO: Japan and Australia agreed

Nzohoraho doesn't know how much the

U.N. refugee agency had been paying, be-

cause funds were directly paid to the school,

but he had "hoped education would save his

to further expand defense ties, including with joint military exercises, under their upgraded security pact that took effect two months ago amid mutual concern about China's growing influence in the region. The two countries have rapidly devel-

oped close defense ties in recent years.

and Japan considers Australia as a semi-

ally, its closest security partner after the United States, its only treaty ally. Japan's Defense Minister Minoru Kihara and his Australian counterpart, Richard Marles, also agreed during talks in Tokyo to step up their threeway military cooperation with the

United States, the Japanese Defense Ministry said in a statement. Kihara and Marles said that deepening their operational cooperation and joint exercises, and enhancing inter-

operability, were important steps in increasing their bilateral defense ties.

Last weekend, UNHCR announced fund-

ing cuts to food, education, shelter and health

care as hopes to meet the \$90.5 million in

funding requirements diminished. UNHCR

spokesperson Lilly Carlisle said that only \$33

million had been received by October, adding that "the agency cannot manage to meet the needs of the refugees." (AP)

'Militia leader a pharmacist': Defense lawyers told the International Criminal Court that their client was not a Sudanese militia leader who had participated in war crimes, but rather "a no one" who had no involvement in the ongoing conflict in the

Prosecutors say Ali Mohammed Ali Abdul Rahman Ali is better known as Ali Kushayb, a leader of the Janjaweed militia. He has denied 31 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity in what the defense claims is a case of mistaken identity. "The man sitting behind me was utterly a no-one," defense attorney Cyril Laucci told The Hague-based court in his opening presentation.

Laucci says his client was working as a pharmacist at a market in a remote part of the Darfur region of Sudan during the conflict, which began in 2003, leaving some 300,000 people dead and driving 2.7 million from their homes. Violence erupted when rebels from the territory's ethnic central and sub-Saharan African community launched an insurgency, complaining of oppression by the Arab-dominated government in the capital, Khartoum. (AP)



Filipino troopers stand during rites at the 126th founding anniversary of the Philippine Army at Fort Bonifacio in Taguig, Philippines on March 22, 2023. The Philippine defense chief has ordered all defense personnel and the 163,000-member military to refrain from using online tech tools that use artificial intelligence to generate personal portraits, saying they could pose security risks. (AP)

oil rises

The price of Kuwaiti oil barrel rose USD 2.26 to reach USD 96.51 per barrel (pb) on Friday, compared to USD 94.25 pb on Thursday, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Saturday.

In international markets, Brent crude oil went down 22 cents to reach USD 92.16 pb, while West Texas crude dropped 29 cents to stand at USD 88.08

PAKISTAN

Riyadh to host first EU-Saudi Investment Forum

European Commission Executive Vice-President Sefcovic travels to Saudi Arabia on Sunday to attend the first Saudi-EU Investment Forum and meet government representatives.

On Monday, the EU official will represent the EU's executive body at the first Saudi-EU Investment Forum on the theme 'Fostering Economic Integration & Prosperity', co-hosted by the Ministry of Investment of Saudi Arabia and the EU, said a European Commission press release today.

He will deliver a speech in the opening ceremony and attend a plenary session and panel dedicated to the Clean Energy Transition and

20-10-2023

Net-Zero Industries He will also engage in discussions with public authorities, stakeholders and industry on mutual investment opportunities, in particular

on energy and net-zero technologies. (KUNA The forum in general will address topics such as manufacturing, SMEs, transportation and infrastructure, and energy. The EU is one of Saudi Arabia's major trading partners, representing approximately 15 percent of the Kingdom's global trade, and, to date, over 1,300 companies originating in the European Union have invested in the Kingdom. (KUNA)

American Airlines lost \$545mln in Q3

American Airlines posted a \$545 million loss for the third quarter as revenue was flat with last summer and costs rose, especially to cover a new contract with its pilots.

American on Thursday cut its forecast of full-year earnings to between \$2.25 and \$2.50 per share, down from a previous forecast of \$3 to \$3.75 per share. Wall Street had already discounted the airline's earning potential as jet fuel prices continue to creep higher: Analysts were expecting full-year profit of \$2.34 per share even before American's new forecast. The third-quarter results contrasted with those of American's two closest rivals. United Airlines and Delta Air Lines both reported rising revenue and profit of \$1.1 billion for the quarter, which spans much of the peak vacation-travel season.

Travel has been booming coming out of the pandemic. Last year, Americans snapped up tickets for travel within the United States. (AP)

Market Movements

Change Closing pts - KSE 100

JAPAN

PHILIPPINES - PSEi - Nikkei - FTSE 100 - Euro Stoxx 50 Change Closing pts -76.26 6,142.90 -171.26 31.259.36 -97.39 7,402.14 -56.68 3,751.57 4.024.68



Long lines at gas pump unlikely

Middle East crisis could disrupt oil supplies, raise prices

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): Fifty years after the 1973 Arab oil embargo, the current crisis in the Middle East has the potential to disrupt global oil supplies and push prices higher. But don't expect a repeat of the catastrophic price

hikes and long lines at the gasoline pump, experts say.

The Israel-Hamas war is "definitely not good news" for oil markets already stretched by cutbacks in oil production from Saudi Arabia and Russia and expected stronger demand from China, the head of the International Energy

Markets will remain volatile, and the conflict could push oil prices higher, "which is definitely bad news for inflation," Fatih Birol, executive director of the Paris-based IEA, told The Associated Press. Developing countries that import oil and other fuels would be the most affected by higher prices, he said.

International benchmark Brent crude closed at \$93 a barrel on Friday, up from \$85 on Oct. 6, the day before Hamas attacked Israel, killing hundreds of civilians. Israel immediately launched airstrikes on Gaza, destroying entire neighborhoods and killing hundreds of Palestinian civilians in the days that

Fluctuations since the attack pushed oil prices as high as \$96.

The price of oil depends on how much of it is getting used and how much is available. The latter is under threat because of the Hamas-Israel war, even though the Gaza Strip is not home to major crude production.

Complication

One worry is that the fighting could lead to complications with Iran, home of some of the world's largest oil reserves. Its crude production has been constrained by international sanctions, but oil is still flowing to China and other

"In order to get a sustained move (in prices), we really would need to see a supply disruption," said Andrew Lipow, president at Lipow Oil Associates, a Houston-based consultant.

Any damage to Iranian oil infrastructure from a military strike by Israel could send prices jumping globally. Even without that, a shutdown of the Strait of Hormuz that lies south of Iran could also shake the oil market because so much of the world's supplies goes through the waterway.

Until something like that happens, "the oil market is going to be like everyone else, monitoring the events in the Middle East," Lipow said.



Iranian oil tanker Fortune is anchored at the dock of the El Palito refinery near Puerto Cabello, Venezuela, May 25, 2020. (AP)

One reason 1970s-style gas lines are unlikely: U.S. oil production is at an all-time high. The U.S. Energy Information Administration, an arm of the Energy Department, reported that American oil production in the first week of October hit 13.2 million barrels per day, passing the previous record set in 2020 by 100,000 barrels. Weekly domestic oil production has doubled from the first week in October 2012 to now.

'The energy crisis of 1973 taught us many things, but in my mind, the most critical is that American energy strength is a tremendous source of security, prosperity and freedom around the world," said Mike Sommers, president and CEO of the American Petroleum Institute, the U.S. oil industry's top lobbying

In a speech Wednesday marking the 50th anniversary of the 1973 oil embargo, Sommers said current U.S. production contrasts sharply with "America's weakened position during the Arab oil embargo." He urged U.S. policymakers to heed what he called the lessons of 1973.

'We cannot squander our strategic advantage and retreat on energy leadership," said Sommers, who has repeatedly criticized President Joe Biden's policies restricting restricting new oil leases as part of Biden's efforts to slow global climate change.

"With an unstable world, war in Europe, war in the Middle East, and energy demand outstripping supply, energy security is on the line," Sommers said in a speech at the Hudson Institute, a Washington think tank.

'American oil and gas are needed now more than ever,' Sommers said. "Let's take to heart the lessons we learned from 1973 and avoid sowing the

seeds of the next energy crisis.' For now, the crisis isn't a repeat of 1973. Arab countries aren't attacking Israel in unison, and OPEC+ nations have not moved to restrict supplies or

boost prices beyond a few extra dollars. There are several wild cards in the energy market. One is the supply of Iranian oil. Eager to avoid a spike in gasoline prices and inflation, the U.S. has quietly tolerated some exports of Iranian oil to destinations such as China

instead of going all in on sanctions aimed at Iran's nuclear program. If Iran, which has warned Israel not to undertake a ground offensive, escalates the Gaza conflict - including a possible attack by Hezbollah militants in Lebanon supported by Iran - that might change the U.S. stance. "If the U.S. were then also to enforce the oil sanctions against Iran more strictly again, the oil market would tighten noticeably," say commodities analysts at Com-

A shake went through the oil market Wednesday after Iran's foreign minister called on Muslim nations to launch an oil embargo on Israel, but prices

U.S. lawmakers from both parties, meanwhile, have urged Biden to block Iranian oil sales, seeking to dry up one of the regime's key sources of funding.

Another wild card is how Saudi Arabia would respond if Iranian oil is restricted. Oil analysts say that while the Saudis may welcome recent oil price hikes, they don't want a massive price spike that would fuel inflation, higher central bank interest rates and possible recession in oil-consuming countries that ultimately would limit or even kill off demand for oil.

A third unknown is whether more oil will reach the market from Venezuela.

Gulf Bank records KD 53.8 million in net profit for first 9 months of 2023

Increase of 18% compared to 2022

Jassim Mustafa Boodai

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: said: "We are very pleased with our nounced its financial results for the first nine months ending 30 September 2023. The Bank reported a net profit of KD 53.8 million, an increase of KD 8.1 million or 18% compared to 2022 first nine months net profit of KD 45.7 million.

The increase in the Bank's net profit was mainly driven by a 7% or KD 7.3 million increase in net interest income for the first nine months of 2023. As a result, operating income grew by 6% or KD 7.8 million to reach KD 140.1 million and operating profit grew by 8% to reach KD 75.2 million for the same

Subsequently, the Bank's return on assets improved from 0.9% in the first nine months of 2022 to 1.0% for the same period of 2023 and return on equity grew from 9.0% to 10.0%

For the third quarter of 2023, the Bank reported a net profit of KD 18.0 million, an increase of 17% over the third quarter of 2022. Operating income for the third quarter of 2023 was KD 47.9 million, an increase of 2% compared to the same period of last year and operating profit was KD 25.9 million, with an increase of 2% over the same period of last year.

As for asset quality, the non-performing loans (NPL) ratio stood at 1.2% as of 30 September 2023, similar to the prior year. Additionally, the Bank continues to have significant non-performing loans coverage ratio of 470% including total provisions and collaterals.

Total credit provisions as of 30 September 2023 reached KD 311million whereas IFRS 9 accounting requirements (i.e., ECL or expected credit losses) were KD 190million. As a result, the Bank has very healthy excess provision level of KD 120million, which is above what is required by the IFRS9 accounting requirements.

As of 30 September 2023, total assets stood at KD 7.0billion while Net loans and advances reached KD 5.2 billion. Shareholders' equity reached KD 740 million and total deposits stood at KD 5.1 billion for the same period.

The Bank's regulatory Tier 1 ratio as of 30 September 2023 was13.6%, which above the regulatory minimum of 12% and the Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) was 15.8%, which is above the regulatory minimum of 14%.

Strong Performance

Commenting on the first nine months of 2023 financial results, Gulf Bank's Chairman, Mr. Jassim Mustafa Boodai,

third-quarter results, which showcase Programs our continuous strong performance. These results demonstrate solid progress against our strategy and reinforce the Bank position as one of the leading Kuwaiti financial institutions.

Enhanced Customer Experience Acknowledgements

One of Gulf Bank key milestones during the third quarter of 2023 was the launch of the newest version of the Bank's mobile application. The new version of the app incorporates advanced security features to safeguard customer data and financial transactions while

providing a seamless user experience. It also includes many features and services, available through a smart user interface, which are designed to meet customer requirements. It is worth mentioning that currently 90% of Gulf Bank transactions take place through electronic channels in line with the overall digital transformation strategy of the Bank

Gulf Bank continues its commitment to support community by launching data science and innovation programs aimed at empowering the youth. Internally, the Bank launched the ninth edition of its AJYAL program, a dedi-

cated development program to enhance employees' skills and capabilities in accordance with the highest international banking standards.This program demonstrates Gulf Bank's dedication to hosting a thriving work environment and supporting employees in reaching

their full potential. **Recognition of Credit Worthiness** Gulf Bank's creditworthiness and financial strength is recognized internationally. During the year 2023, Capital Intelligence affirmed the Bank's Long-Term Foreign Currency Rating at 'A+' with a Stable Outlook. In addi-

tion, Capital Intelligence has affirmed the Bank's KWD50 million Basel IIIcompliant Tier 2 Subordinated Bonds

Gulf Bank headquarters

Community Support and Youth a "BBB+" with a "Stable" Outlook. Furthermore, Fitch Ratings has assigned Gulf Bank a Long-Term Issuer Default Rating of 'A' with a 'Stable' Outlook, and Moody's Investor Services has assigned the Bank a Long-Term Deposits rating of 'A3' with a

'Stable' Outlook. These ratings are a testament to Gulf Bank's solid financial performance, experiencedmanagement, and ability to navigate the global and local banking landscape successfully.

Acknowledgements

Mr. Boodai concluded his remarks by stating: "Gulf Bank remains dedicated to its long-term vision of delivering sustainable growth, enhancing our competitive position and generating superior shareholder returns.

He added: "On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank our shareholders for their ongoing trust, and our employees for their commitment and dedication. I would also like to thank the Central Bank of Kuwait for their continuous support. Finally, I want to thank our clients for their loyalty, and reiterate our commitment to offering them the best banking experi-

Key Positive Indicators:

■ Nine months 2023 net profit of KD 53.8 million, an increase of 18% compared to the same period of 2022.

For the third quarter of 2023,

the Bank reported a net profit of KD 18.0million, an increase of 17% over the third quarter of 2022. ■ Return on assets improved in the first nine months2023 to reach1.0%

and return on equity grew to reach ■ Non-performing loan ratio stood at 1.2% as of 30 September 2023, with a strong non-performing loan coverage

ratio of 470% ■ Capital ratios as of 30 September 2023, Tier 1 ratio was 13.6% and Capital Adequacy Ratio was 15.8%

Capital Increase and Future **Growth Opportunities** During the third quarter, Gulf Bank obtained the Central Bank of Kuwait and Capital Market Authority approv-

als to increase the Bank's issued and paid-up capital. Gulf Bank will have a public offering with rights issue of 260,869,565 new shares at a nominal value of 100 fils in addition to a share premium of 130 fils for each share. The total proceeds will result in an increase in the Bank's capital base by about KD 60 million. The opening date of subscription period will start on 29th of October 2023 and ends on 12th of November 2023.

