



HH Amir's state visit to Oman reflects strength of ties

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah leaves on Tuesday with his accompanying delegation to Oman on a state visit.

His Highness the Amir, with the Sultanate of Oman Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq will attend the opening ceremony of the Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Company on Wednesday.

The state visit of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the Sultanate of Oman reflects the strength of ties between the two nations, said Kuwaiti Ambassador to Oman Dr. Mohammad Al-Hajri on Monday.

Speaking to KUNA, Ambassador Al-Hajri lauded the historic relations linking the two countries, saying that the Kuwaiti and Oman people were looking forward to boost ties on all possible domains.

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Kuwait reopens 'entry visas' for family, commercial and tourism

Issuance resumes with new conditions

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The Ministry of Interior has decided to resume the issuance of entry visas for family, commercial and tourism purposes under new conditions starting from Wednesday.

In a press statement, the ministry disclosed this is in compliance with the instructions of Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Yusuf

Al-Sabah and the desire to stimulate commercial, economic and tourism movement in the country; while taking into account the social aspects.

The ministry added that the residency affairs departments in various governorates will receive visa applicants who should book an appointment through the Matta platform.

Following are the conditions for the issuance of visit visa for a family member:

- The visa is granted to the parents, wife and children of expatriate workers provided their salary is not less than KD400 and not less than KD800 for other relatives.

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P.M. HOSTS EDITORS-IN-CHIEF, MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES AT SEIF PALACE



Left: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah with Sulaiman Al-Jarallah, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers.



Right: HH the PM in a meeting with editors-in-chief of local dailies and representatives of media outlets – with attendance of Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi.

'Expat residency' on agenda

Lawmaker queries gov't over family visa decision

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: MP Abdul Karim Al-Kandari asked Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Yusuf Al-Sabah about the expected number of foreigners entering the country in view of the decision to open the family visa; projected cost for the State in terms of subsidies, health services and other public services; rationale behind allowing this number of foreigners to enter the country; investment plans in this regard for the benefit of the public treasury; impact of the decision on the State's plans to control the demographic composition, proportions of workers and nationalities in the country; bases of the conditions for obtaining a family visa and the exemptions from these conditions; and mechanism to verify the authenticity of the educational certificates of those who wish to apply for a family visa and if their degree matches their line of work in the country.

Meanwhile, the ordinary parliamentary sessions slated for Tuesday and Wednesday will tackle the following:

- Request of the government to increase the annual budget for the head of State by KD50 million to cover the relevant expenses,
- Election of the members of some committees,
- Formation of new committees,
- Vote on the minutes of the previous sessions,
- Incoming letters,
- Parliamentary queries,
- Bill on reforming constituencies,
- Bill on amending the Foreigners Residency Law,
- Amiri speech at the inaugural session in the current year of the 17th parliamentary term,
- Reports of the fact-finding committee tasked to investigate violations in the armament deals -- Eurofighter and Caracal helicopters.

Until now, there is no assurance that the reports of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee on the proposals to increase the cost of living allowance from KD120 to KD250 per month and the zero interest loans for retirees to be equal to 15 times their pension will be discussed in the upcoming sessions due to the conservative position of the government — that the implementation of both bills will exhaust the public budget.

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Yusuf Al-Sabah will lead the government in the upcoming session; as HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is currently outside the country, so HH the Deputy Amir and Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah is carrying out the tasks of HH the Amir.

On the other hand, MP Khalid Al-Otaibi said there is no time to waste on the "maneuvers" of the government. He pointed out that bills deemed beneficial for the citizens were discussed thoroughly and studied well; hence, postponing the discussion of these bills in the Assembly is outrightly rejected. He warned that requesting for such postponement could signal the beginning of crises.

MP Badr Nashmi Al-Anzi urged the government to adopt a clear and plain position on the abovementioned bills. He said the Assembly is willing to cooperate with the government, hoping the latter will do the same in the interest of citizens. He added that postponing the discussion of these bills could lead to tension and skepticism.

He wondered why the government announced that its work program is ready, as it recently urged the citizens to contribute to laying down the program by sending their priorities to the Cabinet. This means the program is not yet ready, he asserted.

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We are finalizing the government's work program: PM

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The government is in the process of finalizing its work program, which will be referred to the National Assembly in accordance with Article 98 of the Constitution, reports Al-Seyassah daily quoting HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

Article 98 states: "Upon formation, every Ministry shall submit its program to the National Assembly and the Assembly may express whatever comments it deems appropriate thereon."

HH the Prime Minister made the announcement during his meeting with the editors-in-chief of local newspapers and

representatives of the relevant media entities at Seif Palace on Tuesday. Head of the Prime Minister's Office Abdulaziz Dekheel Al-Dekheel, Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, and senior State officials also attended the meeting.

His Highness the Prime Minister stressed that the meeting is an opportunity to present general ideas and the main lines of the government's work program. He thanked Allah for the blessing of security, safety and the mercy of good governance; in which the meanings of justice, participation and accountability are rooted in an open political atmosphere that

preserves freedoms and values.

He pointed out that the speech of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah expressed a bold practice in the proposal, adding that His Highness the father of the authorities who is responsible for the security and safety of the nation and citizens.

He affirmed that His Highness the Amir shares his people's concern about the imbalance of justice and the dangers facing the sustainability of the welfare State.

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Kuwaiti flags adorn the street near the National Assembly building.

Municipality adorns roads with 3,880 flags

Kuwait Municipality announced Monday that it adorned bridges and roads with the state's flags in preparation for the 63rd National and 33rd Liberation Day celebrations.

Director of the public relations department and the official spokesperson for Kuwait Municipality, Moham-

mad Al-Sindan, announced in a press release that 183 road advertisements have been installed throughout all governorates of the nation, as well as 3,880 new flags replacing old ones. He further urged citizens and residents to cooperate with municipality bodies to maintain cleanliness of public spaces. (KUNA)

KFAS, KISTI team up for digital innovation

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5, (KUNA): Kuwait Foundation for Advancement of Sciences signed a memorandum of understanding with the Korea Institute of Science and Technology Information (KISTI), aimed at enhancing scientific culture, digital capacities and overhauling the education of sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics.

KFAS said in a statement on Monday that the MoU inking came in line with its vision for contributing to building digital potentials in data of sciences, technology, high-performance computing, artificial intelligence, the internet,

robotics, cyber security and digital transformation.

The MoU stipulates that there is possibility to establish joint programs for boosting digital skills among students and workers in various sectors as well as developing researchers' ability in the State of Kuwait.

Moreover, it sets the stage for cooperation in research, overhauling enterprises related to the AI and technologies, in addition to organizing workshops, devising programs in sciences, technologies, innovation, updating the content of education of sciences and technologies, engineering, and online mathematics.

NewsWatch

RIYADH: Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary General **Jassem Al-Budaiwi** affirmed on Monday support to efforts made to reach a comprehensive political solution for the Yemeni crisis in accordance with the three terms of reference represented by the Gulf Initiative and its executive mechanism, the outcomes of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference, and Security Council Resolution 2216 to achieve security and stability in Yemen.



Al-Budaiwi

The Secretariat General stated that this came during Al-Budaiwi's reception of Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Yemen and general supervisor of Saudi program for Development and Reconstruction of Yemen **Mohammad Al Jaber** in the Secretariat HQ in Riyadh. (KUNA)

DOHA: The state of Qatar stressed on Monday its continuous support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) warning of "disastrous repercussions" in case of discontinuing its funding.

This came during a meeting between Qatar's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs **Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani** and UNRWA Commissioner-General **Philippe Lazzarinito** where they discussed cooperation in humanitarian field, Qatar foreign ministry said in a statement.

The two officials also discussed Qatar-UN cooperation and the latest developments in the Middle East, especially in

Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories, in addition to ways to continue the sustainable entry of humanitarian aid into all areas of the strip.

Al-Thani reaffirmed "Qatar's continuous support to UNRWA especially for the role it played in assisting millions of people in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon."

He also called for separating the agency as an international institution with well-established values and traditions from the allegations against a number of its employees who are under investigation.

On his part, Lazzarinito expressed his gratitude to Qatar and their generous support for its programs which helped in providing urgent humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people. (KUNA)

CAIRO: The League of Arab States confirmed Monday, that the Arab region is considered a crossing point for international trade convoys through history due to its geographical location.

However, the developments taking place in the region have led to a change in the landscape of transport management in the world.

This came in Arab League speech delivered by Director of the Arab Economic Integration Department at the League, **Dr. Bahjat Abul Nasr**, during workshop on establishing an Arab mechanism and database to support the field of the shipbuilding and ship repair industry in the Arab countries.

This workshop is being held under exceptional circumstances that the world is going through, as the global economy witnessed a number of successive challenges since the mortgage crisis, then the spread of the Corona virus, the Russian-Ukrainian war, energy and food crises, and above all that the genocide war in Gaza by Israeli occupation, he said. (KUNA)

Prayer Timings

Fajr 05:14 Asr 15:07
 Sunrise .. 06:35 Maghrib .. 17:29
 Zohr 12:02 Isha 18:48

Local

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

Admin building to handle marine ops, have helipad

Municipality studying expansion of Shuaiba Port, build new berths

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The Deputy Director General for Urban Planning and Structural Planning Affairs in the Kuwait Municipality, Eng. Manal Al-Asfour, said work is underway to study the requests submitted by the Kuwait Ports Authority for the Shuaiba Port development project, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Al-Asfour said, in a letter addressed to the Director General of the Kuwait Ports Authority, the issues related to the Shuaiba Port and the request submitted in this regard are being looked into so that necessary action can be taken towards Shuaiba Port expansion to increase the capacity and create new berths, to approve the height of the administrative building to be constructed to operate and manage the port, and to settle all other issues.

The authorities concerned with the port's work said the representative of the Water Department and the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy have reported their inability to respond, and requested that a study on the reorganization of the Shuaiba Industrial Area be taken into consideration.

Al-Asfour explained work is underway to stabilize the existing Shuaiba Port site, before it is handed over after completion.

The official added, work is also underway to study the KPA requests for the aforementioned Shuaiba Port development project, calling for providing the municipality with "civil aviation" and "security" approvals and the Protection of Vital and Oil Facilities Department, and the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (oil companies operating around the site), regarding the height of the required administrative building.

Regarding the expansion of the port and the dredging sites, it requested that the municipality be provided with the approval of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (oil companies operating around the site), Maritime Transport (Coast Guard), and the Environment Public Authority, so that the study and procedures can be completed according to established systems.

The Corporation had sent a letter to the municipality, regarding issues related to Shuaiba Port, during which it

referred to the coordination meeting held in the municipality to follow up on the latest measures taken regarding the lands belonging to the Kuwait Ports Corporation, and to the measures taken regarding transferring the dependency of Shuaiba Port to the benefit of the Kuwait Ports Authority to take the necessary measures to obtain necessary licenses from the departments affiliated with the municipality, and from the Directorate-General of Fire Department for the existing buildings in Shuaiba Port, calling for taking the following necessary measures:

-- Expansion of Shuaiba Port to increase the port's capacity through the construction of new berths, knowing that the Central Agency for Public Tenders has been contacted with a request to launch a tender for the implementation of the expansion of Shuaiba Port.

-- Excluding the height of the unified administrative building to be constructed in the southwest of Shuaiba Port, on a land surface with an area of approximately 5,249 square meters, from the heights permitted in the region, as the height of the building reached approximately 61 meters from the surface of the ground, and this height came to provide administrative spaces required to operate and manage the port, as the building includes all departments affiliated with the authority and other government agencies required to be present inside the port, in addition to providing rest rooms for employees who work in shifts.

The building also includes a special role for works related to the management of marine operations, and a helipad located on the roof of the building.

On the other hand, Al-Asfour called on the KPA to determine the location of the land required to establish facilities to receive and treat ship waste.

In a letter addressed to the KPA Director General, Al-Asfour requested that the municipality be provided with a plan showing the site's area, dimensions, and coordinates, so that we could study the request in accordance with the applicable regulations.

The KPA explained that receiving and treating this waste requires allocating a plot of land in a suitable place, in accordance with environmental rules that guarantee the protection of the environment from pollution, in order to establish facilities to receive and treat ship waste, in compliance with what is stated in the MARPOL Convention.



Eng. Al-Asfour

Ready for all eventualities: official

No plan to expand conflict: US

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: Regional spokesman for the US State Department Sam Warburg confirmed that his country is not seeking to expand the conflict in the Middle East, indicating that it is prepared for all possibilities, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Warburg told the daily that the US strikes came in response to the ongoing aggression by Iranian-backed groups, which pose a direct threat to the security and stability of the region and the safety of Americans. He assured the daily that the United States does not seek conflict in the Middle East or anywhere else in the world, but everyone who tries to harm Americans must know this: "If harm is done to an American or to the interests of the United States, the United States will respond."

He added: "The goal of these strikes is to reduce the ability of these groups to carry out their attacks, and we are working hard to ensure that no escalation occurs in the region," noting that Iran is the one escalating the situation through its support of terrorist groups and militias in the region.

On whether the United States has concerns about the Iranian or Iraqi response after targeting some sites based on President Joe Biden's decision to direct strikes, Warburg said: "We repeat once again that the decision taken by President Biden to direct strikes that targeted sites used by Iranian-backed groups came in response to the ongoing hostility against American forces and interests in the region. The United States takes into account all pos-

'More instability'

'Strategic mistake'

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: Iranian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Totonji considers the American aggression against Syria and Iraq "a new adventure and a strategic mistake committed by the American administration, and will lead to a doubling of provocations and instability in the region," reports Al-Qabas daily.

In a statement to the daily, Totonji confirmed that these attacks aim to provide protection for the Zionist entity. He warned against the consequences of these adventures, which are considered a threat to regional and international peace and security.

He called on the international community and the United Nations Security Council to confront these illegal and unilateral attacks by the United States of America and prevent the expansion of areas of crisis in the region.

sibilities and takes the necessary measures to protect its people and interests, while being careful to avoid escalation and maintain regional stability.

Regarding the measures taken by the United States to secure American bases in neighboring countries in the region after the strikes, Warburg responded: "The United States is working continuously and closely with its allies in the region to ensure the security and safety of its bases and forces. It is committed to defending itself and is prepared to take all necessary steps to ensure its security and that of its allies in the face of any threat."

Bid to meet 'special' peoples needs

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5, (KUNA): Kuwait Municipal Council in its session Monday approved a request to form a temporary five-member committee for affairs of people of special challenges.

This panel aims to collaborate with all relevant entities in the affairs of disabled people through regular workshops to understand their needs and develop optimal designs.

The Municipal Council returned the proposal to the technical committee for the establishment of a sea bridge connecting Al-Mutlaa City (residential district) to Kuwait city, inviting various entities to express their opinions.

Board members emphasized the significance of the proposal, with planning

conducted by international companies as Al-Mutlaa's population is expected to reach 400,000.

They affirmed necessity of linking up the residential district with Al-Assima (the capital) via a bridge over the sea waters spanning for only 29 kms, instead of 44 kms on land.

The board approved a proposal by the ministry of electricity, water and energy to establish a main relay station in Doha for serving the entertainment city project.

It also blessed an amendment of the decision to develop Al-Mubarakiya market, where the municipality will be able to reconstruct Imam Abdul-Rahman Al-Faisal Museum, deemed a cultural bridge with Saudi Arabia.

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Mild with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 10-38 km/h.
 By Night: Rather cold to cold

Weather

with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-38 km/h.

Station Max Exp Min Rec
 Kuwait City 20 12

Kuwait Airport	22	07
Abdaly	23	05
Jahra	23	09
Salmiyah	19	14
Nuwaisib	21	09
Wafra	23	06

No plans to send domestic workers to Kuwait, says Indonesian envoy

Panel formed to monitor polls: Lina Mariana

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The Ambassador of Indonesia to Kuwait Lina Mariana denied any intention to send domestic workers to Kuwait, insisting that rumors in this regard are not true, and this is not a topic for discussion at the current period.

In a press statement issued the day before yesterday evening during a press conference at the Indonesian Embassy in Kuwait to announce the launch of the Indonesian general elections for the year 2024, Ambassador Mariana said the government is holding elections to choose members of the National House of Representatives, members of the Regional Council of Representatives, the president, the vice president, members of the House of Representatives, provincial members, and members of the Municipal Council.

She explained that there are six people running for president and vice president. A committee has been allocated to manage the elections outside the country, including Kuwait. Eligible voters in 128 countries can cast their votes. The number of Indonesian citizens in Kuwait is 6,164, and those entitled to cast their votes are 3,630 - 1,189 men and 2,441 women.

Those entitled to vote abroad will receive two ballot papers, one to choose the president and his deputy, and the second to choose representatives of the National House of Representatives, as there are eight electoral committees available at the embassy to receive voters.

The ambassador revealed that the voting process will begin at the embassy on February 9 from 8:00am to 6:00pm (Kuwait time), adding, "If none of the presidential candidates and their deputies obtain the minimum number of votes of 50 percent, another round of elections will be organized on June 26, 2024".



Lina Mariana



Boats going out to sea during the drill.



The participating forces briefed on the exercises.

'Ready Defenders 24' to up efficiency

Kuwait, GCC, US and British navies take part in exercises

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense said yesterday that the "Ready Defenders 24" exercise, which is currently being implemented by the naval force with the participation of the Coast Guard, forces from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, and the American and British Navy, aims to raise the combat efficiency of the participating units, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Colonel Hamad Al-Saqr spokesman of the ministry said "Ready Defender 24" is one of the effective exercises and is held periodically, noting that it began last January 28 and continues until February 7, including training on specific operations to reach the highest levels of coordination and cooperation among the participants.

He explained that the exercise is being carried out at the Muhammad Al-Ahmad Naval Base, the Naval Shooting Range, Camp Buring, and Failaka Island.

For his part, the director of the exercise, Brigadier General Matthew Reed, commander of Duty Force 51 of the US Marine Expeditionary Brigade, said that it was "a wonderful exercise between the United States, Kuwait, the United Kingdom, and Saudi Arabia, with observers from the Gulf countries."

For his part, Deputy Director of the exercise, Brigadier General of the Kuwaiti Army, Mohammed Al-Arifi, said, "This joint naval exercise translates cooperation and commitment between the participating forces from the Gulf Cooperation Council and their allies from friendly countries."

Al-Arifi added, "The exercise is a unique opportunity to raise the level of integration and cooperation among the participating countries, which enhances the collective ability to deal with the various security challenges in the region."

Rush, chaos for course registration

Students crisis brewing at KU

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The crisis of the students at the Kuwait University is brewing according to an academic source who said the crisis has worsened, indicating that hundreds of students have not been able to complete their schedules so far, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The start of studies at Kuwait University revealed the worsening crisis due to failure of students to complete their schedules with the permitted academic load according to the regulations.

Sources said hundreds of students flocked to the building of the Deanship of Admission and Registration, to register for academic courses, to complete their schedules, after they had exhausted all available methods during the previous registration period, without success in completing the schedules, due to the lack of staff, and the building of the Deanship of Admission and Registration witnessed heavy student crowding amid unprecedented confusion.

It was noteworthy, according to the source, that some colleges asked their professors to teach without financial compensation due to the exhaustion of the number allowed for the additional burden of professors and the lack of sufficient classrooms for students.

The source stated that there are large numbers of students, in colleges with a high student density, who were unable to complete their study schedules, meaning that they registered for courses less than the load allowed for a university student, indicating that the number of students who did not complete their schedules in some colleges is estimated at hundreds of students.

The source stated that some colleges are urging their professors to volunteer to teach additional courses, after they had exhausted all the regular teaching loads and the additional teaching loads allowed according to the regulations for professors, pointing out that the regulations.

MoH to hold three-day annual medical confab

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: Director of the Medical Emergency Department Dr. Ahmad Al-Shatti called on all doctors and workers in the health sector to benefit from the annual medical emergency conference titled "Emergency Medical Services... Current Reality and Future Aspirations" that will be held for three days from February 18 to February 20.

In a press statement issued yesterday, Dr. Al-Shatti explained that the conference, which is being held under the auspices of the Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, includes ten sessions and three workshops, as well as discussion sessions on 40 scientific papers. An elite group of emergency technicians, doctors, nurses, paramedics, planners and trainers from the Ministry of Health and the relevant authorities will participate in the conference.

He stressed the importance of the conference in creating a platform for exchanging knowledge, skills and experiences, and exploring developments in First Aid and emergency medicine.

Dr. Al-Shatti highlighted the participation of an elite group of local specialists, along with a group of international experts and consultants from four Arab countries - Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the Emirates - and four foreign countries - Australia, Germany, America and Italy.

He explained that the conference, during its sessions, will review emergency medical management services in terms of the air and sea ambulance services, and the achievements realized by the emergency medical management in this field.

It will also review ways to deal with disaster and crisis management, either through preparedness or tracking, and review some models for dealing with major incidents such as explosions and terrorist acts.



Fingerprinting at airport

'Biometrics' continues at border posts, airport

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The Ministry of Interior is actively continuing its efforts to collect biometric fingerprints from citizens, residents, and citizens of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries at various border crossings, Kuwait International Airport, and designated centers, reports Al-Anba daily.

Citizens, residents, and GCC citizens arriving at these centers and complexes can conveniently undergo the biometric fingerprinting process. Designated locations for this purpose include Hawall Security Directorate, Farwaniya Security Directorate, Al-Ahmadi Security Directorate, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Security Directorate, and Al-Jahra Security Directorate (specifically for GCC citizens). Additionally, residents can undergo fingerprinting at the Personality Investigation Department, fingerprinting companies in Ali Sabah Al-Salem region, and the Identity Investigation Department fingerprinting companies in the Jahra area. Notably, the Avenues Mall, 360 Mall, Al-Kout Mall, the Capital Mall, and the Ministries Complex are also equipped for this purpose.

