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Amir receives oil min

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Tuesday morning Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Oil and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Dr. Saad Hamad Al-Barak.

Opinion

Sheikh Mohammad, it's pointless

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

WHEN corruption spreads throughout a country and oversight agencies are unable to curb it, there is no solution other than cauterization, especially when the law is full of loopholes that lawyers take advantage of for the benefit of the accused.

Today with the revelation of facts regarding many deals that were concluded behind the scenes, rendering institutions helpless in the face of them, it is necessary to deviate from the norm, like the way it happened in several neighboring countries, so that those who portray themselves as above-accountability become aware of themselves.



Al-Jarallah

I remember in 2001, information was received by the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said about corruption in one of the Omani authorities. He immediately ordered the punishment of those responsible, which led to the imprisonment of more than 20 government officials and prominent bankers on charges of embezzlement.

The state recovered hundreds of millions of riyals that these people had obtained illegally. It took strict measures, which straightened out the financial cycle in the Sultanate.

Also in the same year, when Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid came to know that about 30 officials had committed corruption during the urban boom in the emirate of Dubai, he immediately worked to arrest them and collect tens of millions of Emirati dirhams.

The leaders of those countries had no other path, because the crime was organized in such a way that it could not be discovered according to normal procedures. The methods followed were to bend the law to the benefit of the corrupt.

The same thing happened in Saudi Arabia when King Salman bin Abdulaziz assumed power. He saw that there was wastage in state institutions, and that the costs of the projects were very large.

Therefore, his Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman ordered that measures be taken quickly to stop tampering with public funds.

In this regard, we all know that the Crown Prince was working that day to host more than 87 defendants, including princes and businessmen. After three months, the government recovered about 400 billion Saudi riyals.

The outcome was then equivalent to the state's general budget. Reform measures were taken, and the cost of projects decreased by about two times after getting rid of the corruption.

Now we beg to ask - What happened in Kuwait? Were 14 oversight and inspection agencies able to stop corruption, or were most of them subjugated to serve the corrupt?

The answer is in what was published in the newspapers yesterday about ministers and leaders involved in the "Caracal" and "Eurofighter" contracts. This is one of a series of scandals that affected sovereign funds, in addition to an organized "looting" of public money, which indicates the extent of the disdain for the state as a whole, and not just institutions.

Therefore, if we compare the rate of corruption in Kuwait to this scourge on a global level, our country would rank first, because the matter has reached the extent of all-out plundering, while some were held accountable selectively, which indicated that it was a matter of settling of scores, and not a reform approach.

In this regard, it would be good if the National Assembly approved, after a lot of effort, the abolition of the local agent, but that is not enough, because whoever leaves the door can return through the window.

We therefore have been calling for years for a firm decision that changes the equations, and for there to be a man's stance. Perhaps Sheikh Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem will be this man, as he is well-known for his fight against corruption.

There is no other treatment left for this widespread disease of corruption apart from cauterization.

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Day by Day

THERE are three types of devils – the first is afraid of the 'Ayat Al-Khursi' (The Throne), the second is the one sitting on that throne and afraid of leaving it, and the third permanently sitting on the throne.

In real sense of the word there are many around us who are afraid of leaving the throne. There are others who are clapping their hands to support the one sitting on the throne, especially those who have failed to find for themselves a place on the throne of milk and honey. ... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

MPs express discontent over postponed session

Parliament speaker adjourns session over gov't absence

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: National Assembly Speaker Ahmed Al-Saadoun decided to adjourn the ordinary session scheduled for Tuesday to Jan 16-17, 2024, because of the absence of the interim government, which sent a letter declining the invitation to the session.

Al-Saadoun also confirmed the issuance of an Amiri decree approving the resignation of the government.

Meanwhile, MP Dawoud Maarefi expressed objection to the postponement of the session, stressing the need to hold the session even if the government is absent as long as majority of the members are present. He disclosed that he and a number of his colleagues were not given a chance to object. He said they let it slide this time, but the necessary action must be taken next time in order to stop the practice of postponing sessions

whenever the government is absent. He pointed out it is up to the government to resign, attend the session or not; but the Assembly has nothing to do with all these procedures, since it represents the citizens and the sessions are aimed at fulfilling the citizens' demands.

The lawmaker went on to say that there is no time limit for the formation of a new government. He retorted: "If it takes months to form the new government, will the parliamentary session be suspended throughout such period?"

In addition, Deputy Speaker Muhammad Al-Mutair posted on his account on X (formerly Twitter) that he is currently abroad for personal reasons. He believes it is correct to hold a parliamentary session even if the government is absent. He added the National Assembly Law states that it is not allowed to hold a session or invite the MPs to the session only if the speaker authorized such move or if the speaker is absent.

MP Abdullah Al-Mudhaf explained that a parliamentary

session should not be held only under three circumstances: dissolution of the Assembly, lack of quorum and implementation of Article 106 of the Constitution: "The Amir may, by a decree, adjourn the session of the National Assembly for a period not exceeding one month. Adjournment may be repeated during the same session with the consent of the Assembly and then only once. A period of adjournment is not counted in computing the duration of the session." He then pointed out that the reasons for not holding parliamentary sessions do not include the absence of the government.

He considers the other opinion a violation of principle of separation of powers as it is stated in Article 50 of the Constitution: "The system of Government is based on the principle of separation of powers functioning in cooperation with each other in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution."

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Kuwait suspends 41 domestic worker recruitment agencies



Palestinians line up for free food during the ongoing Israeli air and ground offensive on the Gaza Strip in Rafah, Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024. (AP)

'Comply with law'

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: The Public Authority for Manpower has suspended 41 domestic worker recruitment offices due to violations of the Labor Law and Ministry of Trade and Industry regulations, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

A tripartite committee comprising of the Ministry of Interior, Public Authority for Manpower, and Ministry of Commerce enforced the ministerial decision on domestic worker recruitment prices.

During inspections across various governorates, six offices were found violating Article 24 of Law No. 68 of 2015, leading to a 6-month suspension.

Furthermore, 35 recruitment offices lacking K-Net devices were suspended for non-compliance with Ministry of Commerce circulars. Legal actions will be pursued, following Ministerial Resolution No. 99 of 2022 issued on August 7, 2022.

One day after confirming that the travel ticket is now included in the recruitment amount, the Public Authority for Manpower and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry jointly called on citizens to make payments to domestic worker recruitment offices through KNET.

Continued on Page 4

NewsWatch

BAGHDAD: A fire erupted Monday evening at a hospital in southern Iraq, sending smoke through a maternity ward and killing four babies who had been born prematurely, health officials said.

The fire started at a pile of debris belonging to a construction company working on renovations at Women and Children's Hospital in Divaniyah, Iraqi Health Minister Saleh al-Hasnawi told journalists at the scene.

The hospital building did not burn but it was filled with smoke, and the four infants died of chest problems as a result of smoke inhalation, Al-Hasnawi said. (AP)

ANKARA: An earthquake measuring 4.4 on the Richter scale jolted Malatya province in southeast Turkey on Monday, Turkey's Disaster Management Authority (AFAD) reported.

The earthquake took place at 16:00 (local time), AFAD said, noting that the depth of the earthquake was 9.6 km and its epicenter was in the district of Puturge. (KUNA)

BEIRUT: The prime minister of the caretaker government, Najib Mikati, affirmed on Tuesday that the Lebanese government is ready to engage in negotiations to establish long-term stability in southern Lebanon and along the borders with occupied Palestine.

"We have always advocated stability and we have called for a permanent peaceful solution however we have received warnings from international envoys that a war might be waged on Lebanon," said Mikati during a meeting with the UN undersecretary for peace operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, according to a statement released by the premier press bureau. (KUNA)

US looks to planning for post-war future

Gaza toll 23,210 as bombardment shakes refugee camps

GAZA, Jan 9, (Agencies): Some 23,210 Palestinians have been killed and 59,167 others were wounded since Israeli attacks across the Gaza Strip started on October 7, Palestinian health authorities said on Tuesday.

In the last 24 hours alone, 126 Palestinians were killed and 241 others were wounded in "massacres" committed by Israeli forces, health ministry spokesman Ashraf Al-Qadra told the press.

Israeli forces have bombarded the Gaza Strip since October, leaving behind a staggering death toll while plunging the Middle East into its worst wave of violence in decades.

Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken faced tough talks with Israeli leaders on Gaza's post-war future Tuesday, while Israel's military pushed ahead with its offensive in the beleaguered territory. Heavy bombardment and fighting shook refugee camps, sending Palestinians scrambling to find safety and hampering aid groups' efforts to get relief to the population.

Blinken said he was coming to Israel with promises from four Arab nations and Turkey to help in rebuilding Gaza after the war. But those nations also want to see an end to the fighting in Gaza and concrete steps toward the eventual creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, something Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed not to allow.

The U.S. and Israel also remain deeply divided over how Gaza will be run when - and if - its current Hamas rulers are defeated. American officials have called for the Palestinian Authority, which currently governs parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank, to take the reins in Gaza.

Continued on Page 4

'OAPEC's founding signals paradigm shift in Arab coop'

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9, (KUNA): Secretary General of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) Jamal Al-Loughani said Tuesday that the organization's founding is a crucial turning point in joint Arab action, emphasizing OAPEC's commitment to fostering cooperation among member states for shared economic interests.

In a press statement marking the 56th anniversary of OAPEC's establishment, Al-Loughani outlined the organization's core goal: to foster cooperation among member states in various economic facets of the petroleum industry, underscoring the

need for close relations and effective means to safeguard members' legitimate interests, articulating collective commitment to navigate the industry.

He asserted the organization's objective to harmonize efforts for fair access of petroleum to consumption markets, ensuring reasonable terms and creating optimal conditions for capital and expertise investments within the petroleum industry across member states.

Al-Loughani highlighted the establishment of a group of companies within member states, noting the effective contributions of emerging Arab companies, playing a vital role in strengthening the Arab petroleum industry through implemented or financed projects, benefiting numerous Arab member and non-member countries.

Underscoring their dedication, OAPEC's General Secretariat actively tracks global petroleum industry developments, assessing their impact on member states' economies through comprehensive technical and economic studies.

In response to the evolving energy industry, growing interest in renewable energy, and the implementation of stringent environmental regulations, OAPEC's Council of Ministers

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'Hassle-free'

Kuwait's smart center revolutionizes service

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: Al-Seyassah daily yesterday toured the first smart service center of its kind in Kuwait, which was opened in Shuwaikh close to Sahafa Street under the directives of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled to hand over citizens their passports, driver's licenses, and civil cards in an automated manner without the need for employees to be present.

The new center, which contains advanced devices, has been allocated to complete citizens' transactions in the quickest period of time and at all times of the day in order to make it easier for the citizens, to provide them with the best services, and to improve the electronic system.

Continued on Page 4



Photo shows one of the state-of-the-art machines at the smart service center which was opened in Shuwaikh close to Sahafa Street.

Photo by Samer Shikar

Prayer Timings

Fajr 05:20 Asr 14:48
 Sunrise .. 06:44 Maghrib .. 17:07
 Zohr 11:55 Isha 18:28

Local

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

Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Warm with light to moderate freshening at times southeasterly wind with speeds of 12-40 km/h with a chance for fog forming at night and some scattered clouds will appear later on.

By Night: Rather cold to cold to partly cloudy with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 06-35 km/h with a chance for light fog forming over some areas.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	20	11
Kuwait Airport	21	05
Abdaly	23	03
Jahra	22	08
Salmiyah	18	13
Nuwaib	21	08
Wafra	22	04

Cooperation eyed between NDHR, legal institutions

Nat'l Diwan for Human Rights makes humanitarian work recommendations

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9, (KUNA): Chairman of the Permanent Committee for Complaints and Grievances and Member of the Board of Directors of the National Diwan for Human Rights (NDHR), Dr. Abdulredha Assiri, affirmed on Tuesday the important role of the Diwan in providing proposals and recommendation to improve humanitarian work.

Dr. Assiri said in a press conference organized by the Center for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies at Kuwait University that the symposium on human rights policies in Kuwait and interaction with the local and international situation, held last December, came up with important recommendations after the completion of the workshops and meetings.

Among the recommendations was the establishment of awareness and educational programs about the role of the National Office for Human Rights in the appropriate fields.

Furthermore, Dr. Assiri pointed out the importance of the NDHR embracing community initiatives of human rights and mobilizing effective partnerships within the framework of spreading the culture and goals of human rights, in order to benefit from higher education institutions and their expertise in allocating matters related to human rights through research and proper evaluation.

Dr. Assiri stressed the need to urge the establishment of a joint Gulf system for national human rights institutions, similar to the Arab Network for National Human Rights Institutions, which is entrusted with raising the capabilities of workers in national human rights institutions in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

Such institutes also provide logistical support to national and Gulf institutions to raise the societal level of human rights concepts, he added.

Dr. Assiri emphasized the importance of activating cooperation between the NDHR and judicial and legal institutions to con-

duct joint training and awareness programs, and involving public benefit institutions in measuring the training impact of the joint programs that are implemented, and working in the future to develop such programs.

Dr. Assiri continued that one of the recommendations was to hold a periodic meeting or forum with the public in order to spread the culture of human rights, increase public human rights awareness, and shed light on the policies and activities carried out by all governmental and non-governmental agencies related to human rights.

In addition to laws and decrees approving international conventions concerned with human rights and their explanatory memorandums, equipped with the necessary resolutions, interpretations, clarifications and comments, Dr. Assiri continued issuing a volume containing the texts of the Kuwaiti Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

He said that the recommendations included holding closed or limited workshops for specialists and stakeholders in human rights matters to discuss issues and develop plans, policies, strategies, and problem solving in order to deepen the common understanding of those concerned with human rights.

Moreover, Dr. Assiri also added activating strategic relations with Kuwait University, public and private educational institutions, civil society institutions, and other official governmental and private bodies concerned with human rights to prepare an accredited academic or training program that provides human rights activists with the understanding and skills necessary to deal with international, regional and national systems while developing capacities for negotiating and managing human rights projects.

He went on to explain the importance of preparing a comprehensive draft on human rights laws that explicitly stipulates the repeal of any issue that can cause violations of the aforementioned rights in the draft.

Finally, Dr. Assiri reiterated the importance of initiating laws that regulate interaction with technologies and artificial intelligence techniques in a way that guarantees and preserves the basic requirements of human rights.



Dr. Assiri

Focus on Info blunders

'KTV brass lack strategy to train young blood'



KUNA photo
 Dr. Abdulredha Assiri and his team during the press conference at the Kuwait University.

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: At a time the State Audit Bureau (SAB) revealed the accumulation of financial and administrative violations in the Ministry of Information including the misappropriation of public money, the focus is now shifting to serious technical errors committed since the appointment of Nasser Al-Muhaisen as Undersecretary, reports Al-Qabas daily,

The ministry seems contented with the policy of reaction with regard to addressing accumulated errors in its sectors and referring employees to the investigation authorities.

With the repetition of errors while broadcasting programs on Kuwait TV, the viewers' criticism of what is happening in the programs of the ministry has intensified. It seems the ministry has no clear vision or strategy, as its programs are broadcasted without scrutiny.

The latest of these mistakes is that of a young broadcaster from Mashhad. It was met with ridicule and disapproval as confusion and chaos occurred in another program. The incident gives rise to a logical question in the midst of such chaos: Where is the ministry's role in developing the skills of national manpower?!

The catastrophic mistakes are caused by the absence of a clear strategy and vision for developing the content of Kuwait TV and other stations, as these mistakes were committed by Kuwaiti broadcasters and directors from different segments and age groups. This confirms that the defect is not in the young staff, but in the management mechanism of the officials who were unable to present solutions for the national staff and involve them in drawing up the media development strategy.

This confusion has been evident since the appointment of Al-Muhaisen, as blatant mistakes accumulated during his tenure and young employees have been referred for investigation to absorb public anger.

All of this is happening while the plans to develop the skills of the staff, train them and reintroduce these young people in a modern and professional manner are still a dead letter, and the agent and his staff have devoted themselves to political pursuits of some opinion-makers, writers and tweeters.

Then, their pursuits took another turn. The young national staff referred for investigation were targeted to absorb the anger of the street, as if the Undersecretary information knew nothing except the referral of opinion-makers and then the young employees for investigation, as he was hostile to freedoms and development.

The directive of Information Minister Abdurahman Al-Mutairi has been clear since he announced the need to support creative Kuwaiti youths. However, these directives did not bode well for some parties, as they were content with referring the staff to useless investigation committees.

The Undersecretary also failed to address the comments of SAB, which confirmed the ministry's inaction and repetition of violations in its recent report. The bureau recorded a number of violations, including the delayed submission of the final account for fiscal 2022/2023 and inaccuracy in preparing budget estimates -- a violation of the Ministry of Finance Circular No. 5/2021 on preparing the budget estimates of ministries and government entities.

According to the bureau, the Ministry of Information also failed to settle amounts owed to certain government agencies since March 2022 -- about KD1.6 million.

The bureau also pointed out that the Information Ministry deprived the State treasury of revenues by allowing an Arab production company to film clips from the series shown recently in a private Arab channel without compensation in violation of the ministerial decisions on regulating radio and television media services.

Robot employed in first-time operation

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

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: An orthopedic surgeon consultant at Jaber Hospital and the Chairman of the Council of Orthopedic Departments in Kuwait Dr. Awaith Al-Mutairi announced the use of an automated robot to carry out knee replacement surgeries at Jaber Hospital, a move that is considered a first of its kind in the country.

In a press statement issued yesterday, Dr. Al-Mutairi said the use of the robot for performing knee replacement surgeries is the first step, which will be followed by replacing the pelvic joints, then the shoulder, then spinal navigation surgeries, and then spinal surgeries as a whole.

He highlighted the global launch of the use of automated robots for orthopedic surgeries about four to five years ago.

Dr. Al-Mutairi stressed the importance of robotic surgeries in increasing patient satisfaction rates and reducing complications and human errors by more than 50 percent compared to regular surgeries.

He said the complications of joint replacement surgeries reach 20 percent but with the use of the robot, they reach ten percent or less.

Dr. Al-Mutairi affirmed the start of popularizing joint replacement surgeries using automated robots in all specialized hospitals in Kuwait, clarifying that orthopedic surgeries are performed by specialized surgeons, and the automated robot helps reduce the complication rates.