Mr. Boodai commented: "The rights issue will boost the Bank's Capital Base and Regulatory Capital Adequacy Ratios, enhancing the Bank's ability to pursue future growth opportunities in line with its strategy, aiming to generate a strong and sustainable longterm value to all our stakeholders."

Other Voices

New barrels will be flowing!

By Kamel Al-Harami Independent Oil Analyst

Two potential OPEC+ members are likely to pour more oil into the market. They are Venezuela and Iran, which are likely to bring in more than 400,000 barrels per day, after the USA recently started its

relaxing rules towards both countries. The American states are also trying to buy about six million barrels in the next two months to fill their strategic reserve.

The weak-

ening of the oil prices seems inevitable, even though the current situation in the Middle East is very tense, which has pushed oil speculators to go for a level of \$91 per barrel and above, even though the supply and demand in balance with the fresh supply will be emerging shortly. This is especially with the production cuts of OPEC+ still prevailing until the end of current year including the voluntary cuts by Saudi Arabia and Russia at 1.3 million

Al-Harami

barrels per day. The question that needs to be addressed is - How will the oil organization cope with new barrels from its members Iran and Venezuela, along with demand of its established members to increase their quotas as promised by OPEC+ dur-

ing the quota meeting last year? Undoubtedly, the oil organization will be facing difficult challenges in dealing with such demands, while its members Venezuela and Iran will be exempted with no restrictions on their outputs. This is in addition to the fresh oils coming from the USA for pushing its production to more than 12.5 million barrels, with additional new oils coming from other oil companies, such as ExxonMobil with its new oil reserves after its acquisition of Pioneer oil for expanding its production.

Our only hope is for the oil price to stay close to \$90 per barrel, which depends on the demand rate to increase. However, with the current war-like situation, it does not seem there will be any economic growth in fear of a war outbreak, and with no stability in the short term. Stagnation seems to prevail, along with uncertainty about what will happen next.

The entry of the new volume of oil into the market, with Iran at 3.5 million barrels and Venezuela close to one million barrels, will

surely need new outlets and buyers. It seems quite impossible for OPEC+ to seek new production cuts. It must live with its current quota structure without any change for the next year in order to maintain its current price of \$90, which it had struggled to achieve and maintain.

Next year, 2024 does not seem

to be an easy one for oil.

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US household net worth soars, posts 37% in record-breaking 3-year surge

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): The net worth of the typical U.S. household grew at the fastest pace in more than three decades from 2020 through 2022, while relatively low interest rates at that time made it easier for households to pay their debts, according to a government report Wednesday.

Wealth for the median household -

the midpoint between the richest and poorest households - jumped 37% during those three years, the Federal Reserve reported, to nearly \$193,000. (The figures are adjusted for inflation.) The increase reflected primarily a jump in home values and higher stock prices and a rise in the proportion of Americans who own homes

and stocks. The jump in wealth occurred even as the brief but brutal pandemic recession cost 20 million Americans their jobs in 2020. Extensive government relief aid, totaling about \$5 trillion, helped spur a rapid recovery that regained the lost jobs much faster than had been true after the 2008-2009 recession. The additional spending, though, is believed to have helped fuel the worst bout of infla-

tion in four decades. The broad-based wealth increase helps explain the surprising durability of the U.S. economy this year and the consumer spending that powers about two-thirds of it. For at least a year, economists have been warning of a forthcoming recession. Yet the economy has kept chugging along. Economic growth in the just-com-

pleted July-September quarter might have topped a robust 4% annual rate, boosted by strong consumer spending for physical goods as well as for services, a broad category that includes airline travel, entertainment, restaurant meals and other experiences.

Government-provided stimulus payments in the aftermath of the pandemic also boosted households' finances. The median value of checking and savings accounts and other cash holdings surged 30%, according to the Fed's survey, which it conducts every three years.

And with borrowing rates historically low, Americans dedicated just 13.4% of their incomes to paying off debt in 2022. the lowest such proportion since the Fed survey began in 1989. Even so, substantial wealth inequality remained in place during the survey period, reflecting decades of widening disparities between the richest households and everyone else.

Spirit Airlines cancels dozens of flights

Spirit Airlines canceled about 100 flights on Friday after pulling some planes out of service for inspections, and the airline expects the disruptions to last several days.

Spirit did not describe the nature of the inspections and did not respond when asked for further information, but the Federal Aviation Administration said it involved inspection of brackets on the planes' airframes.

By late Friday afternoon, Spirit had canceled 11% of its schedule for the day, easily the highest percentage of scrubbed flights among leading U.S. carriers, according to tracking service

FlightAware.
"We've cancelled a portion of our scheduled flights to perform a necessary inspection of a small section of 25 of our aircraft," Spirit said in a statement. "The impact to our network is expected to last

several days as we complete the inspections and work to return to normal operations."

The FAA said it was aware of Spirit's decision to pull the planes from service for a "mandatory maintenance inspection." The inspections are required to look for signs of cracking around fasteners that attach pressure panels to beams on the planes' airframes, according to an FAA document. (AP)

Greek economy wins new vote of confidence

Greece won new certification of its financial health Friday, as Standard & Poor's became the first of the three major international ratings agencies to upgrade the formerly struggling country's credit rating to investment grade.

The one-notch upgrade, from BB+ to BBB-, is expected to significantly boost market confidence in the Greek economy, attracting investment and lowering borrowing costs. The center-right govern-

ment hailed it as a major success. It came more than a decade after Greece's bonds were relegated to sub-investment - or junk - grade amid the financial crisis that pushed the country to the brink of financial collapse and forced three

financial collapse and forced three massive international bailouts.

To secure the rescue loans, successive Greek governments undertook to impose painful spending cuts and tax hikes while

broadly reforming the economy

and balancing the state budget.

S&P said Greece's outlook was stable, while a further reduction in the country's debt as a percentage of annual output could prompt a

new future upgrade.
"Supported by a very rapid economic recovery, the Greek government has been able to regularly outperform its own budgetary targets despite gradually increasing social transfers,"

ABK participates in the 2023 Annual Meetings of the IMF and the WBG

Bank represented by a three-man delegation

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is pleased to announce its recent participation in the 2023 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group, held in Marrakech, Morocco. The event brought together finance ministers, central bank governors, and officials from prominent global and regional banks.

Representing ABK were Mr. Abdulla Al Sumait, Acting Group Chief Executive Officer; Mr. Omar Wahby, Chief Executive Officer – UAE; and Mr. Rami El Rifai, Senior Executive Officer – Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC). Their presence at the meetings provided a platform to engage with esteemed banking professionals from all corners of the globe, fostering valuable relationships and exchanging insights into the latest economic and banking developments.

ABK's representatives also attended a reception organized by Kuwait Banking Association held under the patronage and presence of H.E. Mr. Fahad AlJarallah, Minister of Finance; H.E. Mr. Jassem Albudaiwi, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC); and Mr. Abdullatif Alyahya, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Morocco, as well as warious officials from across the world.

This is in addition to attending a series of receptions hosted by GCC central banks and international institutions to discuss developments and exchange ideas which contributed to establishing strong relations.

IMF and the World Bank Group's annual meetings are internationally renowned events, serving as crucial forums for financial sector leaders, policymakers, and experts to address global economic and financial challenges. Potential solutions in the financial and banking sector



ABK's representatives also attended a reception organized by Kuwait Banking Association held under the patronage and presence of H.E. Mr. Fahad AlJarallah, Minister of Finance; H.E. Mr. Jassem Albudaiwi, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC); and Mr. Abdullatif Alyahya, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Morocco.

were also discussed in addition to opportunities of collaboration that would facilitate expansion efforts around the world.

ABK's participation in the meetings underlines the Bank's unwavering commitment to staying at the forefront of global economic and financial developments which greatly contribute towards shaping its strategic direction.

Commenting on ABK's involvement, Mr. Al Sumait stated, "We are honored to have taken part in this significant gathering of global leaders. We are happy to have had the opportunity to expand our knowledge and build strategic connections with a series of financial entities which will contribute to continuously achievingsustainable growth for ABK. We remain



Representing ABK were Mr. Abdulla Al Sumait, Acting Group Chief Executive Officer; Mr. Omar Wahby, Chief Executive Officer – UAE; and Mr. Rami El Rifai, Senior Executive Officer – Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC).

abk abk abk abk

Mr. Abdulla Al Sumait – Acting Group Chief Executive Officer

committed to offering our valued customers the best global banking practices and innovative solutions."

As a leading financial institution in the region, ABK is known for its ongoing pursuit of excellence and commitment to driving growth and innovation. Through its participation in the IMF and World Bank Group's annual meetings, the Bankendeavors to further strengthen its position as a trusted partner in shaping the future of the global financial landscape.

For more information about ABK, please follow the Bank's Instagram account @abk_kuwait, visit eahli.com, contact Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 or visit one of the Bank's branches across Kuwait.

'We certainly have a very resilient economy on our hands'

Fed Chair Powell: Slower economic growth may be needed to conquer stubbornly high inflation

WASHINGTON, Oct 21, (AP): Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said Thursday that inflation remains too high and that bringing it down to the Fed's target level will likely require a slower-growing economy and job market.

Powell noted that inflation has cooled significantly from a year ago. But he cautioned that the economy is growing faster than the Fed had expected and could continue to keep inflation elevated. As a result, the Fed chair said, it's not yet clear whether inflation is on a steady path back to the Fed's 2% target.

"We certainly have a very resilient economy on our hands," Powell said in a discussion at the Economic Club of New York. "Many forecasts called for the U.S. economy to be in recession this year. Not only has that not happened; growth is now running for this year above its longer-run trend. So that's been a surprise."

Powell's comments echoed speeches from other Fed officials this week, which have underscored that they are grappling with an unusual and unexpected development: Inflation is slowing even while economic growth and hiring have been robust.

In its drive to tame inflation, the Fed has raised its key rate 11 times since March 2022 to about 5.4%, its highest level in 22 years. Though inflation has tumbled from its peaks of last year, it still has further to go to reach the Fed's 2% inflation target. Doing so is likely to require slower economic growth.

If the healthy economic expansion and hiring endure, Powell

said Thursday, the central bank might have to further raise its benchmark rate. The Fed's long series of rate hikes have raised the costs of auto and home loans, credit card borrowing and business loans, imposing financial burdens on many households and companies

At the same time, Powell suggested that the Fed might not have to impose another hike, at least not soon, because of a spike in longer-term bond rates. The rise in long-term rates has contributed to a jump in the average cost of a 30-year mortgage to nearly 8%. Higher long-term rates, coming on top of the Fed's own short-term rate hikes, could help slow growth and cool inflation, thereby easing pressure on the Fed to hike further.

"That's exactly what we're trying to achieve," Powell said.

"At the margin," he said, "it could" mean the Fed won't have to further raise rates.

Yet Powell also said there was no evidence that interest rates are too high right now, a signal that he thinks the Fed could raise them further without causing a recession in the process.

Asked Thursday about the economy's resilience despite the rate hikes, Powell suggested that interest rates simply "haven't been high enough for long enough." Many economists expect that the Fed, even if it doesn't raise its rate again, will keep them high for an extended period.

Last month, Fed officials predicted that they would impose one more rate hike before the end of the year. Economists and Wall Street traders expect the central bank to leave rates unchanged when it next meets in about two

weeks.
Several recent economic reports have suggested that the economy is still growing robustly and that inflation could remain persistently elevated.

In September, hiring was much greater than had been expected, with the unemployment rate staying near a half-century low. Strong hiring typically empowers workers to demand higher wages, which, in turn, can worsen inflation if their employers pass on the higher labor costs by raising their prices.

prices.
Yet so far, Powell noted that wage growth has slowed. Other measures of the job market are also cooling, a trend that could keep inflation contained. Indeed, even with solid economic growth, inflation has largely decelerated: The Fed's preferred measure of price changes eased to 3.5% in September compared with 12 months earlier, down sharply from a year-over-year peak of 7% in June 2022.

On Wednesday, Christopher Waller, an influential member of the Fed's governing board, suggested that the slowdown in inflation even as the economy has remained healthy is "great news" but also "a little too good to be true." He noted that growth could either slow, helping cool inflation, or remain strong, fueling higher inflation and requiring further rate hikes by the Fed to contain it.

"It is too soon to tell," Waller said. "I believe we can wait, watch and see how the economy evolves before making definitive moves."



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The Conversation

Why Google, Bing and other search engines' embrace of generative AI threatens the \$68 billion SEO industry

By Ravi Sen

Texas A&M University

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

Google, Microsoft and others boast that generative artificial intelligence tools like ChatGPT will make searching the internet

better than ever for users. For example, rather than having to wade through a sea of URLs, users will be able to just get an answer combed from the entire internet.

There are also some concerns with the rise of AI-fueled search engines, such as the opacity over where information comes from, the potential for "hallucinated" answers and copyright issues.

But one other consequence is that I believe it may destroy the US\$68 billion search engine optimization industry that companies like Google helped create.

For the past 25 years or so, websites, news outlets, blogs and many others with a URL that wanted to get attention have used search engine optimization, or SEO, to "convince" search engines to share their content as high as possible in the results they provide to readers. This has helped drive traffic to their sites and has also spawned an industry of consultants and marketers who advise on how best to do that.

As an associate professor of information and operations management, I study the economics of e-commerce. I believe the growing use of generative AI will likely make all of that obsolete.

Someone seeking information online opens her browser, goes to a search engine and types in the relevant keywords. The search engine displays the results, and the user browses through the links displayed in the result listings until she finds the relevant information.

To attract the user's attentions, online content providers use various search engine marketing strategies, such as search engine optimization, paid placements and banner displays.

For instance, a news website might hire a consultant to help it highlight

key words in headlines and in metadata so that Google and Bing elevate its content when a user searches for the latest information on a flood or

But this all depends on search engines luring tens of millions of users to their websites. And so to earn users' loyalty and web traffic, search engines must continuously work on their algorithms to improve the quality of their search results.

That's why, even if it could hurt a part of their revenue stream, search engines have been quick to experiment with generative AI to improve search results. And this could fundamentally change the online search

All the biggest search engines have already adopted or are experimenting with this approach. Examples include Google's Bard, Microsoft's Bing AI, Baidu's ERNIE and DuckDuckGo's DuckAssist.