Travelers leaving Kuwait are exempt from the fingerprinting requirement, only having to undergo the process upon their return. In January 2024 alone, Kuwait International Airport conducted biometric fingerprinting for 26,238 arrivals.

'Your Highness the Premier, we have no room for error'

"THE morals of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem stem from an honest foundation built and nurtured by his father, the late Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem (1965-1977), and from it comes justice in his rulings, which is the most important asset from Sheikh Mohammad's ammunition store," columnist **Abdullah Bishara** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"With the launch of a new era, it must be remembered that the basis of political action in Kuwait is based on participation and partnership between the executive and the legislative authorities, in a mutual awareness of avoiding infringement on the powers of each party, from which understanding and co-operation are born, an element absent from the relations that recorded the expansion of the representatives' appetite for rights. The executive authority, and the competition to put forward proposals that undermine its competencies, and among them came tension and chaos infiltrating the way of work, with the government abandoning defending its rights, which escalated the interventions of MPs by proposing solutions to issues that are not within their jurisdiction, and raising the size of the wish list.

"The first lesson for the new government is the inevitability of its intervention in defense of its powers and to ensure the dictates of cooperation, and we expect that His Highness the Prime Minister will fulfill this responsibility by defending, clarifying, commitment, clarity and without the fog of courtesies.

"These are the first steps that will put public opinion at ease, and they are one of the tools from which understanding is generated. If immunity to specializations is secured, the doors for serious joint action will be opened.

"Secondly - Sheikh Mohammad is aware of the extent of the regional turmoil and the intensity of the tensions that are afloat in the atmosphere, and I have no doubt that he is aware of the type of ideologies that affect the course of the countries of the region, which are not devoid of a tendency to expand and infiltrate, which has made the region live in an unhealthy space.

"These are facts that affect Kuwait's security, sovereignty, and reality as a state, while recognizing that it is in dire need of a deterrent that enhances its capabilities to secure its independence and the freedom of its people. We point to the strategic partnership with the two allies, Britain and the United States, reminding that relations of interests are in constant need of understandings, improvements, joint cooperation, and dialogues that go beyond.

"The formalities require participation by organizations and institutions that represent Kuwaiti society, express the feelings of Kuwaiti civil society institutions, and build bridges of understanding and knowledge with their counterparts in Washington and London.

"I would like to remind Sheikh Muhammad that countries begin their development programs when they fulfill the contents of security and bring in its mechanisms, so that development construction can take place in a reassuring and secure environment.

"Third - It is inevitable to confirm the vitality of Kuwait in the path of the Gulf Cooperation Council by resolving the deadlock with initiatives that increase communication networks among members, especially in the security aspects, in development harmony, in political coordination in the Arab and regional sphere, and harmony towards global issues and in the rules of dealing with the global family, in particular big countries.

"The Gulf Cooperation Council remains a vital factor in preserving the positive aspects of the Gulf states in the Arab and global environment, as they are the influential element in the path of Arab development, as Gulf efforts continue to extinguish the political fires in the region, in order to preserve the safety of the Gulf and Arab states and the security of the region.

"Fourth - I remember the interests of the late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad in deepening understanding with neighboring countries, especially Iran and Iraq, and his support for reconstruction initiatives for countries that emerged from the devastation they suffered due to mismanagement of their leaders or from natural causes; from the developments in the life of Kuwait, we expect more from the government of Sheikh Mohammad in the form of dialogues and communication with these countries in order to ensure the stability of the region, to provide the appropriate climate for Kuwait to embark on development and the political vitality that the region needs.

"Fifth - Just as a reminder, I refer to the internal security situation that the Ministry of Interior has begun to address, and to what it issued regarding the 'ISIS' cell that was discovered, and to the residency violators and their frightening numbers, which far exceed one hundred thousand. It is not possible to claim that security is maintained despite this frightening reality. The matter requires a collective security uprising in which all national mechanisms participate through political and security mobilization that does not show complacency or hesitation, and with a decision that comes unanimously from the political and civil institutions.

"Sixth - It is necessary to draw up a hosting policy for representatives of political institutions in America, Britain and European Union countries as partners in the process. These visits allow representatives of the Senate and Lords to get to know

Kuwait, its leaders, its reality, its ambitions and its pains according to an annual program and openness with the European Union countries through mutual visits.

"I personally noticed this necessity through my visits to London and Washington, and I noticed the limited knowledge in Congress of the details of the Kuwaiti file. Those who participate with us in preserving the security of Kuwait must know the identity of Kuwait in all its colors and shades.

"Seventh - There is no room for approaching Kuwait's responsibility in helping developing countries, and there is no room for interference in the course of the Development Fund, while affirming the strengthening of its independence in following the work rules to which it committed itself, and affirming the continuation of Kuwait's contributions to the United Nations bodies that chose the late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad as a unique supporter for its work, with hopes of increasing the volume of donations to the organization's institutions.

"These Kuwaiti donations, despite their modest nature, have given us a unique place in the records of the United Nations, and we must always remember the role of the United Nations in incubating the Kuwaiti cause and liberating it from invasion.

"Eighth - We remember the role of the Arab League, especially in the sixties, and its support for Kuwait, and its efforts to send Arab forces stationed on the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border to protect Kuwait. We also remember its position in 1990 in condemning the invasion and contributing positively to respect for the Charter. It is true that eleven countries were unable to condemn the aggression. Its positions do not matter, while the League stood in defense of its charter, and we remember that the Arab League looks to the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to support it amid the recession which other Arab countries are experiencing.

"Ninth - Certainly, the priority will be the renaissance development project that His Highness the Prime Minister wants, and it will include all aspects of development, education, security, and the adaptation of technology. I hope that the role of women will rise, and their presence will be recorded in the implementation of the proposed project, as women are still far from approaching their right to leadership seats, including the ministerial formation.

"Tenth - History recorded that His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Al-Sabah was one of the first to raise the hammer in the face of corruption, and he played a distinguished role in his arena with frankness and confrontation, and he continued to pursue the corrupt despite his distance from the political stage, and "we call on you to wave the hammer to pursue the contents of corruption and cleanse Kuwait of its pollution."

"Eleventh - We hope that His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem will be easy to communicate with, open to talks, a communicator and a listener, and the bottom line is the necessity of listening to different opinions and all colors in the Kuwaiti space.

"Twelfth - Kuwait cannot bear any more hesitation, nor can it absorb the troubles of an upcoming mistake. His Highness the Prime Minister realizes that the invasion destroyed many of the assumptions of the past, and brought forth necessities that were absent from the Kuwaiti file, so there is no longer any room in the body of Kuwait for error, and everyone is calling for him to remain steadfast."

Also:

"Several months ago, the government approved the inclusion of housewives in the Health Insurance (Afiya) Law, initially sanctioned in 2014 for retirees, with the endorsement of the National Assembly. This addition does not necessitate government or Council approval, as the law grants the Minister of Health the authority to incorporate any group into the "Afiya" insurance," columnist **Khaled Al-Arafa**, wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"Over the next few days, "Afiya" cards will be distributed to eligible groups, encompassing a married Kuwaiti woman, aged 55, under the Public Assistance Law, and a Kuwaiti widow, also aged 55, who falls under the Public Assistance Law or receives a share from her deceased husband as per the Social Insurance Law. Additionally, Kuwaiti divorcees, aged no less than 50, subject to the Public Assistance Law, will benefit from the law.

"Equally significant is the category of unmarried female citizens, aged over 50, receiving social assistance or a share of their father's salary, or both, which remains excluded from this amendment despite meeting all eligibility criteria.

"Upon the approval of these amendments, we had previously urged the previous government to reconsider the status of this eligible group and include them in the housewives' law, but regrettably, it was not implemented. We reiterate our appeal to consider the inclusion of unmarried female citizens, aged over fifty, receiving social assistance, in the "Afiya" law. The decision to add categories rests solely with the Minister of Health. Including this category is crucial for equality, given its small number, and it will not strain the state budget, which allocates significant funds to this law.

"Congratulations to the Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, for renewing the political leadership's confidence in him. We hope for directives to expedite justice for Kuwaiti women and ensure their equality with housewives. The eligibility criteria for this category are fulfilled in terms of receiving social assistance and age, so why deprive them of this right? Our appeal goes out to those concerned."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes

Officers promoted in minister's 'reshuffle'

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, in his capacity as Acting Minister of Interior, has issued a decision to appoint Major General Yousef Al-Khadda, the Director of the General Traffic Department, as Assistant Undersecretary for the Traffic and Operations Sector, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

The decision also outlines the appointment of Brigadier General Dr. Faisal Al-Makrad, the Acting Director of the General Department of Criminal Enforcement, as Assistant Undersecretary for the Correctional Institutions Sector and Sentence Enforcement Department.

Major General Abdullah Al-Rajaib, the Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Public Security Affairs, has been assigned the responsibility of two sectors that fell vacant following the retirement of Major General Jamal Al-Sayegh.

Additionally, the decision includes the merger of the Correctional Institutions and Judgment Enforcement Sector with the Special Security Forces Sector. Major General Walid Al-Tararwa, currently serving as the Director of the General Department of Residence Affairs Investigations, has been assigned to work as Assistant Undersecretary for Residence Affairs. This position had been vacant since the promotion of Major General Anwar Al-Barjas to the rank of Lieutenant General and his subsequent appointment as Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, followed by his retirement upon reaching the legal age.

Mol urges MoE to provide info on students involved in peer assault

'Schools refuse to provide data citing lack of rules'

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: In an effort to address student violence as classes resume for the second semester, the Ministry of Interior has urged the Ministry of Education to instruct school principals to cooperate with local police stations. This cooperation is requested specifically when police stations seek information on students accused of assaulting their classmates, particularly in cases where parents file complaints against the alleged aggressors, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf, the Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, penned a letter to Anwar Al-Hamdan, the Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education.

The letter emphasizes the need for schools across governorates to collaborate with police stations in instances where parental complaints prompt the police to request personal data about the students involved.

The coordination is expected to take place between school principals, district leaders, and directors of investigation departments in governorates, aligning with the respective jurisdictions.

The communication between these entities is to be conducted through official letters, ensuring a formal and organized exchange of information.

The letter highlights a concern where some parents, when approached by police stations for complaints related to disputes or conflicts between their children and others, fail to provide complete information.

This lack of comprehensive details hampers the police's ability to identify the accused student accurately.

To address this issue, the Ministry of Interior is urging enhanced cooperation between schools and police stations. Additionally, the letter notes instances where, upon the police station's return to the school administration seeking information on the accused student, the schools refuse to provide data due to the absence of regulatory instructions on this matter.

The call for collaboration seeks to streamline the process and ensure effective communication in addressing incidents of student violence.

Officer gets 10 years jail for shooting 'colleague'

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The Court of Cassation upheld the verdict issued by a lower court which sentenced a Corporal officer of the Ministry of Interior to ten-year imprisonment after he was convicted of shooting his colleague at the Nuwaiseeb Port due to a work dispute, and also ordered his dismissal from his job.

According to the case file, the victim was at his workplace where a verbal altercation occurred between him and the accused, during which the latter pulled out his gun and shot the victim, wounding him. The victim was then taken to the hospital for treatment.

Earlier, the Criminal Court had issued a ruling to sentence the accused to ten-year imprisonment with hard labor, and order his removal from his job after carrying out the sentence.

Fraud, money-laundering: The Criminal Court brought to conclusion the case of fraud, embezzlement and money laundering filed against two Kuwaiti citizens who owned a "luxury car office" and were imprisoned for ten years each. It obligated the first and second defendants to pay an amount of KD 16 million.

The court obligated the company as a third defendant to pay an amount of KD 17 million, and ordered to confiscate the company's funds, assets and profits both inside and outside Kuwait. It also ordered the referral of the civil case to the competent civil court.

Lawyer Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattam, in his capacity as the legal counsel representing a number of the victims, stated that the court does not consider the defendants' denials, especially given the lack of evidence to support their claim that they did not commit the crime, stressing that the Public Prosecution brought them to trial with complementary evidence.

He insisted that the actions committed by the defendants that harmed the victims and disrupted commercial transactions require that they be punished with the harshest penalties stipulated by the law, so that the rights are restored to their owners and the prestige, trust and good faith of those dealing with them are restored to this area.

Lawyer Al-Qattam explained that the defendants face charges of fraud, embezzlement, and money laundering of large sums after they were accused by more than 500 people inside and outside Kuwait of defrauding them by supplying various vehicles and laundering their money obtained from the fraud crime. They transferred the amounts they collected from the victims, which are estimated at more than KD 17 million, and 1.5 million Qatari riyals, to hide their illegal source, after he deluded them of the possibility of purchasing luxury vehicles at a lower price from the agencies and having them shipped and delivered to them.

The Public Prosecution accused the citizens and a general trading and contracting company of deceiving others about their ability to buy and import cars from abroad at competitive prices lower than their actual value and to deliver them within a record period.

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Little girls return to school after a break.

200 held in Jleeb raids

841 expats deported in one week

By Munaif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The Ministry of Interior's Residency Affairs Investigations, Public Security, Traffic, Operations and Investigation departments continued security campaigns against violators of the residency law, which resulted in the deportation of 841 violators in the past week.

According to security sources, the deportation department deported a total of 841 violators - 510 men and 331 women - who were referred from various sectors of the Ministry of Interior in the past week.

The sources said the ministry launched surprise security campaigns in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh in the past few days, which resulted in the arrest of about 200 violators of the residency and labor law, and marginal workers, affirming that these campaigns will not stop until the desired objective is achieved.

Man dies in mishap: A 27-year-old man died when the arm of a crane fell on him inside a warehouse in the Sulaibiya area, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The daily added, when the Public Rela-

tions and Security Media Department of the Ministry of Interior received a report, securitymen and forensic personnel moved to inspect the site, determine the causes, remove the crane arm from the corpse and referred the body to Forensics. A case has been registered at the area police station.

559 illegals held: Personnel from the General Administration of Residency Affairs Investigations have arrested 559 violators of labor law during security campaigns in Farwaniya, Al-Ahmadi, Hawalli, and Kabd, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The security authorities have also issued 3,309 violations and arrested 9 juveniles for driving without a license in addition to issuing 107 citations to motorists who were identified via the radar.

Fire tackled: The firefighting teams from the Al-Istiqlal, Sulaibkhat, Tahrir and Support Centers have put out fire to 4 warehouses inside an agricultural plot containing sanitary tools, wood, sponges and cork, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The fire which happened in Sulaibiya damaged the warehouses, but no casualties have been reported.

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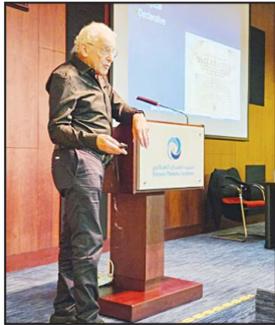
Photo during the Dasman Diabetes Institute lecture series.

Workshop advances scientific skills

DDI organizes a two-day lecture series on Scientific Writing and Clinical Methodology

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI), established by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), recently organized a two-day lecture series entitled "Scientific Writing and Clinical Methodology". This workshop, presented for the second consecutive year, was led by the esteemed Prof. Abe Fingerhut MD, FACS (hon), FRCPS (g), FRCS (Ed), who serves as the Co-Editor-in-Chief of the renowned Annals of Laparoscopic and Endoscopic Surgery (ALES).

Throughout the workshop, Prof. Fingerhut covered a wide range of topics, including but not limited to: the Systematic Approach to Writing and Publishing, General Principles for Structure and Content, Statistics



Prof. Abe Fingerhut

and Study Design, Critical Appraisal, and Special Aspects of Writing a Surgical Paper. These discussions

were complemented by engaging activities and exercises.

The workshop attracted a significant number of internal and external researchers, as well as professionals from Kuwait University, the Ministry of Health, and other esteemed institutions in Kuwait. Attendees were awarded certificates of attendance, along with Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits.

Overall, the workshop provided a valuable platform for researchers, academics, scientists, and doctors to enhance their scientific writing skills and stay updated with the latest methodologies in the field. Dasman Diabetes Institute remains committed to its mission and vision, striving to make a significant impact in the fight against diabetes.

Al-Hajraf 'terminates' services of twelve advisors in his office

Minister inspects Subiya Station

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr Salem Al-Hajraf recently issued a decision to terminate the services of 12 advisors in his office, reports Al-Anba daily.

Meanwhile, Al-Hajraf visited Subiya Station, accompanied by Assistant Undersecretary for the Electrical Power and Water Distillation Stations Sector Eng Haitham Al-Ali to personally look into the progress of work and the station's preparations for summer.

Officials and employees at the station briefed the min-

Strengthening bilateral relations

Kuwait envoy Al-Jassam presents his credentials to King of Bhutan

NEW DELHI, Feb 5, (KUNA): Ambassador of Kuwait to the Kingdom of Bhutan Adel Al-Jassam presented his credentials to Bhutan King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck.

In a statement to KUNA, Kuwait Embassy in Bhutan said that Ambassador Al-Jassam presented his credentials to the King of Bhutan at a function held at Royal Palace of the Kingdom of Bhutan Sunday.

Diplomatic attache Fawaz Adel Khalifa accompanied him in the accreditation ceremony.

The ceremonies included performances of ancient Bhutanese cultural heritage in which several officials and bodies participated as a mark of respect and appreciation of the royal family for His Highness the Amir and the ruling family in the State of Kuwait.

Ambassador Al-Jassam conveyed to the King of Bhutan greetings of the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the greetings of Deputy Amir and Prime Minister Dr. Sheikh Muhammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and the leadership and the people of Kuwait.

He stressed keenness of the leadership of Kuwait to strengthen and consolidate bilateral relations between the two countries. Ambassador Al-Jassam also recalled that the long political history that goes back to more than forty years in the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two friendly countries came on the basis of the vision of the rulers of Kuwait beginning in 1983.

In order to serve the common interest



KUNA photo
Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Kingdom of Bhutan, Adel Al-Jassam with King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk, King of Bhutan.

of the peoples of the two friendly countries, the leadership of both the countries developed strong bridges in many fields.

Ambassador Al-Jassam expressed his pride in meeting the King and assuming his position as Ambassador of Kuwait to Bhutan during the rule of Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah who supports all efforts to achieve more prosperity for the people in the two friendly countries.

ister on the rates of achievement in maintenance operations, as he began his tour with a meeting with the director and supervisors of the station; during which he was informed about the procedures followed in preparing the power and water distillation stations for the summer of 2024.

Acting director of the station Eng Talal Al-Shammari gave a detailed explanation of the mechanism of operation of the electrical control system in the station; which has a production capacity of 7,100 megawatts and constitutes 35 percent of the total energy produced in the country; while water production capacity is 100 million imperial gallons per day.

He confirmed that the national employees are a source of pride and honor for the ministry, indicating the Power and Water Stations Sector is the backbone of the ministry through which the country's needs for electricity and water are met. He stressed the importance of developing the national human resources, and qualifying them scientifically and practically to overcome the challenges they might face in securing sources of electric energy and water.

In addition, Al-Hajraf met with various sectors in the ministry in the presence of acting Undersecretary Eng Maha Al-Asouli last week. These sectors include the Water Projects Sector; Water Operation and Maintenance Sector; Planning, Training and Information Systems Sector; Technical Services and Main Workshops Sector; Electric Power and Water Distillation Plants Sector, and Monitoring and Control Centers Sector.



February

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MPs Abdul Wahab Al-Essa, Fahad Al-Masoud, and Bader Al-Mulla.

Proposal recommends harsh penalties

MPs propose new e-commerce law

Minister Al-Joan forms transitional committee

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The Minister of Commerce and Industry, Abdullah Al-Joan, has formed a transitional committee tasked with assuming full authority of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Board of Directors, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Heading this committee is Professor of Law Dr. Muhammad Al-Faili, alongside with the Undersecretary of Commerce, Abdullah Al-Afasi; the current Undersecretary, Ziyad Al-Najem; the Acting Director of the Public Authority for Industry, Muhammad Al-Adwani; the Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, Salem Al-Rashidi and Khaled Al-Duwaikh, representing "Small Projects" as members.



Al-Joan

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: MPs Bader Al-Mulla, Hamad Al-Madlej, Hassan Jawhar, Fahad Al-Masoud, and Abdul Wahab Al-Essa submitted a proposal to issue an e-commerce law, which is the first legislation of its kind according to the MPs who submitted the proposal, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The proposed law applies to electronic commercial deals or transactions in which one of the parties is a person who provides a service through an online store, and to electronic commercial contracts.

The law mandates the minister of Commerce and Industry to issue the executive regulations and decisions necessary to implement it within six months of publishing the law in the official gazette.

The proposal includes severe penalties, especially for repeated violations, reaching up to imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years and/or a fine not exceeding KD 20,000.

Relocation of Qurain landfill granted

Ahmadi Governorate approves MoH's request

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: During its meeting yesterday, the Ahmadi Governorate Committee of the Municipal Council approved the Ministry of Health's request to allocate the location of Khairan Health Center within Khairan, Block 1.

During its meeting headed by Nassar bin Muhini, the committee approved the request of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to allocate a site and parking lots within Sabahiya Block 1.

It referred a citizen's proposal regarding the New Kuwait vision to the technical staff for a technical opinion.