Meanwhile, Dr. Awaith Al-Mutairi also announced the launch of the activities of the Annual Orthopedic Surgery Conference for the year 2024 tomorrow, Thursday, with the participation of nine international doctors and experts, in addition to specialized doctors from Kuwait.

In a press statement, he said the conference will be held from January 11 to January 13, and will include more than 52 scientific lectures, eight discussion panels, and six specialized workshops in all sub-specialties and general orthopedic surgery.

Dr. Al-Mutairi stressed that the conference includes doctors from various medical specialties, including orthopedics, muscular system diseases, sports injuries, physical medicine, physiotherapy, interventional radiology and family medicine.

He revealed that the conference agenda and lecturers can be accessed and the registration process can be carried out through the conference website - www.kworthoconf.com

Cleaning drive to continue in Jan

'Can put up tents in home gardens'

By Enas Awad

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Communications, Fahad Al-Shoula, has given the nod to erect temporary tents within the gardens of private and model housing.

This decision is in accordance with specified guidelines outlined in the amendment to regulations governing the cultivation of state-owned yards adjacent to private and model housing residences.

However, Al-Shoula expressed objections to the Municipal Council's endorsement of Adailiya residents' request to stop the Kuwait Football Association to use the adjoining site for commercial purpose, calling for further examination of the matter.

Additionally, the minister objected to the initial article of the draft resolution related to regulations for cultivating state-owned yards next to private and model residential homes.

This article prohibits any cosmetic cultivation in areas adjoining existing buildings in private and model housing areas exploited for private residences, except for essential needs. He raised concerns about the lack of a study from the executive branch.

Furthermore, Al-Shoula forwarded

member Munira Al-Amir's proposal to form a committee to resolve disputes between citizens and contracting and construction companies and to entirely replace the existing street vendors system.

Cleaning drive to continue: The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality said that the cleaning campaigns are set to continue throughout the month of January, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement released yesterday, the municipality highlighted that the Department of Public Cleanliness and Road Works in the Hawalli Governorate Municipality Branch conducted an inspection campaign on Sunday.

The campaign was aimed at assessing all public cleaning services within the areas under the Governorate Municipality Branch. This includes tasks related to monitoring, supervision, and follow-up on public cleanliness, overseeing the work of contractors and cleaning companies, and monitoring street vendors.

The initiative also involved ensuring compliance with laws, regulations, and decisions pertaining to public cleanliness and road works within the governorate.

The goal is to enhance cleanliness levels and address issues obstructing roads or affecting the general appearance, such as the removal of abandoned cars, boats, and debris from public squares and streets.



Huge boat is lifted.



Forgotten cars picked up.

Abandoned boats, cars removed

The Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate Municipality branch, through its Public Cleanliness and Road Works Department, recently conducted field trips resulting in the removal of 9 abandoned cars and boats. Additionally, 29 stickers were placed on abandoned vehicles, groceries, and commercial containers, signaling their impending removal once the designated period elapses. Furthermore, the department replaced 5 old containers with new ones over the past week, reports Al-Rai daily.

Fahd Al-Quraifa, the Director of the Pub-

lic Cleanliness and Road Works Department in the municipality branch, emphasized that the primary objective of these extensive field tours is to monitor and address violations by implementing appropriate legal measures. Al-Quraifa highlighted the dedicated efforts of his supervisory team in enhancing cleanliness levels within their jurisdiction. The team is committed to eliminating elements that mar the aesthetic landscape and impede traffic flow across all areas. These field tours aim to uphold the cultural integrity of the governorate by preserving its scenic views.

'Delivery van drivers ignore rules'

Buses, taxis worsen traffic chaos

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: The traffic crisis has taken more than one turn and it is expected to be more complex in the absence of a joint action plan between the General Traffic Department in the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Public Works, reports Al-Shahed daily.

The worsening traffic problem directly affects road users -- whether financially or psychologically. Citizens are fed up with the daily traffic congestion, disruption of movement on the roads and lack of intervention on the part of traffic patrols to address the issue in a timely manner, in addition to their annoyance over the Ministry of Public Works' intrusion to repair potholes or cracks on roads everywhere.

The situation is unbearable and the traffic patrols are not doing anything. They turn a blind eye to buses, delivery vehicles and taxis whose drivers cause accidents daily

due to failure to comply with traffic regulations.

Citizens appealed to the Ministry of Interior to quickly arrest the violators -- whoever they are; and not to be lenient towards the drivers of buses and delivery vehicles that have increased remarkably.

Citizens stressed the need to hold accountable the negligent people in the General Traffic Department and Ministry of Public Works. They also called on members of the National Assembly to quickly solve the traffic and road crisis, instead of being preoccupied with trivial matters.

They said: "Our representatives must hold accountable those who are negligent and those harming the citizens who incur material losses daily due to excavations on the main roads and the streets in residential areas."

Other Voices

'Foul money is never blessed'

By Ahmad alsarraf

The UAE Prosecution referred 84 defendants, most of them from the Muslim Brotherhood, which is classified as a terrorist organization, to court for their role in creating "another" secret organization for the purpose of committing acts of violence and terrorism on state territory. Charges were brought, after monitoring and research that lasted for six months.



alsarraf

Mr. Nasser Al-Sanea, head of the Arab Parliamentarians Against "Corruption" organization, a former president of the Transparency Association, a leader of the Brotherhood, who represented them in Parliament for many years, and a member of a religious political group, stated in a television interview, in an attempt to return to the limelight, that he and other representatives, were subjected to several financial temptations.

He had previously been offered \$20 million in exchange for his effort to approve a law that was being presented at the time of his representation to the National Assembly, but the large amount raised his doubts (does this mean that the problem was in the large amount and not in the offer itself?)

He added in the interview, while laughing, that he rejected the offer, and contented himself with saying to the briber: God bless no money that comes this way!

Without bothering to report the "incident and the briber," despite his membership in several bodies that are supposed to fight corruption, in addition to his capacity as a representative and member of political and religious party bodies, above his responsibility as a citizen, and what he is known for repeatedly demanding and urging citizens to report any case of corruption, and

when the offer came to his house, he remained silent, only to then rant about the incident as evidence of his integrity!!!

After the interview was telecast, the social media platforms were abuzz with demands for the need to hold the former MP accountable.

The Integrity Commission responded to the demands and summoned him to learn more about the extremely dangerous issue, knowing that the Commission cannot do much if the aforementioned person refrains from cooperating with it, and here is the Transparency Commission, some of whose leaders are rumored to have Brotherhood tendencies, should at least announce Al-Sanea's refusal to cooperate with it in the investigation.

In its modern history, Kuwait has been exposed to two dangers. The first was the Saddam invasion, which we miraculously got rid of and its destructive effects. The second danger remains, which is still present, represented by the Muslim Brotherhood party, which has increased its spread in the last two years and has come to control many aspects of the country. And state institutions.

We succeeded in getting rid of the threat of invasion and occupation thanks to three factors: popular rally, unprecedented in the history of nations, around the leadership of the state; secondly, the intervention of free Western powers to liberate us from the yoke of occupation and thirdly, the stupidity of Saddam, who could have obtained a lot, instead of the despicable invasion!

Therefore, we hope that the current political situation, and what is known about the lack of prudence and knowledge of the Brotherhood, will help, politically at least, the government move and get rid of their organization and their danger, once and for all, as other Gulf countries and others have done.

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diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Sheikh Dr Muhammad 'right person in the right' position

"THE announcement of Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Sabah Al-Salem's appointment to lead the new government under the guidance of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad marked a pivotal moment in the dawn of a new era. May God grant His Highness a long life, guidance, and protection," columnist **Tarek Boursli** wrote for **Al-Anba** daily.

"Undoubtedly, Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Al-Sabah's appointment signifies a significant stride towards the initial facets of this new era, characterized by a commitment to growth and development.

"This aligns seamlessly with the modernization goals outlined in Kuwait Vision 2035, reflecting the evolution of the vision. From my perspective, the recently resigned Kuwaiti government, led by His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, laid the groundwork for the desired national development trajectory.

"As a citizen writer, my articles consistently echo the hopes and aspirations of the Kuwaiti people for sustainable development, a cause I earnestly follow through the shifts in political landscapes, ministries, and parliaments. I eagerly anticipate the realization of these aspirations in the near future, God willing.

"If I were to characterize this appointment, I would deem it as placing 'the right man in the right place.' It is imperative to recognize the capabilities of Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, the new Prime Minister.

"My optimism for substantial reform in Kuwait's economic landscape stems from his extensive experience and qualifications as a seasoned economist and politician. Our Prime Minister holds advanced degrees in economics from prestigious American universities, having earned his bachelor's degree from Claremont University in California and a doctorate from Harvard University.

"Additionally, he served as a professor at Kuwait University's Faculty of Commerce, Economics, and Political Science starting in 1985.

"His prowess extends beyond academia, as he has proven himself as a first-rate politician and distinguished Kuwaiti diplomat. Notably, he served as the ambassador to the United States of America in 1993, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in 2001, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Social Affairs, and Labor by proxy in 2003.

"At the Kuwaiti political forefront, Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Sabah Al-Salem assumed significant roles, including Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2006 and subsequent reassignments in 2007-2008 and 2011.

"His multifaceted experience underscores the meticulous selection of a prime minister whose competence aligns with the demands of economic, political, and foreign diplomatic leadership.

"It is evident that the guiding principle of the new era is rooted in the notion that 'competence is a prerequisite for selection'. I am confident that the Prime Minister will assemble an exceptional ministerial team reflective of this strategy.

"The appointment of Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah as Kuwait's Prime Minister is a defining aspect of the new era envisioned by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad during his constitutional oath.

"In essence, the forthcoming era is characterized by reform, rejuvenation, and sustainable development across Kuwaiti society, with a primary focus on economic advancement.

"Optimism abounds for the accomplishments that lie ahead, God willing. A warm welcome to the Prime Minister 'of the Government of Difficult Tasks'.

"In closing, I extend my gratitude to His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, acknowledging his service and expressing the enduring love of the Kuwaiti people for his efforts during the past period, a sentiment that will forever live in our hearts."

Also:

"The address from His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, may God protect him, resonated deeply within our hearts, revealing the shortcomings in the performance of both the Executive and Legislative Councils," columnist **Musa Behbehani** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

"The words of HH the Amir signaled the commencement of a renewed reform process, emphasizing the impartial application of the law on all.

"The issuance of an Amiri decree appointing Sheikh Mohammad Al-Sabah to lead the Council of Ministers in the upcoming phase garnered unanimous approval, as he is widely recognized as a reformist leader.

"This endorsement is especially crucial amid the current international challenges, as we anticipate a substantial reform movement that will elevate the nation from its current decline, restoring the prosperity and pride we once celebrated.

"Post Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem, there is no room for excuses! Kuwait boasts a populace of dedicated and patriotic citizens deeply invested in the welfare of the nation and its people.

"Therefore, the Prime Minister must take the following steps:

■ Recognize that work is a responsibility, not a privilege, and avoid quotas in the selection of the ministerial team. Choose individuals based on compe-

tence, experience, and a commitment to reform and innovation to enhance state institutions.

■ Technocracy – placing the right individuals in the appropriate roles.

■ Avoid selecting individuals who have a tainted record.

■ Resist pressure from influential figures in the selection of ministers and leaders.

■ Implement rigorous monitoring, follow-up, and accountability. Negligence by any official must be met with consequences.

■ Establish an open-door policy directly with citizens while closing doors to undue influence.

■ Hold accountable those responsible for the mismanagement of public funds, particularly in poorly executed road projects that pose risks to lives and property.

■ Enforce the law to combat corruption effectively.

"To address major citizen concerns:

■ Employment: Swift action must be taken to provide opportunities for graduates rather than subjecting them to prolonged waits for employment.

■ Housing: Alleviate the burden on young families by addressing skyrocketing house prices and exorbitant apartment rents.

■ Price regulation: The Ministry of Commerce should play an active role in determining fair prices for consumer goods, building materials, luxury items, and medicines.

■ Combat academic forgery with strict accountability.

■ Increase penalties for contraband traders who jeopardize the well-being of our youth.

■ Implement a strategic alternative by unifying salaries across ministries and institutions for similar specializations.

■ Promotion must be based on merit, ensuring that only those who excel, innovate, and demonstrate competence are advanced.

"In conclusion, we pray for the success of Prime Minister Sheikh Muhammad Al-Sabah in steering the reform path and restoring Kuwait to its rightful trajectory.

"Kuwait transcends individual interests, and with the collective cooperation of loyal patriots, we are optimistic about overcoming these challenges.

"May God protect Kuwait from the schemes of plotters and deceitful manipulators. May this country, along with all other Muslim nations, remain safe and secure. Praise be to God, the Lord of the Worlds."

□ □ □

"They set up gallows at Safat Square.

Many types of drugs have entered the country, the latest of which is a drug that made a Bangladeshi writhe on the street in front of passersby in Farwaniya. He died after taking 'Flakka'. Whoever takes this drug loses control of himself within seconds. This is preceded by bouts of aggression, hostility, delirium, hallucinations and violent behavior. Since some drugs are manufactured in Kuwait, it is also possible that the drug, 'Fentanyl,' also exists in the country," columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawaas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"This drug is 100 times stronger than morphine according to a report by the American magazine -- Newsweek -- dated Sept 12, 2018. It is stated that in 2022, the American authorities confiscated quantities of such drug, enough to kill the entire population of America. Most of the 'Fentanyl' available in the American market are manufactured in Mexico using chemicals from China.

"If the two drugs -- Flakka and Fentanyl -- have such a severe and deadly effect, what would they do to our youths and their future? The Bangladeshi mentioned above was writhing on the street, and the day might come when we see our youths writhing in pain and the loss of their future.

"The topic is long, but we can summarize it by presenting examples ... A young man killed his father after taking drugs, a woman killed her son due to addiction, juice mixed with drugs is being sold for KD5, Kuwaiti girls are drug addicts at the age of 13, candies for children contain drugs, drugs infiltrated the schools, an Asian delivers drugs, and the terrifying statistics: the number of drug users in Kuwait increased from 70,000 to more than 145,000 in November 2022.

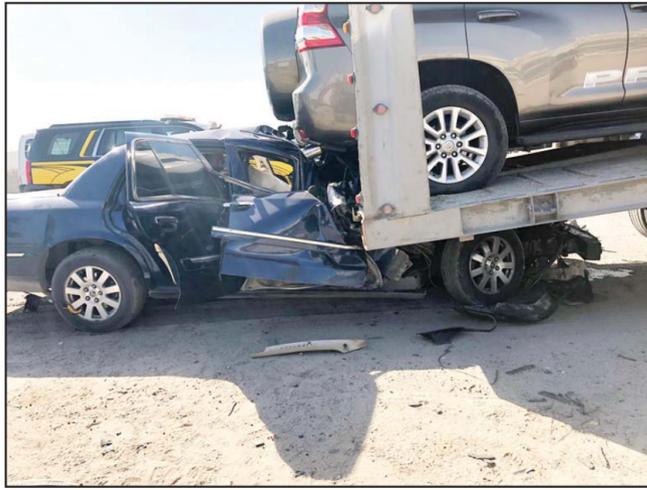
"At the meeting of specialists and advocates, they sounded the alarm and said: 'Drugs in homes and schools are slaughtering our children. Around 7,000 of more than 8,000 prisoners are serving time for involvement in drug-related cases. If they are not in your home, they are in your neighbor. Kuwait is targeted by drugs. We must not let anyone play with it. For our security, legislation must be issued to impose the death penalty on drug traffickers.'

"It is a disaster that has begun to disturb the Kuwaiti society, while the merchants' poisons are eating away at the heart of society, until they reached schools and homes, and are widespread among young men and women. These children or youths are supposed to be the men and women of the future as they could assume government positions.

"Doctors and educators suggested solutions to this serious problem. They identified the causes as follows: excessive pampering, family disintegration, bad friends, and lack of entertainment, which leads to abuse and violence.

"I believe that the treatment lies in strengthening the student's conscience, so that he knows what is wrong and what is right, as well as avoid memorizing the lesson without understanding it."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



File photo: A car rams into a truck carrying new vehicles.

185,000 cases handled by paramedics in 2023

8,757 road accidents dealt with

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: Director of the Medical Emergency Department at the Ministry of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Shatti revealed that the department dealt with a total of 185,000 cases in the year 2023, of which 128,000 were transferred to hospitals.

In a press statement, Dr. Al-Shatti explained that the department dealt with 8,757 road accidents, 808 air ambulance cases, and 94 medical evacuation cases in the past year. The number of cases transported by air ambulance increased by 100 percent from 404 to 808 in the year 2023. There was also an increase in support for gatherings and public activities by 20 percent from 4,418 in 2022 to 6,662 in 2023.

Mock exercises that were conducted increased by 30 percent in the past year to reach 72 in total. The average access time to the reporting site reached ten minutes.

The total number of ambulances in the department reached 286, following the introduction and receipt of 79 new cars during the past few weeks.

Dr. Al-Shatti announced the launch of the paperless system in the Operations Unit at the beginning of the new year, and the expansion of the system for receiving reports and directing ambulances, in accordance with the Ministry of Health's plan for digital governance.

Regarding the most important future projects in the department, Dr. Al-Shatti said he is looking forward to a qualitative leap that will save time and effort on the level of service for employees and contribute to expansion and patient service through training and application of the paperless reporting system, and better use of the medical guidance system.

It will also focus on activating non-urgent reports through the "Sahel" app and adopting communication between ambulances and emergency departments in hospitals.

Meanwhile, Head of the department's Operations Unit Abdullah Al-Nafees reviewed the department's most important achievements during the year, including preparing technical specifications for a tender for the maintenance and repair of ambulances, and coordinating with ambulance crews with the cooperation of regional leaders to provide appropriate numbers at peak times, especially the morning period, in addition to participating and coordinating with the relevant departments regarding exercises and other activities.

He stressed that the workforce in the de-

Fraud accusations

Trader acquitted

By Jaber Al-Humoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: The Misdemeanor Circuit of the High Court acquitted a businessman who was accused of real estate fraud by defrauding a Kuwaiti citizen over real estate projects in the British capital, London.

The defendant was referred to trial for deceiving the victim with the intention of causing him to make a mistake in order to force him to hand over the money in his possession using fraudulent methods by selling him a piece of land. This enabled him to seize those amounts based on that illusion.