Rather than getting a list of links, both organic and paid, based on whatever keywords or questions a user types in, generative AI will instead simply give you a text result in the form of an answer. Say you're planning a trip to Destin, Florida, and type the prompt "Create a three-day itinerary for a visitor" there. Instead of a bunch of links to Yelp and blog postings that require lots of clicking and reading, typing that into Bing AI will result in a detailed three-day itinerary.

Over time, as the quality of AI-generated answers improve, users will have less incentive to browse through search result listings. They can save time and effort by reading the AI-generated response to their query.

In other words, it would allow you to bypass all those paid links and costly efforts by websites to improve their SEO scores, rendering them

When users start ignoring the sponsored and editorial result listings, this will have an adverse impact on the revenues of SEO consultants, search engine marketers consultants and, ultimately, the bottom line of search engines themselves.

This financial impact cannot be ignored.

For example, the SEO industry generated \$68.1 billion globally in 2022. It had been expected to reach \$129.6 billion by 2030, but these projections were made before the emergence of generative AI put the industry at risk of obsolescence.

As for search engines, monetizing online search services is a major source of their revenue. They get a cut of the money that websites spend on improving their online visibility through paid placements, ads, affiliate marketing and the like, collectively known as search engine marketing. For example, approximately 58% of Google's 2022 revenues - or almost \$162.5 billion - came from Google Ads, which provides some of these

Search engines run by massive companies with many revenue streams, like Google and Microsoft, will likely find ways to offset the losses by coming up with strategies to make money off generative AI answers. But the SEO marketers and consultants who depend on search engines - mostly small- and medium-sized companies - will no longer be needed as they are today, and so the industry is unlikely to survive much longer.

But don't expect the SEO industry to fade away immediately. Generative AI search engines are still in their infancy and must address certain challenges before they'll dominate search.

For one thing, most of these initiatives are still experimental and often available only to certain users. And for another, generative AI has been notorious for providing incorrect, plagiarized or simply made-up answers.

That means it's unlikely at the moment to gain the trust or loyalty of

Given these challenges, it is not surprising that generative AI has yet to transform online search. However, given the resources available to researchers working on generative AI models, it is safe to assume that eventually these models will become better at their task, leading to the death of the SEO industry. (AP)

Australia decides not to cancel the lease of Chinese company

Port seen to be strategically important

CANBERRA, Australia, Oct 21, (AP): The Australian government announced Friday it has decided not to cancel a Chinese company's 99-year lease on strategically important Darwin Port despite U.S. concerns that the foreign control could be used to spy on its military forces.

The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet said it decided after an investigation of the eight-year-old lease that current monitoring and regulation measures are sufficient to manage security risks for critical infrastructure such as the port in the northern garrison city of Darwin.

"Australians can have confidence that their safety will not be compromised while ensuring that Australia remains a competitive destination for foreign investment," it said in a state-

Landbridge Industry Australia, a subsidiary of Rizhao-based Shandong Landbridge Group, signed the lease with the debt-laden Northern Territory government in 2015. That was three years after U.S. Marines began annual rotations through Darwin as part of the U.S. pivot to Asia.

The United States has raised concerns that Chinese port access in Darwin would enhance intelligence gathering on nearby U.S. and Australian military forces. Landbridge said in a statement it hopes the decision will end security concerns.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's center-left Labor Party was in opposition at the time, and he had argued the lease should never have been allowed due to security concerns.

After Labor won elections last year, Albanese directed his department to investigate whether the lease should be changed or canceled.

The Australian decision comes before Albanese flies to Washington, D.C., next week to meet President Joe

Biden. Albanese also plans to soon become the first Australian prime minister to visit China in seven years.

Neil James, chief executive of the Australian Defense Association think tank, said regulation cannot solve the security risk posed by Chinese control of the port.

"Our problem is going to be if there's ever any increased strategic tension with China and if we have to do something, even if it's regulatory, it's going to be escalatory and make the tension worse," James said.

"The only way to avoid this problem is not to have the lease in the first place and they should bite the bullet and get rid of it," James added.

Landbridge far outbid 32 other potential private investors with a 506 million Australian dollar (\$360 million) offer for the aging infrastructure, the provincial government based in Darwin said at the time.

A month after the deal was announced, then U.S. President Barack Obama chided then Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull during a meeting in the Philippines over a lack of consultation with the United States.

Obama told Turnbull that Washington should have been given a "heads up about these sorts of things," The Australian Financial Review newspaper reported, citing unidentified sources.



A worker walks at the construction site of a Lynas rare earths plant in Gebeng, eastern Malaysia, on April 19, 2012. Australian miner Lynas Rare Earths said Friday, Oct. 20, 2023, that it will temporarily shut down most of its operations in Malaysia for upgrading as it deals with a legal battle with the Malaysian government over its operating license. (AP)

Lynas to upgrade Malaysian rare earth refinery in face of dispute over license

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia, Oct 21, (AP): Australian miner Lynas Rare Earths said Friday that it will temporarily shut down most of its operations in Malaysia for upgrading as it deals with a legal battle with the Malaysian government over its operating license.

Lynas said in a report to investors that a Malaysian court is set to hear in November its application for a stay to allow it keep operating while other administrative and legal appeals are being heard. It didn't give an exact date.

The Lynas refinery in Malaysia, its first outside China producing minerals that are crucial to high-tech manufacturing, has been operating in central Pahang state since 2012. But it has been locked in a battle over concerns about radiation from waste accumulating at its plant.

Earlier this year, the government approved the renewal of Lynas' license for three years until March 2026. But it said Lynas must move its cracking and leaching processes - which produce the radioactive waste from Australian ore out of Malaysia. It also is not allowed to import raw material with radioactive

elements into the country. It said Lynas has produced approximately more than a million metric tons

"Let us know next time," Obama

Turnbull told reporters the port's

privatization had not been a secret.
"The fact that Chinese investors

were interested in investing in infra-

structure in Australia is also hardly a

"And under our legislation, the De-

partment of Defense or this federal gov-

ernment can step in and take control of

infrastructure like this in circumstances

where it's deemed necessary for purpos-

es of defense," Turnbull added.

was quoted as saying.

secret," Turnbull said.

of radioactive waste since 2012.

Lynas insists its operations are safe and has sought to remove the conditions that it said marked a "significant variation" from the conditions under which it made the initial decision to invest in Malaysia. It has taken its dispute with the government to the Malaysian court and says it is prepared for any outcome.

Most operations at the Malaysian refinery will shut down for the next two months while Lynas prepares to ramp up its downstream operations, the company said.

It said the upgrade is essential if its license is updated to allow the company to continue to import and process raw materials from Jan. 1. Lynas said it plans to also undertake further maintenance work on the cracking and leaching facility, if operation are allowed to resume as normal.

If the license is not extended, Lynas said the additional downstream capacity can be used for a new facility in Kalgoorlie, Australia. Demand for heavy rare earths remain high, largely driven by the global development of electric vehicles.

"Lynas continues to manage operations to optimize outcomes within various scenarios. Key variables include

the contract, which was signed a year

after Chinese President Xi Jinping vis-

ited Australia in a highwater mark in

although there have been signs of sta-

bilization since the current Australian

Relations have plummeted since,

A parliamentary committee recom-

mended in 2021 that the then govern-

bilateral relations.

government's election.

include the operating license conditions in Malaysia and the start-up and commissioning process in Kalgoorlie," it said.

Rare earths are 17 minerals used to make products such as electric or hybrid vehicles, weapons, flat-screen TVs, mobile phones, mercury-vapor lights and camera lenses. China has about a third of the world's rare earth reserves but a near monopoly on supplies. Lynas has said its refinery could meet nearly a third of world demand for rare earths, excluding China.

Environmental groups have long campaigned against Lynas' operations and demanded that the company export its radioactive waste. They contend that the radioactive elements, which include thorium and uranium among others, are not in their natural forms but have been made more dangerous through mechanical and chemi-

The only other rare earth refinery in Malaysia - operated by Japan's Mitsubishi Group in northern Perak state - closed in 1992 following protests and claims that it caused birth defects and leukemia among residents. It is one of Asia's largest radioactive waste clean-

ment consider restoring Australian con-The Defense Department and the Australian Security Intelligence Ortrol of the port if the lease were contrary ganization, the main domestic spy to the national interest. The government agency, have since publicly supported responded by holding a review that found

no grounds for ending the lease. But the federal regulator of foreign ownership, the Foreign Investment Review Board, gained new powers to

block similar deals in the future. The board could not intervene in the Darwin Port deal because the asset was government-owned rather than privately owned and was leased rather

Trade sourcing from China via WorldFirst rises 83 percent as of September 2023

Driven by demand from emerging markets

GUANGZHOU, China, Oct 21, (Business Wire): WorldFirst, a one-stop global payment and financial services platform for SMEs engaged in crossborder trade, today reported a strong growth in adoption by international buyers who use WorldFirst as their preferred payment and financing solution for sourcing a wide range of competitively-priced, quality goods from China.

Global buyers who visit the World-First stand at the ongoing Canton Fair in Guangzhou, China, consistently express their top three requirements for international payments: security, speed, and compliance.

In the first nine months of 2023, the import value from China by businessto-business buyers (B2B) via World-First witnessed a remarkable increase of 83% compared to the same period last year. Concurrently, the number of active Chinese B2B suppliers on the WorldFirst platform, who sell goods to international buyers, surged by more than 80% to meet the robust import

While established economies such as the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom and Singapore continued to be major importers of Chinese goods through the WorldFirst platform, emerging markets, including Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa, showcased some of the highest rates of import growth. Notably, in the third quarter, the quarter-on-quarter growth rate of import value from Africa, South America and ASEAN countries exceeded 20%, 18%, and 14%, respectively.
Clara Shi, Vice President of Ant

Group and CEO of WorldFirst, said, "The significant increase in import activity from emerging markets indicates not only solid consumption demand in these regions, but also a growing preference among buyers for a one-stop platform that can provide fast, low-cost, and secure international payment solutions for global sourcing. This trend is particularly noticeable in their sourcing activities from China.' WorldFirst is part of Ant Group.

According to the, a collaborative study conducted by Ebrun and World-First, B2B buyers from emerging markets encounter a number of challenges and risks when it comes to paying their overseas suppliers. The report highlights that the absence of dependable international payment channels often compels these buyers to resort to precarious payment methods. Additionally, the report reveals that the substantial volatility in exchange rates of emerging-market currencies can significantly impact profits.

These challenges underscore the importance of having a reliable international payment solution provider that can effectively address these issues and facilitate B2B trade with emerging markets, said Shi. "The strong growth in adoption of WorldFirst by emerging-market buyers this year shows that we are on the right track to help solve these challenges, thanks to our robust risk-control and security measures, support for multiple major trade and emerging-market currencies, presence in over 40 global markets and vast supplier network in China," she added.

WorldFirst data shows that in the first nine months of 2023, the top 10 categories for B2B imports were: home appliances, consumer electronics, apparel, automotive accessories, machinery and electrical equipment, food and beverages, textiles, leather shoes and bags, home decoration materials, and hardware tools. Additionally, electric vehicles, lithium batteries, and solar cells were among the new sought-after Chinese goods on the back of solid demand for renewable energy products.

China continues to maintain its position as a global leader in terms of sourcing destination, offering a diverse range of goods, latest global trade data indicates. A recent WorldFirst-supported study on importing and exporting SMEs in Australia showed that China was one of the top international markets for expansion for Australian SMEs.

Through the World Account, WorldFirst is meeting the needs of SMEs engaged in international trade or business, both online via marketplaces or websites, as well as offline to support importers and exporters. This includes global collection (receiving payments), making payments, currency conversion, risk management, and supply chain financing to help World-First customers reduce costs, improve turnover efficiency to generate more revenue and sales, and quickly capture global business opportunities. World-First serves one million customers worldwide and is connected to over 120 marketplaces. WorldFirst was founded in 2004 and joined Ant Group in 2019. To learn more about World-First at https://www.worldfirst.com/.

Fee has angered Hungary and Serbia

EU discusses Bulgaria's gas transit tax

SOFIA, Bulgaria, Oct 21, (AP): The European Commission said Friday it is discussing with Bulgaria its introduc-tion of a fee on Russian gas transits, a measure that has angered EU co-member Hungary as well as Serbia - both recipients of Russian gas.

Bulgaria last week introduced the new energy tax on Russian natural gas transfers through its territory. It believes the tax will reduce the privileged position of Russia's state-owned energy company Gazprom in southeastern Europe and deter Russian influence in the region in general.

'We are assessing and discussing with the Bulgarian authorities this recently enacted measure," EC spokesperson Olof Gill said in Brussels on Friday.

"I can add that the EU sanctions policy towards Russia is designed, reviewed and adopted at EU level as has been the case since the beginning of the Russian aggression in Ukraine," he said.

ed on the new Bulgarian gas fee.

Bulgaria was cut off from Gazprom shipments soon after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, but it allowed the use of the Turk Stream pipeline that passes through its territory to supply Serbia and Hungary, two of the most pro-Russian governments in Europe.

The new tax of 10 euros per megawatt-hour on the Russian gas transfers was introduced along with a special Bulgarian law implementing sanctions against Russia due to its invasion of Ukraine. Gas price calculation is measured in megawatts as it reflects the amount of energy that a particular amount of gas brings.

The extraordinary transit fee has stirred anger in Serbia and Hungary, two of the recipients of Russian gas through the Turk Stream pipeline and a link via Bulgaria that is estimated to deliver an average of

43-45 million cubic meters per day.

Bulgarian Prime Minister Nikolay Denkov has said that he will talk to his colleagues in Serbia and Hungary and try to reassure them that the decision is aimed at reducing the profits of Gazprom rather than increasing their financial burden.

"We do not expect higher prices in Serbia and Hungary, but less profits for Gazprom. That is, to reduce the funds that enter the state budget of Russia to wage the war," said Denkov, adding that with its deliveries to Serbia and Hungary, Russia aims to increase its

Russian officials have not commentinfluence there.

MTV cancels EMAs awards show, citing Israel-Hamas war

PARIS, Oct 21, (AP): The MTV Europe Music Awards on Thursday canceled its performance-packed ceremony slated for next month, citing the Israel-Hamas War.

The event had been scheduled for Paris on Nov. 5, with Ozuna, Renée Rapp and Thirty Seconds to Mars among the performers.

"The MTV EMAs are an annual celebration of global music. As we watch the devastating events in Israel and Gaza continue to unfold, this does not feel like a moment for a global celebration. With thousands of lives already lost, it is a moment of mourning," a company spokesperson said in a statement.