Meanwhile, the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate Committee of the Municipal Council, during its meeting yesterday headed by Nassar bin Muhini, approved the Environment Public Authority's request to reallocate the Qurain waste landfill site within Adan Block 5 in the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate to the



Qurain waste landfill site.

Kuwait Municipality, with a modification of the area.

The committee reserved the letter of the Ministry of Interior regarding the second meeting of the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate Committee for the second session of the 13th legislative term.

Under the patronage of H.H. the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

Zain strategic partner of 14th International Invention Fair in Middle East

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: Zain today announced its return as a strategic partner to the International Invention Fair in the Middle East in its 14th edition. The prestigious event, organized by the Kuwait Science Club with support from the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), runs from 4-7 February with the participation of 40 nations, and comes under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Zain joined the event's inaugura-

tion at Arraya Ballroom, attended by the representative of H.H. the Amir, H.E. Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education and Research Dr. Adel Al Adwani, Kuwait Science Club Chairman and Head of the Fair's Organizing Committee Talal Al Kharafi, Zain Kuwait Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer Waleed Al Khashti, along with diplomats, academics, and distinguished guests.

Zain is proud to remain a key partner of this prominent scientific gathering since its inception, especially

that it is privileged with H.H. the Amir's patronage every year, something that reflects the nation's keenness to support scientists, inventors, and innovators, and highlights Kuwait's leading position in the international scientific community.

Through this participation, Zain aspires to showcase the key role played by Kuwait's private sector to encourage and promote initiatives that push the scientific innovation wheel locally and regionally. This event's past successes have greatly contributed to highlighting Kuwait's rich cultural involvement in scientific areas across regional and international levels, proving itself to become the biggest in the Middle East.

The 14th edition of the fair witnesses notable participation from several GCC and Arab science institutions, including the GCC Patent Office, the King Abdulaziz Foundation, KSA-based Majmaah University, the Qatar Scientific Club, the Emirates Science Club, the International University of Rabat, the Iraqi Inventors and Innovators Society, the Yemen-based Hadramout Foundation of Inventions, as well as first-time participation from the China Association of Inventions and the Russia-based Federal Institute of Industrial Property.

The event also witnesses the return of several previous participants, including the Geneva International Exhibition, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and the International Federation of Inventors' Associations (IFIA). During the event, these institutions will present their own awards to winners.

Over 40 nations participate in the International Invention Fair in the Middle East this year, with over 200 inventions submitted. 21 Kuwaiti



Dr. Adel Al Adwani with Talal Al Kharafi and Waleed Al Khashti during the event's inauguration.

inventors also submitted 21 inventions representing several local scientific institutions, including Kuwait University, the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC) – a center of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), and others.

This event is one of the major specialized exhibitions of inventions in the Middle East region, offering an opportunity for inventions from different cultures to be exhibited and for inventors to build connections with investors. Zain will spare no efforts to offer its support and encouragement to any entity that adopts creativity and innovation within the community and contribute to the further progress of national economy.

Kuwait Deputy FM receives Saudi, Greek, Indian envoys

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5, (KUNA): Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Monday Saudi Ambassador to the State of Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad Khaled al-Saud, discussing bilateral ties and issues of joint

concern.

Separately, he hosted the Greek Ambassador, Ioannis Plotas, discussing bilateral relations, and the Indian envoy, Dr. Adarsh Swaika, holding talks on means of cementing the bilateral relations between the two countries.



Deputy Foreign Minister receives Saudi Ambassador to the State of Kuwait.



Deputy Foreign Minister receives the Ambassador of the Greek Republic to the State of Kuwait.



KUNA photos
Deputy Foreign Minister receives the Ambassador of the Republic of India to the State of Kuwait.

HH Amir's

Continued from Page 1

The two countries also shared a similar vision and goals in relation to matters concerning Arab policies and happenings around the world, added the Ambassador, indicating that the upcoming visit would push to solidify coordination on matters of ties in addition to regional and international developments.

His Highness the Amir is expected to meet with Sultan Haitham bin Tareq during state visit.

The two leaders would be patronizing the opening of Al-Duqm refinery and petrochemical complex, a project showcasing the Kuwaiti-Omani strategic and economic partnership.

The scheduled official ceremony at the site symbolizes the substantial outcome of the two GCC countries' partnership, economic and strategic cooperation, spanning for three decades.

The mega project, corner stone of which had been placed by Kuwait and Oman, would set the stage of significant development of Al-Duqm region, forecast to turn into a key regional energy hub with feasible affiliate industries.

Occupying a 900-hectare plot of coastal land, the USD 8.5 billion complex is a joint venture for the Omani international energy integrated company (OQ) and Kuwait Petroleum International (Q8).

Its preliminary refining capacity is estimated at 230,000 barrels of (Kuwaiti) crude oil per day. The products include diesel, aviation fuel, naphtha and liquefied petroleum gas. Kuwait Petroleum Corporation will secure 65 percent of the refinery's resources of crude oil.

The Kuwait-Omani relations have developed substantially since three decades ago and the two countries have signed cooperation agreements at the

political, economic, cultural, tourist and artistic levels.

Genuineness of these close and warm relations was visible in 1990, when Oman sided with Kuwait in the face of the flagrant Iraqi aggression. Upon orders by the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the sultanate hosted a large number of Kuwaiti citizens during the occupation.

In gratitude for the support, the late Amir Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah visited the sultanate on September 18, 1991, and met Sultan Qaboos. On December 28, 2009, the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah decorated Sultan Qaboos with the Order of Mubarak the Great during the latter's visit to Kuwait and the sultan granted the Amir the Order of Oman.

The two countries, in 2003, formed a joint committee to tackle economic, commercial and tourist issues of common concern. It had held nine meetings, the latest of which convened in Muscat in March. The meeting was marked with five memoranda of understanding in diplomatic training, higher education, competition protection, prohibiting monopolization, environment protection and industrial exports.

Kuwait and Oman had worked out 17 accords between 1974 and 2017. Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development had executed 23 projects in Oman and Kuwait's investments in Oman Fund for Fixed Income reached some KD three million (USD 26.4 million), while volume of the trade exchanges amounted to KD 105 million (USD 346.5 million).

Kuwait reopens

Continued from Page 1

This requires approval of some terms and conditions that must be met to issue the visa as follows:

- Provide roundtrip travel ticket on airlines affiliated with the national airlines (national carrier).

- A written pledge not to demand that these visits be converted into residence in the country.

- Pledge to adhere to the duration of the visit.

- Visitor treatment will be in private hospitals and health centers, as such treatment will not be permitted in government hospital.

- In the event that the visitor violates the specified period of stay, the Residence Affairs Investigations General Department will include both the visitor and the sponsor in the security control system, through which the violator will be followed up by the department and the legal procedures followed for violators of the Foreigners Residency Law will be applied.

Commercial visa

- It is issued upon a request submitted by a Kuwaiti company or institution and is granted to persons holding university or technical qualifications, in a manner commensurate with the company's activity and the nature of its work.

Tourist visa

- For the citizens of 53 countries, the visa is granted to them either directly from the port of entry upon arrival to the country or through an electronic visa on the ministry's website - www.moi.gov.kw.

- For residents of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries where entry visas for tourism are issued to persons with professions specified in Ministerial Resolution number 2030/2008 and its amendments, and in accordance with the rules and regulations specified in the aforementioned Ministerial Resolution.

- Through hotels and companies that have an automatic link with the system of the Residence Affairs General Department in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Ministry of Social Affairs approves return of wedding halls to donors

Maintenance contracts mandatory

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The Ministry of Social Affairs has initiated the process of granting approvals for the return of several wedding halls across different regions to their respective donors and the boards of directors of cooperative societies, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This action is in compliance with Ministerial Resolution No. 1/2024 which stipulates a six-month deadline for interested parties to submit applications to the Ministry of Social Affairs for managing the halls. Failure to do so may result in the assignment of management, maintenance, and operation to cooperative societies falling under the Ministry's purview.

The Ministry is set to implement rigorous supervision through its Lounges Department inspectors to ensure the halls adhere to established controls and requirements. Sources reveal that the Community Development Department within the Ministry intends to monitor the halls closely, particularly in relation to the pricing of "food buffets" during social events, is aimed at preventing the

exploitation and ensure fair practices.

The Ministry has explicitly prohibited hall managers from discontinuing the use of the "Events House" application for the automated reservation system, emphasizing its continued usage to make halls available for citizens during various social events.

Regarding the restoration process, the Ministry welcomes donors or cooperative boards of directors interested in reclaiming the halls, provided they adhere to established controls. Comprehensive maintenance contracts, covering aspects such as air conditioners and electricity, are mandatory. In cases where a donor declines with an official letter confirming their decision, the hall may be presented to the cooperative for management. If the cooperative's board of directors refuses, alternative cooperatives in proximity will be considered.

Furthermore, donors are obliged to install surveillance cameras, ensure regular maintenance, and are prohibited from subcontracting to third parties or exploiting the halls in violation of government regulations, including those issued by entities like the General Fire Force and the Municipality. Failure to comply may result in withdrawal of the hall from the donor.

Lawmaker queries

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, MP Shuaib Shaaban forwarded queries to Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Yusuf Al-Sabah about the Kuwait Army Fund case.

He stated this is one of the biggest corruption cases, in which a number of individuals have been convicted. He added that according to the case filed by the Ministry of Defense on Dec 25, 2023; it includes spying devices and training certain individuals to become spies. He warned this is a threat to national security.

He inquired if the Intelligence and Security Directorate at the Kuwait Army formed committees and teams to investigate the aforementioned issues, and if the investigation committees were suspended and their members punished through forced retirement.

He also requested for copies of the decisions and directives that the defense minister issued since Jan 1, 2024 till date.

In another development, the Education, Culture and Guidance Affairs Committee has approved the proposal of MP Shuaib Shaaban for the education minister to issue a decision obligating the public and private schools to organize tutorial classes for all subjects in the afternoon throughout the academic year.

The proposal stipulates that the schools will collect low fees – maximum of KD5 per session, while the Kuwait Teachers Society should organize cultural programs to raise the students' awareness about the importance of replacing private tutorial sessions with those organized by the schools.

Kuwait MOCI refutes system hack, urges using Sahel app

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI), on Monday, stated that news of a hacking breach on their online databases affecting both citizens and residents are not true.

In a press statement, the MOCI underlined importance of using official government websites and the official mobile application, Sahel.

The incident that had happened is known as "phishing," where fraudulent websites mimic official government websites, tricking users into revealing their private information, and paying through unofficial pay-

ment links, explained the MOCI.

The MOCI emphasized in multiple awareness campaigns against phishing, and the importance of being cautious when providing private and sensitive information online. The Ministry reiterated that only official government websites and Sahel should be trusted.

Furthermore, the MOCI commended the Ministry of Interior and the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) on their cooperative efforts in reporting and blocking fraudulent websites to protect users in Kuwait from phishing schemes.

Best visiting doctor of 2023

Kuwait's Dr Muthana Sartawi wins the King's College London Hospital Award



Dr Muthana Sartawi

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: Dr Muthana Sartawi, a Kuwaiti, won the King's College London Hospital Award as the best visiting doctor for the year 2023, among an elite group of world-renowned doctors in the field of medicine, reports Al-Qabas daily.

It has been reported that Sartawi is performing his operations at InterHealth Hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Sartawi is a well-known orthopedic surgeon who created a unique technique for treating knee osteoarthritis, with a success rate of 98 percent. This technology contributed significantly to accelerating the recovery process for patients, reducing annoying pain, and making them return to their daily activities quickly without suffering, including the ability to pray shortly after treatment.

He also suggested giving priority to Kuwaiti teachers in conducting the tutorial sessions.

Furthermore, six parliamentary committees discussed various items in their agendas on Monday. The Complaints and Petitions Committee talked about the complaints of several citizens with the representatives of the ministries of Oil, Commerce and Industry in attendance.

The Budgets and Final Accounts Committee deliberated on the proposal for the Central Bank of Kuwait to collect a certain percentage of the annual revenues of public institutions in order to increase the reserve fund to KD5 billion. Representatives of the Central Bank and Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) attended the meeting.

The Women, Family and Children Affairs Committee deliberated on the implementation of the law on family abuse and its executive regulations in the presence of Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Sheikh Feras Al-Sabah, as well as the representatives of the Higher Council for Family Affairs and a number of civil society organizations.

The Health, Social and Labor Affairs Committee discussed the bills on amending Public Aid Law No. 12/2011 and adding Article 15bis to Infectious Diseases Prevention Law number 8/1969 with the representatives of the ministries of Finance, Health and Social Affairs.

The Human Resources Committee discussed the bills on amending Civil Service Law No. 15/1979 in order to allow public sector employees to work in the private sector or manage their own businesses, in addition to their current jobs. Representatives of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Civil Service Commission (CSC) were present at the meeting.

The Committee for Digitalization, Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity Empowerment in Public Institutions discussed the bills on amending the Electronic Transactions Law and the establishment of the Public Authority for Artificial Intelligence.

P.M. HOSTS

Continued from Page 1

He then stressed that the sustainability of the welfare State must be built on clear foundations, based on a cohesive and stable middle class that supports stability in society.

He also stated that there is a disparity in wages, which is not due to a difference in skill, academic degree or experience... "This is a major defect that needs to be fixed," he added, while emphasizing the necessity of addressing the issue of wage disparity through the government's work program and the strategic alternative to the salary scale without prejudice to acquired rights.

He affirmed that the government has been working hard to translate the concerns expressed by His Highness the Amir into an action program based on clear thought and various factors -- the most important of which is maintaining a cohesive middle class that supports the stability of society and enhances its security.

He stressed: "Our small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are faltering, while the public sector needs the initiative to help these activities." He also revealed the need for 300,000 jobs that the public sector cannot absorb, indicating the SMEs and private sector must be able to absorb them.

World News Roundup

Europe

Leaders in Belfast

Ukraine's prez may dismiss army chief

KYIV, Ukraine, Feb 5. (AP): Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he was weighing a possible dismissal of the country's top military officer, a prospect that has shocked the nation fighting Russia's invasion and worried Kyiv's Western allies.

Asked whether he was considering the ouster of Gen. Valerii Zaluzhnyi, Zelenskyy told Italian RAI TV in an interview released late Sunday that he was thinking about it as part of a broader issue of setting the country's path. He said that "a reset, a new beginning is necessary," and it's "not about a single person but about the direction of the country's leadership."

"I'm thinking about this replacement, but you can't say here we replaced a single person," Zelenskyy said. "When we talk about this, I mean a replacement of a series of state leaders, not just in a single sector like the military. If we want to win we must all push in the same direction, convinced of victory, we cannot be discouraged, let our arms fall, we must have the right positive energy."

Zelenskyy's comments marked his first confirmation that he was mulling to fire the widely popular general, a possibility that caused an uproar in Ukraine and delighted the Kremlin as the war approaches its second anniversary.

According to Ukrainian and Western media reports, Zelenskyy last week offered Zaluzhnyi to resign, but the general refused. Zaluzhnyi hasn't commented on the issue.



Zelenskyy

Tensions

The tensions between the president and Zaluzhnyi have been rising as the country grapples with dire ammunition and personnel shortages following a failed summer counteroffensive. The need for a broad mobilization to fill the ranks has reportedly been one of the areas of disagreement.

Zelenskyy said at the end of last year that he had turned down the military's request to mobilize up to 500,000 people, demanding more details about how it would be organized and paid for.

Ukrainska Pravda reported Monday that Zelenskyy was allegedly considering the removal of General Staff Chief Serhii Shaptala along with Zaluzhnyi.

Zaluzhnyi on Monday congratulated Shaptala on his birthday and posted a picture of them together on Facebook.

A rift between Zaluzhnyi and Zelenskyy first broke into the open last fall when the general acknowledged in an interview with The Economist that the fighting with Russia had stalemated. The president strongly denied that was the case.

Also:

LONDON: The leaders of the US and Ireland went to Belfast Monday to meet Northern Ireland's newly revived government and bask in a good-news moment after two years of political crisis.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Irish counterpart Leo Varadkar were visiting the new administration at Belfast's Stormont Castle as its ministers met for the first time. The ministers wasted no time before pressing London for more money to patch up Northern Ireland's creaking public services.

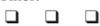
Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly appointed a power-sharing government on Saturday after a two-year hiatus sparked when the main British unionist party walked out in February 2022.

The Democratic Unionist Party boycotted the administration to protest post-Brexit trading arrangements that it said undermined Northern Ireland's place in the United Kingdom. The party was coaxed into returning last week after the UK promised to eliminate most checks on goods moving to Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK.

Under power-sharing rules established as part of Northern Ireland's peace process, the administration in Belfast must include both British unionists and Irish nationalists. The U.K. and the Republic of Ireland both have roles as guarantors of the peace.

The new administration is led by First Minister Michelle O'Neill of Sinn Fein, the party allied with the Irish Republican Army during Northern Ireland's decades of violence known as "The Troubles." Her appointment was historic, marking the first time an Irish nationalist, who aspires to take Northern Ireland out of the UK and unite it with the republic, has held the post.

In practice, nationalists and unionists will continue to govern in uneasy balance. The post of deputy first minister - held by Emma Little-Pengelly of the DUP - is officially equal to the first minister, and neither can govern without the other.



BERLIN: Five people were injured in southwestern Germany Sunday afternoon when a carnival float burst into flames, police said.

Around 3 pm local time in Kehl, a city in southwestern Germany along the border with France, part of a float participating in a local parade caught fire. The parade was part of Fasnacht, the local name for Carnival celebrations.

To avoid the flames, participants jumped off the float. As a result, five people were injured - some seriously - either from the flames or the jump, police said.

Firefighters were able to put out the fire relatively quickly, police said. The rest of the parade was canceled. Further information about the cause of the fire or the condition of those injured was not immediately available.



BUDAPEST, Hungary: Hungary's parliament was to convene an emergency session on Monday to do something its western partners have waited for, often impatiently, for more than a year: to hold a vote, finally, on approving Sweden's bid to join the NATO military alliance.

But Hungary's governing party, led by nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, has signaled that it will boycott the session, blocking the chance for a vote and further delaying a decision on Stockholm's bid. It's the kind of obstruction of key policy objectives for which Orbán has become notorious within the European Union.

"We are the sand in the machinery, the stick between the spokes, the splinter under the fingernail," Orbán said in a speech to tens of thousands of supporters in 2021.

That "stick between the spokes" tactic, and Orbán's role as Europe's perennial spoiler, has brought the EU to breaking point time and again as he has blocked crucial decisions to leverage concessions from the bloc, forcing its leaders to scramble to find workarounds.



A National Guard soldier guards Shelby Park in Eagle Pass, Texas, on Feb 4. Inset: Idaho Gov Brad Little and several of America's Governors attend a briefing about the border at the Texas Department of Public Safety on Sunday. (AP)

Politics

Biden urges Nevada Dems to vote for him

'2nd Trump presidency would be nightmare'

LAS VEGAS, Feb 5. (AP): US President Joe Biden on Sunday ticked through a list of reasons he says a second Donald Trump presidency would be a "nightmare" for the country as he urged Nevada Democrats to vote for him in the state's presidential primary this week and for his party at large in November.

Biden opened a campaign swing with a fundraiser where he focused on Trump's ample history of provocative statements - his description of Jan. 6 rioters as "hostages," his musing about a former top military officer deserving execution, his branding of fallen soldiers as "suckers" and "losers," his wish to be a Day One "dictator," his vow to supporters that "I am your retribution," and more.

Reason

Then it was on to a community center in a predominantly Black section of Las Vegas, where he told his crowd of several hundred that "you're the reason we'll make Donald Trump a loser again."

Biden said the stakes were huge when he took on Trump in 2020 - "what made America America, I thought, was at risk" - and they are even larger now as a likely rematch looms.

He told donors at the private home in Henderson, Nevada, that if they came to Washington, he'd show them the White House dining room table where Trump, according to ex-aides, sat transfixed for hours in front of the TV as the rioters he'd fired up with his rhetoric stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

"We have to keep the White House," he said, "We must keep the Senate" and win back the House.

Accomplish that, he said, and "we can say we saved American democracy."

He was equally blunt in talking up his record at his subsequent rally where he implored voters to "imagine the nightmare of Donald Trump."

Trump campaign spokesperson Steven Cheung responded in kind, saying Biden "has been a nightmare for this country in just three short years in the White House, and no amount of gas-

Senators release border & Ukraine deal but Johnson declares it dead on arrival

WASHINGTON, Feb 5. (AP): US Senators have released a highly anticipated \$118 billion package that pairs border enforcement policy with wartime aid for Ukraine, Israel and other U.S. allies, but it quickly ran into a wall of opposition from top House Republicans, including Speaker Mike Johnson.

The proposal could be the best chance for President Joe Biden to resupply Ukraine with wartime aid - a major foreign policy goal that is shared with both the Senate's top Democrat, Sen. Chuck Schumer, and top Republican, Sen. Mitch McConnell. The Senate was expected this week to hold a key test vote on the legislation, but within hours of the text being released Johnson said on social media that it would be "dead on arrival" if it reaches the House.

With Congress stalled on approving \$60 billion in Ukraine aid, the US has halted shipments of ammunition and missiles to Kyiv, leaving Ukrainian soldiers outgunned as they try to beat back Russia's invasion.

Senators have been working for months on the carefully negotiated compromise intended to overcome opposition from conservatives who

have tired of funding Ukraine's fight. But the coming days will be a crucial test of whether congressional leaders can once again muscle their members to support a package designed to assert American strength - and commitment - around the world.