The defense counsel representing the defendant, lawyer Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan, said the elements of the crime of fraud and civil conflict were absent. He also highlighted the laxity and delay in reporting, adding that the documents lacked evidence with which the incident could be attributed to the accused.

Al-Qattan said, "It is known in jurisprudence that the basis of the crime of fraud, in order to have its financial element, requires the existence of fraudulent means taken by the accused that affected the victim and led him to carry out the illusion of a false project or profit that does not exist, resulting in the seizure of his money."

The legislator has specified the manifestations of fraud in matters of which some of them include impersonating a false identity, seeking the help of someone else to support his false allegations, submitting false papers to seize money, or other deceptive means taken by the perpetrator to deceive the victim, provided that they are so serious as to deceive him."

partment amounts to 247 employees, including 160 employees in the Urgent Operations Division, 77 in the Non-Urgent Operations Division, nine secretarial employees, and one employee in the Follow-up Division.

Al-Nafees revealed the receiving of public complaints through the Sahel app, coordinating with the helicopters and the official authorities to participate in the exercises, and activating the electronic communications system from the beginning of this January, in addition to adding the Supply and Support Division to the Operations Unit.



Al-Qattan



Dr. Al-Sayer

Major events in Kuwait for 2023

Humanitarian aid:

Jan 2: Kuwaiti Najat charitable society provides 2,666 wells for 15 country in need with a value surpassing USD five million over the past year.

Jan 8: Najat charitable society, in 2022, built 358 mosques in various countries including Niger Chad and the Philippines.

Jan 11: Najat charitable society announced that number of people benefiting from its projects whether inside or outside of Kuwait reached 5.5 million for the year 2022, and added that its tuition fees program has benefited more than 50,000 student in the country since 1993.

Jan 16: Around 13,700 orphans in 16 countries have been sponsored by Najat charitable society in the year 2022.

Jan 17: Al-Salam society for humanitarian and charitable works announced that number of relief trucks it has been sending to Syrian and Yemeni refugees reached 190 trucks.

Jan 18: Al-Tamayuz society announced distributing winter necessities and school supplies to 18,000 people in northern Lebanon.

Jan 19: Najat charitable society announced giving out aid to 700 families in need and 750 orphaned child in Jordanian camps.

Jan 24: The Kuwait-based International Islamic Charity Organization inked a USD 500,000 deal with high commissioner of refugee affairs to provide protection and humanitarian aid to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

Jan 26: Rahma international charitable society opened a school benefiting 500 students from displaced families in southern Yemen.

Jan 30: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) inaugurated medical projects and orphan homes in Yemen, while Kuwaiti Zakat house supervised a medical center for mother and child care benefiting around 25,000 people.

Jan 31: KRCS established a medical camp in Yemen with the aim of operating 100 surgeries.

Feb 7: KRCS sent urgent humanitarian aid on board two planes as part of Kuwait's airbridge to Turkiye following devastating quake.

Feb 7: Kuwait's search and rescue team of the fire force, comprised of 45 officers, headed to Turkiye to contribute to search and rescue mission in quake-struck areas.

Feb 9: KRCS sent 80 tons of relief and urgent aid to Turkiye on board military aircraft.

Feb 10: Kuwait Red Crescent Society signed international cooperation agreements to provide USD millions worth of urgent aid to the quake-hit northern Syria.

Feb 11: Kuwait by your side campaign, organized by the Ministry of Social Affairs, collected more than KD 20.7 million of donations to quake-hit areas in Turkiye and Syria, and the International Charity Authority announced that Kuwaiti donations to these areas surpassed USD 860,000.

Feb 13: KRCS inked cooperation deal with International Red Cross Committee of USD one million to aid Syrians affected by the devastating earthquake.

Feb 15: Kuwait Red Crescent Society announced giving out USD two million to support efforts providing aid to humanitarian situation in Syria.

Feb 16: Daraj Zakat committee, supported by Kuwaiti Zakat House, announced completing tuition fee project helping 770 students in Gaza strip.

March 2: Kuwait Relief Society inaugurated urgent water treatment project servicing more than 300,000 thousand people in Yemen.

March 6: Kuwait Zakat house announced allocating USD two million for Kuwait's medical center for prosthetic limbs in Istanbul.

April 4: Direct Aid launched a project to help over 100 villages in 25 African countries.

April 4: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) announced distribution of 2,000 food baskets for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

May 2: KRCS announced launching donation campaign for the Sudanese people.

May 4: Kuwait began operation of humanitarian corridor for Sudan, sending tens of tons of medical supplies and aid for the Sudanese people.

June 15: KRCS signed an agreement with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development to renovate and equip maternity section at the Islamic Maqased Society hospital in Beirut.

June 19: Kuwait pledged USD six million at an international donor conference for Sudan, held in Geneva.

July 18: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Kuwaiti Abdullah Al-Nouri Charitable Society signed a cooperation agreement to support Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

July 21: The Kuwaiti humanitarian team (Shifa) performed 14 urgent surgeries for those injured by the earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria.

Aug 29: Kuwaiti Al-Najat (Charity) Society concluded campaign providing support to about 2,160 Yemeni families.

Sept 4: Kuwaiti Embassy in Cairo announced urgent humanitarian aid shipment estimated at approximately 190 tons of food supplies and medical supplies, directed to Sudanese people.

Sept 6: Kuwait Red Crescent Society and the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center signed a cooperation agreement to support the Sudanese people.

Sept 8: Direct Aid Society concluded its surgical camp in Ethiopia in cooperation with the Kuwaiti Al-Amal Surgical Team, which included 8 different specialties and carried out 500 surgical operations.

To be continued

Companies blacklisted

KPA wins KD22m damages

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: The Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA) announced that the judiciary has issued verdicts requiring companies to compensate the authority to the tune of more than 22 million dinars, while placing the violating companies on the blacklist from registering and operating at the Shuwaikh and Shuaiba ports, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The authority said in a statement that this step "came as a result of its serious follow-up on the necessity of confronting all forms of infringement on public funds and preventing any illegal practices by any violating company, with emphasis and ensuring the provision of an attractive environment for investment and improving maritime logistics services in Kuwait."

The authority stressed the importance of taking the necessary legal measures to ensure that the state's capabilities are not violated, removing the violating parties through proper lawsuits, and providing the Fatwa and Legislation Department with all the evidence and documents necessary to file these lawsuits.

The KPA said it is proud of Kuwait's judiciary for obligating one of the companies to pay 20 million dinars in compensation to the institution based on a final verdict issued by Court of Cassation.

The authority explained that this ruling came as a result of the company's exploitation of an area of 270,000 square meters in the tenth storage area in Doha Port from the expiry date of the license granted to it in July 2014, and the organization was compensated for the lost profits and losses it incurred.

It indicated that the ruling obligated two companies to pay an amount of 2.7 million dinars to the authority based on a final ruling that has the force of a res judicata issued by the Court of Cassation, for the value of their registration fees as a container handling contractor in Shuaiba Port individually from July 2002 until December 2015.

The authority also explained that supporting the final ruling The ruling issued by the Court of Cassation is not subject to appeal in any way, upholding the Corporation's decision not to register these companies as a general cargo handling contractor in Shuwaikh Port and as a container handling contractor in Shuaiba Port for the years 2017 and 2018.



Sheikh Yousef

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Congratulations

HH the Amir receives congratulations from Argentina president on power assumption

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a letter from President of Argentina Javier Milei on Tuesday, congratulating His Highness on the assumption

of power. President Milei also underlined enhancing bilateral ties between the two countries, wishing His Highness the Amir the best of luck in his new position.

On his part, His Highness Sheikh Mishal sent a letter to President Milei, thanking him for his kind words and wishing him a long healthy life and more prosperity and development for Argentina.

Farwaniya Hospital to receive cardiac catheterization cases

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: Director of Farwaniya Hospital Dr. Ali Al-Mutairi announced the start of receiving cardiac catheterization cases at the hospital in the coming few days, stressing that it is the first step of its kind, as it had previously transferred all cardiac catheterization cases to other hospitals such as Chest Diseases Hospital and Jaber Hospital.

In a press statement issued yesterday, Al-Mutairi affirmed that many precise medical specialties will be developed at Farwaniya Hospital soon, including spine specialization in the orthopedic department, ferti-

lity and sterilization in the obstetrics and gynecology department, and cardiac catheterization, in addition to the establishment of a clinic for fertility diseases and artificial insemination attached to laboratories and devices, to become the third clinic specializing in fertility diseases in the country in Kuwait after the clinics of Jahra Hospital and Sabah Hospital.

He revealed the complete transition of the Nuclear Medicine Department with all its therapeutic and diagnostic services to positron emission, which is one of the latest diagnostic technologies in the hospital, indicating the start of the fifth and

final operational phase of transferring clinics from the old Farwaniya Hospital to the new one.

Dr. Al-Mutairi appreciated the efforts exerted by the Ministry of Health to improve the health services provided in line with the development plan and the New Kuwait 2035 vision.

He also praised the new medical projects in Jaber, Jahra, Adan and Farwaniya hospitals, stressing that this aims to raise the level of health services provided by increasing the bed capacity and adding precise medical specialties to enhance the services of the health system in the country.

Kuwait's smart

Continued from Page 1

The daily monitored the process of completion of transactions by a number of citizens in the morning, as they received their passports, driver's licenses, and civil cards from the center with complete ease without any problem or disruption.

All instructions were clearly placed on the devices, which the citizens followed in order to complete their transactions quickly.

Al-Seyassah noted the presence of a technical employee to assist visitors when necessary if they need any assistance, or to clarify instructions for using the devices.

It is worth highlighting that the Ministry of Interior had announced the opening of the first smart service center for citizens that can provide its services around the clock electronically to citizens on the "Sahel" application or the Ministry of Interior's website. The services include receiving the passport, driver's license, and civil ID.

The ministry confirmed that there will be an expansion of such smart centers in the coming period in various areas to facilitate citizens' completion of transactions.

Kuwait suspends

Continued from Page 1

In a collective statement, the two entities urged citizens to file complaints against offices that do not adhere to the specified payment method via KNET or fail to comply with the announced prices.

The committee urges labor recruitment office owners to adhere to laws, ministerial decisions, and circulars, emphasizing ongoing daily inspections to identify and address violations.

Emphasizing the strictest legal measures against offices violating ministerial decisions and the Domestic Workers Law, the statement aims to safeguard the rights of citizens.

Citizens are encouraged to promptly contact the workforce hotline at (96966595) and the Ministry of Commerce at (135) to submit complaints in case offices do not adhere to the prices outlined in Ministerial Resolution No. (2) of 2024, issued on January 7, 2024.

The resolution, announced by the Minister of Commerce and Industry and the Minister of the State Department for Youth Affairs, Muhammad Al-Aiban, establishes the cost of recruiting domestic workers, inclusive of the travel ticket, based on collaborative efforts with the Public Authority for Manpower and in response to recommendations from Sheikh Talal Khaleel Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior.

'OAEPEC's founding

Continued from Page 1

took a significant step in December 2022, deciding to review and develop the organization's activities and objectives, aligning with industry advancements, energy production technology, and environmental legislation, aiming for a more substantial and effective role with a modern and comprehensive vision.

Expressing gratitude, Al-Loughani acknowledged the support from member states that empowered OAEPEC to fulfill its mission, particularly thanking Kuwait for hosting the organization's permanent headquarters for over five decades, underlining the nation's unwavering commitment to OAEPEC's future as a comprehensive Arab entity focused on all energy sources.

Commemorating its 56th anniversary, OAEPEC was established on January 9, 1968, in Beirut city through an agreement between Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Libya, signaling the creation of a specialized Arab regional organization of international significance, with Kuwait city selected as its permanent headquarters.

OAEPEC's membership grew significantly: in 1970, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Algeria joined; Syria and Iraq followed in 1972, Egypt in 1973, and Tunisia in 1982, later suspending its membership in 1986.

Parliament speaker

Continued from Page 1

None of these powers may relinquish all or part of its competence specified in this Constitution."

In a bid to address the issue, Al-Mudhaf said he previously submitted a bill on amending the National Assembly Law to clearly stipulate that a parliamentary session is legal even if it is held in the absence of the government.

In another development, MP Saud Al-Asfour commented on the current road conditions; asserting that the situation now is worse than during the liberation of Kuwait seven months after the Iraqi occupation. He pointed out that at the time, there was massive chaos and damages caused by heavy military trucks. He argued that dealing with the current conditions of the roads as if they need just the usual maintenance is not enough, because the situation necessitates immediate comprehensive reconstruction works. He highlighted the failure of successive governments to address the issue, although it is under the jurisdiction of the executive authority.

He then unveiled his plan to submit a bill on issuing a temporary legislation on road reconstruction to allow international, Gulf and domestic contractors to bid according to the rules and regulations; away from complicated and bureaucratic procedures. He added three factors must be considered in the roads reconstruction project -- speedy execution, high quality and public funds protection.

On the other hand, 39 MPs issued a statement urging the government, represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to take the necessary steps to join South Africa in filing a case against Israel for committing war crimes targeting civilians in Gaza.

The statement started with the citation of the Hadith of Prophet Mohammad — Peace Be Upon Him: "The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body. If one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds with weakness and fever."

The MPs said the world is witnessing the crimes committed by the Zionist gang, known as the Israeli Army, against the people of Gaza; victimizing about 20,000 people and displacing 1.8 million civilians, most of whom are women and children. "This is in addition to the demolition of worshipping places, hospitals, schools and refugees' shelters, as well as targeting journalists. International organizations have described the war against Gaza as the bloodiest and most horrible in modern history; yet the western countries continue to support and protect Israel in its war against unarmed civilian people. Suing the Israeli leaders is one of the recommendations presented during the special parliamentary session on supporting Palestine," the statement added.

Gaza toll

Continued from Page 1

Israeli leaders have rejected that idea but haven't put forward a concrete plan beyond an open-ended military control over the territory.

At the same time, Blinken is trying to prevent an all-out war between Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah. After a presumed Israeli strike last week hit Beirut, killing Hamas's deputy leader, the two sides have stepped up their exchanges. On Tuesday, Hezbollah said its exploding drones targeted the Israeli army northern command in the town of Safed - deeper into Israel than previous fire by the group. The Israeli military said a drone fell at a base in the north without causing damage, suggesting it had been intercepted. It did not identify the base.

"There is lots to talk about, in particular about the way forward," Blinken said after meeting Israeli President Isaac Herzog.

The United States has pressed Israel to scale down its offensive in Gaza to more precise operations targeting Hamas. But the pace of death and destruction has remained largely the same, with several hundred Palestinians killed a day, according to health officials in Gaza. Israel has vowed to keep going until it has destroyed Hamas throughout the territory, in response to the Oct. 7 attack during which mili-

tants killed some 1,200 people, mainly civilians, in southern Israel and kidnapped around 250 others.

Still, after three months of fighting, Hamas continues to put up a fierce fight.

The Israeli military says it has dismantled Hamas infrastructure in northern Gaza, where large swaths of the cityscape have been demolished. But fighting continues there against what Israel says are pockets of militants. The offensive's focus has shifted to the southern city of Khan Younis, where ground troops have been fighting militants for weeks, and a number of urban refugee camps in central Gaza.

"The fighting will continue throughout 2024," military spokesman Daniel Hagari said.

Since the war began, Israel's assault in Gaza has killed more than 23,210 Palestinians, about two-thirds of them women and children, and more than 58,000 have been wounded, according to the Health Ministry in Hamas-run Gaza. The death toll does not distinguish between combatants and civilians. Nearly 85% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million have been driven from their homes by the fighting, and a quarter of its residents face starvation, with only a trickle of food, water, medicine and other supplies entering through an Israeli siege.

Throughout the night and into Tuesday morning, warplanes struck multiple areas in and around Khan Younis. Israeli artillery shelling and gunfire echoed through the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, where troops have been pushing in from the north, said one resident, Saeed Moustafa. They were facing heavy resistance from gunmen in the camp, he said.

Like other refugee camps in Gaza, Nuseirat was built to house Palestinians driven out of homes during the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation, and over the decades it has been built up into a densely populated town housing refugees and their descendants.

Families in Nuseirat's northern neighborhoods were fleeing to other parts of the camp, Moustafa said by phone, with the sound of sporadic gunfire in the background. Some tried to head south on the Gaza's main north-south road but found it blocked by Israeli tanks and turned around, he said. In leaflets, the military had told people evacuating to use another road, along the coast.

The U.N. humanitarian office, known as OCHA, warned that the fighting was severely hampering aid deliveries. Several warehouses, distribution centers, health facilities and shelters have been affected by the military's evacuation orders, it said. Some bakeries in the central city of Deir al-Balah have been forced to shut down. A U.N. warehouse was hit last week, killing a staffer, and five other staffers were detained by the military, with two still held.

The situation is even more dire in northern Gaza, which Israeli forces cut off from the rest of the territory in late October. Tens of thousands of people who remain there face shortages of food and water.

The World Health Organization has been unable to deliver supplies to the north for two weeks. OCHA said the military rejected five attempted aid convoys to the north over that period, including planned deliveries of medical supplies and fuel for water and sanitation facilities.

As Blinken arrived in Israel, exchanges between Israel and Hezbollah continued their spiral since last week's killing of Hamas deputy leader Saleh Arouri in Beirut.

Hezbollah said its drone strike on the base in northern Israel on Tuesday was further retaliation for the killing of Arouri and of a senior Hezbollah commander in an Israeli bombing Monday.

Tuesday morning, an Israeli drone hit a car in northern Lebanon, killing three people inside, security officials in the area and the state news agency said. There was no immediate word on the identities of the three.

Israel has repeatedly warned that time is running out before it launches a campaign to end militants' fire across the border.

U.S. officials have said they expect Blinken's discussions with Netanyahu, the War Cabinet and other officials to be some of the most difficult on his current Mideast tour, his fourth since the war began,

Minister ratifies Council's decisions amid objections

10th and 11th meetings held in December '23

By Inass Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: The Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and the Minister of State for Communication Affairs Fahd Al-Shoula ratified many of the decisions taken by the Municipal Council during its 10th and 11th meetings of the second session held on December 11 and December 25, 2023 respectively.

He objected to a number of decisions, namely approving the renewal of the Municipal Council's decision taken on 21/07/2021 regarding the addition to plot no. 17 of the cadastral plan M/39557 in Qibla Block 15 for further study, the Municipal Council's approval of the request submitted by the residents of Adailiya residential area for curbing the commercial exploitation of the Kuwait Football Association site in the area, and finding investment alternatives outside the residential areas for further study.