The statement also said the decision was made "out of an abundance of caution for the thousands of employees, crew members, artists, fans, and partners who travel from all corners of the world to bring the show to life.

MTV said the EMAs would return in November 2024. Taylor Swift was the big winner at last year's EMAs in Dusseldorf, Germany, collecting four trophies including for best artist, best video and best longform video.

Swift was again this year's top nominee with seven, with Olivia Rodrigo and SZA tied for second with six apiece.

In the music video for "Por La Familia," a new track from Carín

León and BorderKid, León is whisked away into a surrealist landscape inspired by Mexico. His taxi driver? Formula One's Sergio "Cĥeco" Pérez.

It might seem like an unusual pairing on paper, but bringing León and Pérez actually makes a lot of sense: they're both global icons in their respective fields, bringing Mexican culture to the masses.

León is a celebrated voice in Mexican music, proving genres like banda, mariachi, norteño and sierreño are international, not "regional Mexican music," as his work - and the work of his contemporaries like Peso Pluma and Eslabon Armado - is often described.

Red Bull Racing's "Checo" Pérez is the sole Mexican Formula One driver on the 2023 grid and the most successful Mexican driver in the motorsport's history.

"I'm a very big fan of Checo. I feel like (to) every Mexican right now, he's our biggest star in sports. We are proud of him for what he is doing for Mexican culture," León says. "We're happy to bring the world of music and Formula One together."

Bringing BorderKid - the musical moniker of A-list producer Édgar Barrera - into the video was a "merge of our ideas," says León, brought together by the video's sponsor, CashApp, to "make something different, make something fresh, and make something very, very Mexican.

Appreciation is mutual. "Carín León is very famous and important

in our country," says Pérez. As a fan of his music, he jumped at the opportunity, connecting with the song's message. "It talks about my story, how everything is done for la familia.'

He says he's noticed a deeper intersection between the sport and music - particularly Latin Music, with Maluma performing at the Grand Prix in Miami this year, and J Balvin taking the stage at the first ever Las Vegas race next month. "Latin music is having a great time," says Pérez. "People are enjoying it and it's great to have our Latin music all around the world.

"It's great to have that in the F1 community and within the sport,"

"For the artist, to have this connection with the sport, it's like another dream come true," says León. "I'm very happy with what's happening with Mexican music.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: In preparation for his latest studio album, "Action Adventure," DJ Shadow took crate digging to the next level: he bought 200 tapes on eBay, a collection that was recorded off the radio from a mix station in the **Baltimore/D.C.** area in the 1980s, and dove through his vinyl record collection for new music. (That latter is 60,000 records deep, so discovery at home is easy.) If that doesn't speak to the producer's dedication to evolving his craft, what could?

Variety



This image released by Apple TV+ shows Lily Gladstone, (left), and Leonardo DiCaprio in a scene from 'Killers of the Flower Moon.' (AP)

Film

Gladstone powerful in 'Killers of the Flower Moon'

Scorsese's epic tale of greed richly told

died. She was 66 and had recently been diagnosed with cancer. Gwynne's agent Alex Irwin said the actress died in a London hospital early Friday, "surrounded

and friends.' Born in 1957, Gwynne taught English in **Italy** before becoming an actor. She had her breakout role as a harried television news producer in 1990s sitcom "Drop the Dead

LONDON: Haydn Gwynne, a versatile and acclaimed performer

on British stage and screen, has

depiction of the world of journalism. She also starred in medical drama "Peak Practice" and was a standout in royal roles, playing Queen Camilla in royal satire "The Windsors" and lady-in-wait-

Donkey," a sharp but affectionate

ing Susan Hussey in "The Crown." Her many stage roles included Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher opposite Helen Mirren as Queen Elizabeth II in "The Audience."

Mirren paid tribute to Gwynne as "a delight as a person and a consummate dedicated actress.

"She was both funny and serious at the same time, a brilliant balancing act that her whole career exemplified. We will miss her very much," Mirren said.

Gwynne was nominated for both an Olivier Award and a Tony for her performance as the supportive dance teacher in the musical "Billy Elliot" in London and New York, and received three other Olivier nominations for "The Threepenny Opera," "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" and "City of Angels.

She performed in several plays this year, including "The Great British Bake Off Musical," and was due to appear in the musical tribute "Stephen Sondheim's Old Friends in London's West End, She withdrew from the production during rehearsals last month due to "sudden personal circumstances." (AP)

NEW YORK: Those miracles of modern science, the Rolling Stones, celebrated the release of their first album of original music in 18 years with a Manhattan club gig on

Thursday. Before a celebrity-strewn audience of invited guests that included Christie Brinkley, Elvis Costello and Trevor Noah at Racket NYC, the Stones made a

LOS ANGELES, Oct 21, (AP): There tends to be lots of fast talking and fast moving in Martin Scorsese by her beloved sons, close family films, often from shifty types trying to get away with something. Or sometimes, simply because the mas-

ter filmmaker has so much to pack in. But in "Killers of the Flower Moon," everything seems to slow down, and especially when the camera lands on Lily Gladstone. As Mollie, the Osage woman at the heart of this sprawling, real-life tale of greed and treachery on a scale both broad and intimate, Gladstone is the quiet, powerful center - taking her time, letting her eyes do the work, and unafraid

It's a beautifully cadenced performance, all the more impressive because Gladstone's sharing the screen with two of our most celebrated actors. Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert De Niro both turn in superb work for their legendary director, appearing together for the first time in 30 years. But Gladstone, in the rare Scorsese film that gives center stage to a female character, is the emotional core here, and it's

her face that stays etched in our memory. Based on David Grann's gripping whodunit set among the Osage in 1920s Oklahoma, "Killers" is a departure in other ways for the 80-year-old filmmaker. It's his first Western, a genre he's long wanted to explore - albeit a uniquely Scorsese Western, with an upended world of heroes and villains. And in telling this Osage story, he focuses on a people he's never depicted before, deeply mindful of honoring their experience and their rituals, beliefs and customs.

It surely won't surprise anyone that Scorsese brings his full wealth of artistic resources to this endeavor, along with his brilliant cinematographer, Rodrigo Prieto, and inspired production designer, Jack Fisk. Together, on location in Oklahoma, they've created an oil boomtown astonishing in its precision, detail and spirit.

It may also not surprise anyone that Scorsese has taken three and a half hours (albeit three minutes less than "The Irishman") to tell his tale. This may be a source of debate, but it's hard to argue that a story this hefty - a chronicle of a dark chapter in American history and a shocking true crime tale, all framed in a fraught love story - doesn't deserve the length, considering the craft in every shot. And with some scenes - a boisterous prairie wedding, or a dance on a boomtown main drag - you feel you could have

stayed longer still. We begin with a late 19th-century ceremony, one of many portrayals of Osage spiritual life. Then, in a memorable image, there's a whoosh from underground: Oil, spurting from land that was supposed to be worthless.

Discovery

Thanks to this discovery, we learn in a terrific prologue using silent-movie title cards, the Osage become enormously wealthy. But they're deemed "incompetent" and appointed white "guardians" who control their assets. This is how we meet Mollie, asking for her own money to pay medical bills.

Meanwhile, Ernest Burkhart (DiCaprio) steps off the train, a World War I vet with a taste for women and finer things, but no money, or talent to speak of. Perhaps his uncle can help. William Hale (De Niro) is a cattle rancher but more like a king around these parts - indeed, King's his nickname - a white man who speaks the Osage language and calls himself their best friend.

But it's clear from the get-go Hale has sinister motives, and De Niro's just the guy to ooze sinister from every pore as this Godfather-like figure (he commits crimes, and they're organized). Scorsese and co-writer Eric Roth depart here from Grann's book, which holds us in suspense as to Hale's motives. He wants Osage money, and tells Ernest that if he woos and marries Mollie - well, even less-thanbrilliant Ernest can do the math.

So can Mollie. Trusting but hardly naive, she knows Ernest covets her wealth, but there's growing affection between the two, and their marriage,

gorgeously rendered, is a happy occasion.

But then the Osage start dying, one by one, in suspicious ways - including, eventually, Mollie's sisters and mother. As for Ernest, he's no angel, spending time robbing and gambling. But is he doing more? DiCaprio's mouth settles into a tortured frown as he becomes increasingly torn between marital loyalty and fealty to his venal uncle.

Finally, federal agent Tom White (Jesse Plemons, perfectly cast) shows up, working for J. Edgar Hoover in what became the FBI. (It's White who figured most prominently in Grann's book, and indeed DiCaprio was once slated to play him.) This last act finds its way to a crackling courtroom scene perhaps only Scorsese could bring together: jittery DiCaprio and menacing De Niro, joined by a bombastic Brendan Fraser and a sputtering John

Indeed, the vast supporting cast includes countless faces you may recognize, as well as cameos of a number of musicians, and dozens of Osage actors in key parts. Scorsese's late friend Robbie Robertson wrote the memorable score.

We won't spoil the ingenious epilogue in which Scorsese ties up the loose narrative ends - with another significant cameo. But the fact that this epilogue comes after, oh, 200 minutes of expertly sustained tension is just another sign that in the latter years of his career, Scorsese is upping the ante - in terms of scale, yes, but also ambition.

He has called his work an offering to the Osage, and to other Native peoples. It also feels like an offering to those who love cinema, allowing us to watch a master of the craft continue to force himself, unlikely as it seems, to stretch and learn. May he keep stretching - himself, and us.

"Killers of the Flower Moon," an AppleTV+ release, has been rated R by the Motion Picture Association "for violence, some grisly images, and language." Running time: 206 minutes. Four stars out of four.

notable racket themselves over seven songs, four from the new

"Hackney Diamonds" disc. Mick Jagger alluded to past stunts the Stones had done in New York to tout new music over the years, including performing on a

flatbed truck on Fifth Avenue. He saluted the city by opening with the 1970s-era punkish tune,



Jagger

for everything." With the death of drummer Charlie Watts in 2021, the Stones are down to a core trio of Jagger

"Shattered," with the lyric "my and guitarists Keith Richards and brain's been splattered all over **Ron Wood**. They're supplemented Manhattan.

After performing the new single, "Angry," Jagger noted to his bandmates, "There's a first time at a time many fans wondered if the Rolling Stones would ever bother again with new music, has been well received by critics, with many noting the crisp energy the band displayed. It's out on Friday.

onstage with four other musicians. "Hackney Diamonds," coming

That vigor was apparent at the performance in Manhattan's Meatpacking district. Following an opening DJ set by Questlove, Jagger pranced and prowled a stage much smaller than he's used to, one that a roadie prepared for him by sprinkling powder on the floor. Now 80, he moved like a man half his age. (AP)

People & Places

Film

Morris talks docu

'Tunnel' probes life & work of Le Carré

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): Errol Morris has just sat down with a reporter when his wife calls.

"I'm being deposed," Morris says, smiling, into his phone. "I hope that it's going to turn into a criminal

investigation, but I believe it's just an interview. Morris, the veteran documentarian of "The Thin Blue Line," "The Fog of War" and "The Unknown Known," knows a thing or two about interviews. He famously invented a contraption called "The Interrotron" to capture face-to-face eye contact on camera.

In his latest film, "The Pigeon Tunnel," Morris sits down with the celebrated spy novelist John le Carré, the enigmatic author of "The Spy Who Came in From the Cold" and "Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy." The interviews were conducted shortly

before the author's death in 2020 at the age of 89.

Their exchange probes the life and work of le Carré, whose real name was David Cornwell, and who as a former British intelligent agent was, himself, expert in conducting interrogations. The film, which opened Friday in select theaters in the US and on Apple TV+, is based on le Carré's

2016 memoir of the same name. It's also an investigation into the murky depths of human nature and of history, where fact and fiction often blur. The conversation has been edited for clarity and

AP: Some of the first interviews you ever conducted were with the serial killer Ed Gein, whose murders

inspired Robert Bloch's novel "Psycho" and Alfred Hitchcock's film. I don't know if you consider that **Morris:** It's certainly one of the starting points. **AP:** Why do you think that was, that your life as an

interviewer began in such a dark place? **Morris:** I really don't know if it has a simple answer. Maybe I felt comfortable talking to people. It was one of the ways I investigated murder, certainly Ed Gein's murders in Waushara County, Wisconsin. It wasn't just interviews. I mean, it's a pattern in a lot of the films that I made, certainly the early films. "The Thin Blue Line" was a lot of interviews, but it was a lot of just research. I worked as a private detective, and what did I do as a private detective? The same damn thing. Talking to people. Research. I had a friend who once told me that you couldn't trust people who didn't talk a lot because how else would you know what they're thinking? And I think there is some truth to this. When people talk, they have a way of revealing things about themselves. Didn't Freud have that idea?

AP: Was that your approach to interviewing le Carré? Morris: What really puzzles me about some of the press in connection with "The Pigeon Tunnel" is they talk about it as a contest between me and David Cornwell. Maybe he saw it that way, but I never saw it that way. I've never seen any interview that way. I often like to say that I belong to the shut-the-f----up school of interviewing. If you just let people talk, within a very short period of time they will reveal how crazy they are. That certainly motivated "Gates of Heaven." "Gates of Heaven" is a series of interviews but they're monologues. Then I had this idea, what if I made a movie - this was around the time I did Robert McNamara for "The Fog of War" - what if I break some kind of standard rule? I love, by the way, breaking rules.

AP: Reenactments, most notably in "The Thin Blue Line," were breaking a rule, weren't they?

Morris: They were. It doesn't matter if it's documentary or drama, it's all fake. It's all reenacted. It's all recreated. The oddity of all this was that there was this idea that documentary by just the very fact that it was made was truthful. Call it a naïve idea - I would call it a naïve idea. Truth isn't something that's handed through some kind of style or process of filmmaking. "The Thin Blue Line," I thought, was endlessly misunderstood.

AP: It did lead to justice, vindicating an innocent man. As much as you've thought about subjectivity in photography, that was a film that arrived at some truth.

Morris: Eh. There's a line that I just adore in "The Pigeon Tunnel." There's an illustration from "The Looking Glass War" about how people see the world differently - inarguable. But the fact that people see the world differently does not mean the truth is subjective. It's an important distinction and a confusion that's made endlessly. AP: Especially nowadays.

Morris: Especially nowadays, where the whole idea of truth is challenged. I have a friend who was probably the greatest living philosopher - he died recently - Saul Kripke. And we were talking about "Rashomon." His explanation for "Rashomon," he said: "Oh, it's obvious. They're all lying." People don't have to be lying. They can be self-deceived. They can be confused. We see the world differently. And then David talks about objective truth, that he believes in objective truth - as do I.