They will also be weighing whether to continue pressing on one of the most fraught issues in American politics - border and immigration legislation.

Also:

EAGLE PASS, Texas: As more than a dozen Republican governors gathered Sunday on the Texas border, Kyle Willis was across the river in Mexico considering his next move to enter the U.S.

The 23-year-old Jamaican, who said he left his country after facing attacks and discrimination due to his sexuality, had followed the path of a historic number of migrants over the past two years and tried crossing the Rio Grande at the border city of Eagle Pass. But he waded back across the river after spending hours, in soaking clothes, failing to persuade Texas National Guard soldiers behind a razor wire fence to let him through.



Britain's Queen Camilla meets members of the public after attending a Service of Celebration at Bath Abbey as she carries out engagements celebrating the 850th anniversary of St John's Foundation in Bath, England on Feb 1. (AP)



Hammoud



Newsom

America

Two dead, 4 hurt in shooting: Two people were killed and four others injured after gunfire broke out during a confrontation at a late-night party in a residential area of Denver, police said Sunday.

Evidence from the scene pointed to multiple shots being fired from multiple firearms, Denver police said.

A 26-year-old man and a boy were killed. The boy did not appear to have been involved in the conflict, which began after a group of uninvited guests showed up at the party and the confrontation escalated into gunfire, Denver police spokesperson Sean Towle said.

Four male victims remained hospitalized, one of them in critical condition, Towle said. Three were adults and the age of the fourth had not been determined. (AP)



Michigan city ramps up security: Dearborn, Michigan, is ramping up its police presence in response to fallout from an opinion piece that described the city, which has the nation's highest Muslim population per capita, as "America's jihad capital."

Dearborn Mayor Abdullah Hammoud on Friday tweeted that city police increased security at places of worship and major infrastructure points as a "direct result" of a Wall Street Journal opinion piece titled, "Welcome to Dearborn, America's Jihad Capital."

Hammoud posted on the X platform, formerly known as Twitter, that the item published Friday "led to an alarming increase in bigoted and Islamophobic rhetoric online targeting the city of Dearborn."

Steven Stalinsky, executive director of the Middle East Media Research Institute, who authored the opinion piece in the Wall Street Journal, said in an interview with The Associated Press that he wanted to draw attention to protests in Michigan and elsewhere across the US in which people have expressed support for Hamas since the start of the war with Israel. (AP)



Off-duty officers shoot, kill 2: Two

off-duty police officers in Nebraska's largest city shot and killed two men in an SUV, though authorities have provided few details about the confrontation.

The two Omaha officers were working

at a local business at around 2 am Saturday when they opened fire on the men in the SUV, police said.

The men, 26-year-old Fernando Rodriguez-Juarez and 28-year-old Jonathan



Search and rescue workers evacuate men from a homeless encampment that became surrounded by floodwater from the Guadalupe River on Feb 4, in San Jose, Calif. The second of back-to-back atmospheric rivers churned slowly through California early Monday, flooding roadways and knocking out power to hundreds of thousands of people. (AP)

pino and Chinese American and Black communities. Nevada has a stark rural-urban divide, with more than 88% of active registered voters - and much of its political power - in the two most populous counties, which include the Las Vegas and Reno metro areas.

In 2022, Democrats successfully defended their Senate seat and lost the governor's office. The six constitutional officers elected statewide are split evenly among Democrats and Republicans.

The narrow victory of Sen Catherine Cortez Masto helped Democrats party keep control of the Senate for the remainder of Biden's current term.

Hernandez-Rosales, were taken to a local hospital with life-threatening injuries and later died.

Police said they found a handgun in the vehicle, but they didn't say whether there was anything illegal about that or what led the two off-duty officers to shoot the men. Police also haven't said whether the two officers, whom they haven't publicly identified, identified themselves as police to the men or whether they were wearing their police uniforms. (AP)



Storms inundates Calif streets:

The second of back-to-back atmospheric rivers churned slowly through California early Monday, flooding roadways and knocking out power to hundreds of thousands of people and prompting a rare warning for hurricane-force winds as the already soggy state braced for another day of heavy rains.

The storm inundated streets and brought down trees and electrical lines Sunday across the San Francisco Bay Area, where winds topped 60 mph (96 kph) in some areas. Gusts exceeding 80 mph (128 kph) were recorded in the mountains. California governor is Gavin Newsom.

Just to the south in San Jose, emergency crews pulled occupants out of the windows of a car stranded by floodwaters and rescued people from a homeless encampment alongside a rising river. (AP)

Lat/Am

Fires death toll 112

El Salvador's Bukele claims re-election win

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador, Feb 5, (AP): Voters in El Salvador appeared to give **Nayib Bukele** a second term as president, but a troubled vote tally delayed results in an election that for many hinged on the trade-off of curtailed civil liberties for security in a country once terrorized by gangs.

Problems with the vote count stalled the effort late Sunday with ballots from only 31% of polling places tallied, a percentage that remained stuck in place on the Supreme Electoral Tribunal's preliminary results website Monday morning.

Early Monday, the electoral authority released a statement referring to "multiple actions that have hampered the development of the transmission activities of preliminary results" and the lack of the paper used to print out the vote tallies at polling places.

It called on the boards charged with tallying the votes at each polling place to switch to a contingency process that included tallying votes by hand, taking photographs or scans of those manual tallies and turning them into the Supreme Electoral Tribunal.

When the Supreme Electoral Tribunal's digital tallied stopped late Sunday, Bukele had 83% of the vote, far ahead of his nearest competitor's 7% for the leftist Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front. The electoral site updating the count crashed shortly before midnight.

Stop

That did not stop a jubilant Bukele from declaring a historic margin of victory before electoral authorities had released even the first preliminary figure Sunday evening.

Later, standing on the balcony of the National Palace, he said that the country had made history.

"Why are there so many eyes on a small (Latin) American country?" he asked thousands of supporters. "They're afraid of the power of example."

"Salvadorans have given the example to the entire world that any problem can be solved if there is the will to do it," he said.

The self-described "world's coolest dictator" appeared on his way to victory after enjoying soaring approval ratings and virtually no competition. That came despite concerns that Bukele's government has slowly chipped away at checks and balances in his first term and accusations that he dodged a constitutional ban on reelection.

After casting his vote, Bukele made clear that he expects the newly elected Legislative Assembly to continue extending the special powers he has enjoyed since March 2022 to combat the gangs.

He jousted with reporters, asserting that the election's results would serve as a "referendum" on what his administration has done.

"We are not substituting democracy, because El Salvador never had democracy," he said. "This is the first time in history that El Salvador has democracy. And I'm not saying it, the people say it."

Bukele has been a highly popular leader and only more so since the government began its crackdown on the country's feared gangs.

Migrate

Sara Leon, 48, was among throngs of people who flocked to El Salvador's previously gang-controlled downtown to celebrate. When she was 23, Leon risked her life to migrate from El Salvador to the United States with her 6-year-old daughter.

"If the gangs saw a cute girl, they abducted her, abused her and killed her," she said. "I didn't want that to happen to my daughter."

She returned to her homeland in October because of the "state of emergency." She said she now plans to buy a home here and hopes her daughter who has since moved to Toronto will be able to return.

"He is a genius," she said of Bukele, tearing up when asked what his administration has meant. "If he's a dictator, may we have a dictator for 100 years."

Bukele's popularity has also drawn eyes from across the region, and he and party are increasingly looked to as a case study for a wider global rise in authoritarianism.

Throughout his presidency, Bukele has been accused of taking undemocratic steps that concentrated power in his hands, something observers have worried will only grow with Sunday's election.

He showed up in congress with soldiers while attempting to pass his agenda. After his party was victorious in 2021 legislative elections, the newly elected congress purged the constitutional court, replacing judges with loyalists. The new justices later ruled that Bukele could run for a second term despite the constitutional ban on reelection.

Bukele arrived on the scene when Salvadorans were craving change, when El Salvador's traditional parties - the conservative Nationalist Republican Alliance and leftist Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front - alternating power for three decades were thoroughly discredited by deep corruption and ineffectiveness.

Earlier Sunday, Bukele waded through a crowd to vote wearing a blue golf shirt and white baseball cap, while supporters chanted, "Five more years! Five more years!"

Also:

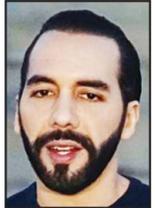
SANTIAGO, Chile: Firefighters wrestled Sunday with massive forest fires that broke out in central Chile two days earlier, as officials extended curfews in cities most heavily affected by the blazes and said at least 112 people had been killed.

The fires burned with the highest intensity around the city of **Viña del Mar**, where a famous botanical garden founded in 1931 was destroyed by the flames Sunday. At least 1,600 people were left without homes.

Several neighborhoods on the eastern edge of Viña del Mar were devoured by flames and smoke, trapping some people in their homes. Officials said 200 people were reported missing in Viña del Mar and the surrounding area. The city of 300,000 people is a popular beach resort and also hosts a well-known music festival during the southern hemisphere's summer.

On Sunday morning, Chilean President **Gabriel Boric** visited the town of **Quilpé**, which was also heavily affected by the fires and reported that 64 people had been killed. Late Sunday, Chile's Forensic Medicine Service updated the confirmed death toll to 112 people.

Boric said the death toll could rise as rescue workers search through homes that have collapsed. Some of those arriving in hospitals were also in critical condition.



Bukele



Senegalese riot police lobs tear gas at supporters of opposition presidential candidate Daouda Ndiaye, in Dakar, Senegal on Feb 4. Inset: Senegal's President Macky Sall speaks during a plenary session at the COP28 UN Climate Summit, Dec 1, 2023, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Sall on Feb 3, postponed presidential elections scheduled for Feb 25, citing controversies over the disqualification of some candidates and allegations of corruption in election-related cases. (AP)

Asia

China gives suspended death sentence to writer

Myanmar govt forces flee to Bangladesh

DHAKA, Bangladesh, Feb 5, (AP): Nearly a hundred members of Myanmar's Border Guard Police have fled their posts and taken shelter in Bangladesh during fighting between Myanmar security forces and an ethnic minority army, an official of Bangladesh's border agency said Monday.

Shariful Islam, spokesperson for Border Guard Bangladesh, said by phone that the Myanmar forces entered Bangladesh over last two days to escape fighting with the Arakan Army in Myanmar's Rakhine state bordering Bangladesh.

They entered Bangladesh through the Tombrub border in Bandarban district, he said.

"In total 95, Myanmar troops are there now," he said. "They have been disarmed and taken to safe places."

Since Saturday, gunshots could be heard coming from the Myanmar side of the border, local media reported.

Trained

The Arakan Army is the well-trained military wing of the Rakhine ethnic minority seeking autonomy from the central government and has been attacking army outposts in the western state since mid-November.

It is part of an alliance of ethnic minority armies that launched an offensive in late October, gaining strategic territory in the country's northeast bordering China. Its success was widely seen as a major defeat for the military government, which seized power in February 2021 from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi and is now embroiled in a wide-ranging civil war.

The alliance, called the Three Brotherhood Alliance, said in a statement Monday that the Arakan Army had attacked two border outposts in Maungdaw township in Rakhine state and captured one of them on Sunday.

Khaing Thukha, an Arakan Army spokesperson, said later Monday that fighting was still continuing at the second outpost.

Myanmar's military government made no immediate comment.

The alliance includes the Arakan Army, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army.

Bangladesh shares a 271-kilometer (168-mile) border with Myanmar

and hosts more than 1 million Muslim Rohingya refugees, many of whom fled from Buddhist-dominated Myanmar starting in late August 2017 when its military launched a brutal "clearance operation" against them following attacks by an insurgent group.

Also:

SYDNEY: Australia said Monday it was appalled at China's suspended death sentence for writer and democracy blogger **Yang Hengjun**.

Australian Foreign Minister **Penney Wong** said in a statement it was "harrowing news for Dr Yang, his family and all who have supported him."

Yang has been detained in China since Jan. 19, 2019, when he arrived in **Guangzhou** from **New York** with his wife and teenage stepdaughter.

He received a closed-door trial on an espionage charge in **Beijing** in May 2021 and was awaiting a verdict. The details of his case have not been disclosed.

Yang has denied he has worked as a spy for Australia or the **United States**.

The Chinese court did not immediately announce the sentence. In China, suspended sentences are generally commuted to life sentences after a certain length of time.

Yang was born in China and was a diplomat and state security agent before moving to the private sector in **Hong Kong** and later to Australia. He became an Australian citizen in 2002. China does not recognize dual nationalities.

In Australia, he became known as a writer of spy novels, blogger and political commentator. In January 2019, he was detained by Chinese authorities upon landing in the southern metropolis of Guangzhou.

He was initially held under a form of detention known as "residential surveillance at a designated location," during which he was denied access to his family and lawyers. Yang was later moved to a Beijing detention center.

In a letter to his sons in August last year, Yang said he hadn't experienced direct sunlight in more than four years. He told his family he feared he would die in detention after being diagnosed with a kidney cyst, prompting supporters to demand his

release for medical treatment.

Wong said Australia "will be communicating our response in the strongest terms" and will continue to press for Dr Yang's interests and wellbeing, including appropriate medical care.

In October last year, Australian journalist **Cheng Lei** was freed after more than three years in detention in China for breaking an embargo with a television broadcast on a state-run TV network.

The plights of Yang and Cheng had frequently been on the agendas of high-level meetings between the countries in recent years.



KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia: More than 100 Rohingya immigrants have escaped from a detention center in Malaysia after a protest, with one confirmed killed in a road accident, officials said Friday.

This was the second time in two years that such a breakout occurred. In 2022, 528 Rohingya refugees staged a protest and escaped from detention in northern Penang state. Six were killed while trying to cross a highway, and most of the others were rearrested.

Immigration Department Director-General **Ruslin Jusoh** said in a statement that 131 detainees escaped from a center in Perak state late Thursday. He said one of the detainees was killed in a road accident. Nearly 400 personnel were deployed to hunt them down, he added, without giving details on what sparked the breakout.

District police chief **Mohamad Naim Asnawi** was quoted by national Bernama news agency as saying that the immigrants escaped from the men's block after a riot broke out at the center. The suspects included 115 Rohingya and 16 Myanmar nationals, all males, he said.

Malaysia, which has a dominant Muslim population, is a preferred destination for Muslim Rohingya fleeing from Buddhist-majority Myanmar or those seeking to escape misery in refugee camps in Bangladesh.

Malaysia doesn't grant refugee status, but it houses about 180,000 refugees and asylum seekers accredited with the United Nations refugee agency, including more than 100,000 Rohingya and other Myanmar ethnic groups. Thousands stay in the country illegally after arriving by sea.

said did not meet election requirements.

Senegalese authorities in June last year also cut internet access on mobile phones when supporters of disqualified opposition leader **Ousmane Sonko** clashed with security forces.

Analysts say the crisis in Senegal could further threaten West Africa's stability at a time when the region is struggling with a recent surge in coups and threats to democratic institutions.

Meanwhile, police made arrests and fired tear gas at opposition supporters during protests Sunday.

Demonstrators rallied in the capital of Dakar after leading opposition figures and candidates in the presidential election rejected Saturday's announcement of the election postponement. Opposition leaders had called on citizens to defend democracy amid a push for dialogue by West Africa's regional bloc, ECOWAS.

Among those arrested at the protests spread in the capital included former prime minister **Aminata Touré** and Anta Babacar Ngom, one of the presidential candidates in the election.

The government cut off the signal of the private Walf television channel as it broadcast the protest live. The global Committee to Protect Journalists condemned the signal cutoff in a post on the social media platform X, urging Senegalese authorities to ensure that "journalists can work without hindrance." (AP)



Members of Myanmar Border Guard Police, in civilian clothing, sit under the shade of trees after abandoning their posts following an alleged attack by members of the Arakan Army as Bangladesh border guards stand guard in Ghumdhum, Bandarban, Bangladesh, on Feb 5. (AP)



Touré



Sonko

Africa

37 killed in Abyei: Thirty-seven people were killed over the weekend in fighting apparently tied to a land feud in the disputed oil-rich region of Abyei, an official said Sunday. The bloodshed came a week after 52 people died in a land dispute in the same region.

Information Minister **Bolis Koch** in Abyei, which is claimed by South Sudan and Sudan, said the fighting erupted in Rumbek, Alal and Mijak counties with an attack by armed youth from South Sudan's Warrap state who were backed by fighters loyal to spiritual leader **Gai Machiek** from the country's Unity state.

Koch said the fighting left 19 people dead and 18 injured Saturday and claimed the lives of 18 more people Sunday, including four women and three children. He said 1,000 head of cattle also were stolen.

"The Abyei Special Administrative Area strongly condemns the terrorist attacks, the heinous killings of innocent civilians, the burning of local markets and residential areas," Koch said in a statement.

Ethnic violence has been common in the region, where Twic Dinka tribal members from Warrap are contesting for land with Ngok Dinka people in Abyei's Aneet area, located at the border.

Although land is seen as the major driver of the conflict, officials allege the armed Twic young people are being incited by Machiek, an ethnic Neur spiritual leader who has been accused of fomenting conflict. He also was blamed for the attack a week ago that killed 53 people, including two UN peacekeepers.

Machiek has denied any wrongdoing in interviews with local media. (AP)

Senegal cuts internet access: Senegal's government on Monday restricted access to the mobile internet as opposition leaders and supporters launched protests against President **Macky Sall**'s decision to postpone the Feb 25 presidential election over an electoral dispute.

Federal lawmakers were set to debate a bill that recommends an election delay of up to six months. It would put the next likely election date in August, four months after Sall's tenure is due to end.

Senegal's presidential election has never been postponed. Protests that erupted on Sunday were expected to continue after opposition leaders condemned the election postponement as a "constitutional coup."

The Ministry of Communication, Telecommunications and Digital Economy said the internet was cut "due to the dissemination of sev-

eral hateful and subversive messages relayed on social networks in the context of threats and disturbances to public order." Sall on Saturday cited a dispute between the judiciary and parliament over the disqualification of some candidates and the reported dual na-

tionality of some qualified candidates.

Senegal has been embroiled in political tensions for at least a year, including deadly clashes among opposition supporters and the disqualification of two opposition leaders whom the country's highest election authority



Supporters of President Nayib Bukele cheer outside the polling station where he will vote in general elections in San Salvador, El Salvador on Feb. 4. (AP)

		Change	Closing pts
SAUDI	- Tadawul	+62.19	12,024.91
UAE	- DFM	+1.96	4,230.70
JAPAN	- Nikkei	+196.14	36,354.16
EGYPT	- EGX 30	+92.25	27,665.75
PHILIPPINES	- PSEI	+20.97	6,728.22
PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	+525.02	62,989.88

Change Closing pts

Business



Group picture of representatives at the symposium



Audience at the symposium

Collaborative symposium explores innovations in Kuwait's petroleum sector

Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research hosts 21st joint Kuwait-Japanese symposium

Boursa Kuwait witnesses 26% surge in foreign investments

Third consecutive dip for stock market indices

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: In January, foreign investments in the Boursa Kuwait surged by 26%, reaching 9 million dinars. Their net purchases hit 43.3 million dinars, a notable increase from December's 34.3 million dinars. Institutions and companies led the way with strong net purchases of 42.6 million dinars, while individuals, investment funds, and others recorded net purchases and sales of 578.9 thousand dinars and 52.9 thousand dinars, respectively.

Foreign investors made significant purchases totaling 47.9 million dinars, driven by the MSCI index review. Foreign institutions and companies led the pack with purchases soaring to 113.1 million dinars, and investment funds made purchases totaling 471.5 thousand dinars. Overall, foreign traders, including individuals and institutions, recorded net purchases of 43.32 million dinars.

In contrast, Kuwaitis, including individuals, institutions, and investment funds, posted net sales worth 33.03 million dinars in January. Kuwaiti investors recorded the highest transaction percentage, followed by foreign investors,

while Gulf shareholders had the smallest share of transactions.

Transactions on the Boursa Kuwait totaled 1.478 billion dinars in January, with institutions or companies accounting for over 53%, individuals over 42%, client portfolios limited to Kuwaitis, and investment funds. The market exhibited positive performance, with key indexes experiencing notable increases. The market's end-of-month value reached 42.922 billion dinars, up 6.61% from December 2023.

Also:

KUWAIT CITY: The Kuwait Stock Exchange indices continued to dip in the new week, marking the third consecutive loss amidst a decrease in market variables. The General Market index saw a reduction of 0.61 percent, or 44.03 points, closing at 7,194.28 points. Liquidity dropped to 58.5 million dinars, down from 77 million dinars on the preceding Thursday, with 254.3 million shares traded through 12,525 transactions. Out of 124 shares, 36 gained, 69 lost, and 19 remained unchanged, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The Premier Market Index experienced a 0.67 percent decline, losing 53.09 points to close at 7,865.10 points, accompanied by liquidity amounting to 46.3 million dinars. Trading involved 167.7 million shares through 6,860 transactions, with 31 shares traded, where only 6 gained, 23 lost, and two remained unchanged.

The Main Market index also registered a 0.38 percent decline, losing 22.49 points to

close at 5,949.29 points. Liquidity surpassed 12 million dinars, with 86.5 million shares traded through 5,665 transactions. Out of 93 traded shares, 30 gained, 46 lost, and 17 remained unchanged.

Leading stocks, particularly in the banking sector, contributed to the decline for the third consecutive session. Notably, National Bank, Burgan, International, and KFH witnessed notable decreases. Al-Mabaneh experienced a 1 percent decline, and Arzan shares from the IFA bloc stood out with varying increases, including significant percentages for IFA Hotels and First Takaful shares. Kuwait Real Estate shares declined, with MENA Real Estate recording significant growth of more than 25 percent upon its return to trading.