Al-Shoula also objected to the first article in the draft ministerial decision regarding the regulations concerning the cultivation of state-owned yards adjacent to private and model residential homes.

He justified his objection by highlighting the cancellation of the ban on carrying out cosmetic plantings in squares across the streets, according to what was stated by the executive body.

He also objected to Clause 11 of Article 4 of the regulations, which excludes the prohibition of fencing the licensed area mentioned in clause Ten in support of people with special needs after presenting it to the Agriculture Committee. His objection was based on the fact that there is no study from the executive branch in what is considered as a violation of the provisions of Article 22 of Law No. 33/2016 concerning the Kuwait Municipality.

He objected to the Municipal Council's approval of the proposal submitted by member Munira Al-Amir regarding adopting a mechanism to resolve disputes between citizens and contracting and construction companies through the formation of a dispute resolution committee and its working mechanism. This is based on the item related to the parties to the dispute submitting (optionally) to the mu-



ABK's Alfouz logo

Bank holds Weekly Draw

ABK names Asmaa AlHuraibi as winner of Alfouz KD10,000 prize

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced Asmaa Mohammad AlHuraibi as the KD10,000 Alfouz weekly draw winner on Monday, 8 January 2024, held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Since its launch, the Alfouz account continues to offer an impressive weekly draw of KD10,000. The Bank has recently expanded its offering by adding a new alluring monthly draw of KD20,000, and an exceptional quarterly draw of KD100,000.

The account also retains its hallmark mega annual draw of a KD5,000 monthly salary for ten

years. Furthermore, the Bank now offers customers an increased opportunity to win for every KD10 as opposed to KD100 previously.

ABK encourages everyone to open an Alfouz draw account and/or increase their balances to have more chances in winning in the upcoming weekly draw winner announcement, which will take place on Monday, 15 January 2024. The higher the deposits, the higher the chances to win.

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

nicipality to complete the papers and explain the dispute, as the municipality introduces this service through its means to persuade the parties dealing with it to cooperate, in addition to the item related to the parties to the dispute signing a document.

The minister's objection to the above mentioned was due to the lack of an integrated study by the executive branch, which is considered a violation of the provisions of Article 22 of Law No. 33/2016 regarding the Kuwait Municipality, as the issue is still under study by the committee formed by ministerial Resolution No. 164/2023.

Al-Shoula also objected to the Municipal Council's approval of the proposal submitted by member Munira Al-Amir regarding the

complete replacement of the current street vendors system. This is because it violates the provisions of Article 48 of Law No. 33/2016 regarding the Kuwait Municipality, which includes transferring the jurisdiction of licensing, supervision, and monitoring of street vendors to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

In addition, he expressed objection to the Municipal Council's approval of a real estate company's request related to purchasing an area of 151.8 square meters of state-owned land and adding it to the adjacent block (Block 4) located in Qibla Block 1, which has an area of 366 square meters, making the total plot area 517.8 square meters. The minister's objection was based on the need for further study.

Both sides agree on large number of matters

Empowering Kuwait's minors – PAMA and PAHW enhance ties for welfare initiatives

By Abdul Nasser Al-Aslami

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: The Public Authority for Minors Affairs yesterday discussed with the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) various ways to enhance cooperation between them for the benefit of minors and those covered by the authority's care from various categories.

In a press statement issued yesterday, the Director of the Public Authority for Minors Affairs Eng. Hamad Al-Barjas said, "The authority is keen to strengthen the institutional partnership and relationship, unify visions and work concepts, and integrate with PAHW, relevant government agencies, and the public and private sectors for providing services."

He also stressed the keenness of both parties to facilitate procedures and expedite the provision of services.

Al-Barjas explained that they agreed on a large number of matters that will be in the interest of the minors and their families covered by the authority's care. At the forefront of them is the need to form a joint working team from the authority, PAHW, the Kuwait

Credit Bank, and the relevant authorities to discuss the proposals that were put forward during the meeting, study them from various aspects, and take appropriate decisions regarding them, taking into account the governing controls."

Meanwhile, the Acting Director General of PAHW Eng. Rashid Al-Enzi affirmed PAHW's keenness to coordinate and cooperate fruitfully with the Public Authority for Minors' Affairs in all matters, and agree on them with a clear understanding and full cooperation, in recognition of PAHW's awareness of the nature of the important role that the authority plays towards one of the most important and vital segments in the community.

Coordinates

He explained that PAHW coordinates continuously with the authority on many matters related to those covered by the authority's sponsorship. Among them are the allocation of plots to families under its care, mechanisms for dealing with minors and families of those detained in residential care, cases of disbursing rent allowance, exchange procedures for plots, govern-

ment houses and apartments, and other matters.

Meanwhile, informed sources revealed that PAHW completed 22,363 transactions in the month of December, including 240 new housing applications, and conducted 1,207 allocation transactions.

According to statistics issued by PAHW, the Citizen Service Department conducted 330 transactions last month and distributed 264 documentation transactions and 66 collection transactions. It opened 90 new files related to rented houses, carried out 200 rental allowance transactions and issued 160 "for whom it may concern" certificates. The telephone customer service also received 1,659 enquiries.

The Statistical Section of the Follow-up Department also looked into 103 petitions that were submitted to the PAHW's Applications and Allocation Sector, and the Distribution and Documentation Sector.

It is worth highlighting that the total number of transactions submitted through the website was 14, and the total number of services completed through the Sahel application was 18,030.

'Need to adhere to legal period to answer questions'

Council member asks about truck assembly sites

By Inass Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: The Municipal Council Member Dr. Hassan Kamal asked the executive branch of Kuwait Municipality regarding the allocation of truck assembly sites in the country.

In the preamble to the question letter, he highlighted his observation of trucks and heavy equipment stopping randomly on the sides of main and secondary roads and public squares in private residential, investment, craftsman and other areas, which is considered a violation of road occupancy in addition to its

negative effects such as visual, environmental, traffic and security.

Dr. Kamal explained that the Municipal Council had previously issued two decisions to organize the assembly of trucks in designated and licensed locations. They stipulated the allocation of sites for the assembly of trucks to be distributed among the Capital, Jahra, Ahmadi, and Farwaniya governorates. The first Municipal Council decision in this regard was issued on July 25, 2005, and the second was issued on June 25, 2007.

He asked about the authorities responsible for the land allocated for truck assembly in the country based on the executive branch's study at

the time of the two decisions. He also asked why the sites allocated in the two aforementioned decisions were not licensed and exploited.

Dr. Kamal said, "After more than 16 years of allocation and non-licensing, have these allocated sites been withdrawn? Does the executive body currently have new requests to allocate locations for the parking of trucks and other similar vehicles? If the answer is yes, please mention the entities, locations, and areas required for each site".

He concluded by emphasizing the necessity to adhere to the legal period to answer the questions of the Municipal Council members.

Need to upload required documents on or before Tuesday

KU sets self-service system for employee performance evaluation in '23

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: The Secretariat General of Kuwait University has required the submission of vacations, permissions and fingerprint attendance proof through the self-service system for the evaluation of the performance of university employees including the support academic staff for the year 2023 (from Jan 1 to Dec 31, 2023), reports Al-Anba daily.

The Secretariat specified Tuesday as the deadline for the employees to

submit the required documents to the Human Resources Department. Meanwhile, sources said all the direct superiors and heads of work centers must ensure that their subordinates upload the required documents on or before Tuesday. They confirmed that the application to evaluate the employees and support academic staff will be open through the Oracle system of the Human Resources Department starting from Jan 11.

Sources stressed the need to evaluate the performance of employees under the following categories: general, comprehensive bonus and lump sum salary, in addition to the support academic staff, by the direct manager and those who are next in charge in accordance with the approved organizational structure. Sources said the factors for measuring the extent of commitment to official working hours is based on the de-

cision of the Civil Service Commission, indicating the evaluation must be completed by Feb 6. Sources added that it is necessary to inform the employees about the evaluation result; clarifying that in case of discrepancy in the assessment of the direct manager and whoever is next in charge, the issued will be presented to the relevant committees for consideration and approval of the final evaluation.

Ahmadi has highest number of contracts

MoJ registers real estate deals worth KD195 mln in Dec 2023

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: In December 2023, the total value of real estate contracts registered with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Justice reached approximately 195.71 million dinars, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to statistics from the Real Estate Registration and Documentation Department, a total of 301 contracts were executed across six governorates during the month.

The breakdown of contract trading in December comprised about 215 private contracts, amounting to 97.13 million dinars, 75 investment contracts totaling 85.79 million dinars, and 6 commercial contracts worth 6.24 million dinars.

Additionally, there was a coastal strip contract valued at 2.20 million dinars, three contracts in the craftsman sector worth 2.25 million dinars, and another contract in warehouses amounting to 2.10 million dinars.

Among the governorates, Al-Ahmadi had the highest number of deals, with approximately 95 contracts. These were distributed between 77 private properties, 16 investment properties, and two commercial properties.

Hawalli followed with 75 deals, including 40 private properties and 35 investment properties. Regarding agency transactions, six agency contracts for private real estate, valued at 3.80 million dinars, were executed last month.

In the week ending December 21, a contract for agency services in private real estate, worth 3.35 million Kuwaiti dinars, was recorded.

HRC okays two proposals in private oil sector work

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: During its recent meeting, the Human Resources Committee has finalized two proposals for laws related to work in the private oil business sector. The committee achieved consensus with representatives from the oil sector, its subsidiaries, and the Union of Workers in the Private Oil Sector, reports Al-Anba daily.

MP Fares Al-Otaibi, the head of the committee, announced the unanimous approval of the proposed law, congratulating the workers in the private oil sector for the accomplishment.

Al-Otaibi emphasized that the approved law aims to secure the rights of Kuwaiti workers in the private oil sector and enhance job security. He expressed his gratitude to the government, the Oil Sector Board of Directors, and the head of the Private Oil Sector Syndicate for their cooperation in approving the law.

Another contract for agency services in private real estate, valued at 450 thousand Kuwaiti dinars, and an investment property contract worth 1.07 million dinars, were registered in the week ending December 14, 2023. No agency contracts were implemented in the remaining weeks.

Financial savings of KD 152m bolster MEW amid electricity crisis concerns

CSC agrees to set flexible working hours for ministry employees

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: According to informed sources in the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, the ministry achieved financial savings estimated at KD 152 million from the last budget. This invalidates the ministry's argument that the lack of financial funds is one of the main reasons for the disruption of electricity and water production projects at a time when the ministry is facing serious challenges that portend an electricity crisis in the coming summer. It had forced the ministry to allocate KD 30 million on demand to purchase energy from the electrical connection network and obtain the approval of the Fatwa and Legislation Department to purchase energy from companies.

The sources indicated that the ministry was supposed to benefit from these financial savings that it achieved in the budgets year after year, adding that the percentage of savings was 13.8 percent compared to the total budget, which amounted to KD 3.237 billion during the aforementioned fiscal year of 2022/2023.

Production

Meanwhile, the sources explained that the ministry has many electricity production projects until 2029, and these projects are supposed to lead to the production of about 13,780 megawatts if they are implemented according to the plans set without delay.

These projects include two within the Subiya station's fourth phase that can produce 900 megawatts and are scheduled to be launched on a trial basis in 2025 and 2027 respectively.

One of the largest projects implemented by the ministry is the Nuwaiseeb station project (first phase), which is scheduled to produce 3,600 megawatts in the years 2028 and 2029.

The ministry has a project to enhance production at the Subiya station by adding 250 megawatts, and it is scheduled to be operated on a trial basis in 2026.

There is also another project for the production of 2,700 megawatts from the North Zour station (the second and third phases), which are scheduled to be operated on an experimental basis in 2027 and 2028.

One of the public-private partnership projects is the Khairan Project (first phase), which is scheduled to produce 1,800 megawatts in the year 2028 in two parts - 1,200 MW and 600 MW. Also, the Shagaya project's second phase is scheduled to produce 1,100 megawatts in 2026, and the third phase is scheduled to produce 200 megawatts in 2028. The fourth phase is scheduled to produce 1,500 megawatts in 2026, and the fifth phase is scheduled to produce 1,700 megawatts in 2028.

The sources added that the latest project is a project of photovoltaic panels on water tanks, which is scheduled to produce 30 megawatts in 2026.

They affirmed that these projects would cover the country's needs during the next stage according to expected consumption rates.

In another development, the Civil Service Commission has agreed to set flexible working hours for employees of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy by granting them a flexible hour from 7:00 am to 8:00 am with a grace period of 30 minutes.

Draft budget submitted to MoF

MoE seeks KD 2.7 bln budget approval for '24/'25 fiscal year

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: The Ministry of Education has requested its finance counterpart to approve a budget amounting to KD2.7 billion for fiscal 2024/2025, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources informed the daily that the Financial Sector in the Ministry of Education prepared the draft budget, which was submitted to the Ministry of Finance for approval.

They disclosed the draft budget includes salaries and bonuses, which exceeded KD2 billion due to the increase in the number of employees in the educational and administrative sectors, coinciding with the opening of new schools and the plan to open more schools later due to the urban expansion and establishment of residential like Mutlaa, West Abdullah Mubarak and others.

They added the number of employees in the Ministry of Education reached around 143,000 including teachers and administrators, pointing out that the salaries item consumes approximately 90 percent of the budget.

In another development, the grade 12 students in the scientific, literary and religious education sections continued their exams for the first academic period on Monday when they took the Arabic Language test, while Tuesday is a rest day and the exams will resume on Wednesday.

Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education Anwar Al-Hamdan continued her field tours, accompanied by acting Assistant Undersecretary for Public Education Hessa Al-Mutawa and acting Assistant Undersecretary for Special Education Dr Salman Al-Lafi to personally look into the progress of work in the examination committees in religious education institutes.

Al-Mutawa said there are four religious institutes for the secondary stage and the number of students is reached 794. "We visited Abdul Rahman Al-Sumait Religious Secondary Institute for boys and Cordoba Religious Institute for girls. We are keen on implementing the regulations to ensure the quality of education and the progress of the educational process," she stressed.

To be continued

Major events in Kuwait during 2023

June 24: Kuwait University announced registration of high school students wishing to study medicine in Koc university in Turkey.

June 29: Kuwait University announced it had made advances on six indicators of the QS World University Rankings of 2023.

July 2: Ministry of Education launched first stage of central acceptance portal part of developing infrastructure and bettering electronic services.

July 4: Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research collaborated with a factory to switch up plastic bags in favor of biodegradable bags.

July 5: PAAET announced five new scientific majors for the year 2023-24. July 25: KISR announced attaining patent for desalination technology.

July 27: Kuwait University announced equating IELTS results with English placement test results for applicants.

Aug 17: Education Ministry announced 18 new schools in Farwaniya and Ahmadi educational areas for the year 2023-24.

Aug 31: Kuwaiti Ministry of Education announced the medical humanitarian campaign organized by the Student Association at the College of Dentistry in Nepal contributed to providing medical services and assistance to more than 900 cases.

Aug 31: Kuwaiti Ministry of Education announced its contract with 531 male and female teachers from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in Palestine.

Sept 4: The Kuwaiti school debate team won first place in the sixth international school debate championship in Qatari capital of Doha in the Arabic language for the first time.

Sept 10: Kuwait University announced the opening of Sabah Al-Salem University City Ambulance Center to provide the necessary medical services to its students and members.

Sept 10: The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training signed an academic, training and scientific cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Interior.

Sept 11: Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) announced the Institute's achievements during (2022-23), as it registered four new patents and 237 research projects.

Sept 11: Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences announced winners of the Jaber Al-Ahmad Award for young researchers in its 33rd session, Dr. Mohammad Jamal, Dr. Dhari Al-Huwail, Dr. Yousef Al-Asiri, and Dr. Abdullah Al-Shibli.

Sept 12: Ministry of Education issued a decision changing the official working hours for all schools.

Sept 25: Abdullah Al-Salem University received its first batch of its new students in various academic programs.

Ministry of Commerce and Industry

وزارة التجارة والصناعة

RECALL INFORMATION

Peugeot Model 2008 M.Y. 2023

RECALL REASON: Vehicle reliability and your safety are a major concern for Peugeot. An engine ECU software update recall refers to a situation where the manufacturer or a regulatory authority identifies a software issue in the Engine Control Unit (ECU) of certain vehicles. This issue may impact the performance, emissions, or overall functionality of the engine.

REMEDY: The manufacturer initiated a recall campaign to address the problem by updating the Engine ECU software in affected vehicles.

CONTACT: Kuwait Automotive Imports Co.W.L.L Peugeot Service Center - Shuwaikh Hotline: 66279604 www.https://kwf.peugeot.com/

This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42,43,44,45,46, 47 and48)of no.(27/2015) issuing the executive by laws no.(39/2014)on Consumer Protection

Ministry of Commerce and Industry

وزارة التجارة والصناعة

RECALL INFORMATION

Peugeot Model Expert M.Y. 2023

RECALL REASON: A built-in system interface software update related to a gear shift indicator typically involves an update to the software that controls the gear shift indicator display in a vehicle. The gear shift indicator is a feature that provides information to the driver about the recommended gear for optimal fuel efficiency or performance. The manufacturer identified a software issue that affects the

REMEDY: The manufacturer initiated a recall campaign to address the problem by updating the Built In System software in affected vehicles.

CONTACT: Kuwait Automotive Imports Co.W.L.L Peugeot Service Center - Shuwaikh Hotline: 66279604 https://kwf.peugeot.com/

This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42,43,44,45,46, 47 and48)of no.(27/2015) issuing the executive by laws no.(39/2014)on Consumer Protection

Ministry of Commerce and Industry

وزارة التجارة والصناعة

RECALL INFORMATION

Peugeot Model 301 M.Y. 2021

RECALL REASON: Vehicle reliability and your safety are a major concern for Peugeot. An engine ECU software update recall refers to a situation where the manufacturer or a regulatory authority identifies a software issue in the Engine Control Unit (ECU) of certain vehicles. This issue may impact the performance, emissions, or overall functionality of the engine.

REMEDY: The manufacturer initiated a recall campaign to address the problem by updating the Engine ECU software in affected vehicles.