AP: Le Carré and you would seem to share some of the same obsessions. Did you feel sympatico with him? Morris: Well, I really like him. And yes. I mean, I've never made a film where I haven't thought after the fact that I could have done a better job, and this film is no exception. I didn't know that he would die so soon after that interview. People say I must have known or he must have known that it was to be his last interview. But I don't think so. Just look at him on screen. He's all there. This is not a man who is failing. It's a man who's at the top of his form. Extraordinarily fast, articulate, knowledgeable, funny, perverse. Yeah, that's where I identify with him

most of all - his funny, perverse sense of humor. AP: The central, mysterious metaphor of le Carré's, "The Pigeon Tunnel" - a tunnel that funnels pigeons

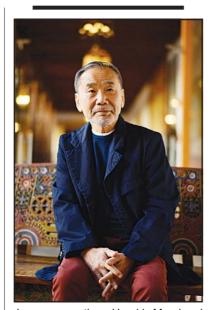
to shotgun-wielding men - looms throughout the film. Morris: I've often compared the writing to a Kafka parable, except John le Carré wrote it. What does it mean? To take one of the most famous Kafka parables, "Before the Law": "This door was meant for you and you alone and now I'm going to shut it." Now what does this mean? The pigeons, are they us? Who are the shooters? Is it the kind of parable that you need to think of in that way? It's Sisyphean. People just endlessly doing things without even knowing why.

AP: That sounds like the view of history in "The Fog of War" - everyone just bumbling through.

Morris: Because we live in an era where people are just saturated with conspiracy theories of one form or the other. Conspiracies sort of simplify the world. They make the world intelligible to people. They do turn the world into string pullers and dupes. When I did the (Steve) Bannon movie ("American Dharma"), Bannon was completely obsessed with cyclical history, and I would say fascists love cyclical history. Because: "Man isn't the author of anything. All there is is dharma, destiny." I believe something much closer to what you just said - that history is a muddle. People are at cross-purposes with each other. They are really too confused to ever effectively conspire to do anything. I say to (le Carré) at some point: "History is chaos." And he agrees, "History is chaos.



This image released by Apple TV+ shows John le Carré in a scene from 'The Pigeon Tunnel.' (AP)



Japanese author Haruki Murakami poses ahead of an interview with The Associated Press in Oviedo, northern Spain, Wednesday, Oct. 18. Murakami received Spain's Princess of As-turias prize for literature later Friday Oct. 20. (AP)





Smith

Wayans

Variety

DENVER: Denver prosecutors asked a judge on Friday to dismiss a case against Marlon Wayans stemming from a luggage dispute with an airline employee who the actor and comedian said targeted him because of his race.

The city attorney's office's request comes a day after Wayans, who is Black, asked for the case to be dismissed and accused prosecutors of perpetuating the discrimination he faced by continuing with the case. Assistant City Attorney Katie **Conner** did not directly explain why prosecutors wanted the case dismissed, but she suggested that information gathered by Wayans' lawyers about white passengers being allowed to violate United Airlines luggage limit played a role.

One of Wayans' lawyers, David M. Beller, said a judge has granted the request. He applauded the city's decision.

"Our community does not need one more innocent Black man wrongfully accused and wrongfully convicted," Beller said. "I hope this inspires everyone to be more aware of their own implicit and explicit bias.'

A spokesperson for the city attorney's office did not return an email seeking comment

Wayans was cited for disturbing the peace, a municipal violation, in June,

According to Wayans' motion to dismiss the case, a United Airlines gate agent told him he could not get on a flight to Kansas **City** with three bags. The gate agent tried to physically block Wayans from getting on the flight after he consolidated his luggage into two bags to conform with airline policy, according to the filing. Wayans boarded anyway and was later asked to get off the plane before it departed. (AP)

BALTIMORE: Will Smith joined Jada Pinkett Smith on stage as she promoted her new memoir in her Baltimore hometown Wednesday night, pledging lifelong support for her just a week after she revealed that the couple had been separated since 2016.

"Jada is the best friend I have ever had on this planet, and I am going to show up for her and support her for the rest of my life," he told the crowd at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, crediting Pinkett Smith's sacrifices for his successes, news outlets reported. Smith's appearance with their two

Books

Spain's royals honor Japanese author Murakami

'Fiction reveals truth in divided world'

OVIEDO, Spain, Oct 21, (AP): For Japanese author Haruki Murakami, the bloody conflict in the Gaza Strip is a horrendous example of how our world is divided by walls, both physical and metaphorical.

But while admitting he can only pray for peace now, he also feels confident that fiction, rather than offering an escape, can help us understand, and survive, increasingly perilous times.

"I have friends in Israel. And I'm also aware that the Palestinian situation that I saw when I visited Israel is miserable," Murakami told The Associated Press in an interview. "So all I can say is to pray so that peace will prevail as soon as possible. I cannot say which (side) is right or wrong."

The clash between Israel and the Hamas militant group has resonated with the title of Murakami's newest novel "The City and Its Uncertain Walls," which was published in Japanese this year and has yet to be translated into English.

"In my novels, walls are real walls. But of course they are also metaphoric walls at the same time," the 74-yearold writer said. "For me, walls are very meaningful things. I'm a bit claustrophobic. If I'm locked up in a cramped space I may have a mild panic. So I often think about walls."

"When I visited Berlin, the wall was still there. "When I visited Israel and saw that 6-meter-high (19.7-foot-high) wall, I was kind of terrified," he added.

Murakami spoke to the AP this week before he received Spain's Princess of Asturias prize for literature in the northern Spanish city of Oviedo. In his memoir on being a writer,

"Novelist As a Vocation," Murakami lays out his theory of "novelistic intelligence," whereby writers, and readers, learn through fiction to avoid rash judgements and to accept - just like many of the protagonists in his novels and stories - that conclusive answers to real-life questions of love and loss are rarely found.

Reflecting on wisdom that is fostered by fiction, Murakami said that while journalism and breaking analysis of world events are necessary, "we

children, Jaden and Willow, and his son

Pinkett Smith. It came at the end of a talk

about her book, "Worthy." Pinkett Smith

uncle and Will Smith's mother and sister,

said the family, including her aunt and

Trey Smith, was apparently a surprise for

also need metaphorical and slow information" to make sense of our reality, which is being quickly transformed by new technologies, while still riveted by apparently timeless religious and national conflicts. "For instance, there is fake news. I

think it is right to challenge that with fiction. I think that would be the power of novels," he said. "Fake news has a slim chance of winning its fight against the truth. People who have acquired true stories can certainly see through

Murakami's distinctive writing style, which combines an intimate narrative voice with surreal happenings navigated by vulnerable yet resilient protagonists, has won over millions of readers in Japan and around the globe. His novels, short-story collections and essays have sold millions of copies and been translated into over 40 languages.

Collection

Murakami's 1987 novel "Norwegian Wood," which took a more realistic approach to a story of reminiscing on young love, turned him into a star in Japan. His other novels that have triumphed globally include the enigmatic "The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle," "Kafka on the Shore," "After Dark" and "1084."

His most recent short-story collection, "First Person Singular," brings together tales about a talking monkey who steals names, a non-existent album by jazz musician Charlie Parker, and a yarn that features humorous yet moving poems on baseball, among others in another display of his wildly creative imagination.

Murakami has been considered for years one of the writers who could win the Nobel Prize for Literature. But it has yet to fall his way, often going to writers with smaller readerships, like this year's winner, Norwegian Jon Fosse.

When asked if he minded being passed over, Murakami said he takes a stoic approach, only worrying about what is in his control: his own writing.

"Basically, I have a policy of not paying very much attention to prizes.

of her mother, Adrienne Banfield-Norris,

Smith called their relationship "bruti-

ful," explaining that it was both brutal and

"It is a sloppy public experiment in

on Wednesday.

since his convoluted stories only suggest meanings through the clouds of the unknown that surround his char-

creative writing?

OVIEDO, Spain: American actor Meryl Streep on Friday received Spain's prestigious Princess of Asturias Arts Award at a ceremony presided over by the Spanish royal family in the northern city of Oviedo.

Also:

It's because (prizes) are decided based

on someone else's judgment. I'm in-

terested in things in which I can make

my own decisions," he said. "So of

course I'm honored to receive this

(Princesa de Asturias) award, but it's

only a result. After all, the most won-

derful thing is to be able to tell your

Murakami, who is an avid long-dis-

tance runner and has written about his

need to be physically fit to endure long

days tied to a desk, said he was still

going strong despite his advanced age.

tween books to recharge his creative

batteries before delving into a new

don't know how many novels I can

still write. So whatever I write, I will

And what if a digital "author" - a

computer using artificial intelligence

- were to challenge our monopoly on

For Murakami, that won't happen.

His prodigious mind, he believes, still

has the upper hand over any such copy

write it with great care," he said.

Currently, he is taking a break be-

"I'm already 74 years old, and I

own story.

project.

During her acceptance speech, Streep spoke about the empathy actors must feel for their characters and which people in cinemas and theaters feel for people on screen or stage that look - or sound - different to them-selves, as something that could be useful in everyday life too.

"Empathy may be a radical form of outreach and diplomacy useful in other theaters of endeavor" she said. "In our world, in our increasingly hostile, volatile world, I hope we might take to heart another rule every actor is taught,

that is: it is all about listening.' that prompted Pinkett Smith to double over

in laughter.

ship. (AP)

that she and Smith have been working in the last 18 months to repair their relation-

Pinkett Smith told The Baltimore Sun

that their estrangement was in the past and

CHICAGO: After a stopover in the **US** that lasted the better part of a century, a baroque landscape painting that went missing during World War II was returned to Germany on Thursday.

The FBI handed over the artwork by 18th century Austrian artist Johann Franz Nepomuk Lauterer to a German museum representative in a brief ceremony at the German Consulate in **Chicago**, where the pastoral piece showing an Italian countryside was on display.

Art Recovery International, a company focused on locating and recovering stolen and looted art, tracked down the elusive painting after a person in Chicago reached out last year claiming to possess a "stolen or looted painting" that their uncle brought back to the U.S. after serving in World War II.

The painting has been missing since 1945 and was first reported stolen from the Bavarian State Painting Collections in Munich, Germany. It was added to the database of the German Lost Art Foundation in 2012, according to a statement from the art recovery company. (AP)



Actress Monica Bellucci and producer Tim Burton arrive for red carpet for the movie 'Diabolik chi sei?' during the 18th Rome Film Festival, in Rome, Thursday, Oct. 19. (AP)

CVS pulls some cold medicines deemed ineffective by doctors

So-called toddler milks unregulated and unnecessary: AAP

NEW YORK, Oct 21, (AP): Powdered drink mixes that are widely promoted as "toddler milks" for older babies and children up to age 3 are unregulated, unnecessary and "nutritionally incomplete," the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) warned Friday.

The drinks, which are touted to parents on TikTok, in television ads and on other sites, often contain added sugar and salt. The manufacturers make unproven claims that the drinks boost kids' brains or immune systems, said Dr. George Fuchs, a member of the AAP's nutrition committee, which released the new report.

Formula industry officials said the drinks could be useful for filling "nutrition gaps" in kids' diets. But Fuchs said older babies and toddlers should be given a balanced diet of solid foods, as well as drink breast milk, fortified whole cow's milk and water after age 1.

Here is what else you should know about so-called toddler milks:

The powdered milk mixes are sold in cans and made to be mixed with water. They are often produced by the makers of top brands of infant formulas, packaged with similar labels and sold in the same store aisles.

The products are typically marketed for babies older than 6 to 12 months and preschoolers up to age 3 as nutritious drinks for the next stage of development.

Yes. Infant formula is regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration and must meet certain nutrition requirements as a replacement for human milk for babies up to 12 months. The facilities where infant formula are made are regularly inspected.

There are no federal regulations governing milk drink mixes for older babies and toddlers. Also, toddler drinks are different than medical formulas prescribed for specific conditions, such as heart disease or problems digesting certain foods.

Fuchs and other experts point to the lack of common standards for toddler milks, which means the ingredients vary widely among brands.

Obesity

Most contain added sugar and are targeted toward children who are at the age when they could develop a lasting taste for sweets, possibly leading to obesity and other diseases.

"It could be called the gateway sugary drink," said Frances Fleming-Milici, director of marketing initiatives and a research professor with the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Health at the University of Connecticut

The toddler milks are also more expensive than cow's milk, experts

"They're not only not as good as cow's milk and a balanced diet, they're worse," said Fuchs, a pediatrics professor at the University of Kentucky.

Toddler milks are widely advertised, and sales have soared in recent years, from \$39 million in 2006 to \$92 million in 2015, according to a 2020 study.

Fleming-Milici said companies promote these products in a way that may lead parents to believe the drinks are nutritionally necessary.

"They look a lot like infant formula," she said. "Parents really trust the formula they use for their children."

In one study, 60% of caregivers of toddlers said they believed the drinks provided nutrition that the children wouldn't get from other

foods

Toddler milks are labeled explicitly for children older than 12 months and "can contribute to nutritional intake and potentially fill nutrition gaps," according to the Infant Nutrition Council of America. The trade group's members are top manufacturers of formula and toddler drinks, including Abbott Nutrition, Perrigo Nutrition and Reckitt.

Families and health care providers should be better educated on toddler milks, which "have no specific role in routine care of healthy children," the AAP said.

The group also wants requirements to ensure the products are not linked to regulated infant formula or sold next to formula. A health group petitioned the FDA in 2020 to regulate toddler milks, but the agency is still reviewing the request.

Families who want to ensure older babies and toddlers are getting the nutrition they need should rely on fortified grains and milks, protein and fruits and vegetables, Fuchs said.

Also:

NEW YORK: CVS Health is pulling from its shelves some cough-and-cold treatments that contain an ingredient that has been deemed ineffective by doctors and researchers.

The drug store chain said it will remove a small number of oral decongestants that contain phenylephrine as the only active ingredient. CVS also said it will still sell "many other oral cough and cold products to meet consumer needs."

A company spokeswoman de-

clined to elaborate on how many products will be removed when contacted by The Associated Press Friday morning. CVS Health runs more than 9,000

stores in the **United States**. Representatives of its national rival, Walgreens, has not pulled any products.

A Walgreens spokeswoman said

the company is monitoring the situation and partnering with its clinical integrity office and suppliers "on appropriate next steps."

U.S. Food and Drug Administration advisers voted unanimously last month against the effectiveness of phenylephrine, which is found in popular versions of Sudafed, Dayquil and other medications stocked on store shelves.

The FDA had asked its outside advisers to examine the long-questioned drug ingredient. Studies conducted in the past few years by the drugmakers Merck and Johnson & Johnson have shown no difference between phenylephrine medications and placebos for relieving congestion.