Unicap shares rose by over 12 percent, breaching the 100 fils level after reaching its lowest point this month at 88 fils. Aayan stock faced pressure, declining by more than 6.5 percent due to the announcement of annual dividends. The auction period was relatively subdued with limited offers and requests for leading stocks, primarily Eva and Arzan stocks.

In the Gulf, GCC market indices displayed varied performances in the initial sessions of the week. **Bahrain and Saudi Arabia** indices rose modestly, while **Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman** indices declined. Oil prices traded at their lowest levels in three weeks at 77.5, following a substantial percentage loss exceeding 7 percent during the previous week on the standard Brent barrel.

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The Petroleum Research Center of the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research held the 21st Joint Kuwait-Japanese Symposium entitled "Advancement in Petroleum Industries" from February 5-6, 2024. The symposium organized by the "Petroleum Research Center" of the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, the Japan Cooperation Center Petroleum, Japan Petroleum Institute and Kuwait National Petroleum Corporation. The continuous cooperation with Japan dates back to several decades when the Arabian Oil Company helped in establishing KISR. Over the years, the mutually beneficial relationship between KISR/JCCP has strengthened further. The cooperation covers various activities such as; participation in joint research projects aimed at developing solutions to specific technological gaps, hosting distinguished Japanese scientists at KISR facilities, providing training opportunities for KISR research staff at Japanese research institutions and utilizing scientific meetings such as this symposium as a forum for exchanging knowledge and discussing critical issues that impact the oil refining industry. All of these joint activities are coordinated with the Petroleum sector in Kuwait to ensure that these activities are benefiting the oil sector companies and enhancing the scientific and technical capabilities in these companies.

Praised

Dr. Meshan M. Al-Otaibi, Acting Director General, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, KISR also praised the role of the Japanese government for its continuous support and close cooperation between the State of Kuwait and Japan in the field of science and technology. The aspects of cooperation are represented in various activities such as participating in joint research projects aimed at developing solutions to the problems facing the oil sector in Kuwait, hosting Japanese scientists at the Institute and the Petroleum Research Center in particular, providing opportunities for training the Institute's staff in Japanese research institutions, and benefiting from scientific meetings to exchange Opinions, and discussion of important issues affecting the oil refining industry. All of these joint activities are coordinated with the Petroleum sector in Kuwait to ensure that these activities are benefiting the oil sector companies and enhancing the scientific and technical capabilities of our colleagues in these companies. In addition, the joint activities with Japan have contributed in building KISR capabilities in petroleum.

He informed that the topics of this year's symposium namely, the 21st Kuwait/Japan Joint Symposium includes; Advancement in downstream processes, Refining process Optimization, Targeting Specifications, Petrochemical industrial processes, Membrane technology, Green Initiatives in Refining Industry, Carbon dioxide utilization, emission reduction and recycling, Zero carbon hydrogen fuel, Equipment maintenance, Integrity Management systems and Robots and Drones for Inspection.

The stringent environmental regulations has put additional responsibilities on the industry to adopt innovative technologies.

Adopting better technologies and knowledge sharing are essential to reduce operating cost and to produce high quality finished products.

Dr. Meshan Al-Otaibi mentioned that the symposium consisted of a main lecture from Kuwait entitled "Prospective Role of Oil-Producing Nations in the Hydrogen Economy" and a second

main lecture from Japan entitled "JPI direction along carbon neutrality and introduction of our research on zeolite catalysts", in addition to 19 scientific lectures and 11 scientific posters, during the symposium constructive discussions that took place between Participants in order to enhance the scientific enrichment of the symposium and exchange of knowledge among the various stakeholders that will help in further understanding of new technologies related to petroleum sector. He deeply appreciated all the participants, especially the Japanese and Kuwaiti scientists, for their dedicated time and efforts in organizing this important event.

His Excellency Mr. Yasunari Morino, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Embassy of Japan in Kuwait, also confirmed that Kuwait and Japan have agreed in 2013 on the "Comprehensive Partnership for Stability and Prosperity" as our major accomplishment. The scientists and technologists who are present today are critical supporters of such relationship. His Excellency stressed that both Japan and Kuwait are committed to transitioning to a society that is net zero in terms of carbon gas emission. In addition, his Excellency have high expectations for the acceleration of technological development through cooperation between Japan and Kuwait based on the historical strong network of experts in the area of science and technology.

Mr. Hitoshi Masuda, Special Counselor, Japan Cooperation Center for Petroleum and Sustainable Energy, JCCP delivered a speech in which he stated that in human resource development programs, JCCP received 811 trainees from Kuwait, and 213 Japanese experts were dispatched in the opposite direction. Mr. Hitoshi Masuda added that in technical cooperation with Kuwait, JCCP implemented 2 projects in FY 2022, and totally 39 projects among all 281 projects since 1993. Mr. Hitoshi Masuda pointed that JCCP will provide technical cooperation and human resources development in the fields of petroleum and sustainable energy.

Stressed

Dr. Atsushi Muramatsu, President of JPI, Deputy Director (Soft Materials), Tohoku University, Japan stressed that Japan will achieve carbon neutrality and a decarbonized society by 2050. Kuwait declared a carbon neutrality goal for the oil and gas sector by 2050. Japan has been conducting research on the effective use of petroleum, fuels, and chemicals using new carbon resources such as CO₂, development of CO₂ capture and storage technology (CCS), and studies toward a hydrogen society, but we consider that further technological development is needed. We believe that this joint symposium will not only accelerate technological development but will also contribute to human resource development in both countries.

In conclusion, Dr. Meshan M. Al-Otaibi, His Excellency Mr. Yasunari Morino, Mr. Hitoshi Masuda and Dr. Atsushi Muramatsu thanked the management and staff of the Japan Petroleum Institute and the Japan Petroleum Cooperation Center, the Petroleum Research Center staff and the National Petroleum Company's management Kuwait" for their continuous support and active participation in this symposium, and for their efforts in organizing and making this important symposium a success.

'Initiative aims to raise awareness on plastic's negative impact'

Gulf Bank launches environmental sustainability initiative in collaboration with Al-Dahiya and Al-Mansouriah co-op

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: Gulf Bank had earlier revealed the timetable for executing the initiative within the participating co-ops, which include Al-Dahiya and Al-Mansouriah, Al-Shamiya and Shuwaikh, Al-Rawda and Hawally, Kaifan, and Mishref. This disclosure took place in the presence of bank officials, representatives from the Environment Public Authority, and the Committee for Environmental, Food, and Water Security in the National Assembly.

On this occasion, Mr. Ahmad Al-Amir, Deputy General Manager of Corporate Communications at Gulf Bank, stated, "We are pleased at Gulf Bank to launch the initiative today at the Al-Dahiya and Al-Mansouriah co-op. Our goal is to achieve the desired outcome, by cultivating a change in the mindset of our community. This will be accomplished through the distribution of reusable bags and by encouraging co-ops in Kuwait to reduce their plastic usage."

He emphasized that this initiative is part of Gulf Bank's annual commitment to implement various initiatives aimed at reinforcing the principles of environmental sustainability within the community. Gulf Bank believes that the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, and they found it fitting to initiate this program with selected major co-ops in Kuwait. Around 100,000 reusable bags will be distributed to the selected co-ops, marking the first step towards changing behavior, and becoming an integral part of their daily lives.

He added, "This initiative is rooted in Gulf Bank's 2025 strategy,

with the goal of establishing principles of environmental, social, and governance sustainability. It aligns with the country's environmental strategy under the vision of 'New Kuwait 2035,' as well as legislation related to the environment, laws safeguarding the environment, resource conservation, pollution reduction, environmental safety, ecosystem rehabilitation, biodiversity protection, waste management efficiency improvement, utilization of renewable energy, and building and developing national capabilities in environmental work."

He conveyed optimism that this initiative would actively contribute to shaping government decisions and laws, compelling both institutions and individuals to minimize plastic usage. Ultimately, this effort is expected to contribute significantly to the protection of Kuwait's environment from the significant harm caused by plastic bags.

In response, Mr. Ahmed Al-Rashed, Chairman of the Board of the Al-Dahiya and Mansouriah co-op, expressed appreciation to Gulf Bank for initiating this noteworthy program and choosing the Al-Dahiya and Al-Mansouriah Cooperative as the trailblazer in its execution.

Moreover, Ms. Mashaal Jassim Al-Khalib, Head of the Social Committee at the Al-Dahiya and Al-Mansouriah Cooperative, praised the initiative. She highlighted the co-op's role in community service and its collaboration with both private and public sector institutions to execute various initiatives focused on environmental preservation.



A group photo of representatives of Gulf Bank and members of the Al-Dahiya and Al-Mansouriah co-op society.



Reusable bags provided to the customers.

NIC to commence role for two firms

National Investments Company signs agreements for market maker service

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The National Investments Company signed two agreements to provide a market maker service on the shares of IFA Hotels and Resorts and the International Financial Consulting Holding Company, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to a statement from the Kuwait Stock Exchange, the company will begin the market maker activity on the two companies after completing the registration procedures on the Kuwait Stock Exchange and fulfilling the regulatory requirements estab-

lished in this regard.

In a separate statement, the KSE announced its approval to register the National Investments Company as a market maker in the shares of "IFA" and "IFA Hotels" companies, starting today.

The market maker in the KSE is defined as the person who works to provide the forces of supply and demand for one or more listed securities in accordance with the controls issued by or approved by the Capital Markets Authority.

BUSINESS

Pakistan, UAE for boosting ties in marine, logistic sector

Pakistan and United Arab Emirates signed on Saturday a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed to strengthen bilateral relations in marine and logistic sectors.

UAE Minister of State for Foreign Trade Dr. Thani bin Ahmad Al Zeyoudi called on Pakistan's Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar in Islamabad. PM Kakar witnessed the signing of a MoU between the author-

ity of Karachi Port Trust Pakistan and Abu Dhabi Ports Group, UAE, according to a press release issued by PM House.

The MoU aims to strengthen bilateral relations in marine and logistic sectors of Pakistan and UAE. The Prime Minister expressed his satisfaction over the growth of exchanges, interaction and cooperation between businesses in Pakistan and the UAE.

PM Kakar said the long-standing brotherly relations between Pakistan and UAE are getting stronger with each passing day.

He recalled his recent visit to UAE where many MoUs were signed by both countries.

"UAE is home to 1.8 million Pakistanis who are contributing towards development, prosperity and economic growth of the two brotherly countries," said the premier. (KUNA)

Greece sells 30% stake in Athens airport operator

Greece completed a major privatization, selling its 30% stake in the biggest airport operator in the tourism-reliant country during an initial public offering, officials said.

Shares in Athens International Airport are expected to begin trading on the Athens stock exchange starting Wednesday, the airport said in a statement.

Finance Minister Costis Hadzidakis said the listing of a new blue chip stock would provide a strong boost

to Greek capital markets.

The initial public offering drew demand that exceeded the number of shares available, raising 785 million euros (\$848 million) for Greece's state HRADF privatization fund.

The share price was set at 8.20 euros, at the top end of the range envisaged by HRADF, implying a market capitalization of 2.46 billion euros for the airport.

Some 32 million tourists visited Greece in 2023, up from about 28

million a year earlier. Overall traffic at Greek airports hit a historic high of 72.6 million people last year, up 14% on the year, according to Greece's civil aviation authority.

During Greece's 2010-18 financial crisis, the country privatized a broad raft of state assets. The process has continued at a slower pace since, with the state recently offloading its stakes in major Greek banks and pressing ahead with harbor and highway concession deals. (AP)

Case related to 2015 merger

Samsung chief Lee acquitted of financial crimes

SEOUL, South Korea, Feb 5, (AP): A South Korean court on Monday acquitted Samsung Electronics Chairman Lee Jae-yong of financial crimes involving a contentious merger between Samsung affiliates in 2015 that tightened his grip over South Korea's biggest company.

The ruling by the Seoul Central District Court could ease the legal troubles surrounding the Samsung heir less than two years after he was pardoned of a separate conviction of bribery in a corruption scandal that helped topple a previous South Korean government.

The court said the prosecution failed to sufficiently prove the merger between Samsung C&T and Cheil Industries was unlawfully conducted with an aim to strengthen Lee's control over Samsung Electronics.

The ruling was criticized by activists, progressive politicians and commentators, who questioned how Lee could be innocent of all charges when he had previously been convicted in the separate case of bribing a former president while seeking government support for the merger.

The People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy, South Korea's biggest civic group, said the court failed to display "even a minimal level of social justice" by putting Lee's interests before those of shareholders and pensioners, whose retirement funds were possibly reduced by the deal, which was endorsed by the National Pension Service.

It described the ruling as a setback for years of efforts to reform the management culture of South Korea's family-owned conglomerates and their cozy ties with the government. South Korean corporate leaders often receive relatively lenient punishments for corruption, business irregularities and other crimes, with judges often citing concerns over the country's economy.

Prosecutors had sought a five-year jail term for Lee, who was accused of stock price manipulation and accounting fraud.

It wasn't immediately clear whether they would appeal. Lee denied wrongdoing in the current case, describing the 2015 merger as "normal business activity."

Lee, 55, did not answer questions from reporters as he left the court. You Jin Kim, Lee's lawyer, praised the ruling, saying it confirmed that the merger was legal.

Lee, a third-generation corporate heir who was officially appointed chairman of Samsung Electronics in October 2022, has led the Samsung group of companies since 2014, when his late father, former chairman Lee Kun-hee, suffered a heart attack.

Lee Jae-yong served 18 months in prison after being convicted in 2017 over separate bribery charges related to the 2015 deal. He was originally sentenced to five years in prison for offering 8.6 billion won (\$6.4 million) worth of bribes to then-President Park Geun-hye and her close confidante to win government support for the 2015 merger, which was key to strengthening his control over the Samsung business empire and solidifying the father-to-son leadership succession.

Park and her confidante were also convicted in the scandal, and enraged South Koreans staged massive protests for months demanding an end to shady ties between business and politics. The demonstrations eventually led to Park's ouster from office.

Lee was released on parole in 2021 and pardoned by South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol in August 2022, in moves that extended a history of leniency toward major white-collar crime in South Korea and preferential treatment for convicted tycoons.

Some shareholders had opposed the 2015 merger, saying it unfairly benefited the Lee family while hurting minority shareholders.

There was also public anger over how the national pension fund's stake in Samsung C&T, the merged entity, fell by an estimated hundreds of millions of dollars after Park pressured the National Pension Service to support the deal.

Prosecutors have argued that Lee and other Samsung officials caused damage to shareholders of Samsung C&T, which was a major construction company, by manipulating corporate assets to engineer a merger that was favorable to Cheil, an amusement park and clothing company where Lee had been the biggest shareholder.

Prosecutors also claimed that Samsung executives, through accounting fraud, inflated the value of Samsung Biologics, a Cheil subsidiary, by more than 4 trillion won (\$3 billion) in an effort to make the deal look fair.

In its ruling, the court said the prosecution's evidence wasn't enough to establish that the 2015 merger was conducted through illegal steps or served the sole purpose of strengthening Lee's control over Samsung Electronics, saying broader business considerations were likely involved.

The court said it was unclear that the deal's conditions unfairly hurt the interests of shareholders and added that prosecutors failed to prove that Samsung officials committed accounting fraud. Samsung Electronics showed no obvious sign of business trouble when Lee was running the company from behind bars, communicating his decisions through visiting company executives. Nonetheless, South Korean business lobbies, including the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry, praised Lee's acquittal, saying that an extension of Lee's legal troubles would have hampered Samsung's speed and decisiveness as it faces heightened competition in semiconductors and other markets.

Oh Se Hyung, an official at the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice, said the ruling represented a "collapse in economic and judicial justice."

"It's tragic that a wrongful merger and clear accounting irregularities were ruled as not guilty, and you have to question the roles played by the prosecution and the judiciary that led to this," he said.

Lee has been navigating one of his toughest stretches as the leader of one of the world's largest makers of computer chips and smartphones, with Russia's war on Ukraine and other geopolitical turmoil hurting the world economy and deflating technology spending.

The company last week reported an annual 34% decline in operating profit for October-December quarter as sluggish demands for its TVs and other consumer electronics products offset hard-won gains from a slowly recovering memory chip market.

Bid to boost trade, investment

S. Lanka signs a free trade 'agreement' with Thailand

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Feb 5, (AP): Debt-stricken Sri Lanka signed a trade pact with Thailand on Saturday in a bid to boost trade and investment as the Indian ocean island nation is struggling to recover from its worst economic crisis that hit two year ago.

The Sri Lanka Thailand Free Trade Agreement covering trade in goods, investment, custom procedures and intellectual property rights was signed in the capital Colombo in the presence of Sri Lanka President Ranil Wickremesinghe and Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin.

Sri Lanka began talks with Thailand on a free trade agreement in 2016.

The countries' two-way trade was worth about \$352 million in 2022, with Thailand's exports at \$292 million and Sri Lanka's exports at \$58 million, according to Sri Lankan government's data.

Sri Lanka exports include mainly precious stones, apparel, tea and spices while exports from Thailand include smoked rubber sheets, natural rubber, plastic and cement. Sri Lanka's government expects the trade pact would boost two-way trade up to \$1.5 billion.

Thavisin said that the countries agreed to promote investment in areas such as fisheries, food processing, tourism and green energy. Thailand has made over \$92 million in direct investment in Sri Lanka from 2005 to 2022.

Giving further boost to tourism, Thavisin said that Thailand's flag carrier Thai Airways would resume daily flights from Bangkok to Sri Lanka next month.

Sri Lanka has been struggling

with an economic crisis since declaring bankruptcy in April 2022 with more than \$83 billion in debt, more than half of it to foreign creditors. The crisis led to protests that ousted then-President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

Severe shortages of food, fuel and medicine have largely abated over the past year under Wickremesinghe. But public dissatisfaction has grown over the government's effort to increase revenue by raising electricity bills and imposing heavy new income taxes on professionals and businesses. The International Monetary Fund approved a four-year bailout program last March to help the South Asian country.

Sri Lanka is hoping to restructure \$17 billion of its outstanding debt and has already reached agreements with some of its external creditors.

Calling the agreement "a milestone in the economic partnership" between the two countries, Wickremesinghe said Sri Lanka has made "significant progress in economic stabilization" since the crisis erupted.

"As Sri Lanka begins to stabilise its economy and regain international confidence towards recovery and growth, we are looking at Thailand's support as Sri Lanka undertakes this very important journey of economic transformation and integration with Asia," Wickremesinghe said.

He also said the free trade agreement was Sri Lanka's second with an ASEAN country, after Singapore. Sri Lanka is also in talks with neighbouring India and China on trade agreements.

Boeing flags potential delays after a supplier finds another problem

WASHINGTON, Feb 5, (AP): Boeing reported another problem with fuselages on its 737 jets that might delay deliveries of about 50 aircraft in the latest quality gaff to plague the manufacturer.

Boeing Commercial Airplanes CEO Stan Deal said in a letter to Boeing staff seen Monday that a worker at its supplier discovered misdrilled holes in fuselages. Spirit AeroSystems, based in Wichita, Kansas, makes a large part of the fuselages on Boeing Max jets.

"While this potential condition is not an immediate safety issue and all 737s can continue operating safely, we currently believe we will have to perform rework on about 50 undelivered planes," Deal said in the letter to employees share with the media.

The problem was discovered by an employee of the supplier of the fuselages who notified his manager that two holes might have not been drilled according to specifications, Deal said.

Both Boeing and Spirit AeroSystems are facing intense scrutiny over the quality of their work after an Alas-

ka Airlines 737 Max 9 was forced to make an emergency landing on Jan. 5 when a panel called a door plug blew out of the side of the plane shortly after takeoff from Portland, Oregon.

The NTSB is investigating the accident, while the Federal Aviation Administration investigates whether Boeing and its suppliers followed quality-control procedures.

Alaska Airlines and United Airlines, the only other U.S. airline flying the Max 9, reported finding loose hardware in door plugs of other planes they inspected after the accident. The FAA grounded all Max 9s in the U.S. the day after the blowout. Two weeks later, the agency approved the inspection and maintenance process to return the planes to flying.

Alaska Airlines and United Airlines have begun returning some to service.

Boeing, based in Renton, Washington, said last week it was withdrawing a request for a safety exemption needed to certify a new, smaller model of the 737 Max airliner.

China mkts slump to 5-yr lows

BANGKOK, Feb 5, (AP): Chinese shares gyrated on Monday, sinking to 5-year lows after market regulators sought to reassure jittery investors with a promise to crack down on stock price manipulation and "malicious short selling."

Shares in Shanghai and the smaller market in Shenzhen, near Hong Kong, swung between big losses and small gains throughout the day. The markets have languished on heavy selling of property shares, which are enduring a slump in the real estate market.

The China Securities Regulatory Commission held a meeting Sunday focused on stabilizing the markets, state-run Chinese media reported.

A notice on its website appeared designed to reassure individual investors who account for more than half of trading volume.

It vowed to crack down with harsh punishment for insider trading and other violations. "We must sincerely listen to the voices of the broad numbers of investors, respond to their concerns and protect their rights as investors," the CSRC said in a notice.

Those promises followed comments by various top officials on the need to restore market stability.

The head of the economic crimes unit of the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the country's top public prosecutor's office, said in an interview in the Securities Times, a publication of the ruling Communist Party's People's daily.

"Protecting the rights of investors is the top priority," said Zhang Xiaojin.