CONTACT: Kuwait Automotive Imports Co.W.L.L Peugeot Service Center - Shuwaikh Hotline: 66279604 https://kwf.peugeot.com/

This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42,43,44,45,46, 47 and 48)of no.(27/2015) issuing the executive by laws no.(39/2014)on Consumer Protection

World News Roundup

France

Attal named as France's youngest-ever PM

Macron shakes up government

PARIS, Jan 9, (AP) - Gabriel Attal was named Tuesday as France's youngest-ever prime minister, as President Emmanuel Macron seeks a fresh start for the rest of his term amid growing political pressure from the far right.

Macron's office announced the appointment in a statement. Attal, 34, rose to prominence as the government spokesman and education minister. He is France's first openly gay prime minister.

His predecessor Elisabeth Borne resigned Monday following recent political turmoil over an immigration law that strengthens the government's ability to deport foreigners.

Macron - who was France's youngest-ever president when he came to power in 2017 -- is to work with Attal to name a new government in the coming days, though some key ministers are expected to continue in their posts.

The 46-year-old president has shifted rightward on security and migration issues since rising to power on a pro-business centrist platform in 2017, notably as far-right rival Marine Le Pen and her anti-immigration, anti-Islam National Rally have gained political influence.

Attal, a former member of the Socialist Party, joined Macron's newly created political movement in 2016 and was government spokesperson from 2020 to 2022, a job that made him well-known to the French public. He was then named budget minister before being appointed in July as education minister, one of the most prestigious positions in the French government.

Attal quickly announced a ban on long robes in classrooms which took effect with the new school year in September, saying the garments worn



Outgoing French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne, left, welcomes Gabriel Attal before the handover ceremony, Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024 in Paris. Gabriel Attal was named as France's youngest-ever prime minister, as President Emmanuel Macron seeks a fresh start for the rest of his term amid growing political pressure from the far right. (AP)

mainly by Muslims were testing secularism in the schools.

He also launched a plan to experiment with uniforms in some public schools, as part of efforts to move the focus away from clothes and reduce school bullying.

Attal recently detailed on national television TF1 how he suffered bullying at middle school, including homophobic harassment.

French opinion polls show he was the most popular minister in Borne's government.

French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne resigned Monday following recent political turmoil over immigration, paving the way for President

Emmanuel Macron to seek fresh momentum by appointing a new government in coming days.

The shakeup was widely seen as an attempt by the 46-year-old centrist Macron to head off a looming lame-duck status. Macron's term is to end in 2027, and he won't be able to run for president for a consecutive third term in line with the French Constitution.

In her resignation letter, Borne suggested she resigned at Macron's request, citing the president's "will" to "appoint a new prime minister."

Borne's resignation followed the passage late last month of contentious immigration legislation backed by Macron aimed at strengthening the government's ability to deport some foreigners, among other measures.

Centrist alliance

Macron's centrist alliance was able to pass the measure only after making a deal with the conservative Republicans party, which many observers saw as the government's shift to the right. The tough negotiations and heated parliament debate raised questions over the ability of Borne's government to pass future major bills.

Political observers also suggested that Macron, a staunch supporter of European integration, wants his new government to get ready for June's European Union elections.

Borne, 62, had been appointed in May 2022 after Macron's reelection for a second term. She was France's second female prime minister.

The following month, Macron's centrists lost their majority in parliament, forcing the government into political maneuvering and using special constitutional powers to be able to pass laws.



US President Joe Biden reaches out to touch the casket of former U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson during a prayer service at Concord Church on Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, in Dallas. Johnson, a trailblazing North Texas Democrat who served 15 terms in Congress, died on Dec. 31. (AP)

Biden condemns white supremacy

Courting Black voters he needs to win reelection, President Joe Biden on Monday denounced the "poison" of white supremacy in America, declaring at the site of a deadly racist church shooting in South Carolina that such ideology has no place in America, "not today, tomorrow or ever."

Biden spoke from the pulpit of Mother Emanuel AME Church, where in 2015 nine Black parish-

ioners were shot to death by the white stranger they had invited to join their Bible study. The Democratic president's speech followed his blunt remarks last Friday on the eve of the anniversary of the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol, in which he excoriated former President Donald Trump for "glorifying" rather than condemning political violence.

At Mother Emanuel, Biden said

"the word of God was pierced by bullets of hate, of rage, propelled not just by gunpowder, but by a poison, a poison that has for too long haunted this nation."

That's "white supremacy," he said, the view by some whites that they are superior to other races. "It is a poison, throughout our history, that's ripped this nation apart. This has no place in America. Not today, tomorrow or ever." (AP)

America

WH to review Austin's disclosure

Trump will return to federal court

WASHINGTON, Jan 9, (AP) - Donald Trump is set to return for the first time in months to the federal courthouse in Washington as an appeals court hears arguments Tuesday on whether the former president is immune from prosecution on charges that he plotted to overturn the results of the 2020 election.

The outcome of the arguments carries enormous ramifications both for the landmark criminal case against Trump and for the broader, and legally untested, question of whether an ex-president can be prosecuted for acts committed in the White House. It will also likely set the stage for further appeals before the U.S. Supreme Court, which last month declined a request to weigh but could still get involved later.

A swift decision is crucial for special counsel Jack Smith and his team, who are eager to get the case - now paused pending the appeal - to trial before the November election. But Trump's lawyers, in addition to seeking to get the case dismissed, are hoping to benefit from a protracted appeals process that could delay the trial well past its scheduled March 4 start date, including until potentially after the election.

Underscoring the importance to both sides, Trump, the 2024 Republican presidential primary front-runner, intends to attend Tuesday's arguments even though the Iowa caucuses are just one week away and despite the fact that there's no requirement that defendants appear in person for such proceedings. It will be his first court appearance in Washington, one of four cities where he faces criminal prosecutions and potential trials, since his arraignment in August.

Meanwhile, the White House said Monday that the administration will review what rules or procedures weren't followed when Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin did not disclose his hospitalization for days to President Joe Biden and top officials at the Pentagon and the National Security Council.

"We'll do what's akin to a hot wash and try to see if processes and procedures need to be changed at all or modified so that we can learn from this," John Kirby, the National Security Council spokesman, said Monday when asked whether Biden wanted a review of what happened.

Austin was hospitalized on Jan. 1, which the Pentagon did not disclose to the public until Friday. Biden and Jake Sullivan, the president's national security adviser, were not aware of Austin's condition until Thursday.

Also:

FRANKFORT, Ky: Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear, who defeated Donald Trump-backed rivals twice in Republican-leaning Kentucky, announced the formation of a federal political action committee on Monday to support candidates across the country as he seeks to broaden his influence beyond the Bluegrass State.

Beshear launched a PAC called In This Together with a focus on helping elect more Democrats in swing states and Republican strongholds.

The move comes barely two months since Beshear secured a second term with a convincing victory over GOP challenger and then-state Attorney General Daniel Cameron in one of the nation's most closely watched elections of 2023.



Nikolai Kharitonov, a lawmaker of the Russian Communist Party, the second largest party in the lower house of Parliament, the State Duma, shows his candidate ID while speaking to journalists at Russia's Central Election Committee in Moscow, Russia, on Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024. Russia's national elections commission on Tuesday registered the Communist Party's candidate Nikolai Kharitonov to compete with President Vladimir Putin in the March election that Putin is all but certain to win. (AP)



Meloni



Khodorkovsky

Europe

Outcry in Italy: Opposition politicians in Italy on Monday demanded that the government, headed by far-right Premier Giorgia Meloni, explain how hundreds of demonstrators were able to give a banned fascist salute at a Rome rally without any police intervention.

The rally Sunday night in a working-class neighborhood commemorated the slaying in 1978 of two members of a neo-fascist youth group in an attack later claimed by extreme-left militants. (AP)

Exiled critic wanted: Russia's Ministry of Internal Affairs put exiled Russian tycoon and opposition leader Mikhail Khodorkovsky on its wanted list Tuesday, accusing him of spreading false information about the Russian army. Russian state news agency Tass said. The charge carries a sentence of up to five years in prison, Tass said.

A criminal case was opened against Khodorkovsky in September regarding comments he made online about payments for Russian soldiers killed in the war in Ukraine, Tass said. (AP)

albander hotel & resort

January

Room Promotion

Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 53.361/-net	BHD 119.173/-net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 61.000/-net	BHD 136.198/-net

Promo period from 1st - 31st January 2024

Terms & conditions apply*



People walk through debris of buildings on the Asaichi-dori shopping street in Wajima in the Noto peninsula, facing the Sea of Japan, northwest of Tokyo on Jan. 5, 2024, following a deadly earthquake on New Year's Day. Inset: Firefighters conduct a search operation in Suzu, Ishikawa prefecture, Japan, Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024. Thousands of people made homeless by a powerful earthquake on the western coast of Japan were coping with weariness and uncertainty a week after the temblor. (AP)

Taiwan

'Aspiring for peace'

Presidential hopeful Lai willing to talk with China

TAIPEI, Taiwan, Jan 9, (AP): Taiwan's leading presidential candidate **William Lai** said Tuesday he hopes for a reopening of dialogue with China following almost eight years of Beijing's near-complete refusal to communicate with leaders of the self-governing island it considers its own territory.

But Lai told reporters he would continue the current administration's policy of maintaining democratic Taiwan's de-facto independence in the face of Chinese Communist Party threats to annex it by political, military or economic means. China demands that Taiwan's leadership concede its claim of ownership over the island before reopening contacts.



Lai

Taiwan's capabilities in economic security, enhance partnerships with democracies around the world and maintain stable and principled leadership on cross (Taiwan) Strait relations.

"Our door will always be open to engagement with Beijing under the principles of equality and dignity. We are ready and willing to engage to show more for the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Peace is priceless and war has no winners," Lai said.

Lai, currently Taiwan's vice president, is broadly seen as the front-runner in the election to succeed President Tsai Ing-wen, who is barred by law from running for a third term. Most polls show him well ahead of the main opposition Nationalist Party, or KMT, candidate Hou You-yi, who favors eventual unification with China under its own terms, and the alternative Taiwan People's Party's Ko Wen-je, who has also pressed for renewed dialogue with China and the avoidance of confrontation with Beijing.

Sentiments

Voters will also choose a new legislature, where the DPP will seek to hold on to its majority, largely based on its handling of the economy, public welfare and employment opportunities for young people. Skyrocketing housing prices, a declining birth rate and a yawning gap between the super wealthy and working class are also playing into voter sentiments.

Meanwhile, Taiwan's defense ministry issued an alert Tuesday saying China has launched a satellite and urging caution days before the island's elections.

Taiwan holds presidential and parliamentary elections Saturday that China has described as a choice between war and peace.

In English, the presidential alert sent to residents' mobile phones cautioned there was a missile flyover.

The alerts went off in the middle of an international news conference by Taiwanese Foreign Minister Joseph Wu. He clarified it was a satellite launch, told journalists not to worry, and proceeded with the news conference.

China views Taiwan, which is about 160 kilometers (100 miles) off China's east coast, as a renegade province that must come under its control.

Earlier, at least three people were hospitalized after mistakenly eating colorful pods of liquid laundry detergent that were distributed as a campaign freebie in Taiwan's presidential race, according to Taiwanese media reports.

One of the victims said she thought the pods were candy, the Central News Agency reported.

The pods came in partially clear packaging with photos of Nationalist Party candidate Hou Yu-ih and his running mate. Writing on the bag says "Vote for No. 3," the place on the ballot for the Nationalist ticket in the three-way race, and that each pod can wash up to eight kilograms (18 pounds) of clothes.



A Bhutanese woman carrying her child on her back shows the voting mark on her index finger after casting her vote in the national elections in Deothang, Bhutan, Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024. The landlocked country in the eastern Himalayan mountain range is electing a new Parliament, with the parties in contest promising to fix the nation's economic crisis. (AP)



Hasina



Miller

Subcontinent

'Hasina's rule were not credible': The United States and the United Kingdom said the elections that extended Bangladesh Prime Minister **Sheikh Hasina's** rule were not credible, free and fair.

Both countries, which have trade and development ties with Bangladesh, also condemned political violence that preceded Sunday's election in which Hasina's party won more than two-thirds of the parliamentary seats while turnout was low and the main opposition party boycotted.

"The United States remains concerned by the arrests of thousands of political opposition members and by reports of irregularities on elections day. The United States shares the view with other observers that these elections were not free or fair and we regret that not all parties participated," State Department spokesperson **Mathew Miller** said from Washington.

He urged Bangladesh's government to credibly investigate reports of violence and hold those responsible accountable.

The U.K. said the democratic standards were not met consistently in the lead-up to the election.

"Democratic elections depend on credible, open, and fair competition. Respect for human rights, rule of law and due process are essential elements of the democratic process. These standards were not consistently met during the election period. We are concerned at the significant number of arrests of opposition party members before polling day," the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said in the statement. (AP)

Pakistani officer dies: An officer who was critically wounded in a roadside bombing that targeted police assigned to protect polio vaccination workers in northwestern Pakistan died in a hospital on Tuesday, raising the death toll from the attack, claimed by the Pakistani Taliban, to seven.

Police said in a statement that at least three officers remained in critical condition

Japan

Reforms launched after Haneda Airport tragedy

Japan faces stress and exhaustion

WAJIMA, Japan, Jan 9, (AP): Thousands of people made homeless by a powerful earthquake on the western coast of Japan were coping with weariness and uncertainty a week after the temblor left at least 180 dead and dozens missing.

The rescue effort since the magnitude 7.6 New Year's Day quake has drawn thousands of troops, firefighters and police, who picked through collapsed buildings hoping to find survivors.

Authorities warned of the danger of landslides, exacerbated by a heavy snowfall, around the quake's epicenter on the Noto Peninsula in Ishikawa prefecture. The landscape blanketed in fluffy white, covering burned and crumbled houses, ash-covered blocks of a city, highways with gaping holes and cracks.

As of Tuesday, the deaths included 81 people in Wajima, 71 in Suzu, 18 in Anamizu and the rest were spread among four other towns. At least 120 people were still unaccounted for, declining from a jump Monday to some 300 as rescuers pore over a list of the region's population. Another 565 people were injured, and 1,414 homes were destroyed or seriously damaged.

A tsunami of several meters (feet) followed the initial major quake, adding to the damage. Aftershocks have continued daily.

Japanese meteorological officials warned strong quakes could persist for another month. Their frequency, while gradually diminishing, remained high compared to past quakes, totaling more than 1,000.

For the residents, recovery work has barely started. Shuji Yoshiura, a fisherman, said his boats were damaged and he could not go out on the sea.

Before the quake, Wajima was a tourist town with a shopping street offering seafood and traditional crafts. Much of it was destroyed in the fires that broke out after the Jan. 1 disaster.

Kentaro Mitsumori, who runs a cor-

ner grocery shop, slept in his car with his wife to guard against looting. Their store still stands but has no lock, electricity or running water. Everything sold out in three days. But he plans to close his business.

"Even if I manage to fix up the place, there just aren't going to be enough customers. I don't know how Wajima can survive," he said.

Nearly 30,000 people staying in schools, auditoriums and other evacuation centers worried about infections as cases of COVID-19 and other illnesses popped up.

In the shelters, people were still sleeping on cold floors. After initial help of a piece of bread and a cup of water for each person a day, more aid is allowing some facilities to begin serving hot food cooked in huge pots.

People were delighted by the temporary bathing facilities set up by soldiers, sitting in the hot water they had missed for days.

Survivors

Still, exhaustion and stress are wearing them down. Many are in mourning. The main quake struck on New Year's Day, a time for families to gather in Japan. Some survivors said they were all alone because they lost their loved ones.

Mizue Kaba, 79, was lucky she survived, as did her daughter, son-in-law and grandson, who were visiting on New Year's from Osaka in central Japan.

Kaba is sleeping at a school, and no one is sure what might happen when schools open in a week after the New Year's break.

Three stoves were not enough to heat the school's big hall, and more heaters arrived.

Also:

TOKYO: Japan's transportation ministry said Tuesday it has introduced improved emergency measures for the country's airports, a week after a fa-

tal collision between a Japan Airlines jetliner and a coast guard plane at Tokyo's busy **Haneda** airport that is seen as a result of human error.

The measures - including more visible stop line markings on taxiways leading to runways and use of clearer language in traffic control communication - are to be implemented right away at Haneda while they are slated to go into effect at other airports across the country in the coming weeks.

The Jan. 2 collision occurred when JAL Flight 516 carrying 379 passengers and crew landed right behind the coast guard aircraft preparing to take off on the same seaside runway, engulfing both aircraft in flames.

All occupants of the JAL's Airbus A350-900 airliner safely evacuated in 18 minutes. The captain of the coast guard's much smaller Bombardier Dash-8 escaped with burns but his five crew members died.

The probe into the collision has focused on what caused the coast guard flight crew to believe they had a go-ahead for their take off. A partial release of the air traffic control transcript showed no clear takeoff approval was given to the coast guard plane.

According to the text, the Tokyo air control gave the JAL plane permission to land on the 34R runway, noting that there is a departing plane, with the JAL pilot repeating the instruction. In the transcript, the traffic control tells the coast guard plane that it was given a "No. 1" priority for takeoff, an expression some experts say might have led the Bombardier crew to mistakenly believe they got a permission to proceed to the runway.

According to a report Tuesday in the Asahi newspaper, the coast guard plane may have started communication with the traffic control only after the JAL plane got its landing permission and may not have been aware of the airliner's arrival.

after Monday's bombing in the district of Mamund, a former stronghold of the Pakistani Taliban in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan.

The Pakistani Taliban promptly claimed

responsibility for the attack. However, a competing claim late on Monday by the Islamic State group accused the Pakistani Taliban of falsely taking responsibility for the bombing. In the past, the two militant

groups - which are both active in the region - have issued competing claims. (AP)



Politicians lifetime ban scrapped: Pakistan's Supreme Court on Monday scrapped a lifetime ban on politicians with convictions from contesting elections, paving the way for former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to run for the fourth time.

The court ruling will also enable other politicians to run for parliament in the Feb. 8 elections.

The lifetime ban on convicted politicians was imposed in 2018. Under a new court order passed on Monday, convicted politicians would be barred from running only for five years.

Sharif's party said he will seek a fourth term after returning in October from a four-year self-exile in London to avoid serving prison sentences on corruption charges. They were overturned on appeal after his return.