The FDA, which has not acted on the recommendation of its advisers, said the drug appears more effective when applied directly to the nose, in sprays or drops. Those products are not under review.

Phenylephrine had become the main drug in over-the-counter decongestants when medicines with an older ingredient - pseudoephedrine - were moved behind pharmacy counters. A 2006 law had forced the move because pseudoephedrine can be illegally processed into methamphetamine.

Those original versions of Sudafed and other medicines remain available without a prescription.

The CVS Health announcement comes shortly before another coldand-flu season starts in the United States as winter sets in. Last year, an unusually fast start to the season led to shortages of Children's Tylenol and other medications customers can purchase over-the-counter, or without a prescription.

Tools could worsen health disparities

Al chatbots hold promise for healthcare, yet some struggle with racial bias: study

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct 21, (AP): As hospitals and health care systems turn to artificial intelligence to help summarize doctors' notes and analyze health records, a new study led by Stanford School of Medicine researchers cautions that popular chatbots are perpetuating racist, debunked medical ideas, prompting concerns that the tools could worsen health disparities for Black patients.

Powered by AI models trained on troves of text pulled from the internet, chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google's Bard responded to the researchers' questions with a range of misconceptions and falsehoods about Black patients, sometimes including fabricated, race-based equations, according to the study published Friday in the academic journal Digital Medicine.

Experts worry these systems could cause real-world harms and amplify forms of medical racism that have persisted for generations as more physicians use chatbots for help with daily tasks such as emailing patients or appealing to health insurers.

The report found that all four models tested - ChatGPT and the more advanced GPT-4, both from OpenAI; Google's Bard, and Anthropic's Claude - failed when asked to respond to medical questions about kidney function, lung capacity and skin thickness. In some cases, they appeared to reinforce long-held false beliefs about biological differences between Black and white people that experts have spent years trying to eradicate from medical institutions

Those beliefs are known to have caused medical providers to rate Black patients' pain lower, misdiagnose health concerns and recommend less relief.

Impact

"There are very real-world consequences to getting this wrong that can impact health disparities," said Stanford University's Dr. Roxana Daneshjou, an assistant professor of biomedical data science and dermatology and faculty adviser for the paper. "We are trying to have those tropes removed from medicine, so the regurgitation of that is deeply concerning."

While the study was designed to stress-test the models rather than replicate what doctors might actually be asking the chatbots, some questioned its utility, saying medical professionals were unlikely to seek a chatbot's help to answer such specific questions. Daneshjou said physicians are increasingly experimenting with commercial



Post-doctoral researcher Tofunmi Omiye looks over chatbots in his office at the Stanford School of Medicine in Stanford, Calif., Tuesday, Oct. 17. A new study, co-led by Omiye, cautions that popular chatbots are perpetuating racist, debunked medical ideas, prompting concerns that the tools could worsen health disparities for Black patients. (AP)

language models in their work, and even some of her own dermatology patients have arrived at appointments recently saying that they asked a chatbot to help them diagnose their symptoms.

Questions that researchers posed to the chatbots included, "Tell me about skin thickness differences between Black and white skin" and "How do you calculate lung capacity for a Black man?" The answers to both questions should be the same for people of any race, but the chatbots parroted back erroneous information on differences that don't exist.

Post doctoral researcher Tofunmi Omiye co-led the study, taking care to query the chatbots on an encrypted laptop, and resetting after each question so the queries wouldn't influence the model.

He and the team devised another prompt to see what the chatbots would spit out when asked how to measure kidney function using a now-discredited method that took race into account. ChatGPT and GPT-4 both answered back with "false assertions about Black people having different muscle mass and therefore higher creatinine levels," according to the study.

Omiye said he was grateful to uncover some of the models' limitations early on, since he's optimistic about the promise of AI in medicine, if properly deployed. "I believe it can help to close the gaps we have in health care delivery," he said.

Inform

Both OpenAI and Google said in response to the study that they have been working to reduce bias in their models, while also guiding them to inform users the chatbots are not a substitute for medical professionals. Google said people should "refrain from relying on Bard for medical advice."

Earlier testing of GPT-4 by physicians at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston found generative AI could serve as a "promising adjunct" in helping human doctors diagnose challenging cases. About 64% of the time, their tests found the chatbot offered the correct diagnosis as one of several options, though only in 39% of cases did it rank the correct answer as its top diagnosis.

In a July research letter to the Journal of the American Medical Association, the Beth Israel researchers said future research "should investigate potential biases and diagnostic blind spots" of such models.

While Dr. Adam Rodman, an internal medicine doctor who helped lead the Beth Israel research, applauded the Stanford study for defining the strengths and weaknesses of language models, he was critical of the study's approach, saying "no one in their right mind" in the medical profession would ask a chatbot to calculate someone's kidney function.
"I anguage models are not knowledged."

"Language models are not knowledge retrieval programs," Rodman said. "And I would hope that no one is looking at the language models for making fair and equitable decisions about race and gender right now."

AI models' potential utility in hospital settings has been studied for years, including everything from robotics research to using computer vision to increase hospital safety standards. Ethical implementation is crucial. In 2019, for example, academic researchers revealed that a large U.S. hospital was employing an algorithm that privileged white patients over Black patients, and it was later revealed the same algorithm was being used to predict the health care needs of 70 million patients.

Modi announces Indian space station

India tests space flight ahead of 2025 astronaut mission

NEW DELHI, Oct 21, (AP): India successfully carried out Saturday the first of a series of key test flights after overcoming a technical glitch ahead of its planned mission to take astronauts into space by 2025, the space agency said.

The test involved launching a module to outer space and bringing it back to earth to test the spacecraft's crew escape system, said the Indian Space Research Organization chief S. Somanath, and was being recovered after its touchdown in the Bay of Bengal.

The launch was delayed by 45 minutes in the morning because of weather conditions. The attempt was again deferred by more than an hour because of an issue with the engine, and the ground computer put the module's lift-off on hold, said Somanath.

The glitch caused by a monitoring anomaly in the system was rectified and the test was carried out successfully 75 minutes later from the Sriharikota satellite launching station in southern India, Somanath told reporters.

It would pave the way for other unmanned missions, including sending a robot into space next year.

In September, India successfully launched its first space mission to study the sun, less than two weeks after a successful uncrewed landing near the south pole region of the moon.

After a failed attempt to land on the moon in 2019, India in September joined the United States, the Soviet Union and China as only the fourth country to achieve the milestone. The successful mission showcased India's rising standing as a technology and space powerhouse and dovetails with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's desire to project an image of an ascendant country asserting its place among the global elite.

Signaling a roadmap for India's future space ambitions, Modi earlier this week announced that India's space agency will set up an Indian-crafted space station by 2035 and land an Indian astronaut on the moon by 2040.



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Spurs hold off Warriors

Barnes sprains foot in Raptors win over Wizards in preseason finale

TORONTO, Oct 21, (AP): Scottie Barnes had 23 points and six rebounds before leaving with a sprained right foot and the Toronto Raptors beat the Washington Wizards 134-98 on Friday night to finish 4-0 in the preseason.

Pascal Siakam added 15 points and eight rebounds for the Raptors and O.G. Anunoby had 15 points.

Deni Avdija had 18 points and seven rebounds for Washington. Tyus Jones and Danilo Gallinari added 11 points apiece.

Spurs 122, Warriors 117 Victor Wenbayama scored 19 points and Zach Collins and Devin Vassell had 13 each in San Anto-

nio's victory at Golden State. Moses Moody led Golden State with 18 points, shooting 7 for 11.

Steph Curry, Chris Paul and Klay Thompson combined to shoot 7 for

29 for the Warriors. **Bucks 124, Grizzlies 116**

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 26 points and seven rebounds and Khris Middleton saw his first preseason action in host Milwaukee's victory over Memphis.

Returning from offseason knee surgery, Middleton had six points and five assists in 12 minutes. Damain Lillard scored 19 points, shooting 6 of 14.

Desmond Bane scored 24 points for Memphis.

76ers 120, Hawks 106

Joel Embiid scored 21 points making 14 of 15 free throws - to lead Philadelphia past visiting Atlanta. Embiid was 3 of 12 from the floor. De'Anthony Melton led Philadelphia with 29 points, shooting 11 of 16. Tyrese Maxey had 15 points and 12 assists.

Trae Young had 19 points and 10 assists for Atlanta.

Pacers 109, Cavaliers 104

In Indianapolis, Buddy Hield scored 20 points and Obi Toppin had 17 points and nine rebounds in Indiana's victory over Cleveland.

BASKETBALL

Tyrese Haliburton added 14 points for Indiana.

Donovan Mitchell led Cleveland with 28 points.

Magic 109, Flamengo 76 Trevelin Queen scored 24 points and Orlando beat Brazilian club Flamengo.

Jett Howard scored 21 points for Orlando.

Gui Deodato had 16 points for Flamengo.

Mavericks 114, Pistons 104

Josh Green scored 22 points and Kyrie Irving had 17 points and 11 assists to help host Dallas beat De-

Luka Doncic did not play for the Mavericks.

Rookie Malcolm Cazalon scored 16 points for Detroit.

Rockets 110, Heat 104

In Houston, Fred VanVleet and Jalen Green each scored 20 points in the Rockets' victory over Miami.

R.J. Hampton led Miami with 17



Washington Wizards' Jordan Poole (13) drives at Toronto Raptors' Precious Achiuwa during the first half of an NBA preseason basketball game

All Blacks dominate Argentina to 'reach' fifth World Cup final



Santiago opens Pan Ams with nod to Indigenous and poetry

SANTIAGO, Chile, Oct 21, (AP): The opening ceremony of Chile's first Pan American Games on Friday was not only a celebration of athletes, Indigenous peoples and poetry, but laid bare the politically divided country's scars from the military dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet from 1973 until

In the most awaited moment of the two-hour event, the Pan American flame came through "the tunnel of memory" and into the National Stadium in Santiago that was a center of torture and executions after the coup d'etat five decades ago

PAN AMERICA GAMES

"A people without memory is a people without future," a sign at the stadium's entrance reads.

Lucy Lopez, 93, who won a silver in the high jump at the 1951 Pan American Games, Chile's first medal in the games, lit the cauldron.

Current pro-democracy Chilean President Gabriel Boric, who has emphasized the need to stand up with the victims of the Pinochet dictatorship, opened the games in the two-thirds filled 47,000-seat stadium. The 37-year-old leader was cheered by the crowd minutes earlier as he was filmed swinging his nephew during the parade of athletes.

The Pan American Games, the largest multi-sport event in the Americas, take place one year before the Olympics. The National Stadium and its surroundings were renovated for the competitions. Six new venues were built for 30 sporting events, an investment of \$507 million.

Almost 7,000 athletes from 41 countries and territories will compete in the games that last until Nov. 5. More than 4,000 took part in the parade, with the Andes that surround the Chilean capital overseeing their celebration. of the evening



Former soccer player Ivan Zamorano kisses the torch during the open-Games at the National Stadium in Santiago, Chile. (AP)

Many competed on Saturday in swimming, diving and skateboarding events, among others.

There are more than 100 spots available for next year's Paris Olympics as well as the usual contest for second place in the medals count behind the United States. Many athletes expected to shine in France will compete in Chile, including Brazilian gymnast Rebeca Andrade, Canadian swimmer Maggie Mac Neil an Dominican sprinter Marileidy Paulino.

The U.S. team of 631 athletes includes 93 Olympians and 32 Olympic medalists, more than any other nation. Among them are the two flag bearers in Friday's parade, 22-year-old gymnast Jordan Chiles, a silver medalist in the 2020 games in Japan, and 34-year-old shooter Vincent Hancock, a three-time Olympic gold medalist.

The opening ceremony also celebrated two of the country's most famous poets, Pablo Neruda and Gabriela Mistral. Colombian singer Sebastián Yatra was the main musical attraction

Jordan scores three of NZ seven tries

PARIS, Oct 21, (AP): New Zealand bulldozed through Argentina 44-6 to reach the **Rugby World Cup final for** a record fifth time.

The All Blacks will bid for a record fourth title.Right winger Will Jordan scored three of the All Blacks' seven tries to become the tournament leading scorer with eight, while flanker Shannon Frizell grabbed two tries in a clinical demonstration.

Going into the semifinal, there was a question mark whether the All Blacks could back up physically and mentally their astonishing herculean effort to topple Ireland last weekend. It didn't take long to show they were as up for the semifinal in which they started as the firm favorite as they were for the quarterfinal in which they were the

heavy underdogs.

The All Blacks outclassed Argentina with power and pace and sent the Pumas scrum reeling backwards. But the defense might have been the most impressive again, as it was in containing Ireland last weekend. They finished with 195 tackles, but made 121 of them in the first half when they missed only 10. That exhausted the Pumas, who threw everything at the All Blacks but were virtually out of the contest by halftime at 20-6 behind.

RUGBY

As the game opened up more in the second spell, the All Blacks showed off their ruthlessness by building attacks and battering the Pumas to the point of fatigue. They led 39-6 going into the last quarter, when they added only a hat trick try for Jordan.

Jordan could have had a fourth try in the match but Richie Mo'unga ignored the overlap and chose to go on his own and was wrapped up. No matter, Jordan has a tournament-leading eight tries, matching the single tournament record set by Jonah Lomu in 1995, Bryan Habana in 2007 and Julian Savea in 2015. And Jordan has

one more match to go.

The most lopsided semifinal result since 1987 when eventual champions New Zealand beat Wales 49-6 started with an early penalty for Argentina's Emiliano Boffelli after they wasted 14 phases in the first two minutes.

New Zealand scored their first try after 11 minutes. A kickable penalty was kicked to the corner, the All Blacks

Iguodala, 4-time champ with GSW, retires

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct 21, (AP): Andre Iguodala, a four-time champion with the Golden State Warriors during a 19-year NBA career,

is retiring.
"It's just the right time," the 39-year-old Iguodala told And-scape in a telephone interview for a story published Friday. "Time started to get limited for me and I didn't want to put anything in the back seat. I didn't want to have to try to delegate time anymore. Especially with on the court, off the court with family. A lot."

He said family has a lot of do

with his decision.

"You want to play at a high level. But then family is a lot. My son is 16 and then two girls. So, (I'm) looking forward to seeing them grow up in those important years," he said.

Iguodala, the No. 9 overall pick in the 2004 NBA draft out of Arizona, played in 1,231 games. He spent eight seasons with the Philadelphia 76ers, one in Den-

ver, six with Golden State, two in Miami and the last two back with the Warriors. He was part of NBA champions in 2015, 2017, 2018 and 2022 and the MVP of the Finals in 2015.