"We will continue to increase the intensity of punishing financial crimes in key areas, and severely crack down on crimes that seriously disrupt the order of the capital market in accordance with the law."

Market observers said there were signs Monday that the authorities had, as is often the case, ordered big institutional investors to step up buying of state-owned banks and other heavyweights. Many of those shares saw strong gains.

The Industrial & Commercial Bank of China gained 2.3%, Bank of China rose 2.8% and the Agricultural Bank of China

Regulator promises to protect small investors

Cuba's president replaces the country's 'economy minister'

HAVANA, Feb 5, (AP): Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel removed the country's economy minister on Friday, according to state media, following a delay in recently announced measures to increase the prices of fuel and transportation.

Cuba's Council of State, which is under the president's leadership, appointed Central Bank president Joaquín Alonso Vázquez to replace Alejandro Gil, the outgoing economy minister.

The move comes days after the government put on hold an increase in gasoline prices planned for Feb. 1, saying a cyberattack from outside the communist-run island nation had prevented its implementation.

The Cuban government said late last year that it would have to either increase prices for fuel and electricity, or reduce rations for basic supplies.

At the time, Díaz-Canel said that difficult measures were needed for difficult times.

The then-economy minister, Gil, said Cuba's economy had contracted between 1% and 2% in 2023, while inflation was at about 30%.

The government said it needed to hike fuel prices or else it would have to reduce the amount of food and other basics contained in government ration books.

But overall, shares still mostly lost ground, and technology stocks were among the biggest decliners.

The Shenzhen Component index lost 1.1% after dipping as much as 4.4%. The Shanghai Composite index shed 1% to 2,702.19, having lost 3.5% earlier.

"The situation in the Chinese equity market appears tumultuous, reflecting broader concerns about regulatory uncertainty and government intervention," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a report.

"Despite attempts by state authorities to stabilize the market, investor sentiment remains fragile, reflecting deep-seated concerns about the reliability of government policies and the regulatory framework," Innes said.

Wilder swings were seen in the CSI 1000 index, an exchange-



A man tosses his gas container into the air as he waits in a line to refuel, in Havana, Cuba, Friday, Feb. 2, 2024. Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel removed the country's economy minister on Friday, according to state media, following a delay in recently announced measures to increase the prices of fuel and transportation. (AP)

The economic crisis in Cuba is already so bad that hundreds of thousands of people have left in a bid to reach the United States.

Díaz-Canel also removed Science, Technology and Environment Minister Elba Rosa Perez after more than a decade in the post.

traded fund that fell as much as 8.7% on Monday before regaining some of the losses to close down 6.2%.

The CSI 1000 often is used to track so-called "snowball derivatives," investment products that can pay big gains but also can result in exaggerated losses.

Markets were calmer in Hong Kong.

The benchmark Hang Seng index, which has also recently seen significant losses, edged 0.2% lower, to 15,510.01.

Chinese companies have lost billions of dollars worth of market value as investors shifted away from the markets in Hong Kong and the mainland in search of better returns. Tokyo's benchmark, the Nikkei 225 index, is trading at near 35-year highs, though that is partly due to changes in investment rules that are drawing money into the mar-

ket. She will be replaced by Eduardo Martínez, a lawmaker and president of the Cuban pharmaceutical company, BioCubaFarma.

State media also reported that the Food Industry Ministry will now be led by lawmaker Alberto Lopez, governor of Villa Clara province.

Uncertainty over tensions with Washington isn't helping. Former President Donald Trump has threatened to impose 60% tariffs on imports of Chinese products at a time when the U.S. already is curbing Beijing's access to advanced computer chips and other strategically sensitive technologies.

In 2018, Trump started a trade war by vastly raising tariffs on Chinese imports. China retaliated with tariffs on U.S. goods, and the tariffs on both sides remain to this day.



Victoria Monet



Dua Lipa



Gracie Laboy



Lainey Wilson



Billie Eilish



Allison Russell

Wild-and-wacky fashion

Monét, Cyrus stun on Grammys red carpet

LOS ANGELES, Feb 5, (AP): Victoria Monét walked the Grammys red carpet Sunday in a bronze Versace goddess body-hugger, her adorable 2-year-old and fellow nominee, Hazel, in a matching color as music's big night unfolded on the wildest and wackiest red carpet of awards season. Dua Lipa went for low-cut silver while Taylor Swift walked in classic white.

Swift, the last on the carpet, wore custom Schiaparelli Couture, working the train on her draped corset strapless look for the cameras. She accompanied the dress, which had a high side slit, with long velvet black gloves and multiple necklaces.

Swift's fans, always on the Easter egg hunt, saw nods to her Reputation era in her black and white look.

Monét's custom corset look was stunning, strapless and symbolized Old Hollywood amid a sea of bold color, shimmer and shine at Crypto.com Arena in rain-drenched Los Angeles. Hazel, also in Versace, had a shy attack in the chaos, turning her head away from the cameras while in her mother's arms.

"I feel expensive," said Monét, who finished off her look with a Bulgari serpent necklace.

Lipa's look, by Courrèges, was all-around chunky embellishment with long sleeves and subtle cutouts at the hips. Around her neck was a Tiffany & Co. fish-like necklace of diamonds, orange sapphires and other gems. In all, it was 23 carats.

If Monét was a Grammy statuette, Miley Cyrus was a golden warrior in a sheer, chain mesh look, her hair giving a '70s bouffant vibe. It was custom Maison Margiela by John Galliano.

Culture

Bianca Betancourt, digital culture editor for Harper's Bazaar, called Cyrus' look the "type of over-the-top camp we love and want from the Grammys."

Newcomer Tyla, meanwhile, "perfectly nailed her Grammys debut in a mint-green cutout gown from Versace that didn't deter from the playful, sexy looks she regularly wears," Betancourt said.

The favorite look of the night for Claire Stern, Elle's digital director, wasn't worn on the red carpet.

"It's Miley Cyrus celebrating her first-ever Grammy win by performing 'Flowers' in a beaded Bob Mackie mini-dress," she said.

Billie Eilish donned a Barbie jacket, a vintage piece reworked for her by Chrome Hearts. She was fresh from her win for her "Barbie" song "What Was I Made For?" during the non-televised Grammys Premiere ceremony ahead of the big show.

Bright yellows, pinks and on-trend reds were on display, though classic black was the choice for many. The ladies of boygenius, Julien Baker, Phoebe Bridgers, and Lucy Dacus, wore matching white Thom Browne tailored suits, their trousers and jackets cropped, with pink carnations on their lapels. Menswear for women was a mini-trend on the carpet.

"Much of the best menswear we saw on the carpet was worn by women. Boygenius in their stark white Thom Browne suits, Brandi Carlile in a killer yellow ensemble with a silky pink blouse, Billie Eilish polishing off her Chrome Hearts look with a shirt and tie," said Yang-Yi Goh, style editor at GQ.

Janelle Monáe, always a fashion standout, went classic in a Giorgio Armani Privé liquid sequined gown that plunged at the neck and had a large rosette at the waist.

"I'm feeling classic, timeless, futuristic," Monáe told E!. "I'm standing in Black pride, in a state of joy."

Some on the carpet definitely went wild, but there were far more traditional looks than usual for the Grammys.

"The Grammys seems to be in transition, at least fashion-wise. What used to be the loudest red carpet of the year was noticeably more subdued this year. On the one hand, that's fantastic. It lets quieter looks shine. On the other hand, well, it's the Grammys. A bit of bombast is always fun, after all," said Jonathan Evans, style director for Esquire.

Style



Kelly Clarkson



Kylie Minogue



Olivia Rodrigo



Chrissy Teigen



Claudia Sulewski



Dawn Richard



Taylor Swift



Gracie Abrams



Tessa Brooks



Janelle Monáe



Haley Kalil



Keltie Knight



Summer Walker



Lauren Daigle



Mimi Succar

FASHION

grammys

Women shine with top honors, memorable performances

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 5, (AP) — It's Taylor Swift's world, and she just allows us to live in it.

After weeks where she attracted endless attention for her football star boyfriend and a mystifying right-wing campaign against her, the Grammy Awards put the focus squarely back on her art. "Midnights" earned Swift her fourth career Grammy for album of the year on Sunday, an achievement no one can match.

It breaks a tie with Frank Sinatra, Paul Simon and Stevie Wonder, who each won the honor three times.

"For me, the award is the work," she said. "All I want to do is keep doing it."

And she will (more on that later), Swift was the last example of an action-packed show where women earned the biggest honors and had the majority of the most memorable performances. Miley Cyrus powerfully belted "Flowers," which won record of the year. Billie Eilish's ballad from "Barbie," "What Was I Made For?" was song of the year for her and co-writer Finneas O'Connell, her brother. Singer-songwriter Victoria Monét is best new artist.

There were so many riches that rock supergroup boygenius, with Julien Baker, Phoebe Bridgers and Lucy Dacus, won three Grammys and didn't even make it onto the CBS portion of the show.

Making the best pop vocal solo performance the televised show's first award - where all five nominees were women - was a savvy hint to what was coming.

Bringing the reclusive Tracy Chapman on to duet with country singer Luke Combs, who had a massive hit covering her "Fast Car" this

past summer, was spine-tingling. In a pre-taped segment leading into it, Combs eloquently described what the song meant to him growing up. Clearly moved, Chapman's eyes glistened when the crowd roared as she played the 1988 song's unforgettable guitar riff. She's kept to the background as Combs brought the song to a new generation, and chose a wise place to reemerge.

Not to diss more elaborately-staged affairs, but there was a certain power to Cyrus' performance of "Flowers." It was just her and the song, essentially. There was no question she could carry it, and she even inserted a couple of ad-libs: "I just won my first Grammy!" Her acceptance speeches were packed with personality.

Attention

In accepting the Dr. Dre Global Impact Award, Jay-Z proved he has a long memory. He recalled the times that rap artists were outspoken about not getting enough attention from the Grammys commensurate with music sales, even boycotting a show - although "they went to a hotel to watch the Grammys," he said. "It wasn't a great boycott." Jay-Z considers it an injustice that his wife, Beyoncé, has never won album of the year despite her astonishing haul of 32 Grammys. "When I get nervous," he said, "I tell the truth."

Joni Mitchell's return to the stage earned her a Grammy and her performance Sunday was another emotional highlight. Surrounded by musical friends like Brandi Carlile, the 80-year-old Mitchell sat in an easy chair that resembled a throne, tapping her cane as she sang "Both Sides Now." Her voice, which she had to recover after suffer-

ing a brain aneurysm, brought a richness and perspective to the song that could only be hinted at in the original. Like Chapman, she was visibly moved by the audience's reception, betrayed by laughter after she finished.

Let's be honest, those "in memoriam" tributes to people who died in the past year usually signal that it's time for a bathroom break. Not so here. Stevie Wonder honored Tony Bennett on a chilling "duet" with a filmed Bennett on Wonder's "For Once in My Life," then sang Bennett's "The Best is Yet to Come." Annie Lennox, saluting Sinead O'Connor, sang "Nothing Compares 2 U," with two of the late songwriter Prince's accompanists. And Fantasia Barrino shook the walls with "Proud Mary" to honor Tina Turner.

The Grammys no doubt intended Billy Joel's performance of his first new song in 30 years, "Turn the Lights Back On," to be a big show-capper. But the Grammys' previous three hours were a hard act to top.

To the public, it sometimes seems that stars arrive suddenly, but Monét and SZA offered charming reminders of all the hard work and dreams that go into success. After disarmingly thanking "the champagne servers of tonight," Monét described the 15-year journey that took her to a best new artist award. "My roots have been growing underneath the ground for so long - and I feel like today I'm sprouting," she said. There was a brief pause before SZA accepted an award for best R&B song, since she was changing backstage. But she was overwhelmed after recalling, with the trophy presented Lizzo, the days a decade ago when they opened shows in small clubs. She hustled off-stage when the tears flowed. "I'm not an attractive crier," she said.

Grammys

Variety



Taylor Swift accepts the award for best pop vocal album for 'Midnights' during the 66th annual Grammy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 4, in Los Angeles. (AP)

Grammys

Features

ARABIC TIMES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2024

NEW YORK: Apple has had its first box office flop.

"Argylle," the \$200-million star-studded spy thriller from Apple Studios, debuted with \$18 million in ticket sales, according to studio estimates Sunday. The film, directed by **Matthew Vaughn**, managed to lead the weekend box office, but still found little interest from moviegoers.

Although Apple has been in the original film business since 2019 and won the Oscar for best picture with 2021's "CODA," the company has only recently produced its own lineup of big-budget releases. The first two - **Martin Scorsese's** "Killers of the Flower Moon" and **Ridley Scott's** "Napoleon" - could be called successful.

"Killers of the Flower Moon," though not profitable with \$156 million in global sales, was one of the most celebrated films of 2023 and is nominated for 10 Academy Awards. "Napoleon," released in November, has raked in \$219 million worldwide - also not enough to turn a profit. But both films raised Apple's reputation as a home to top directors and prestige filmmaking.

The same can't be said for "Argylle," a twisty thriller starring **Bryce Dallas Howard**, **Sam Rockwell** and **Henry Cavill**. The movie was badly dinged by critics, who gave it a Rotten Tomatoes score of 35% "fresh." Ticket buyers also gave it a thumbs down, with a C+ CinemaScore.

Apple has paired with traditional studios for each of those releases. Universal Pictures handled the rollout of "Argylle," which opened in 3,605 North American venues and took in an additional \$17.3 million in 78 international markets. Paramount handled "Killers of the Flower Moon," while Sony steered "Napoleon."

"Argylle," with "Kingsman" director Vaughn at the helm, was made with aspirations of starting a new franchise. But one of its biggest talking points ahead of its release was conjecture that **Taylor Swift** might have been involved with the movie thanks to the prominent presence of argyle patterns and a cat in the promotional materials. Despite plenty of online discussion, Swift had no involvement in the film. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: The night began with a rare sight: tennis champion

'Midnights' wins album of the year

Swift sets new record at Grammys

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 5, (AP) — Taylor Swift won album of the year at the Grammy Awards for "Midnights," breaking the record for most wins in the category with four.

She began her speech by thanking her producer and friend Jack Antonoff and added, "I would love to tell you this is the happiest moment of my life," she told the crowd, but said she feels this happy when she creates music and plays shows.

Earlier in the night, Taylor Swift used her 13th Grammy win on Sunday to announce her new album, "The Tortured Poets Department," will arrive April 19.

"I know that the way that the Recording Academy voted is a direct reflection of the passion of the fans," she said while accepting the best pop vocal album award. "So, I want to say thank you to the fans by telling you a secret that I've been keeping from you for the last two years."

One of the night's biggest awards, record of the year, went to Miley Cyrus for "Flowers," her second-ever Grammy and second of the night.

"This award is amazing. But I really hope that it doesn't change anything because my life was beautiful yesterday," she said in her speech.

Victoria Monét won best new artist. "Thank you to the champagne-servers tonight," Monét began her acceptance speech. "Thanks to my mom, a single mom raising this really bad girl." Then she started to cry, telling the room that this award was "15 years in the making."

Billie Eilish won song of the year for writing the "Barbie" hit, "What Was I Made For?" She thanked director Greta Gerwig for "making the best movie of the year."

It was just one of several standout moments from Sunday's show, hosted by Trevor Noah and broadcast live from Crypto.com Arena in downtown Los Angeles.

Karol G made Grammy history Sunday by becoming the first female performer to win best música

urbana album for her blockbuster "Mañana Será Bonito" record.

"This is my first time at the Grammys," she told the audience in English. "And this is my first time holding my own Grammy."

Performances were many. Olivia Rodrigo brought her bloodsucking ballad "vampire" - or in this case, bloodletting, as red liquid dripped from the walls behind her. Joni Mitchell, 80, made Grammy history by performing "Both Sides Now" from her 1969 album "Clouds"; Travis Scott did a medley of "My Eyes," "I Know?," and "Fein." Burna Boy was joined by Brandy and 21 Savage and did "On Form," "City Boys," and "Sittin' on Top of the World."

Speech

A long and touching In Memoriam segment celebrated many of the musical greats lost last year. Stevie Wonder performed "For Once in My Life" and "The Best Is Yet to Come" in honor of Tony Bennett; Annie Lennox delivered "Nothing Compares 2 U" for Sinead O'Connor. "Artists for ceasefire, peace in the world," Lennox said at the end of the song, her fist extended in the air.

Jon Batiste did a medley of "Ain't No Sunshine," "Lean On Me," and finally "Optimistic" with Ann Nesby for the late great music exec Clarence Avant. Oprah introduced a fiery Tina Turner tribute of "Proud Mary" by Fantasia Barrino and Adam Blackstone.

SZA also took the stage - performing a medley of her larger-than-life hits "Snooze" and "Kill Bill," joined by dancers wielding katanas. Later, she'd take home the trophy for best R&B song - for "Snooze," handed to her by Lizzo. SZA ran to the stage and gave a charming, out of breath speech because she was "changing, and then I took a shot."

Luke Combs delivered a heartfelt rendition of "Fast Car" with Tracy Chapman - his cover of the Chapman classic has dominated country radio and

won him song of the year at the 2023 CMAs. In 1989 the song won Chapman best female pop vocal performance.

Dua Lipa opened the show with a high-octane medley: first, a tease of her forthcoming single, "Training Season," then, her most recent single, "Houdini," and finally, her disco-pop "Barbie" hit "Dance the Night."

Eilish and Finneas also brought "Barbie" to the Grammys stage with live string accompaniment. They were followed by Cyrus, who performed "Flowers" for the first time live on television.

"Why are you acting like you don't know this song?" she teased the crowd - John Legend and wife Chrissy Teigen were among those in the audience who got up to dance - and later cheered mid-song. "I just won my first Grammy!"

Best country album went to Lainey Wilson for "Bell Bottom Country," - her very first Grammy - as presented by Kacey Musgraves. "I'm a fifth-generation farmer's daughter," she told the crowd, adding that she's a "songwriting farmer," and that's where the musical magic came from.

Jay-Z was awarded the Dr. Dre Global Impact Award and used his speech to talk about the hip-hop greats that came before him - and heavily suggesting at the Grammys history of placing rap on the backburner - or at the very least, not in the televised version of the show. (This year, there were no rap categories on the telecast, but two pop, one Latin, one country and one R&B.)

"We want you all to get it right," he said. "At least get it close to right," before switching focus to Beyoncé. "Most Grammys, never won album of the year. How does that work?"

Bridgers took an early lead at the Grammys, quickly winning four trophies ahead of the main telecast, with her and her boygenius bandmates bringing an infectious energy to the pre-telecast Premiere Ceremony.

Continued on Page 12

Serena Williams was flustered. "I'm a little nervous... I can't breathe," she said through an exasperated smile. "I'm usually really good at this."

The overwhelming task was not opening the famed **Clive Davis** pre-Grammys gala at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California - though that no doubt comes



Scott



Howard

with some social pressure. It was introducing its opening act, one of her favorite groups of all time: Green Day.

An enthusiasm for music fueled the night, as to be expected. But it was a concluding performance by **Gladys Knight, Dionne Warwick,** and **Stevie Wonder** that really stole the show - for those still in the room

after 1 a.m. "Music is love," Wonder told the crowd before launching into a singalong of Warwick's "What the World Needs Now."

Knight first emerged to sing "The Way We Were / Try to Remember," before being joined by Warwick for "That's What Friends Are For," which Wonder closed with a harmonica solo.