Sharif stepped down as prime minister in 2017 over the corruption charges. His main rival, Imran Khan, is currently serving a prison term, but he too has announced plans to run next month. Khan was ousted in a no-confidence vote in April 2022, but he remains a leading figure and his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party has a large following. (AP)



A health worker administers a polio vaccine to a child at a neighbourhood of Karachi, Pakistan, Monday, Jan. 8, 2024. (AP)

USD drops

The exchange rate of the US dollar on Tuesday dropped by 0.05 percent to KD 0.307, while the Euro rose by 0.11 percent to KD 0.336, compared to Monday's rates.

The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) said in its daily bulletin that the sterling pound rose by 0.29 percent to KD 0.391, the Swiss franc rose by 0.44 percent to KD 0.362 and the Japanese Yen rose by 0.51 to KD 0.002.

Currency exchange rates declared by the CBK reflect average rates and not actual trades. (KUNA)

Kuwait oil up

The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 15 cents to USD 79.95 per barrel on Monday as opposed to USD 79.80 pb last Friday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Tuesday.

The prices of the Brent crude and the West Texas Intermediate both fell by USD 2.64 and USD 3.04 respectively, settling each at USD 76.12 pb and USD 70.77 pb. (KUNA)

JetBlue to have first woman CEO to lead US carrier

JetBlue said Monday that CEO Robin Hayes will step down next month and be replaced by the airline's president, Joanna Geraghty, who will be the first woman to lead a major U.S. carrier.

Geraghty, 51, joined JetBlue in 2005 and has taken on an increasingly prominent role at the New York-based airline in recent years, including becoming president and chief operating officer in 2018.

Geraghty said she was honored to get the new job, and said she was looking forward "as we execute on our strategic initia-

tives, return to profitable growth, and generate sustainable value" for shareholders. Hayes, 57, said he will retire for health reasons.

"The extraordinary challenges and pressure of this job have taken their toll, and on the advice of my doctor and after talking to my wife, it's time I put more focus on my health and well-being," Hayes said in a statement.

The change at the top will occur on Feb. 12. It comes as JetBlue waits for a federal judge in Boston to decide wheth-

er it can purchase Spirit Airlines for \$3.8 billion in a bid to grow quickly into a challenger to the biggest U.S. airlines. The Justice Department sued to block the deal, and a trial was held last fall.

Hayes, 57, is a former British Airways executive who joined JetBlue in 2008 and became CEO in 2015. He pushed the airline to start transatlantic flights and create a partnership in the Northeast with American Airlines. The deal with American was disbanded, however, after the Justice Department successfully sued to kill it. (AP)

Market Movements

09-01-2024

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
UAE - DFM	+0.69	4,117.72	PAKISTAN - KSE 100	-0.26	64,060.80
JAPAN - Nikkei	+1.16	33,763.18	SAUDI - Tadawul	-0.44	12,197.61
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	+0.14	6,618.52			
EGYPT - EGX 30	+0.97	25,589.99			

Business

Initiative aimed at unmasking shell company owners

Yellen says 100,000 firms have joined a business database

Salaries & subsidies constitute 80 pct of Kuwait's expenditure

Private sector continues to attract non-Kuwaiti labor

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: A report from the General Secretariat of Planning has revealed that Kuwait allocates approximately 80% of its total annual expenditures in the state's general budget to salaries and subsidies.

The report highlighted a productivity challenge due to a weakness in worker productivity and emphasizes the ongoing reforms to modify the demographic composition in the country.

The private sector continues to attract non-Kuwaiti labor, while the public sector remains attractive to Kuwaiti workers in the medium term. The report warns of potential deficits in public spending on salaries and subsidies if global oil prices decline in the medium and long term.

The development plan for Kuwait includes initiatives to strengthen the private sector, enhance citizens' capabilities, and create an active local labor market. Cooperation from all segments of society is deemed essential to implement these initiatives and empower the private sector to play a more effective role in the Kuwaiti economy.

In terms of the Kuwaiti economy, the report notes that Kuwait has been spending 80% of its total expenditures on salaries and subsidies.

Public spending has seen fluctuations in recent years, with a decline in 2020 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite efforts to rationalize expenditures, public spending has gradually increased in 2021 and 2022 with the economic recovery.

Unemployment rates in Kuwait, especially among citizens, have been generally low due to the state guaranteeing jobs, particularly in the public sector. The report indicates fluctuations in unemployment rates and highlights the unique context of Kuwait compared to developed countries.

Association takes proactive step

KBA's initiative to drive sustainable finance

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: Dr. Hamad Al-Hasawi, Secretary General at Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) said that with growing global concerns over climate change, social inequality, and corporate governance, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) considerations have become essential for financial institutions worldwide. Recognizing the significance of sustainable finance, the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) has taken a proactive step by establishing a new committee dedicated to promoting ESG practices in the country's banking sector. This move showcases the KBA's commitment to responsible and sustainable banking practices in Kuwait.

It is worth noting that the financial institutions' adoption of ESG practices not only aligns with global standards; it also fosters trust among stakeholders, attracts responsible investors, and enhances a bank's overall reputation. Moreover, incorporating ESG considerations into banking operations contributes to mitigating risks, fostering long-term sustainability, and creating value for society and shareholders, and the national economy.

Al-Hasawi commented that recognizing the significant impact financial institutions, especially banks, can have on the environment and society, the establishment of the new committee was essential to ensure adherence to sustainability standards in banks' strategies and daily operations, with the aim of positively impacting society and driving sustainable growth in line with global best practices.

The committee's core objectives

Productivity rates have experienced fluctuations, indicating weaknesses. The report attributes this to the significant volume of foreign remittances from non-Kuwaiti workers.

The population structure has



Dr Hamad

encompass several key areas:

- Awareness and Education:** The committee will focus on raising awareness about ESG principles among member banks, bankers, and stakeholders. This will ensure well-informed banking sector about sustainable finance practices and their importance.
- Framework Development:** The committee will work towards establishing a comprehensive framework for ESG practices, aligned with international standards and tailored to the specific needs of Kuwait's banking industry. This framework will serve as a guideline for banks to assess their current practices and integrate ESG considerations within their policies and strategies.
- Reporting and Disclosure:** Transparency is vital in promoting sustainable finance practices. The committee will develop guidelines and reporting frameworks to facilitate accurate and standardized ESG reporting among member banks. Such reporting will enable stakeholders to evaluate banks' ESG performance and make informed decisions about their investment choices.

undergone changes, with a decrease in the percentage of foreigners and an increase in the percentage of citizens.

Government reforms, including the introduction of the biometric fin-

4. Collaboration and Partnership: The committee will seek to collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including regulatory bodies, think tanks, and industry experts, to leverage their expertise and promote sustainable practices. This partnership approach will contribute to the growth and development of a responsible banking culture in Kuwait, while fostering innovation and sharing best practices.

The Road Ahead
Al-Hasawi stressed that the integration of ESG principles within the banking sector while fostering collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and awareness, paves the way to a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient financial system that contributes positively to the country's economic growth.

While the journey towards sustainable finance may pose certain challenges, the KBA's proactive approach ensures that Kuwait's banking industry remains at the forefront of global best practices.

Al-Hasawi concluded that as global concerns around sustainability intensify, the establishment of a dedicated ESG committee marks a pivotal step in integrating sustainable finance practices within Kuwait's banking sector. Through education, framework development, reporting, and collaboration, the committee will drive responsible banking practices, benefitting both the industry and the nation. The committee's strategic initiatives will undoubtedly contribute to enhancing the sector's overall reputation, attracting responsible investors, and fostering long-term sustainability in Kuwait's financial landscape.

gerprint system and smart worker ID, have contributed to addressing demographic imbalances. The report underscores the importance of ongoing government efforts to reform and enhance demographic composition.

VIENNA, Va., Jan 9, (AP): Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen announced that 100,000 businesses have joined a new database that collects "beneficial ownership" information on firms as part of a new government effort to unmask shell company owners.

Yellen said in remarks Monday that the new Treasury database that is collecting beneficial ownership information sends the message that "the United States is not a haven for dirty money."

Yellen visited Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network - known as FinCEN - in Vienna, Virginia to discuss the launch of the database with the new year. She also spoke about upcoming real estate rules meant to increase transparency about the people and companies buying up property in the U.S.

The Virginia visit is meant to showcase the Biden administration's intent to increase corporate transparency and prevent the misuse of shell companies.

"Around the world, lack of transparency, specifically due to opaque corporate structures, makes it easier to conceal illicit activity," Yellen said during her visit to FinCEN headquarters. "Information on beneficial ownership will support our law enforcement colleagues in making arrests, prosecuting offenders, and seizing ill-gotten assets."

In 2021, the bipartisan Corporate Transparency Act was signed into law, giving Treasury the authority to write new rules on beneficial ownership. And as of Jan. 1, most U.S. firms must report identifying information about who directly or indirectly owns or controls them.

The rule requires most American businesses with fewer than 20 employees - roughly 32.6 million companies - to register with the government.

In November 2022, the National Small Business Association sued Treasury over the database and argued that the new reporting rule violates the U.S. Constitution, saying it is unduly burdensome on small firms, violates privacy and free speech protections and infringes on states' powers to govern businesses.

A judge is expected to decide on the matter imminently.

Along with the business database,



U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen talks with reporters during a visit to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) in Va., Monday, Jan. 8, 2024. Yellen announced that 100,000 businesses have joined a new database that collects 'beneficial ownership' information on firms as part of a new government effort to unmask shell company owners. (AP)

Yellen said Treasury is considering additional steps to address risks associated with commercial real estate.

Real estate is a commonly used vehicle for money laundering. Yellen said in March 2023 that illicit actors laundered at least \$2.3 billion through U.S. real estate between 2015 and 2020.

A 2022 Congressional Research Service report suggested that Congress could consider how to balance money-laundering risks in the real estate sector against differing views on oversight.

"The benefits of increasing corporate transparency through gathering beneficial ownership information - put simply, knowing who owns what - start with protecting our national security," Yellen said. "Corporate transparency can bring economic benefits as well: protecting our financial system, reducing due diligence costs, enabling fair business competition, and increasing tax revenue."

FinCEN's mission is to safeguard the financial system from criminal abuse, money laundering and other illicit activity, according to its website.

Collaboration on sustainable minerals

Ministerial roundtable sets stage for Future Minerals Forum 2024

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Jan. 9, (PRNewswire): The Ministerial Roundtable, a pivotal precursor to the third edition of the Future Minerals Forum, is poised to take the spotlight on 9 January 2024. Led by its Chair, H.E. Bandar Ibrahim AlKhorayef, Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Ministerial Roundtable will serve as a pivotal gathering for global mining and metals stakeholders to engage in vital discussions and foster collaboration on responsible mineral development to meet the needs of the clean energy transition.

First initiated in January 2022, the Ministerial Roundtable was conceived to launch initiatives aimed at enhancing cooperation and coordination in the mineral sector. These initiatives encompass critical areas such as establishing principles for a regional critical minerals framework, developing centers of excellence, defining responsible supply expectations, and creating green metals hubs.

All countries participating in the meeting have one goal - to work to secure the future of mineral supply chains for the global transition to clean energy, and achieve regional economic development in the mining and metals sector. The super region extending from Africa to Western

and Central Asia has promising mining potential and capabilities and is capable of meeting the expected gap in future demand.

Taking place in Saudi Arabia's capital, Riyadh, this esteemed platform will unite ministers and high-level government representatives from over 77 countries, which include G20 countries such as Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, the European Union, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Turkey, Japan, the US, and the United Kingdom. Significant mining countries such as Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ghana Guinea Republic, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Russia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, are also set to join, underscoring the significance of this event for the mineral sector, particularly in the Super Region spanning Africa, Western and Central Asia.

Besides government attendees, the event will also convene representatives from 13 international organizations, 15 non-governmental organizations, and 7 business associations, including the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the World Bank, and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), among others.

Some employers won't likely be happy

New labor rules aim to offer gig workers more security

WASHINGTON, Jan 9, (AP): The Biden administration enacted a new labor rule Tuesday that aims to prevent the misclassification of workers as "independent contractors," a step that could bolster both legal protections and compensation for many in the U.S. workforce.

The Labor Department rule, which the administration proposed 15 months ago, replaces a scrapped Trump-era standard that lowered the bar for classifying employees as contractors. Such workers neither receive federal minimum wage protections nor qualify for employee benefits, such as health coverage and paid sick days.

The changes have long been viewed as especially bad news for

companies like Uber and DoorDash - pioneers of the so-called gig economy, in which companies essentially rely on armies of freelance drivers, delivery people and others to provide services without traditional labor protections. Some gig workers say they prefer things this way, extolling the freedom to set their own hours and schedules. But others complain of exploitation by companies.

Financial markets appeared to shrug off leaked news of the agreement on Monday. Shares of Uber and Lyft, which dropped 10% and 12% respectively when the administration unveiled the proposed rules in October 2022, rose 2.5% and 5.8% on Monday. Shares were down about

1% before the opening bell Tuesday.

One significant change in the new rules, which take effect March 11, involves the way the Labor Department - and federal judges - decide whether workers have been properly classified as independent contractors. In particular, employers will be required to consider whether the jobs performed by such workers are an integral part of the employer's business.

That could affect app-based companies that rely almost entirely on freelance workers. In such cases, that provision could tip the scales toward classifying such people as regular employees rather than contractors.

The new rule directs employers to consider six criteria for determining

whether a worker is an employee or a contractor, without predetermining whether one outweighs the other. The criteria also include the degree of control by the employer, whether the work requires special skills, the degree of permanence of the relationship between worker and employer, and the investment a worker makes, such as car payments.

The rule, however, does not carry the same weight as laws passed by Congress or state legislatures, nor does it specify whether any specific company or industry should reclassify their workers. It basically just offers an interpretation of who should qualify for protections under the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act.

'Heightened global tensions pose risk of even weaker growth'

Global economy will slow for a third straight year in 2024: World Bank

WASHINGTON, Jan 9, (AP): Hobbled by high interest rates, persistent inflation, slumping trade and a diminished China, the global economy will slow for a third consecutive year in 2024.

That is the picture sketched by the World Bank, which forecast Tuesday that the world economy will expand

just 2.4% this year. That would be down from 2.6% growth in 2023, 3% in 2022 and a galloping 6.2% in 2021, which reflected the robust recovery from the pandemic recession of 2020.

Heightened global tensions, arising particularly from Israel's war with Hamas and the conflict in Ukraine, pose the risk of even weaker growth. And

World Bank officials express worry that deeply indebted poor countries cannot afford to make necessary investments to fight climate change and poverty.

"Near-term growth will remain weak, leaving many developing countries - especially the poorest - stuck in a trap: with paralyzing levels of debt

and tenuous access to food for nearly one out of every three people," Indermit Gill, the World Bank's chief economist, said in a statement.

In recent years, the international economy has proved surprisingly resilient in the face of shock after shock: the pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, resurgent global inflation

and the burdensome interest rates that were imposed by central banks to try to bring price increases back under control. The World Bank now says the global economy grew half a percentage point faster in 2023 than it had predicted back in June and concludes that "the risk of a global recession has receded."

Leading the way in 2023 was the United States, which likely registered 2.5% growth last year - 1.4 percentage points faster than the World Bank had expected in mid-year. The World Bank, a 189-country anti-poverty agency, expects U.S. growth to decelerate to 1.6% this year as higher interest rates weaken borrowing and spending.

From AI marvels to smart homes

CES unveils futuristic tech delights

LAS VEGAS, Jan 9, (AP): CES 2024 kicks off in Las Vegas this week. The multi-day trade event put on by the Consumer Technology Association is set to feature swaths of the latest advances and gadgets across personal tech, transportation, health care, sustainability and more – with burgeoning uses of artificial intelligence almost everywhere you look.

The Associated Press will be keeping a running report of everything we find interesting from the floor of CES, from the most interesting developments in vehicle tech, to wearables designed to improve accessibility to the newest smart home gadgets.

It can be tricky to keep track of your furry friends in and out of the house – but a new pet door might make it a little easier.

Tech startup Pawport has unveiled a motorized pet door that will let your pet come and go as they please – while keeping other critters out. An accompanying collar tag that will open the door when your pet is near. But there's also customizable guardrails.

The product, which can slide directly onto existing pet door frames, can be temporarily locked for specific pets or set to "curfews" using the Pawport app or with remote-control through compatible virtual assistants like Amazon's Alexa and Google Assistant.

Pawport's pet door and app are currently available for preorder and are set to make their way into homes during the second quarter of 2024.

It's 2024, of course your face can unlock your phone. And your front door is next.

Lockly, a tech company that specializes in smart locks, is showcasing a new lock with facial recognition technology that allows consumers to open doors without any keys. The new smart lock, dubbed "Visage," is set to hit the market this summer. In addition to facial recognition, this lock will feature a biometric fingerprint sensor and secure digital keypad for alternative ways of entry – similar to past Lockly products. Visage is also compatible with Apple HomeKey and Apple Home.

Have you ever wondered what it's like to be a twin? Rex Wong, CEO of Hollo AI, says his company has created "AI personalization technology" that can create your digital twin in mere minutes after uploading a selfie and voice memos in a phone app expected to launch later this month.

Wong said he wanted to create a technology that could help digital creators and celebrities connect with their fans in a new way.

Standing next to a television screen projecting her AI clone, Los Angeles-based content creator McKenzie Brooke told AP that her digital twin will allow her to interact 24 hours a day with her followers across various social media platforms – and make money off of it.

"It's not a 9-to-5 job. It's a 24-hour job. There's no break," she said, noting that she posts more than 100 times a day just on Snapchat, a photo-sharing social media platform. "Now I have my AI twin who is able to talk to my audience, but it talks the way I would talk."

Sony Honda Mobility returned to the CES this year with some updates to its Afeela EV. While the car itself may not be any closer to moving out from being a concept, Sony had some fun with it: they drove it onto the stage with a PlayStation controller.

President of Sony Honda Mobility Izumi Kawanishi was quick to point out that Afeela owners likely won't be driving cars using controllers in the future.

Hyundai on Monday spotlighted its future plans for utilizing hydrogen energy. Beyond hydrogen-powered fuel cell vehicles, the South Korean automaker pointed to the possibilities of moving further into move further into energy production, storage and transportation – as Hyundai works towards contributing to "the establishment of a hydrogen society." Company leaders say this sets them apart from other automakers.

"We are introducing a way to turn organic waste and even plastic into clean hydrogen. This is unique," José Muñoz, president and global Chief Operating Officer of Hyundai Motor Company, said in a Monday press conference at CES 2024.