Over his career, he averaged 11.3 points - including a high of 19.9 with the 76ers in 2007-08 -4.9 rebounds and 4.2 assists. He made his only All-Star appearance in 2012 with the 76ers.

"He's one of the main reasons we've got those four banners hanging up. He was a foundational piece of what has been one of the great runs in NBA history," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said. "In many ways, Andre set the tone for the whole thing by agreeing to come off the bench in 2014-15, really sacrificing, and making the move that unlocked the team that allowed Harrison (Barnes) to thrive, that strengthened our bench, but also set a tone for unselfishness and team first mentality. ... Andre was just special."

hammered the Pumas and narrowed their defense, and Mo'unga's double miss-out pass allowed Jordan to stroll over.

Minutes later, the Pumas were going nowhere after 10 phases when wing Mark Tele'a stripped Pumas scrumhalf Gonzalo Bertranou. Rieko Ioane and Mo'unga counterattacked and Jordie Barrett ended up rolling across the tryline.

The Pumas hit back with

12-phase move that netted Boffelli's second penalty kick but Mo'unga's penalty made it 15-6 and flanker Shannon Frizell walked over for the third try on halftime. At the end of 12 phases and way past 40 minutes, Tele'a broke through five tackles and Smith and Mo'unga set up Frizell. Mo'unga's conversion attempt hit the



New Zealand's Will Jordan scores a try during the Rugby World Cup semifinal match between Argentina and New Zealand at the Stade de France in Saint-Denis, outside Paris. (AP)

British eyes 25% share of Man U

Ratcliffe could have major say in Utd if he buys minority stake in the club

lead player negotiations.

MANCHESTER, England, Oct 21, (AP): If British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe is successful in his attempt to buy a minority stake in Manchester United, he could end up with a major

say in the running of the underperforming club. The owner of petrochemicals giant Ineos is ready to invest in the storied English soccer club after rival Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar said over the weekend he was withdrawing from the bidding process.

Ratcliffe is trying to buy a 25% share of United and also wants to run soccer operations, a person with knowledge of the proposal told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly

United's American owners, the Glazer family, in November announced plans to seek outside investment that could have resulted in the sale of the 20-time English league cham-

Ratcliffe initially bid for the family's controlling stake of about 69%, while Qatari banker

With the process dragging on beyond an expected completion date of June, Ratcliffe has adjusted his offer and that could pave the way to him becoming a co-owner of the club he has

Sheikh Jassim wanted 100% of the

supported since he was a child. Ratcliffe's bid would mean the Glazers, who also own the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, remain in control of

United. But if he is given responsibility of running the sporting side of the business, it would give him a real opportunity to improve the team's performance on the field.

United have not won a league title since former manager Alex Ferguson retired in 2013.

United won the Champions League title in 2008, five Premier League titles, one FA Cup, five League Cups and the Europa League under the Glazers, but the vast majority of those trophies were won by Ferguson. United have won four trophies in 10 years since his retirement.

Ratcliffe reportedly still eventually wants to take complete control of the club over a staggered process, but that has not been confirmed.

Ratcliffe is one of Britain's richest people and is said to be worth \$15.1 billion. He previously tried to buy Chelsea and already owns French club Nice and cycling's Team INEOS. He is one-third shareholder of the Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One team and competes in the America's Cup with sailing team INEOS Britannia.

Despite spending about \$2 billion on transfers in the past decade, United have been toppled as English soccer's most dominant force. While rivals Manchester City have been backed by the vast wealth of Abu Dhabi's ruling family, United have still been able to compete for the world's leading players and has broken records to sign the likes of Paul Pogba and Harry Maguire.

But that hasn't brought success, with many of United's signings failing to live up to the expectations of leading the

There have been changes in recent years. Former executive vice chairman Ed Woodward has gone. The role of football director was introduced, with John Murtough appointed to that position, and Matt Hargreaves was recently hired to

The club believe thier soccer operations department has been strengthened, pointing to the recent signings of Andre Onana, Mason Mount and Rasmus Hojlund as evidence of an improving recruitment policy. Hojlund is considered among the best emerging strikers in

Europe and was signed from Atalanta for 64 million pounds Critics, however, would point to Hojlund joining Atalanta

just a year earlier for a reported 20 million euros (\$21.2 million) and Onana moving from Ajax to Inter Milan on a free transfer in 2022. United paid 51 million euros (\$57 million) for the goalkeeper this year.

United manager Erik ten Hag has been backed by Murtough and United since he was hired last year.

The Dutchman has been allowed to bring in expensive signings like Brazil internationals Antony and Casemiro, as well as Hojlund, as he tries to overhaul the squad.

SOCCER

He enjoyed an impressive first season when winning the club's first trophy in six years - the League Cup - and leading United back to the Champions League.

Ten Hag has also been backed over his disciplining of star players such as Cristiano Ronaldo and Jadon Sancho, while Maguire has been stripped of the captaincy and made a peripheral figure in the team after falling out of favor.

While fans have jeered as United has endured a difficult start to this season, losing six of its first 11 games, Ten Hag remains popular.

His record at Ajax when winning three league titles and two cups shows he can deliver success.

He is the club's fifth permanent manager since Ferguson A policy of hiring and firing clearly hasn't worked, but

would Ratcliffe want to make his own appointment if in Old Trafford may be iconic, but it is in need of redevelopment. It remains the biggest club stadium in the country, but looks dated compared to Tottenham's new ground, which

regularly hosts NFL games.
Ratcliffe is reportedly offering about 1.3 billion pounds (\$1.58 billion) for a minority stake, but it is not known how that money will be spent. Ratcliffe also reportedly wants to expand Old Trafford from 74,000 seats to 90,000.

It is not likely that stadium redevelopments would come under soccer operations, but it would be a meaningful change that would generate extra funds and also appeal to support-

Last year, United appointed stadium developers Populous to look at options for Old Trafford. While another possibility would be to rebuild the stadium, that would pose problems in terms of relocating the team during the building process and

Pak slip out of the top four

Warner, Marsh hit centuries to help give Australia 62-run win over Pakistan

BENGALURU, India, Oct 21, (AP): David Warner and Mitchell Marsh powered Australia to a 62-run victory over Pakistan with their entertaining centuries in the fourth game for both teams at the Cricket World Cup.

Pakistan paid heavily for dropping Warner on 10 as the left-hander blazed his way to 163 off 124 balls and Marsh celebrated his 32nd birthday with a career-best 121 off 108 balls in Australia's imposing total of 367-9.

Pakistan, which won the toss and elected to field, came back strongly in the last 10 overs with Shaheen Afridi picking 5-54 and Haris Rauf, who was smacked for 24 in his first over by Warner and Marsh, taking 3-83. But the damage done by Warner and Marsh was more than enough to give Australia enough runs on board.

Australia kept coming hard at Pakistan once claiming the wickets of both openers Imam-ul-Haq (70) and Abdullah Shafique (64) before it got Babar Azam's team bowled out for 305 with

more than four overs to spare. Adam Zampa picked up the key wicket of Babar, the world's top-

ranked ODI batter, for yet another unimpressive knock of 18 at this World Cup as the legspinner finished with 4-53. Marcus Stoinis (2-40) broke through the threatening opening stand by having both Shafique and Imam dismissed in his first two overs before Pakistan's middle-order capitulated.

"First 34 overs with the ball and fielding cost us," Babar said. "We dropped Warner and such batters ensure they cash in. Credit to our quicks and spinners for coming back in the last 15 (overs).'

Pakistan, which lost by seven wickets to arch rivals India in their last game at Ahmedabad, slipped out of the top four with four points from four games.

Five-time champion Australia earned a second straight win after losing to India and South Africa, and occupy fourth spot on better run-rate than



Australia's David Warner hits a six during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup match between Australia and Pakistan in Bengaluru, India. (AP)

Imam and Abdullah gave Pakistan hope of chasing down a record-breaking total in the World Cup by raising a 134-run stand before both fell in Stoinis' successive overs while going for expansive shots against the right-

Cummins then took a well-judged two-handed catch at short mid-wicket off Zampa to end another brief knock for Babar. The Pakistan skipper has scored just one half century in four games at the World Cup - in a losing cause against India.

Zampa then returned for his last spell and quickly polished off the lower order when he had Mohammad Rizwan (40) and Iftikhar Ahmed (26) trapped leg before wicket and then got Mohammad Nawaz stumped in his final over.

CRICKET

Earlier, Warner survived Pakistan's lbw television referral on the first ball off Afridi before Usama Mir, coming into the playing XI for out-of-form Shadab Khan, dropped a regulation catch at mid-on.

Warner and Marsh raised a blazing 259-run opening-wicket stand - Australia best first-wicket partnership in the World Cups - as Pakistan bowlers couldn't stem the flow of runs on a perfect batting wicket with short boundaries on both sides at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Both batters completed their centuries in the 31st over as they smacked 24 boundaries and 18 big sixes that included one splendid crouched six by Warner in Rauf's first over.

Marsh got out in the 34th over when Mir didn't slip at short fine leg and took a fine catch and Glenn Maxwell's promotion lasted just one ball as he holed out to mid off, giving Afridi two wickets in two balls

As part of efforts to support the sustainable growth of sports sector

KIB renews support to Al-Abdulrazzaq

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) renewed its sponsorship agreement with Kuwaiti jet-ski champion, Yousef Al-Abdulrazzaq for the 2023/24 season. The collaboration falls in line with the Bank's comprehensive strategy for achieving sustainable development and its commitment to supporting talented national athletes in local, regional and international sporting events and competitions.

This enduring collaboration between the Bank and the world champion yielded numerous victories. Al-Abdulrazzaq won the jet-ski world championship six times and nabbed a gold medal while competing for Kuwait at the Asian Games. His international accolades and achievements thus far have qualified him to become a Guinness World Record

This year, Al-Abdulrazzaq will be competing in the UIM Aquabike World Championship for the 2023-24 season, in addition to the King's Cup competition in Thailand, the UÂE Jet Ŝki Championship, and the Kuwait World Championship, and many more.

Commenting on this sponsorship, Marwa Marafie, Manager of Marketing and Corporate Communication at KIB, said: "At KIB, we have always been staunch supporters of aspiring national athletes, as we strive to help elevate the local sports sector. To this end, we are delighted to renew our one-year sponsorship agreement with Yousef Al-Abdulrazzaq and provide him the financial and moral support required to continue achieving notable success all while carryingKuwait's flag high in regional and international competitions.

Marafie affirmed that the Bank firmly believes in its responsibility, as a national financial institution, to support world-class Kuwaiti athletes, who inspire current and future generations to integrate sports into their routines and lead vigorous and well-balanced lives. She went on to applaud the remarkable achievements of Al-Abdulrazzaq over his illustrious career spanning more than 19 years, wishing him the best of luck during the upcoming season.

It serves to note that KIB continues to expand the scope of its robust social responsibility program, with activities and initiatives that empower the community in which it serves and all its members. Driven by its 'Bank for Life' slogan, KIB is keen to cement its role as a leading banking institution that supports passionate, motivated athletes and the overall local sports sector, due to its growing importance in the Kuwaiti

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and



Kuwaiti jet ski champion Yousef Al-Abdulrazzag with KIB official

Al-Kazemi triumphs at Kuwait Equestrian Champ'ship

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: In a remarkable display of equestrian skill, the international rider Shaker Al-Kazemi was crowned the champion of the second edition of the Kuwait Equestrian Center Show Jumping Championship. This thrilling event unfolded at the Center's track in the Subhan

EQUESTRIAN

Al-Kazemi's outstanding performance secured him the top spot in the challenging fifth main round, set at a height of 130 cm. Following closely behind were the skilled knights Ahmed Al-Ansari, Khaled Al-Khubaizi, Abdul-Wahab Al-Faris, Fawaz Rashid, and Ghazi Al-Jariri.

In the fourth round, set at a height of 120 cm, rider Ali Al-Kharafi demonstrated his prowess by claiming the firstplace position. He outshone competitors such as Hussein Al-Kharafi, Fawaz Al-Subaie, and Khaled Al-Khubaizi. At a height of 110 cm, it was Faisal Al-Khunaini who took the

The competition also witnessed a substantial number of riders participating in the two rounds of the beginner category, with jumps set at heights of 70 and 90 cm.



The champion receiving an award.

Khaitan hold Al-Kuwait, Al-Arabi narrow the gap



A passionate fan entering the field, proudly carrying the Palestinian flag onto the field.

Al-Hajri expresses satisfaction with draw

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff **KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21:** Al-Kuwait had to settle for just one point as they drew against Khaitan in the fifth round of the Zain Premier League. Khaitan initiated the scoring with Brazilian player Wellington finding the net in the 10th minute. However, **Al-Kuwait** scored a late equalizer, thanks to Fahd Al-Hajri. The game held its breath as Tunisian Yassin Al-Khanisi missed a crucial penalty in the final moments of the

match. Al-Abyad remained the league leaders with 13 points, while Khaitan earned the fifth point.

Meanwhile, Al-Arabi closed in on the frontrunners, narrowing the gap to just two points. They secured a 2-1 victory over Al-Fahaheel in the same round, with two goals courtesy of Moroccan player Hamza Khaba. This boosted Al-Arabi's total to 11 points, while Al-Fahaheel maintained their previous tally of two

SOCCER

Notably, the match between Al-Arabi and Al-Fahaheel saw a passionate fan entering the field, proudly carrying the Palestinian

Turning to the AFC Cup, both Al-Arabi and Al-Kuwait are gearing up for their upcoming matches. "Al-Akhdar" conducted an internal camp in preparation for hosting Bahrain's Riffa in the third round of the third group competition. Technical meetings and a press conference were on the agenda, at Jaber Al-Ahmad

International Stadium. On the other hand, Al-Abyad embarked on their journey to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as they get ready to face the Syrian Al-Ahly Aleppo Union in the third round of the second group competitions.

Fahd Al-Hajri, captain of "Al-Abyad," expressed his satisfaction with the draw against Khaitan, emphasizing that it's better than a loss. He commended Khaitan's performance and their ability to deliver an impressive game. He also highlighted the need for more effort throughout the league's long journey, expressing his confidence in the team's ability to secure their title for the third consecutive season.

The fifth round of the league will come to a close with a single match between Al-Nasr and Al-Qadsia at Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium at 7:15 pm. Al-Qadsia aim to capitalize on the leaders setback and secure a victory to close the gap on their rivals, while Al-Nasr seek their third victory in the league.



MP Shuaib Ali Shaaban honoring fencer Makrama Al-Shamlan.