About an hour earlier, **Jon Platt**, Sony Music Publishing chairman and CEO, was honored with the 2024 Grammy Salute to Industry Icons Award at the star-studded event and used his speech to remind those in attendance that "it always takes a village," to move the needle in the music industry. "No one does it alone." (AP)

People & Places



Tracy Chapman, (left), and Luke Combs perform 'Fast Car.' (AP)



Joni Mitchell, (from left), host Trevor Noah, and Brandi Carlile. (AP)



Olivia Rodrigo performs 'Vampire' during the 66th annual Grammy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 4, in Los Angeles. (AP)



Travis Scott performs a medley. (AP)



Billy Joel performs 'Turn The Lights Back On.' (AP)



Jon Batiste performs during an in memoriam tribute during the Grammy Awards. (AP)



Meryl Streep, (center), Mark Ronson present Miley Cyrus with award. (AP)



Billie Eilish, (left), and Finneas pose with the awards for best song and song of the year. (AP)



Phoebe Bridgers, (from left), Lucy Dacus, and Julien Baker of boygenius pose with awards. (AP)



Yannick Nezet-Seguin, (left), and Latoria Moore accept the award for best Opera Recording. (AP)



Celine Dion presents the award for album of the year. (AP)



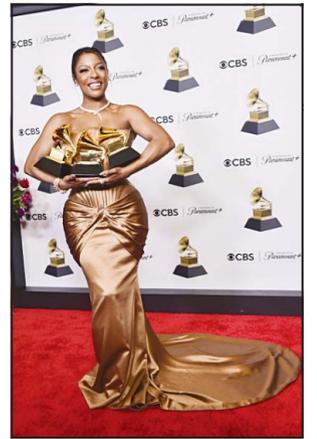
Oprah Winfrey introduces a performance by Fantasia Barrino. (AP)



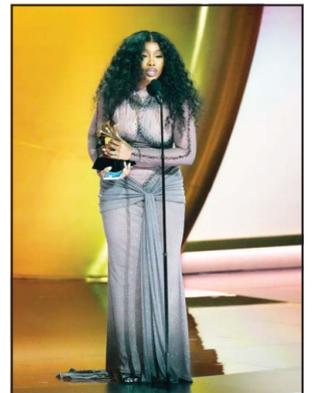
Lainey Wilson poses with the award for best country album. (AP)

List of top Grammy winners

- LOS ANGELES, Feb 5, (AP): A list of top winners at the 66th annual Grammy Awards:
- Album Of The Year: "Midnights," Taylor Swift
 - Record Of The Year: "Flowers," Miley Cyrus
 - Best New Artist: Victoria Monét
 - Song Of The Year (Songwriter's Award): "What Was I Made For?," Billie Eilish and Finneas
 - Best Pop Vocal Album: "Midnights," Taylor Swift
 - Best Pop Solo Performance: "Flowers," Miley Cyrus
 - Best New Artist: Gracie Abrams; Fred again...; Ice Spice; Jelly Roll; Coco Jones; Noah Kahan; Victoria Monét; The War and Treaty.
 - Best Country Album: "Bell Bottom Country," Lainey Wilson
 - Best R&B Song: "Snooze," SZA
 - Best Musica Urbana Album: "Mañana Será Bonito," Karol G
 - Best Pop Duo/Group Performance: "Ghost in the Machine," SZA featuring Phoebe Bridgers
 - Best Alternative Music Album: "The Record," Boygenius
 - Songwriter Of The Year, Non-Classical: Theron Thomas
 - Producer Of The Year, Non-Classical: Jack Antonoff
 - Best R&B Album: "Jaguar II," Victoria Monét
 - Best Progressive R&B Album: "SOS," SZA
 - Best Audio Book, Narration And Storytelling Recording: "The Light We Carry: Overcoming In Uncertain Times," Michelle Obama
 - Best Reggae Album: "Colors of Royal," Julian Marley and Antaeus
 - Best Latin Rock Or Alternative Album (Tie): "Vida Cotidiana," Juanes and "De Todas Las Flores," Natalia Lafourcade
 - Best Latin Pop Album: "X Mi (Vol 1)," Gaby Moreno
 - Best Rap Album: "Michael," Killer Mike
 - Best Rap Song: "Scientists & Engineers," Killer Mike ft. André 3000, Future and Eryn Allen Kane
 - Best Country Solo Performance: "White Horse," Chris Stapleton
 - Best Country Song: "White Horse," Chris Stapleton
 - Best Folk Album: "Joni Mitchell at Newport (Live)," Joni Mitchell
 - Best Pop Dance Recording: "Padam Padam," Kylie Minogue
 - Best Rock Album: "This Is Why," Paramore
 - Best Rock Performance: "Not Strong Enough," Boygenius
 - Best Rock Song: "Not Strong Enough," Boygenius
 - Best Americana Album: "Weathervanes," Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit
 - Best Metal Performance: "72 Seasons," Metallica
 - Best Jazz Instrumental Album: "The Winds of Change," Billy Childs
 - Best Jazz Vocal Album: "How Love Begins," Nicole Zuraitis
 - Best Comedy Album: "What's in a Name?," Dave Chapelle
 - Best Compilation Soundtrack For Visual Media: "Barbie The Album," various artists
 - Best Song Written For Visual Media: "What Was I Made For?," Billie Eilish
 - Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media: "Oppenheimer," Ludwig Göransson
 - Best Music Video: "I'm Only Sleeping," the Beatles
 - Best Music Film: "Moonage Daydream"
 - Best Musical Theater Album: "Some Like It Hot"
 - Best Gospel Album: "All Things New: Live in Orlando," Tye Tribbett
 - Best Contemporary Christian Music Album: "Church Clothes 4," Lecrae
 - Best African Music Performance: "Water," Tyla



Victoria Monet with the awards. (AP)



SZA accepts the award for best R&B song for 'Snooze.' (AP)



Ludwig Göransson poses with the award for best score soundtrack. (AP)



Antaeus accepts the 'Best Reggae Album' award for 'Colors of Royal' during the 66th annual Grammy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 4, in Los Angeles. (AP)

Swift sets

Continued from Page 11

Jack Antonoff took home producer of the year, non-classical for a third year in a row, tying Babyface as the only other producer to do so consecutively. "You need the door kicked open for you," he said in his acceptance speech. "Taylor Swift kicked that (expletive) door open for me," he said.

The first of three new categories in 2024, best pop dance recording, went to Kylie Minogue for "Padam Padam" - her first win in 18 years. About 80 Grammys were handed

out pre-broadcast. Regional Mexican star Peso Pluma won his first Grammy for his first and only nomination, for best música Mexicana album for his "Genesis."

Best African music performance, a new category which aims to highlight regional musical traditions and recognizing "recordings that utilize unique local expressions from across the African continent," went to South African singer Tyla for her ubiquitous hit, "Water."

"I never thought I'd say I won a Grammy at 21 years old," she said in her acceptance speech. "Last year God decided to change my whole life."

Killer Mike won three awards in quick succession Sunday night, but ended up in police custody before the main Grammys ceremony began because of an altercation, police spokesperson Officer Mike Lopez said.

The rapper won his first first Grammy in 21 years, for best rap performance for "Scientists & Engineers," which featured André 3000, Future and Eryn Allen Kane. Soon afterward, they won for "best rap song." Killer Mike also took home best rap album for "Michael," cheering, "It is a sweep! It is a sweep!"

"Billy Joel was both the penultimate and final performance of the

night. First, he brought his new track "Turn the Lights Back on" - his first new music in decades - live to the Grammy stage. Then, after album of the year was announced, he returned to the stage for his 1980 classic, "You May Be Right."

A welcome surprise was the inclusion of Celine Dion, who handed Swift her record-breaking trophy. "When I say I'm happy to be here, I really mean it from my heart," she told the audience. In 2022, Dion revealed she was diagnosed with a rare neurological disorder called stiff person syndrome, which causes spasms that affect her ability to walk and sing.

The Conversation

Blood biomarkers: Your personalized health snapshot

Decoding blood tests: A guide to understanding your health

By Brad Reisfeld

Colorado State University

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

Your blood serves numerous roles to maintain your health. To carry out these functions, blood contains a multitude of components, including red blood cells that transport oxygen, nutrients and hormones; white blood cells that remove waste products and support the immune system; plasma that regulates temperature; and platelets that help with clotting.

Within the blood are also numerous molecules formed as byproducts of normal biochemical functions. When these molecules indicate how your cells are responding to disease, injury or stress, scientists often refer to them as biological markers, or biomarkers. Thus, biomarkers in a blood sample can represent a snapshot of the current biochemical state of your body, and analyzing them can provide information about various aspects of your health.

As a toxicologist, I study the effects of drugs and environmental contaminants on human health. As part of my work, I rely on various health-related biomarkers, many of which are measured using conventional blood tests.

Interpret

Understanding what common blood tests are intended to measure can help you better interpret the results. If you have results from a recent blood test handy, please follow along.

Depending on the lab that analyzed your sample, the results from your blood test may be broken down into individual tests or collections of related tests called panels. Results from these panels can allow a health care professional to recommend preventive care, detect potential diseases and monitor ongoing health conditions.

For each of the tests listed in your report, there will typically be a number corresponding to your test result and a reference range or interval. This range is essentially the upper and lower limits within which most healthy people's test results are expected to fall.

Sometimes called a normal range, a reference interval is based on statistical analyses of tests from a large number of patients in a reference population. Normal levels of some biomarkers are expected to vary across a group of people, depending on their age, sex, ethnicity and other attributes.

So, separate reference populations are often created from people with a particular attribute. For example, a reference population could comprise all women or all children. A patient's test value can then be appropriately compared with results from the reference population that fits them best.

Reference intervals vary from lab to lab because each may use different testing methods or reference populations. This means you might not be able to compare your results with reference intervals from other labs. To determine how your test results compare with the normal range, you need to check the reference interval listed on your lab report.

If you have results for a given test from different labs, your clinician will likely focus on test trends relative to their reference intervals and not the numerical results themselves. There are numerous blood panels

intended to test specific aspects of your health. These include panels that look at the cellular components of your blood, biomarkers of kidney and liver function, and many more.

Rather than describe each panel, let's look at a hypothetical case study that requires using several panels to diagnose a disease.

In this situation, a patient visits their health care provider for fatigue that has lasted several months. Numerous factors and disorders can result in prolonged or chronic fatigue.

Based on a physical examination, other symptoms and medical history, the health practitioner suspects that the patient could be suffering from any of the following: anemia, an underactive thyroid or diabetes.

Blood tests would help further narrow down the cause of fatigue.

Anemia is a condition involving reduced blood capacity to transport oxygen. This results from either lower than normal levels of red blood cells or a decrease in the quantity or quality of hemoglobin, the protein that allows these cells to transport oxygen.

A complete blood count panel measures various components of the blood to provide a comprehensive overview of the cells that make it up. Low values of red blood cell count, or RBC, hemoglobin, or Hb, and hematocrit, or HCT, would indicate that the patient is suffering from anemia.

Hypothyroidism is a disorder in which the thyroid gland does not produce enough thyroid hormones. These include thyroid-stimulating hormone, or TSH, which stimulates the thyroid gland to release two other hormones: triiodothyronine, or T3, and thyroxine, or T4. The thyroid function panel measures the levels of these hormones to assess thyroid-related health.

Information

Diabetes is a disease that occurs when blood sugar levels are too high. Excessive glucose molecules in the bloodstream can bind to hemoglobin and form what's called glycated hemoglobin, or HbA1c. A hemoglobin A1c test measures the percentage of HbA1c present relative to the total amount of hemoglobin. This provides a history of glucose levels in the bloodstream over a period of about three months prior to the test.

Providing additional information is the basic metabolic panel, or BMP, which measures the amount various substances in your blood. These include:

- Glucose, a type of sugar that provides energy for your body and brain. Relevant to diabetes, the BMP measures the blood glucose levels at the time of the test.

- Calcium, a mineral essential for proper functioning of your nerves, muscles and heart.

- Creatinine, a byproduct of muscle activity.

- Blood urea nitrogen, or BUN, the amount of the waste product urea your kidneys help remove from your blood. These indicate the status of a person's metabolism, kidney health and electrolyte balance.

With results from each of these panels, the health professional would assess the patient's values relative to their reference intervals and determine which condition they most likely have.

Understanding the purpose of blood tests and how to interpret them can help patients partner with their health care providers and become more informed about their health. (AP)



KUNA Photo

A group photo from the opening of early cancer detection center in Al-Faiha.

Kuwait sees 2,312 cases of common cancers in 2019

CAN opens new early cancer detection clinic

'Promote cancer awareness and prevention'

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5, (KUNA): Chief of Cancer Aware National Campaign (CAN) Dr. Khalid Al-Saleh announced the opening of early cancer detection clinic in Abdulrahman Al-Abdulghani Center in Al-Faiha, as part of the 9th Gulf week for Cancer Awareness in cooperation with Al-Faiha Health Committee.

In his speech during the opening ceremony on Monday, Al-Saleh said this comes within the cooperation agreement signed with the committee aimed at increasing awareness regarding early cancerous tumors detection in Al-Faiha area.

He noted that a cooperation strategy was developed to further spread preventative measures against non-infectious chronic diseases, as it is one of the 17 sustainable development goals related to health, as well as Kuwait 2035 vision.

According to Kuwait Cancer Control Center statistics about the 10 most common cancers in the year 2019, cas-

Arab League calls for strengthening healthcare

CAIRO, Feb 5, (KUNA): The League of Arab States stressed on Monday the need to strengthen the healthcare systems of member countries to combat cancer and promote awareness and prevention.

Assistant Secretary General and Head of Social Affairs Sector at the League of Arab States Ambassador Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, said in a statement on the occasion of World Cancer Day 2024 that the League is keen on achieving health security for Arab citizens.

This comes through working to implement the 2030 sustainable development goals, which ensures everyone enjoys a healthy lifestyle and reduces premature deaths from non-communicable diseases.

The Ambassador pointed out the importance of observation and conducting research as well as strengthening the health system and increasing financial support to healthcare in member states.

She added that cancer, according to World Health Organization, is one of

the main non-communicable diseases and that deaths from cancer are expected to be over 600,000 by 2030.

In addition, the Ambassador stressed the importance of innovative strategies to ensure universal access to quality health services and investment in resources to achieve a world free of cancer.

The world celebrates World Cancer Day annually on February 4 to increase awareness of the disease and its seriousness.

es have reached 859 for men and 1,453 for women, stated Al-Saleh.

For her part, Director of Primary Health Care at the Health Ministry Dr. Amal Al-Saqabi stated that early detection results in high recovery rates, indi-

ating that all measures have been taken to open the clinic and train doctors in cooperation with CAN campaign to achieve the desired goals.

In turn, Director of Abdulrahman Al-Abdulghani Center Dr. Anwar

Bu Hamra said that such community initiatives enhance the Ministry's efforts and achieve Kuwait Vision 2035, noting that the adoption of Al-Faiha as a health city makes it the fifth in the country.

Hope for mesothelioma patients

Innovative cancer therapy enters next phase of study

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Feb 5, (Agencies): RS Oncology (RSO), a clinical stage biotechnology company developing innovative therapies to eradicate mesothelioma and other diseases, has announced the successful dosing of the first patient in the Phase 2 dose expansion portion of its United Kingdom multicenter study.

Malignant pleural effusion (MPE) is the build up of fluid in the lining membrane (pleura) of the lungs. MPE is a common clinical symptom in patients with various malignancies (~15% of end-stage cancer patients) and produces significant morbidity in the majority of affected patients. RSO's novel, investigational anti-cancer treatment, RSO-021, is administered weekly directly into the pleural space following MPE drainage via

an indwelling pleural catheter. RSO recently (4Q 2023) completed the Phase 1 dose escalation portion of its MITOPE trial and established a recommended Phase 2 dose and safety/tolerability profile of RSO-021 in a relapse setting.

Recently, RSO has expanded the Phase 2 portion of MITOPE and is now investigating RSO-021 anticancer activity in patients:

- First presenting with MPE due to malignant pleural mesothelioma (MPM) and before standard-of-care (SOC) treatment (a window of opportunity arm).
- With MPE who have failed first line SOC treatment and have relapsed disease.
- With local metastatic lung disease and MPE.
- With MPE due to advanced metastatic breast,

ovarian and non-small cell lung cancers (in combination with systemic paclitaxel).

"Mesothelioma has notoriously been a difficult cancer to treat, especially since patients are often diagnosed in the more advanced stages," said Prof. Dean Fennell, Director of the Mesothelioma Research Programme at Leicester University Hospitals. "RSO-021 exhibits a unique mechanism of action that we believe could provide new hope to patients with this disease."

"RSO-021 is an exciting novel anti-cancer treatment that can potentially help a global population of cancer patients who are left with little to no options," said Jarrett Duncan, CEO of RS Oncology. "Commencing the Phase 2 portion of our trial presents a major milestone for patients and their caregivers."

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Niemann wins LIV event in the dark

Clark declared winner at rainy Pebble Beach

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif., Feb 5. (AP): Wyndham Clark was declared the winner of the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am on Sunday evening when the PGA Tour canceled the final round because of wicked weather conditions that would linger into the next day and cause safety concerns.

Clark's final stroke was to tap in for birdie Saturday, giving him a course record 12-under 60 and a one-shot lead over Ludvig Aberg.

He never had to hit another shot. Overnight rain saturated Pebble Beach.

GOLF

and raging wind that followed led the PGA Tour to postpone the final round with hopes of playing on Monday.

The tour said the storm known as an "atmospheric river" was to linger into Monday morning, and while conditions were expected to improve, Monterey County emergency officials had urged residents to stay at home.

Clark picked up his third win in the last nine months, all of them big with a \$3.6

million payoff. He also won the Wells Fargo Championship and his first major at the U.S. Open last year at Los Angeles Country Club.

In Playa Del Carmen, Mexico, Joaquin Niemann outlasted Sergio Garcia well after sunset in the season-opening LIV Golf Mayakoba, making a 12-foot birdie putt from the fringe on the fourth hole of a playoff with the green lit by a large video screen.

Niemann won his first LIV Golf title two days after opening with a 12-under 59 - and after having two penalty strokes tacked onto his second-round score Sunday morning for taking incorrect relief on a drop from a cart path on the 13th hole.

That left the 25-year-old Chilean two shots ahead entering the final round. He closed with a 1-under 70, parring the final two holes to match Garcia (66) at 12-under 201 at El Camaleon.

Masters champion Jon Rahm, the biggest name to sign with LIV Golf league during the offseason, was tied for the lead until he pulled his tee shot into the hazard on the 17th. He finished bogey-bogey for a 70 and tied for third.



Winners celebrate with their trophies at the end of the tournament.

Team Rakkama wins IBAK championship

By Francis Fernandes
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: It's always fun to compete with your colleagues. They teach you more with their skills and talents in a much comfortable mode. The Indian Badminton Association - Kuwait; IBAK conducted its "Intra IBAK Badminton Tournament 2024" on 25th & 26th January 2024. IBAK salwa stadium was feeling the heat on the courts where the best friends competed against each other and clinched titles. It was an amazing treat for the spectators who were more than 200.

The tournament was hosted in Seven categories as follows: Flight 1 Professional Doubles, Flight 2 Advance Doubles, Flight 3 Intermediate Doubles (Open of All), Flight 4 Lower Intermediate Doubles (Open of All), Ladies Doubles, Under-15 Boys Doubles, Under-15 Mix Doubles.

All the players were thoroughly scrutinized and categorized based on their skills and talents shown on courts during their daily practice sessions. All the categorized players were grouped into 6 teams as follows: Team Ranchitame, Team Tatta Tattara, Team Olluleru, Team Rakkama, Team Paalalappi, Team Dhinka Chikka - These names are given to the team inspired by famous Indian songs.

The overall championship trophy was presented to Team Rakkama.

The runner up trophy was shared between Team Ranchitame & Team Paalalappi.

IBAK chairman Dr. Manimara Chozhan congratulated all the participants of the Intra IBAK tournament. IBAK had kick started the year 2024 with a successful Intra IBAK tournament and published the calendar of various tournaments that will be conducted by IBAK.

Ladies Doubles
Winner: Subin Angel and Muthukrishnan Sathya; Runner-up: Tony Angela and Sarah Ephrem Siby
Semi-Finalist 1: Antony Delecta

and Varghese Sneha; Semi-Finalist 2: Syed Mubeena and James Olivia
Flight 1 - Professional Men's Doubles

Winner: Ezzi Hisham and Thomas Relin; Runner-up -- Contractor Faheem and Varghese Subin; Semi-Finalist 1 -- Dr.Manimara Chozhan and Ramachandran Suresh; Semi-Finalist 2 -- Shaik Areef and M.C Arun
Flight 2 - Advance Men's Doubles

Winner: Rajan Binoy and Varghese Subin; Runner-up -- Shaik Areef and M.C Arun; Semi-Finalist 1 -- Varghese Ajay and Puthenveedu Ismail; Semi-Finalist 2 -- Manual

Justin and Pratap Kumar M
Flight 3 - Intermediate Doubles (Open to all)

Winner: Sadiq Muhammed and Hameed Naji; Runner-up: Manimaran Skandhan and Bharaskar Varad;
Semi-Finalist 1: Karunakaran Dilip and Paul Nithin; Semi-Finalist 2: Kandhasamy Muthukrishnan and Chander Pranavesh
Flight 4 - Lower Intermediate (Open to All)

Winner: Mathews Basil and Bajju Sion; Runner-up: TK Sajifal and Swamy Sanjeev; Semi-Finalist 1: T Akber and Amy Amy; Semi-Finalist 2: Syed Mubeena and Shaik Rayyan

BADMINTON

Under-15 Boys Doubles:
Winner: James Chris and Lobo Ranston Antony; Runner-up: Mathews Basil and Titto Liyanfen; Semi-Finalist 1: Praddep Advay and Swamy Sanjeev; Semi-Finalist 2: Hariharan Jayaraj and Baiju Sion

Under-15 Mix Doubles:
Winner: Subin Angel and Shawn Santhosh Alan; Runner-up: Tony Angela and Titto Liyanfen; Semi-Finalist 1: Gund Prajal and Hariharan Jayaraj; Semi-Finalist 2: James Olivia and James Chris

IBAK can be reached on www.ibakwt.org or ibakcommittee@gmail.com



Some of the winners celebrating.



Captain of winning team receives a trophy from officials



Winners pose for a group photo.

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Beal's 43 pts help Suns 'rout' Wizards 140-112

Clippers cool down Heat

WASHINGTON, Feb 5. (AP): Bradley Beal scored a season-high 43 points in his return to Washington and the Phoenix Suns routed the Wizards 140-112 on Sunday.

Beal played 11 seasons before being dealt to Phoenix last offseason. He received a video tribute and standing ovation during player introductions before the game. Then he scored 26 points in the first half.

He had 41 after three quarters and then exited for good with 8:44 to play.

Kevin Durant and Jusuf Nurkic scored 18 points apiece for Phoenix, and Devin Booker had 14. The Suns went 4-3 on a seven-game trip.

Deni Avdija had 24 points for the Wizards. They were without Kyle Kuzma because of left shoulder soreness.

Clippers 109, Heat 95
In Miami, Kawhi Leonard had 25 points and 11 rebounds, James Harden scored 16 of his 21 points in the second half and Los Angeles beat Miami.

Harden flirted with a triple-double, finishing with 11 assists and eight assists. Norman Powell scored 16 points and Paul George added 11 for the Clippers.

BASKETBALL

Los Angeles is 25-5 since the start of December - by far the best record in the NBA over that span. The Clippers improved to 5-1 in their seven-game, 11-day trip.