Hyundai also shared plans to further define vehicles based off of their software offerings and new AI technology. With so-called "software defined vehicles," that could include opportunities for consumers to pay for features on demand – such as advanced driver assistance or autonomous driving – down the road. Hyundai also aims to integrate its own large language model into its navigation system.

Samsung has announced that they are collaborating with Hyundai to develop "home-to-car" and "car-to-home" services to all Kia and Hyundai vehicles.

What that means is that people will be able to use Samsung's SmartThings service to set your car's cabin temperature or open its windows, and when you're in your car, you'll be able to control your home's lights and interact with any of your connected smart devices. Samsung also announced a team-up with Microsoft to bring more Copilot AI functions to their flagship Galaxy smartphones.

Busy families with dogs may want to be on the lookout for a new



A person takes a picture of a Wehead interactive AI interface at the Wehead booth at Pepcom ahead of the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, in Las Vegas. The device allows for human to AI interaction. (AP)



The Lockly Visage facial recognition smart lock is on display at the Lockly booth ahead of the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, in Las Vegas. (AP)



A person tries out the Gran Turismo 7 driving simulator at the Sony booth ahead of the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, in Las Vegas. (AP)



The Pawport pet door is on display at the Pawport booth at Pepcom ahead of the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, in Las Vegas. The pet door utilizes a tag attached to a pet's collar to signal the door to open. (AP)



A person photographs a display of imaging and sensing technology for cars at the Sony Booth ahead of the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, in Las Vegas. (AP)



Sean Robinson, host of Lumix Live at Panasonic, speaks to announce the new Lumix S100 F2.8 macro lens during a Panasonic news conference before the start of the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, in Las Vegas. (AP)



A Sparklin SPARK 1 socket is seen during CES Unveiled before the start of the CES tech show Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024, in Las Vegas. The socket is a smart charging outlet for electric and hybrid vehicles. (AP)



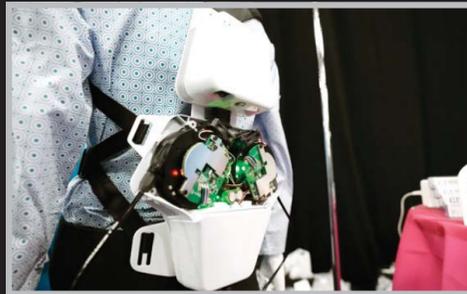
The newly unveiled Panasonic Z95A and Z93A OLED TVs are seen during a Panasonic news conference before the start of the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, in Las Vegas. (AP)



Matt Fischer participates in a demonstration video of FaceHeart during CES Unveiled before the start of the CES tech show Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024, in Las Vegas. FaceHeart is a health monitoring software that utilizes AI image recognition to measure vital signs through video. (AP)



The Peel & Play educational sensory toy by Solive Ventures is displayed during CES Unveiled before the start of the CES tech show Jan. 7, 2024, in Las Vegas. The toy is designed to help children with self-stimulatory behavior. (AP)



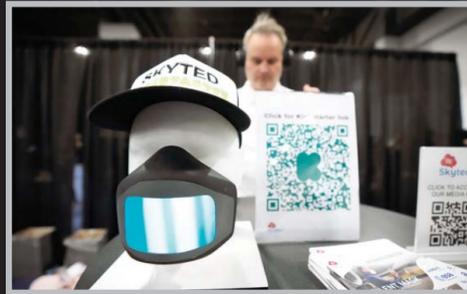
The H-Medi wearable robotic system by Hurotics is seen on a mannequin during CES Unveiled before the start of the CES tech show Jan. 7, 2024, in Las Vegas. H-Medi is designed by Hurotics to help with medical rehabilitation. (AP)



NOWATCH smart watches are displayed during CES Unveiled before the start of the CES tech show Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024, in Las Vegas. NOWATCH smart watches are designed to help users manage stress. (AP)



The charging port and feed dispenser for the ORo robot dog companion is displayed during CES Unveiled before the start of the CES tech show Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024, in Las Vegas. The robot is designed to interact with, feed, and distribute medication for pets automatically. (AP)



The Skyted silent mask is displayed during CES Unveiled before the start of the CES tech show Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024, in Las Vegas. The mask is designed so users can take calls or speak without being overheard. (AP)



The Mirokai robot by Enchanted Tools is seen during CES Unveiled before the start of the CES tech show Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024, in Las Vegas. The robot is designed for medical environments to carry and move equipment and medications. (AP)



The Holotch hologram streaming system is seen during CES Unveiled before the start of the CES tech show Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024, in Las Vegas. The system is an augmented reality device that creates holograms for video communication. (AP)



Izumi Kawanishi, president and COO of Sony Honda Mobility Inc., holds up a PlayStation controller before using it to drive an Afeela EV onto the stage during a Sony press conference ahead of the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, in Las Vegas. (AP)



Gad Baruch Hinkis, of PatchXR, demonstrates the PatchWorld program during CES Unveiled before the start of the CES tech show, Jan. 7, 2024, in Las Vegas. PatchWorld is an augmented reality gaming platform that allows users to create virtual building blocks for music. (AP)

AI-powered robot that promises to play with, feed and even give medicine to your furry best friend.

Consumer robotics firm Ogmen was at CES 2024 to show its new ORo pet companion, an autonomous robot designed to assist with pet care by feeding, providing medicine and even playing with your dog using a ball launcher built into its chest.

Consumer electronics giants LG and

Samsung have unveiled transparent TVs at the show, with LG having just announced its OLED-powered display will go on sale later this year.

Almost invisible when turned off, LG's 77-inch transparent OLED screen can switch between transparent mode and a more traditional black background for regular TV mode.

"The unique thing about OLED is it's an organic material that we can print on any type of surface," explains David

Park from LG's Home Entertainment Division.

"And so what we've done is printed it on a transparent piece of glass, and then to get the OLED picture quality, that's where we have that contrast film that goes up and down."

Content is delivered wirelessly to the display using LG's Zero Connect Box which sends 4K images and sound.

Why would you need a transparent TV?

When not being watched as a traditional TV, the OLED T can be used as a digital canvas for showcasing artworks, for instance.

Samsung's transparent MICRO LED-powered display showed off the technology as a concept.

Food companies advertise all over the grocery store with eye-catching packaging and displays. Now, Instacart hopes they'll start advertising right on

your cart. This week at CES, the San Francisco-based grocery delivery and technology company is unveiling a smart cart that shows video ads on a screen near the handle. General Mills, Del Monte Foods, and Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream are among the companies who will advertise on the carts during an upcoming pilot at West Coast stores owned by Good Food Holdings. (AP)

INNOVATION

Business Plus



'Critical' fuel leak dims prospects

US firm's lunar ambitions face impending failure



A United Launch Alliance Vulcan rocket lifts off from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station Monday, Jan. 8, 2024. This is the inaugural launch of the rocket, carrying Astrobotic's lunar lander. Inset: In this image released by Astrobotic Technology, an image from a mounted camera shows a disturbed section of insulation on the Peregrine lander, while on its way to land on the moon, Monday, Jan. 8, 2024. Astrobotic said the moon landing is in jeopardy because of a fuel leak that developed hours after the spacecraft's launch. (AP)

Each success and setback are opportunities to learn and grow

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., Jan 9, (AP): The first U.S. moon landing attempt in more than 50 years appeared to be doomed after a private company's spacecraft developed a "critical" fuel leak just hours after Monday's launch. Pittsburgh-based Astrobotic Technology managed to orient its lander toward the sun so the solar panel could collect sunlight and charge its battery, as a special team assessed the status of what was termed "a failure in the propulsion system." It soon became apparent, however, that there was "a critical loss of fuel," further dimming hope for what had been a planned moon landing on Feb. 23. Late Monday, the company said the leak was continuing and estimated that the lander would start losing solar

power in about 40 hours. The trouble was reported about seven hours after Monday's predawn liftoff from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. United Launch Alliance's Vulcan rocket provided the lift for Astrobotic's lander, named Peregrine, putting it on a long, round-about path to the moon. A propulsion system problem "threatens the ability of the spacecraft to soft land on the moon," the company said. The lander is equipped with engines and thrusters for maneuvering, not only during the cruise to the moon but for lunar descent. Astrobotic released a photo from a lander-mounted camera, which the company said showed a "disturbance" in a section of thermal insulation. That aligns with what is known so far of the problem, the company said.

Astrobotic was aiming to be the first private business to successfully land on the moon, something only four countries have accomplished. A second lander from a Houston company is due to launch next month. NASA gave the two companies millions to build and fly their own lunar landers. The space agency wants the privately owned landers to scope out the place before astronauts arrive while delivering tech and science experiments for the space agency, other countries and universities as well as odds and ends for other customers. Astrobotic's contract with NASA for the Peregrine lander was \$108 million and it has more in the pipeline. Before the flight, NASA's Joel Keams, deputy associate administrator for exploration, noted that while

using private companies to make deliveries to the moon will be cheaper and quicker than going the usual government route, there will be added risk. He stressed that the space agency was willing to accept that risk, noting Monday: "Each success and setback are opportunities to learn and grow." The last time the U.S. launched a moon-landing mission was in December 1972. Apollo 17's Gene Cernan and Harrison Schmitt became the 11th and 12th men to walk on the moon, closing out an era that has remained NASA's pinnacle. The space agency's new Artemis program - named after the twin sister of Apollo in Greek mythology - looks to return astronauts to the moon's surface within the next few years. First will be a lunar fly-around with four astronauts, possibly before the

end of the year. Highlighting Monday's moonshot was the long-delayed initial test flight of the Vulcan rocket. The 202-foot (61-meter) rocket is essentially an upgraded version of ULA's hugely successful workhorse Atlas V, which is being phased out along with the company's Delta IV. Jeff Bezos' rocket company, Blue Origin, provided the Vulcan's two main engines. ULA declared success once the lander was free of the rocket's upper stage, nearly an hour into the flight and before the spacecraft's propulsion system malfunctioned and prevented the solar panel from properly pointing toward the sun. Landing on the moon has long been a series of hits and misses. The Soviet Union and the U.S. racked up a string of successful moon landings in the 1960s and 70s, before putting touch-downs on pause. China joined the elite club in 2013 and India in 2023. But last year also saw landers from Russia and a private Japanese company slam into the moon. An Israeli nonprofit crashed in 2019. Next month, SpaceX will provide the lift for a lander from Intuitive Machines. The Houston company's Nova-C lander takes a more direct one-week route to the moon. Besides flying experiments for NASA, Astrobotic drummed up its own freight business, packing the 6-foot-tall (1.9-meter-tall) Peregrine lander. On board the lander: a chip of rock from Mount Everest, toy-size cars from Mexico and ashes and DNA of deceased space enthusiasts, including "Star Trek" creator Gene Roddenberry and science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke. The Navajo Nation recently sought to have the launch delayed because of the human remains, saying it would be a "profound desecration" of a celestial body revered by Native Americans. Astrobotic chief executive John Thornton said the December objections came too late but promised to try to find "a good path forward" with the Navajo for future missions. One of the spaceflight memorial companies that bought room on the lander, Celestis, said in a statement that no single culture or religion owns the moon and should not be able to veto a mission. More remains are on the rocket's upper stage, which was boosted into a perpetual orbit around the sun reaching as far out as Mars. Cargo fares for Peregrine ranged from a few hundred dollars to \$1.2 million per kilogram (2.2 pounds), not nearly enough for Astrobotic to break even. But for the first flight, that's not the point, according to Thornton. "A lot of people's dreams and hopes are riding on this," Thornton said days before the flight.

Visions of what AI might be someday overwhelm current reality

AI researchers look to challenges in 2024

In from three to eight years we will have a machine with the general intelligence of an average human being

By Anjana Susarla, Michigan State University; Casey Fiesler, University of Colorado Boulder, and Kentaro Toyama, University of Michigan. The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. 2023 was an inflection point in the evolution of artificial intelligence and its role in society. The year saw the emergence of generative AI, which moved the technology from the shadows to center stage in the public imagination. It also saw boardroom drama in an AI startup dominate the news cycle for several days. And it saw the Biden administration issue an executive order and the European Union pass a law aimed at regulating AI, moves perhaps best described as attempting to bridle a horse that's already galloping along. We've assembled a panel of AI scholars to look ahead to 2024 and describe the issues AI developers, regulators and everyday people are likely to face, and to give their hopes and recommendations. Casey Fiesler, Associate Professor of Information Science, University of Colorado Boulder. 2023 was the year of AI hype. Regardless of whether the narrative

was that AI was going to save the world or destroy it, it often felt as if visions of what AI might be someday overwhelmed the current reality. And though I think that anticipating future harms is a critical component of overcoming ethical debt in tech, getting too swept up in the hype risks creating a vision of AI that seems more like magic than a technology that can still be shaped by explicit choices. But taking control requires a better understanding of that technology. One of the major AI debates of 2023 was around the role of ChatGPT and similar chatbots in education. This time last year, most relevant headlines focused on how students might use it to cheat and how educators were scrambling to keep them from doing so - in ways that often do more harm than good. However, as the year went on, there was a recognition that a failure to teach students about AI might put them at a disadvantage, and many schools rescinded their bans. I don't think we should be revamping education to put AI at the center of everything, but if students don't learn about how AI works, they won't understand its limitations - and therefore how it is useful and appropriate to use and how it's not. This isn't just true for students. The more people understand how AI works, the more empowered they are to use it and to critique it. So my prediction, or perhaps my hope, for 2024 is that there will be a

huge push to learn. In 1966, Joseph Weizenbaum, the creator of the ELIZA chatbot, wrote that machines are "often sufficient to dazzle even the most experienced observer," but that once their "inner workings are explained in language sufficiently plain to induce understanding, its magic crumbles away." The challenge with generative artificial intelligence is that, in contrast to ELIZA's very basic pattern matching and substitution methodology, it is much more difficult to find language "sufficiently plain" to make the AI magic crumble away. I think it's possible to make this happen. I hope that universities that are rushing to hire more technical AI experts put just as much effort into hiring AI ethicists. I hope that media outlets help cut through the hype. I hope that everyone reflects on their own uses of this technology and its consequences. And I hope that tech companies listen to informed critiques in considering what choices continue to shape the future. Kentaro Toyama, Professor of Community Information, University of Michigan. In 1970, Marvin Minsky, the AI pioneer and neural network skeptic, told Life magazine, "In from three to eight years we will have a machine with the general intelligence of an average human being." With the singularity, the moment artificial intelligence matches and begins to exceed human intelligence - not quite here yet

- it's safe to say that Minsky was off by at least a factor of 10. It's perilous to make predictions about AI. Still, making predictions for a year out doesn't seem quite as risky. What can be expected of AI in 2024? First, the race is on! Progress in AI had been steady since the days of Minsky's prime, but the public release of ChatGPT in 2022 kicked off an all-out competition for profit, glory and global supremacy. Expect more powerful AI, in addition to a flood of new AI applications. The big technical question is how soon and how thoroughly AI engineers can address the current Achilles' heel of deep learning - what might be called generalized hard reasoning, things like deductive logic. Will quick tweaks to existing neural-net algorithms be sufficient, or will it require a fundamentally different approach, as neuroscientist Gary Marcus suggests? Armies of AI scientists are working on this problem, so I expect some headway in 2024. Meanwhile, new AI applications are likely to result in new problems, too. You might soon start hearing about AI chatbots and assistants talking to each other, having entire conversations on your behalf but behind your back. Some of it will go haywire - comically, tragically or both. Deepfakes, AI-generated images and videos that are difficult to detect are likely to run rampant despite nascent regulation, causing more sleazy harm to individuals and democracies everywhere. And

there are likely to be new classes of AI calamities that wouldn't have been possible even five years ago. Speaking of problems, the very people sounding the loudest alarms about AI - like Elon Musk and Sam Altman - can't seem to stop themselves from building ever more powerful AI. I expect them to keep doing more of the same. They're like arsonists calling in the blaze they stoked themselves, begging the authorities to restrain them. And along those lines, what I most hope for 2024 - though it seems slow in coming - is stronger AI regulation, at national and international levels. Anjana Susarla, Professor of Information Systems, Michigan State University. In the year since the unveiling of ChatGPT, the development of generative AI models is continuing at a dizzying pace. In contrast to ChatGPT a year back, which took in textual prompts as inputs and produced textual output, the new class of generative AI models are trained to be multi-modal, meaning the data used to train them comes not only from textual sources such as Wikipedia and Reddit, but also from videos on YouTube, songs on Spotify, and other audio and visual information. With the new generation of multi-modal large language models (LLMs) powering these applications, you can use text inputs to generate not only images and text but also audio and video. (AP)

editor's choice



Globes ratings rebound to 9.4m viewers, up from 2023 telecast

NEW YORK, Jan 9, (AP) - Reviews have been poor for Sunday's 81st Golden Globes, but the telecast pulled in an average of 9.4 million viewers, up about 50% from last year, according to CBS.

The ceremony had the benefit of an NFL lead-in, as well as an especially starry gathering that drew Taylor Swift, Oprah Winfrey, Timothée Chalamet, Kylie Jenner, Leonardo DiCaprio and many more. The night's biggest winner, "Oppenheimer," was also a huge ticket-seller, with nearly \$1 billion in box office.

But the broadcast hosted by comedian Jo Koy, was slammed by critics for a fumbled opening monologue and a rushed pace throughout that struggled to rekindle the "Hollywood's party of the year"-vibe that the Globes have long fostered.

But more viewers tuned in than they have since before the pandemic. Back in 2020, 18.4 million watched the Globes.

The ratings were a marked improvement over last year's Globes. That telecast, hosted by Jerrod Carmichael and aired on a Tuesday, attracted 6.3 million viewers, a new low for the ceremony on NBC. At their peak, the Globes often drew closer to 20 million viewers.

Amid the decline of linear television, all award shows have struggled to reach the numbers they once did. But the Globes have been tested especially due to their own actions. After The Los Angeles Times reported that the HFPA had no Black members, Hollywood boycotted the organization and the 2022 Globes were booted off the air.

They returned in 2023 on a one-year trial with NBC, but the Globes' network home for decades ultimately dropped the show. After shopping the broadcast around, including to streaming platforms, CBS last month signed on to air Sunday's show.