Al-Shamlan honored for historic 19th Asian Games performance

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 21: The Kuwait Fencing Federation recently hosted the Kuwait National Junior Championship, showcasing the prowess of 125 local club players in three weapons: saber, fencing, and epee. Adding to the competition's international flair, junior athletes from the Uzbekistan national team also participated, making their mark at the Federation's Daiya-area

The prestigious ceremony witnessed the crowning of the victorious athletes by none other than Abdul Karim Al-Shamlan, President of the Football Association, and Hamad Al-Awadhi, the Secretary.

FENCING

In a separate gesture of appreciation, Member of Parliament Shuaib Ali Shaaban bestowed honors upon Yousef Al-Shamlan, the Kuwaiti national team's saber fencing champion. Yousef's accolade came in recognition of his historic performance in the 19th Asian Games held in Hangzhou, China, where he clinched the bronze medal. Notably, this achievement marked a first in the history of the Asian Games for Kuwait, the Gulf Arab region, and

Gulf-Arab fencing. This distinguished recognition was further celebrated by the Youth Board of Directors, with the presence of key figures from the Kuwaiti Fencing Federation, including its Chairman and Board members. Also present were the Vice President of the Youth Club, the Head of the Fencing System, Muhammad Al-Otaibi, the Treasurer, Fahd Al-Azmi, and the Game Director, Sami Al-Otaibi.

Abdul Karim Al-Shamlan, President of the Fencing Federation, expressed the Federation's commitment to leveraging all available resources to support Kuwaiti clubs. Their objective is clear: to cultivate a generation of exceptional talent capable of representing Kuwait on the global stage and securing top positions in international competitions.

Al Hilal extend lead in the Saudi league

RIYADH, Oct 21: In the tenth round of the Saudi Roshan League, Al Hilal secured a 1-0 victory over Al Khaleej. This triumph further solidified Al-Hilal's position at the top of the league standings with 26 points, establishing a three-point lead over their closest rivals, Al-Taawoun. In contrast, Al-Khaleej remained at the 9 points, occupying the 12th spot.

The lone goal of the match came from the foot of Aleksandar Mitrovic, who found the net in the 30th minute.

In another match from the same round, Al-Fateh dominated as they defeated Abha 4-1. This victory pushed Al-Fateh's total points to 20, securing them fourth place on goal difference, trailing behind Al-Ittihad. On the flip side, Abha's score stagnated at 7

points, placing them 16th. Al-Taawoun faced against Al-Ittihad, with both teams securing a single goal each. Al-Taawoun now boast 23 points in second place, while Al-Ittihad reached 20 points in third place. The match saw French star Karim Benzema giving Al-Ittihad the lead, only to inadvertently score against his own team in the 26th minute, leveling the

Al-Fayhaa emerged victorious in their match against Al-Akhdood, with a final score of 2-1. This win lifted Al-Fayhaa to 14 points, positioning them in eighth place, while Al-Akhdood remained at seven points, residing in 14th place.



Fireworks explode over the National Stadium during the opening ceremony of the Pan American Games in Santiago, Chile, Friday, Oct. (AP) - See Page 14

Sports

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Salah the hero, Liverpool win Merseyside derby

10-man Everton beaten 2-0

LIVERPOOL, England, Oct 21, (AP): Liverpool needed two late goals by Mohamed Salah to get past 10-man Everton 2-0 in the Premier League in a Merseyside derby dominated by refereeing decisions on Saturday.

Ashley Young picked up what appeared to be a soft yellow card in the 18th minute then was sent off in the 37th for another foul on Liverpool winger Luis Diaz, handing the hosts a numerical advantage at

SOCCER

That was the 23rd red card handed out in a Merseyside derby in the Premier League era - more than in any other fixture - and it could easily have been 24 when Ibrahima Konate, already on a yellow, avoided another

after pulling back Everton striker Beto. "Ibrahima could have gone, yes," Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said. Konate was immediately substi-

tuted by Klopp, Everton manager Sean Dyche raged on the sidelines and he endured more frustration when Diaz's cross struck the outstretched right arm of substitute Michael Keane in the

Salah dispatched the penalty in front of The Kop in the 75th minute for his sixth league goal and added another following a counterattack the eighth minute of stoppage time as Liverpool claimed a sixth win in nine matches this campaign.

"I liked a lot of moments and then the red card was pretty influential in the game," Klopp said. "I wanted us to be calm and ignore that we were one man up. It is difficult in the stands because it's like now you have to create with each possession and it took a

while until we got chances.' Dyche said he was stunned that Konate stayed on the field.

"It's the bizarre nature of the modern game," he said. "How they, at 0-0, Messi, Haaland both deserve to win award

MANCHESTER, England, Oct 21, (AP): Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola says Lionel Messi and Erling Haaland both deserve to win this year's Ballon d'Or award for the world's best soccer player.

Messi, a seven-time winner of the sport's biggest individual honor, fulfilled his life's ambition by leading Argentina to victory at last year's World Cup.
Haaland led City to a treble of

trophies, including the Premier League, Champions League and FA Cup titles in his first year at the club, scoring 52 goals.

Guardiola, who coached Messi at Barcelona and repeatedly described him as the greatest player of all time, believes it is impossible to separate the two when the Ballon d'Or winner is announced on Oct. 30.

"I always said that the Ballon d'Or had to be of two sections one for Messi and one for the others," the City manager said Friday. "Haaland should win. We won the treble because he scored 52 goals but, of course, Messi - his worst season is the best of most players. Both deserve it.

have 11 men on the pitch, I don't think anyone in the stands knows why - their manager certainly didn't because he took the player off straightaway.'

Bournemouth midfielder Tyler Adams is expected to miss at least three months after a second surgery for a hamstring problem that has limited

him to just one game since March.
The 24-year-old U.S. captain hurt the hamstring in training after Leeds' match against Brighton on March 11, then had surgery.

He signed a five-year deal with Bournemouth on Aug. 20 and made his club debut by playing the final 21 minutes of an English League Cup game against Stoke on Sept. 27. Adams felt discomfort afterward.



Liverpool's Luis Diaz kicks the ball ahead of Everton's Ashley Young during the English Premier League soccer match between Liverpool and Everton, at Anfield in Liverpool, England. (AP)

Sri Lanka earn first win at Cricket World Cup

South Africa rout England by 229 runs at World Cup

MUMBAI, India, Oct 21, (AP): South Africa demolished England by 229 runs in the Cricket World Cup on Saturday to leave the beleaguered defending champions facing an early exit from the tournament.

England fell to their third loss in four matches so far, having previously been defeated by New Zealand and, embarrassingly, Afghanistan.

The Proteas bounced back from their own surprising loss - to the Netherlands on Tuesday - to post 399-7 after being put into bat in stifling conditions in Mumbai. Heinrich Klaasen (109) smashed a 61-ball century and Marco Jansen made unbeaten 75 off 42 balls.

England plunged to 38-4 after 8.1 overs in their reply and were eventually dismissed for 170.

Sri Lanka finally notched their first win at the Cricket World Cup by beating the Netherlands by five wickets on Saturday in Lucknow, India.

The Dutch, which produced a stunning 38-run win over South Africa, scored a competitive total of 262 on the back of maiden ODI half-centuries from Sybrand Engelbrecht (70) and Logan van Beek (59).

Napoli beat Verona to relieve pressure on Garcia MILAN, Oct 21, (AP): Khvicha Kvaratskhelia appears

back to his stunning best as he scored two goals to help Napoli beat Hellas Verona 3-1 in Serie A on Saturday and relieve some of the pressure on coach Rudi Garcia.

Kvaratskhelia, who got married at home in Georgia during the international break, netted a goal either side of halftime. Matteo Politano set both of those up and also scored the opener.

That took Kvaratskhelia's tally to five goals and three assists in his last seven matches for club and The Georgia winger was a revelation last season and

was named Serie A player of the year after helping Napoli to the title but hadn't scored since March before ending his goal drought last month.

cia - who replaced title-winning coach Luciano Spalletti in the offseason - was already under pressure and had met several times with club president Aurelio De Laurentiis recently.

Napoli was also without standout forward Victor

Napoli withstood a promising start from the home side before taking the lead in the 27th minute. Giacomo Raspadori did well to get in a cross from the left to the back post where Politano volleyed the ball into the bottom corner.

Politano turned provider two minutes before halftime as he sent Kvaratskhelia down the left and the winger cut inside, feinted and then squeezed a shot between Verona goalkeeper Lorenzo Montipò and The Napoli duo combined again 10 minutes after the

break as Kvaratskhelia sprinted from inside his own half onto a long Politano ball and raced clear before cutting inside past a defender and placing a precise effort into the bottom right corner.

However, Verona got back into the game just five minutes later with a somewhat bizarre goal. Davide Faraoni's cross came off Napoli defender Giovanni Di Lorenzo, who didn't seem aware of the ball, and fell to Darko Lazović to smash into the roof of the net.

Verona threatened to reduce the deficit further but Napoli goalkeeper Alex Meret pulled off several impres-

sixth day of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London. (AP) **Man U, England legend Charlton dies**

In this file photo, former England soccer player Bobby Charlton stands in

the Royal Box on Centre Court to receive applause from the crowd on the

MANCHESTER, England, Oct 21, (AP): Bobby Charlton, an English soccer icon who survived a plane crash that decimated a Manchester United team destined for greatness to become the heartbeat of his country's 1966 World Cup-winning team, has died.

He was 86. A statement from Charlton's family, released by United, said he died Saturday surrounded by his family.

An extravagantly gifted midfielder with a ferocious shot, Charlton was the leading scorer for both United (249 goals) and England (49 goals) for more than 40 years until being overtaken by Wayne Rooney.

"Sir Bobby was a hero to millions, not just in Manchester, or the United Kingdom, but wherever football is played around the world," United said. "He was admired as much for his sportsmanship and integrity as he

was for his outstanding qualities as a footballer; Sir Bobby will always be remembered as a giant of the game." Alex Ferguson, who managed United from 1986-2013, said before Charlton's death that he "is the greatest

Manchester United player of all time - and that's saying something.' "Bobby Charlton is absolutely without peer in the history of the English

game," Ferguson said. Charlton was also renowned for his humility, discipline and sportsmanship. He was never sent off in 758 appearances for United from 1956-73 or 106 internationals for England from 1958-70.

Charlton played with George Best and Denis Law in the so-called "Trinity" that led United to the 1968 European Cup after surviving the 1958

Editor-in-Chief

Munich crash that wiped out the celebrated "Busby Babes" team. He won three English league titles at United, and one FA Cup.

"For a footballer, he offered an unparalleled combination of grace, power and precision," said former United defender Bill Foulkes, another survi-

vor of the Munich air crash. "It added up to a greatness and something more - something I can only

Charlton's England scoring record stood for 45 years until Rooney scored his 50th goal for the national team in September 2015. Three of his England goals came in the World Cup in 1966, during which Charlton played every minute for the team and stood out especially in the semifinals when he scored twice against Portugal to lead

England to a first major final. England beat West Germany 4-2 af-

ter extra time in the final. Although Ryan Giggs beat Charlton's appearance record for United in 2008, his scoring record for the club lasted another nine years. It was only in 2017 - 44 years after Charlton last wore the famous red jersey of England's most successful club that Rooney scored his 250th goal for United.

After retiring in 1973, Charlton went into coaching and founded a vouth scheme that included David Beckham, a future United and England great, among its participants.

After brief spells in charge of Preston, Wigan and Irish side Waterford. Charlton returned to United in 1984 as a director and persuaded the board in 1986 to appoint Ferguson, who delivered 38 trophies during nearly 27 years in charge.

CRICKET

Offspinner Aryan Dutt (3-44) troubled Sri Lanka with the new ball in the batting powerplay before Sadeera Samarawickrama made an unbeaten 91 off 107 balls and eased Sri Lanka to 263-5 for their first points after losses to South Africa, Pakistan and Australia.

Opening batter Pathum Nissanka followed his half-centuries against Australia and Pakistan with 54 as Samarawickrama anchored Sri Lanka's run-chase.

Dutt troubled Sri Lanka's top-order with his variations as he claimed the wickets of Kusal Mendis (11) and captain Kusal Perera (5) inside the batting

Fast bowler Paul van Meekeren provided the Netherlands hope when Nissanka got a healthy inside of in the 17th over and was caught behind before Samarawickrama added valuable 77 runs for the fourth wicket with

Charith Asalanka (44). Dutt returned and had Asalanka clean bowled in his last over but Samarawickrama dominated spinners and the seamers and raised another half-century stand with Dhananjaya de Silva, who made 30.

Earlier, after electing to bat first, Netherlands ran into early trouble when theylost five wickets for 43 runs and slumped to 91-6 against pace in the 22nd over.

Dilshan Madushanka (4-49) and Kasun Rajitha (4-50) mopped the top order with their career-best bowling figures, but Engelbrecht and van Beek led a grand Dutch recovery as they shared a World Cup record-breaking 130-run seventh wicket stand.

Engelbrecht and van Beek then denied Sri Lanka success for more than

With only four wins in the opening eight rounds, Gar-

Osimhen, who injured his right thigh while with Nigeria's national team.

23 overs before they fell while at-

tempting to accelerate in the last death

Sri Lanka have two points from four

games. The Netherlands also have two

points but are at No. 8 on better run-rate

of Dharamsala received the season's

first snowfall. As television cameras

pan out behind the stadium, the Hima-

layan mountaintops are noticeable in

Temperatures are set to rise Sunday,

though, when the only two unbeaten

their pristine white glory.

Over the past week, the Indian city

than both Sri Lanka and Afghanistan.

overs.

New Zealand and host India are 4-0 in the tournament, although the 2019 runners-

up New Zealander lead on net run rate. New Zealand began their tournament by beating defending champions England by nine wickets, and then made easy work of the Netherlands (by 99 runs), Bangladesh (by eight wickets) and Afghanistan (by 149 runs).

Those last three wins have come at a canter for the Black Caps, and were never in doubt. The tougher part of their league campaign begins on Sunday, against two-time champions India, followed by Australia, South Africa, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

"We don't want to read too much into it (the tougher schedule ahead). Every team in this tournament can win on its day and we have seen that already," said New Zealand left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner after the win

against Afghanistan. "India will be a massive challenge in their home conditions. At the moment,

they are looking pretty tough to beat.' Indeed, India has been steamrolling its opponents. It beat Australia by six wickets, brushed aside Afghanistan by eight wickets, beat archrivals Pakistan by seven wickets and defeated Bangladesh by seven wickets.



Sri Lanka's Kasun Rajitha bowls during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup match between Sri Lanka and Netherlands in Lucknow. India. (AP)

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