Celtics 131, Grizzlies 91
In Boston, Jayson Tatum scored 34 points before sitting out the final quarter and NBA-leading Boston Celtics cruised past injury-depleted Memphis.

Coming off a disappointing loss Thursday night against a Los Angeles Lakers team missing LeBron James and Anthony Davis, the Celtics faced a squad with only eight available players because 13 were on the injury report.

Timberwolves 111, Rockets 90
In Minneapolis, Anthony Edwards scored 22 of his 32 points in the third quarter, Rudy Gobert had 17 points and 13 rebounds and Minnesota beat Houston.

The Timberwolves have won five of seven and the victory earned coach Chris Finch the nod to coach the Western Conference in the All-Star game.

Nuggets 112, Trail Blazers 103
In Denver, Jamal Murray loves that the Denver Nuggets can turn to their championship mettle in crunch time. He hates that they have to rely on that so often.

"I think we should just be a little bit more on point to start the game, not to have to kick it into another gear," Murray

said after the Denver Nuggets rallied from a double-digit deficit to beat the short-handed but spirited Portland Trail Blazers 112-103 on Sunday night.

Jazz 23 Bucks 108
In Salt Lake City, Lauri Markkanen scored 21 points to lead the Utah Jazz to a 123-108 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks.

Collin Sexton scored 19 points to help the Jazz snap a three-game losing streak. John Collins added 15 points and 10 rebounds, and Keyonte George had 19 points and 10 rebounds.

The Jazz outscored the Bucks 40-13 in the fourth quarter.

Thunder 135 Raptors 127, 2nd OT
In Oklahoma City, Josh Giddey scored 24 points, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 23 and the Oklahoma City Thunder overcame a 23-point deficit to beat the Toronto Raptors 135-127 in double-overtime Sunday night.

Chet Holmgren and Lu Dort each added 22 points and Aaron Wiggins had 20 to help Oklahoma City improve to 35-15. The Thunder tied a team record with 23 3-pointers on 63 attempts.

Pacers 115, Hornets 99
In Charlotte, N.C. Pascal Siakam had 25 points, nine assists and eight rebounds and Indiana overcame a career-high 35 points from Hornets rookie Brandon Miller to beat Charlotte and snap a three-game skid.

Aaron Nesmith added 22 points and Myles Turner had 16 points and 10 rebounds for the Pacers. Tyrese Haliburton had 17 points in 20 minutes while remaining on a minutes restriction due to a lingering hamstring injury.

Magic 111, Pistons 99
In Detroit, Franz Wagner scored 27 of his 38 points in the second half and Orlando beat Detroit for its third straight victory. Paolo Banchero added 20 points for Orlando.

Cade Cunningham and Jaden Ivey each scored 18 points for Detroit. The NBA-worst Pistons dropped to 6-43.

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Al Qasimi, Al Khalifa and Al Mahmoudi with the fencing champions.

President Al Gergawi lauds success of the Games

Kuwait's Al-Fattah Club battles Sharjah in Arab Games for women

By Suzan Nasser

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

DUBAI, Feb 5: The Kuwaiti teams engaged in the Arab Club Games for Women are set to continue their competitions today. The shooting team will participate in the 10-meter rifle competition, concluding the shooting events with an award ceremony for the top shooters and winning teams.

In volleyball action, the Salwa Club team is scheduled to face the host, Sharjah, at the Khor Fakkan Club Stadium. Simultaneously, the Al-Fattah Club Basketball Team will meet the Sharjah Club Team at Al-Bataeh Stadium. It's worth noting that the Al-Fattah Club suffered a loss in their previous match against the Syrian Revolution with a narrow margin of three points (80-77).

Salwa Al-Shammari, a basketball player in the Kuwaiti girl team, shared insights in a statement to Al-Seyassah. She acknowledged the team's strong performance against the defending champion, Jordanian Al-Fuheis, expressing satisfaction despite the loss. Al-Shammari attributed the results to the recent formation of their team and the age range of their players, which spans from 16 to 24 years. She emphasized the invaluable experience gained from participation and expressed gratitude for the organizers, hoping to achieve their goals in future tournaments.

In other Arab competitions, the UAE secured nine medals in fencing, including gold in the epee team and the fluorescent rifle. The Sharjah team claimed gold in the Epee team championship, while the Fujairah Martial Arts Club team clinched gold in the sabre weapon against the Syrian police team.

Leaders Kuwait Club aim to overcome Amir Cup setback against Al-Qadisiya

Haqqan sidelined, Ibrahim set to return for derby

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: Guy Mbienza and Arsene Zola have officially joined Kuwait Club and commenced training, having signed contracts until the conclusion of the current season. This

SOCCER

comes as a replacement for Tunisian players Yassine Al-Khanisi and Bilal Al-Aifa.

In an unfortunate turn, "Al-Abyad" has removed the name of Tunisian top scorer Al-Khanisi from the roster due to a cartilage injury sustained while representing his country in the ongoing Africa Cup of Nations in Ivory Coast.

Kuwait Club coach Nabil Maaloul, is intensifying prep-

arations for the upcoming clash against Al-Qadisiya in the fifteenth round of the Zain Premier League, scheduled for next Tuesday. Kuwait cur-

rently leads the league standings with 33 points, narrowly edging out Al-Arabi in goal difference and holding a one-point advantage over third-

placed Al-Qadisiya.

Despite the disappointment of being eliminated from the Amir Cup quarter-finals by Al-Tadamon in a penalty shootout, Maaloul is focused on motivating his players to perform at their best and put the setback behind them.

In the Al-Qadisiya camp, defender Youssef Al-Haqqaan will be absent from Coach Dr. Muhammad Al-Mashaan's plans for the semi-finals of the Amir Cup against Al-Arabi. Al-Haqqaan suffered a broken nose during the quarter-final match against Al-Fahaheel last Friday, resulting in four stitches to close the wound.

However, there is positive news for Al-Qadisiya as defender Khaled Ibrahim is poised to make a comeback for the upcoming "Derby" match after recovering from an injury that sidelined him for the last two Amir Cup matches.



A file photo of players in action.

The tournament's significance was highlighted by Major General Ismail Al Gergawi, President of the Arab and Emirati Basket-

ball Federations. He expressed gratitude to Sheikha Jawaher Al Qasimi for her sponsorship and efforts in hosting the event, prais-

ing the organizing committee's success in creating a memorable opening ceremony. Al Gergawi affirmed the tournament's role in

supporting women's basketball in the Arab world and emphasized its positive impact on raising the technical level of female players.

Al-Qaoud excels in the third round

Ghuloum wins Show Jumping Championship title

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: Muhammad Ghuloum, the rider from Al-Masayel Club, clinched the prestigious title at the Sahara Resort Equestrian Show Jumping Championship astride his horse, "Artemis." The championship, hosted at the Sahara Resort in the Subhan region, witnessed enthusiastic participation from riders representing various local clubs.

EQUESTRIAN

Ghuloum demonstrated his equestrian prowess by securing the top spot in the fifth round at a height of 110 cm, completing the course in an impressive 53.13 seconds without incurring any penalty points. Additionally, he claimed victory in the fourth round at a height of 100 cm with a remarkable time of 57.81 seconds.



Dalal Al-Obaid stands in the middle of other riders.

Fay Al-Qaoud, an accomplished horsewoman, excelled in the third round at a height of 90 cm, navigating the course flawlessly without any penalty points. The tournament featured a diverse field of male and female knights in the first and second halves, tackling heights of 70 and 80 cm. Many participants exhibited skillful performances, overcoming barriers with precision. The accolades were presented by Dalal Al-Obaid, the General Director of Equestrianism, in the scenic setting of the desert resort.

Reflecting on the success of the tournament, Al-Obaid stated in a press release at the conclusion of the event, "We organized a tournament at the Sahara Resort dedicated to the junior and beginners category, covering heights from 70 to 110 cm. The event surpassed expectations with a tremendous turnout, and the plan is to host tournaments at even greater heights after the conclusion of international events slated for this February."

Al Andari: Muay Thai legend's journey to victory and legacy

BEIRUT, Feb 5: In an era of intense global sports competition, the story of Fadi Al Andari, a Lebanese Muay Thai legend, stands out as a remarkable achievement. In 2019, at the age of 45, he secured the title of Muay Thai Legend in a historic victory at the World Muay Thai Federation Championship.

Despite facing challenges and difficulties during tournaments, Al Andari, known as "The Miracle," showcased exceptional skill and determination. In a memorable bout in Bangkok, Thailand, he triumphed over his 23-year-old Thai opponent, "Babo," despite sustaining injuries in the first round.

The victory earned Al Andari the prestigious "Muay Thai Legend" title, adding to his extensive list of accomplishments in various martial arts disciplines. Notably, he achieved success in bodybuilding and martial arts associations like WPKA, WMC, WMF, WMO, and WML within 24 hours.

For six consecutive years, Al Andari seamlessly blended martial arts practice with natural bodybuilding competitions, earning him the moniker "Miracle in Sports." Unfortunately, his plans for competitive matches in 2020 were thwarted by the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021, his Thai competitor withdrew, and in 2022, he declined participation due to disagreements over the winner's award.



Lebanese Muay Thai legend, Fadi Al Andari

Despite not competing in 2023, Al Andari remains passionate about taking on challenges, expressing a desire to participate in international Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) or "Kowat Al Rami" games. Currently, he focuses on his academy, where he imparts martial arts and self-defense skills to children and adults. Al Andari emphasizes sports ethics and promotes the use of martial arts for defense rather than aggression in daily life.

In recognition of his contributions to sports and character-building, Al Andari is hailed as a legend, a miracle, a great coach, and a champion of generations. His dedication to instilling values and skills in his trainees has not only impacted their personal and psychological growth but also equipped them to combat societal challenges in a rational manner.

Two miss out

MetLife Stadium to hold 2026 WC final

WASHINGTON, Feb 5, (AP): The 2026 World Cup final will be played at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, beating out Texas and California for soccer's showcase game.

FIFA awarded the July 19 championship to the \$1.6 billion venue, which opened in 2010, the culminating match of an expanded 48-nation, 104-game tournament that will be spread across three nations for the first time.

Located about 10 miles from Manhattan, MetLife was promoted by both New York and New Jersey, where the stadium was built in the Meadowlands marshes. The land of Bruce Springsteen, Jon Bon Jovi and Frank Sinatra will be the focal point of the globe on that Sunday, when either Lionel Messi's Argentina will try to win its second straight title or a successor will emerge.

SOCCER

"It will be a celebration of our diversity and our values," New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy said in a telephone interview. "The bigger picture is what leads up to it and what we leave behind for the decades to come."

FIFA made the announcement Sunday at a Miami television studio, allocating the opener of the 39-day tournament to Mexico City's Estadio Azteca on June 11 and the finale to the home of the NFL's New York Jets and Giants.

Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones had lobbied for the final to be at his AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

"The competition was dealing with the perception of the coastal, of a New York, or a Los Angeles," he said. "If this were totally being played to just America and the United States, that wouldn't have been such a formidable thing to overcome. But internationally, that's formidable to overcome."

All games from the quarter-finals on are being played in the United States. Semifinals are on July 14 at AT&T and the following day at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta.

Quarterfinals are at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Massachusetts, on July 9, at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, California, the following day, and at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Missouri, and Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida, on July 11. The third-place game will be at Hard Rock on July 18.

The U.S. team will train in suburban Atlanta ahead of the tournament and open at SoFi on June 12. The Americans play seven days later at Seattle's Lumen Field and finish the group stage at SoFi on June 25.

Since reaching the semifinals of the first World Cup in 1930, the U.S. has advanced to the quarterfinals just once, in 2002.



Real Madrid's Dani Carvajal (left), and Atletico Madrid's Mario Hermoso challenge for the ball during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

Sports

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Kuwait handball team poses with officials.

Private sector support urged for Kuwait's Handball WCup journey

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 5: The Handball Federation hosted a commendation event at its Daiya headquarters, celebrating the players for their qualification to the 2025 World Cup finals scheduled for January in Croatia, Denmark, and Norway. The event also acknowledged the junior team's remarkable third-place achievement and bronze medal in the Arab Championship held in Tunisia last September.

HANDBALL

Key attendees at the ceremony included Qayed Al-Adwani, Secretary-General of the Handball Federation, Abdullah Al-Dhiyab, Assistant Secretary, Khaled Talib, Treasurer, and board members Talal Al-Otaibi and Mubarak Al-Daihani. Faisal Siwan, the director of the national teams, and both the technical and administrative staff, along with the players, were also present.

In recognition of their accomplishments, Al-Itihad presented a financial reward of one thousand dinars to the senior team players and their technical and administrative staff, and 200 dinars to the junior team and their respective staff.

Qayed Al-Adwani emphasized the

significance of honoring both the first and junior national teams, highlighting the need to inspire young champions by showcasing the attention given to the senior team. He expressed confidence in nurturing talents for future success, with a focus on the Asian Youth and Junior Championships in June as a stepping stone towards the World Cup.

Al-Adwani called for collective support for the national teams and expressed gratitude to the Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Daoud Marafi, for pledging to honor the players.

Assistant Secretary Abdullah Al-Dhiyab urged sports authorities and the private sector to recognize and support the achievements of the heroes, stressing the importance of early preparations for the 2025 World Cup. He revealed the federation's strategic plans for both short-term and long-term goals, praising the efforts of players, technical, and administrative staff, while acknowledging the backing of the General Sports Authority.

Hussein Al-Habib, assistant coach of the junior team, highlighted the bronze medal in the Arab Championship as a solid foundation for the upcoming Asian Championship in Iran in June. He underlined the strategic importance of these competitions in preparing for the World Cup and the Gulf Games for Juniors in April in Sharjah.

Real concede late equalizer against Atletico, miss chance to extend lead

Madrid's improvised defense falter

MADRID, Feb 5, (AP): Just a minute away from beating its city rival for the second time in less than a month and taking a four-point lead of the Spanish league, Real Madrid couldn't hang on.

Madrid's improvised defense faltered at the end, and Atletico Madrid scored a stoppage-time equalizer in a 1-1 draw.

Marcos Llorente scored with a header three minutes into added time after Brahim Díaz had put the hosts ahead in the first half at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

The late goal prevented Madrid from exploiting second-place Girona's 0-0 draw with Real Sociedad on Saturday. Madrid leads Girona by two points before the teams meet next week.

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"We played a very good match, we were in control," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "We were unlucky to concede that goal in the end, but we lacked height in the defense and we knew it."

Ancelotti had a depleted defense because of injuries and had to improvise right back Dani Carvajal as a central defender alongside Nacho Fernández.

The duo couldn't cope with a cross into the area with a minute to go, and Memphis Depay headed the ball toward the goal and Llorente came in to score the equalizer, with the ball hitting the crossbar before going in.

"We worked hard the entire match and in the end we got rewarded," Llorente said. "We gained a point and kept them from getting more points. Considering the way things were going, it's a very valuable point for us."

Atletico, which had won four games in a row in all competitions, stayed in fourth place, 10 points off the lead. Diego Simeone's team was two points behind Barcelona, which won 3-1 at Alaves on Saturday.

"The team could've given up but it kept fighting until the end and deserved the draw," Simeone said.

Madrid extended its unbeaten streak to 26 matches across all tournaments, since a 3-1 league defeat at Atletico in September.

It was the third Madrid derby in less than a month, with Madrid winning the Spanish Super Cup semifinal in Saudi Arabia and Atletico winning in the round of 16 of the Copa del Rey.

Díaz, a late addition to the starting lineup after a minor injury to Vinicius Júnior during the pregame warmup, opened the scoring from close range in the 20th minute after Atletico midfielder Koke Resurrección failed to fully clear a ball in front of the goal.

Atletico thought it had equalized with a header by Stefan Savic in the 48th but VAR determined that there was offside by Saúl Ñíguez.

Eighth-place Real Betis couldn't manage more than a 1-1 draw against 10th-place Getafe at home.

Both goals came from penalty kicks, with Mason Greenwood putting Getafe ahead in the eighth minute and Isco equalizing in the 35th.



Iqlis Academy team prepares for its match.

Iqlis Academy advances to semifinals

The Iqlis Academy team secured the top spot in the group stage of the Kuwait Amateur League, held under the auspices of the Kuwait Football Association. They clinched their position after a convincing three-goal victory over the SFG Academy team. This achievement propels them directly into the semi-final match, where they will face the winner between Haiko Academy and R9 Academy.

Abdul Rahman Mustafa, the

technical director of the Eagles team, expressed his commitment to delivering his best in his inaugural experience in the amateur league under the patronage of the Kuwaiti Federation and the General Sports Authority. His aim is to showcase the Eagles Academy players in their finest artistic form and solidify the team's technical identity throughout the league. Mustafa emphasized that his goal, since

taking on the technical responsibilities of the Akiliz Academy, has been crystal clear — to reach the coveted golden square.

The Iqlis Academy boasts a roster of exceptional players, including Fahd Al-Shalal, Khalaf Al-Rashidi, an Al-Tadamon player, Abdullah Al-Husseinan, an Al-Nasr player, along with teammates Nawaf Al-Mutairi, Muhammad Al-Fadhil, the Sulaibikhat goalkeeper

Organizer withdraws application for funds over Messi's 'absence'



Inter Miami's Lionel Messi (sixth from left), looks on from the bench during the friendly football match between Hong Kong Team and US Inter Miami CF at the Hong Kong Stadium in Hong Kong. (AP)

HONG KONG, Feb 5, (AP): The organizer of a soccer match featuring Inter Miami in Hong Kong was dealing with backlash from both angry fans and the government after widespread disappointment that Lionel Messi didn't play in the game.

The much-hyped exhibition match on Sunday ended with fans booing Inter Miami co-owner David Beckham and demanding refunds as Messi stayed on the bench for the full 90 minutes in the game against a local team due to a hamstring strain.

Organizers said Monday they had only been informed during halftime that Lionel Messi would not be playing and that they would withdraw an application for funding from the city government for staging the match.

The fans' reaction was a setback for Hong Kong officials who sought to boost the city's image as a hub for mega events amid a slow economic recovery and Beijing's crackdown on dissidents.

Michel Lamunière, chairman of organizer Tatler Asia, said in a news con-

ference on Monday evening that its contract with Inter Miami required Messi and some other football stars in the team to play unless they were injured.

Lamunière said Messi was named as a substitute in the list of footballers available to come off the bench, but the club's management later told the

SOCCER

organizer that Messi was not fit to play due to an injury. Former Barcelona striker Luis Suarez also did not play in the game.

Lamunière said his team had spent the second half of the match urging the club's leadership to ask Messi to address the fans but "to no avail."

"Tatler Asia deeply regrets the disappointing ending to what was an exciting occasion," he said.

Lamunière did not apologize for the debacle or mention any refund arrangements in the brief news conference, which had no question-and-answer session for reporters.

Hosts level 5-test series at 1-1

India win second Test by 106 runs against England

VISAKHAPATNAM, India, Feb 5, (AP): Jasprit Bumrah and Ravichandran Ashwin shared six wickets as India won the second cricket test against England by 106 runs to level the five-match series 1-1 on Monday.

Bumrah picked up 3-46 in 17.2 overs, while Ashwin finished with 3-72 in 18 overs, as England was bowled out for 292 runs in an improbable pursuit of 399 runs.

Zak Crawley top-scored with 73 runs, but no other English batter crossed the 40-run mark, as India wrapped up the win at the stroke of tea-time on the fourth day.

Bumrah finished with a match total of nine wickets for 91 runs, while Ashwin finished one short of a landmark 500th test wicket.

"I try to bowl by looking at the situation and judging the wicket," Bumrah said. "I look to solve the problem - every wicket is different and I try to use what I have in my armoury."

England won the first test in Hyderabad by 28 runs. The third test will be played in Rajkot from Feb. 15.

The visitors were down to 194-6 at lunch, needing another 205 runs for a win. Ben Stokes and Ben Foakes added 26 runs for the seventh wicket, and tried to resurrect the innings.

But Shreyas Iyer ran out Stokes with a direct throw from square leg as the

skipper was dismissed for 11.

Foakes stepped up the scoring rate a notch by scoring 36 off 69 balls and put on 55 runs for the eighth wicket with Tom Hartley, who also scored 36.

Ashwin and Kuldeep Yadav toiled hard for almost an hour without much success before Bumrah provided the breakthrough, taking a return catch from Foakes.

Mukesh Kumar came to bowl for



India's Jasprit Bumrah celebrates the wicket of England's wicket-keeper Ben Foakes after taking his catch on the fourth day of the second cricket Test match between India and England in Visakhapatnam, India. (AP)

the first time since day three, and his short spell resulted in Shoaib Bashir's wicket as India edged closer.

Bumrah bowled Hartley in the 70th over to bring India level in the series.

"The wicket was good to bat on and our batters got starts, but not many converted them," Indian skipper Rohit Sharma said. "This win gives us confidence. I am proud of such a young squad to come up against England, who are playing good cricket. This is going to be a very good, competitive series."

CRICKET

In the morning session, chasing 399, England collapsed before lunch and lost four quick wickets in the second hour's play.

Zack Crawley and Rehan Ahmed took their second-wicket stand to 45 runs off 66 balls, with the latter contributing 23 runs in the night watchman role. Ahmed was the first to go - out lbw to Axar Patel - while Crawley brought up his second half-century in the test off 83 balls.

Crawley and Ollie Pope (23) upped the pace for the third wicket, adding 37 off 39 balls, before Ashwin got the breakthrough in the 29th over.