Sunday's broadcast was a crucial test for the revamped Globes. Following the scandals, the awards were acquired by Eldridge Industries and Dick Clark Productions, which Penske Media owns, and turned into a for-profit venture. The Hollywood Foreign Press Association was dissolved and a group of some 300 entertainment journalists from around the world was formed to vote on the awards.

Ceremony

CBS also streamed it to Showtime subscribers on Paramount TV+. CBS didn't provide streaming viewership figures but said it was the second-largest live-streamed CBS special event on Paramount+.

Koy, speaking Monday on ABC's "GMA3," acknowledged that he would "be lying" if he said the criticism "doesn't hurt."

"It's a tough room. And it was a hard job, I'm not going to lie," said Koy, who landed the hosting job two weeks before the ceremony. "Getting that gig, and then having the amount of time that we had to prepare - that was a crash course."

They may not have had lukewarm chardonnay on the tables, as nominee Jennifer Lawrence had predicted. But the 81st Golden Globes

had a bit of everything else: Some silliness, some seriousness, a bit of history, a few good jokes and many bad ones, loads of stars - and one Taylor Swift, who didn't ascend the podium but still made her presence known as perhaps only Swift can.

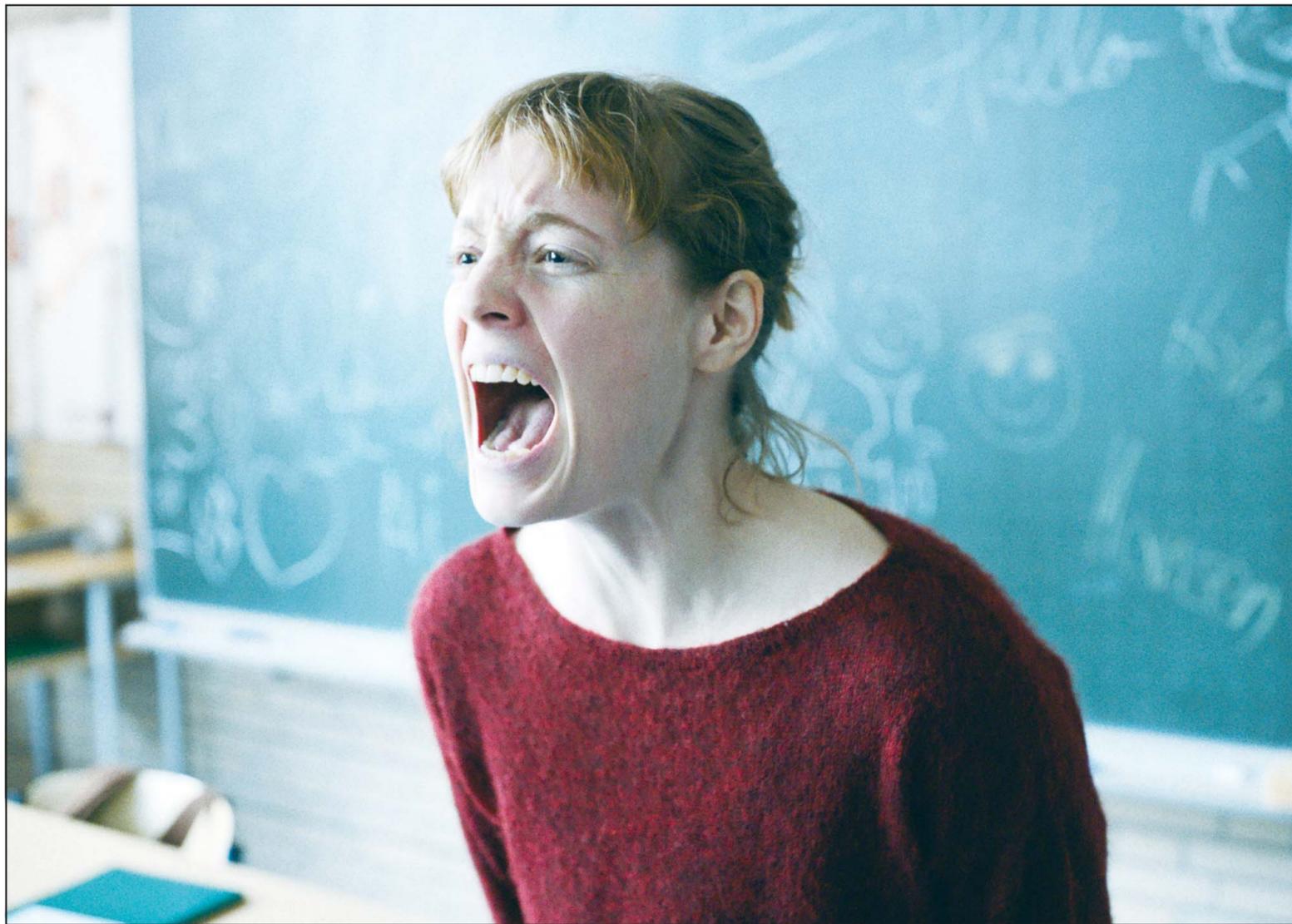
One decisive trend emerged: In the great "Barbenheimer" showdown of awards season 2024, round one went to the "heimer" part. Christopher Nolan's sweeping biopic "Oppenheimer" dominated the evening, among its wins the prize for best drama, best director for Nolan, and best actor (Cillian Murphy) and supporting actor (Robert Downey Jr.). Greta Gerwig's candy-colored "Barbie," meanwhile, lost to upset victor "Poor Things" in the comedy/musical category, but won the new cinematic and box office achievement award, as well as best song for Billie Eilish's wistful "What Was I Made For."

It would be unwise to count "Barbie" out, but it was a disappointing night for her fans, and also for another fearsome force: Swifties. The pop superstar, who spent 2023 smashing all records in sight, lost out on her fifth Globe nomination. But she stunned on the carpet in shimmering Gucci green, and later created a meme-worthy moment when she reacted with a seemingly icy glare to a joke about her by host Jo Koy.

Swift was not alone in her displeasure; at one point the jokes were falling flat enough for Koy to stop and explain that he'd had only 10 days to prepare.

Television

Variety



This image released by Sony Pictures Classics shows Leonie Benesch in a scene from 'The Teachers' Lounge.' (AP)

Film

A cinematic dive into middle school realities

'The Teachers' Lounge' stirs emotions

By Jocelyn Noveck

What happens in the teachers' lounge, anyway? When we were kids, that closed door seemed so tantalizingly forbidding, though it probably only hid some coffee-sipping, light chitchat and paper-grading.

Well, not in the brilliantly taut and absorbing "The Teachers' Lounge," in which that room - and gradually, the whole school around it - hosts an expanding web of uneasy power dynamics, mutual suspicion and misinformation, and that's just for starters. This film also explores cancel culture, institutional racism, privacy rights and even censorship and press freedom.

That's a lot for one middle school. But writer-director İlker Çatak pulls it off, aided by excellent performances all around and two truly superb ones: Leonie Benesch as an idealistic new teacher and a heartbreaking Leo Stettinisch as her troubled student. (The film, Germany's submission to the Academy Awards, has justifiably made the short list for best international feature.)

"The Teachers' Lounge" dives immediately into the controversy that will tear this modern, bustling school apart. Carla Nowak (Benesch) is called to an uncomfortable meeting between school officials and two student representatives of her sixth-grade class. The students are being grilled as to which fellow classmates may have been responsible for a series of thefts - essentially, they're being asked to denounce friends without evidence. Carla is angry at the tactic, but lacks the confidence to speak out.

She's even more appalled by what happens next: The principal and her colleagues come to her classroom, ask the girls to leave and force the boys to surrender their wallets for inspection (why only boys?) Of course, the adults note unconvincingly, the process is entirely voluntary - but if the students have nothing to hide, there's nothing to fear. One boy seems to have a lot of money, but his Turkish immigrant parents, summoned to the school, explain indignantly (in a typically bristling, beautifully modulated scene)

that they'd given him money to buy a video game as a gift. They argue that he's being racially profiled.

Already, back in the teachers' lounge, Carla is clashing with her more aggressive colleagues. And then, in her misguided zeal to identify the real thief and exonerate her kids, she steps right into an ethical morass.

Leaving her wallet in her coat on a chair, and setting her laptop camera to record, she soon has video evidence - just an arm, in a distinctive blouse - of someone stealing from her pocket. It only takes a moment to track down the wearer of that blouse.

Sensitive

Perhaps because Benesch is such an effortlessly empathetic actor, she makes Carla's decision to confront the person she suspects - and then, to hand over the video - feel logical, like something anyone might do. But her action raises issues of privacy rights, and puts her on a collision course with not only the accused school employee but that employee's child, Oskar (Stettinisch), an intelligent and sensitive boy in her class.

At every step, it seems, Carla's earnest efforts to do the right thing - by her students, and by her job - land her into ever hotter water. And then, she must navigate an angry group of parents on parent-teacher night, an experience so harrowing it leaves her heaving on a bathroom floor, blowing into a bag.

Angry parents, suspicious colleagues - can it get worse? Yes, when Carla is interviewed by the student newspaper, an intriguing subplot raising questions of censorship. Carla, rightfully concerned about how she will be portrayed, asks to see the article in advance, and when the students (also rightfully!) defy her, the principal ends up banning distribution of the paper on campus.

"What happens in the teachers' lounge, stays in the teachers' lounge," Carla says in that student newspaper interview, her definition of a "no comment." That is, however, hardly what transpires, as Carla, despite her best intentions, begins to drown in a swamp of

her own making, with seemingly no way out.

All the students have been thoughtfully cast here, and perform with a natural quality rare in movies about kids. As for Stettinisch, he darned near breaks our hearts as he ultimately loses control and threatens his own future.

As for Benesch, from whom the camera rarely departs, she has a luminous presence that carries the film. So skillfully does she draw us in, in fact, that it's easy to forget we hardly know anything about Carla: Is she in a relationship? What is her family like? We never see her home, nor anyone's home, nor even a glimpse of the outside world.

But the outside world certainly finds its way into the school. Çatan and co-writer Johannes Duncker, who in fact attended school together, are making the point that even a middle school is a microcosm of society and all its tensions and ills. Perhaps that is why their film ends without clear answers: In school, as in life, one cannot simply close a door, keep out the bad stuff, and solve everything.

"The Teacher's Lounge," a Sony Pictures Classics release, has been rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association "for some strong language." Running time: 98 minutes. Three and a half stars out of four.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Martin Scorsese's true-crime epic "The Killers of the Flower Moon" begins streaming Friday, Jan. 12, on Apple TV+. If the movie's 3½-hour running time gave you pause to catch it in theaters, you can now watch one of the year's most acclaimed films at your leisure. The film, starring **Leonardo DiCaprio**, **Lily Gladstone** and **Robert De Niro**, adapts **David Grann's** nonfiction chronicle of the Osage murders of the 1920s. Scorsese, 81, tells an expansive and disquieting Western story soaked in blood and oil, with chastening reverberations for American history. In her review, AP National Writer **Jocelyn Noveck** praised the film for "allowing us to watch a master of the craft continue to force himself, unlikely as it seems, to stretch and learn." (AP)

Features

ARABO TIMES

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2024

LOS ANGELES: Lisa Bonet has filed for divorce from Jason Momoa 18 years after the two actors became a couple.

The 56-year-old Bonet, whose legal name is Lilakoi Moon, filed documents to end her marriage to the 44-year-old Momoa in Los Angeles County court on Monday. The filing comes nearly two years after they announced their separation.

The petition cites irreconcilable differences as the reason for the split. The filing says neither person should get financial support and that the two have agreed on how to split their assets. The documents say they should have joint custody of their 16-year-old daughter and 15-year-old son.

Momoa is best known for his roles in the "Aquaman" movies and on "Game of Thrones." Bonet was a star of "The Cosby Show," its spinoff "A Different World," and the films "High Fidelity" and "Enemy of the State."

The two met and started dating in 2005, but did not legally marry until 2017. Their divorce documents gives their separation date as October 2020, more than a year before their announcement. It will be at least six months before a judge declares them divorced.

It was the first marriage for Momoa and the second for Bonet, who was previously married to musician Lenny Kravitz and has another daughter, actor Zoë Kravitz, with him. (AP)

PARIS: Paris immortalized late British music icon David Bowie by naming a street after him in the city's southeast on what would have been his 77th birthday on Monday.

The inauguration of rue David-Bowie was first announced in 2020 by Jérôme Coumet, mayor of the 13th arrondissement. Bowie died of cancer in 2016.

The tribute celebrated Bowie's first Paris performance in 1965 - his first outside the United Kingdom - and his lasting impact on music, fashion and culture. Bowie's influence on music, with hits like "Space Oddity" and "Let's Dance," and on fashion, are now permanently recognized in the Paris city landscape. The inauguration featured a

concert and an exhibit.

The street is roughly between the Jardin des Plantes botanical gardens and the National Library. It is situated between two modern office buildings, including the headquarters of news publications Le Monde and L'Obs, opens onto avenue Pierre-Mendes-France and will connect to a future bridge



Bonet



Momoa

linking the avenue to boulevard de l'Hopital, near Austerlitz train station and Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital. (AP)

NEW YORK: Bill Maher has had a few second thoughts, or at least some variations on the first ones.

Next June, Simon & Schus-

ter will publish "What This Comedian Said Will Shock You," in which the outspoken host of HBO's "Real Time With Bill Maher" revisits some of his on-air commentary. According to the publisher's announcement Friday, Maher "reviewed more than a decade of his editorials, rewriting, reimagining, and updating them,

and adding new material to speak exactly to the moment we're in." Subjects range from free speech and drugs to religion and show business.

"We're not investigative journalists - we don't break stories, we break new ways of looking at stories," Maher said in a statement. (AP)

People & Places

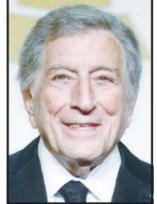
In Memoriam

Year in review

Influential people who died in 2023

Sheldon Harnick, 99. A Tony- and Grammy Award-winning lyricist who with composer Jerry Bock made up the premier musical-theater songwriting duos of the 1950s and 1960s with shows such as "Fiddler on the Roof," "Fiorello!" and "The Apple Tree." June 23.

John Goodenough, 100. He shared the 2019 Nobel Prize in chemistry for his work developing the lithium-ion battery that transformed technology with rechargeable power for devices ranging from cell-phones, computers, and pacemakers to electric cars. June 25.



Alan Arkin, 89. The wry character actor who demonstrated his versatility in everything from farcical comedy to chilling drama, receiving four Academy Award nominations and winning an Oscar in 2007 for "Little Miss Sunshine." June 29.

July

Yan Mingfu, 91. A former top Communist Party figure who acted as an envoy to pro-democracy protesters in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989 and was forced out after the protests were crushed. July 3.

John Beryllson, 70. An American businessman known for his enthusiastic ownership of the English soccer team Millwall. July 4. Car crash.

Coco Lee, 48. A Hong Kong-born singer and songwriter who had a highly successful career in Asia. July 5.

Mikala Jones, 44. A Hawaii surfer known for shooting awe-inspiring photos and videos from the inside of massive, curling waves. July 9. Surfing accident.

André Watts, 77. A pianist whose televised debut with the New York Philharmonic as a 16-year-old in 1963 launched an international career of more than a half-century. July 12.

Jane Birkin, 76. An actor and singer who made France her home and charmed the country with her English grace, natural style and social activism. July 16.

Kevin Mitnick, 59. His pioneering antics tricking employees in the 1980s and 1990s into helping him steal software and services from big phone and tech companies made him the most celebrated US hacker. July 16.

Tony Bennett, 96. The eminent and timeless stylist whose devotion to classic American songs and knack for creating new standards such as "I Left My Heart In San Francisco" graced a decades-long career that brought him admirers from Frank Sinatra to Lady Gaga. July 21.

Hugh "Sonny" Carter Jr., 80. He was an organizer in the "Peanut Brigade" that helped elect his cousin Jimmy to the White House and later enforced the president's frugal ways in the West Wing. July 23.

Sinead O'Connor, 56. The gifted Irish singer-songwriter who became a superstar in her mid-20s as much known for her private struggles and provocative actions as her fierce and expressive music. July 26.

Randy Meisner, 77. A founding member of the Eagles who added high harmonies to such favorites as "Take It Easy" and "The Best of My Love" and stepped out front for the waltz-time ballad "Take It to the Limit." July 26.

Paul Reubens, 70. The actor and comedian whose Pee-wee Herman character - an overgrown child with a tight gray suit and an unforgettable laugh - became a 1980s pop cultural phenomenon. July 30.

Angus Cloud, 25. The actor who starred as the drug dealer Fezco "Fez" O'Neill on the HBO series "Euphoria." July 31.

August

Sheila Oliver, 71. The New Jersey lieutenant governor rose to become one of the state's most prominent Black leaders and passionately advocated for revitalizing cities and against gun violence. Aug. 1.

Mark Margolis, 83. The Emmy-nominated actor who played murderous former drug kingpin Hector Salamanca in "Breaking Bad" and then in the prequel "Better Call Saul." Aug. 3.

William Friedkin, 87. The Oscar winning director who became a top filmmaker in his 30s with the gripping "The French Connection" and the horrifying "The Exorcist" and struggled in the following decades to match his early success. Aug. 7.

Sixto Rodriguez, 81. He lived in obscurity as his music career flamed out early in the U.S. only to find success in South Africa and a stardom of which he was unaware. Aug. 8.

Robbie Robertson, 80. The Band's lead guitarist and songwriter who in such classics as "The Weight" and "Up on Cripple Creek" mined American music and folklore and helped reshape contemporary rock. Aug. 9.

Tom Jones, 95. The lyricist, director and writer of "The Fantasticks," the longest-running musical in history. Aug. 11.

Magoo, 50. The rapper known for his work in the hip-hop duo Timbaland & Magoo and hit song "Up Jumps da Boogie" featuring Aaliyah and Missy Elliott. Aug. 13.

Clarence Avant, 92. The judicious manager, entrepreneur, facilitator and adviser who helped launch or guide the careers of Quincy Jones, Bill Withers and many others and was known as the "Black Godfather" of music and beyond. Aug. 13.

Ada Deer, 88. An esteemed Native American leader from Wisconsin and the first woman to lead the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Aug. 15.

Jerry Moss, 88. A music industry giant who co-founded A&M Records with Herb Alpert and rose from a Los Angeles garage to the heights of success with hits by Alpert, the Police, the Carpenters and hundreds of other performers. Aug. 16.

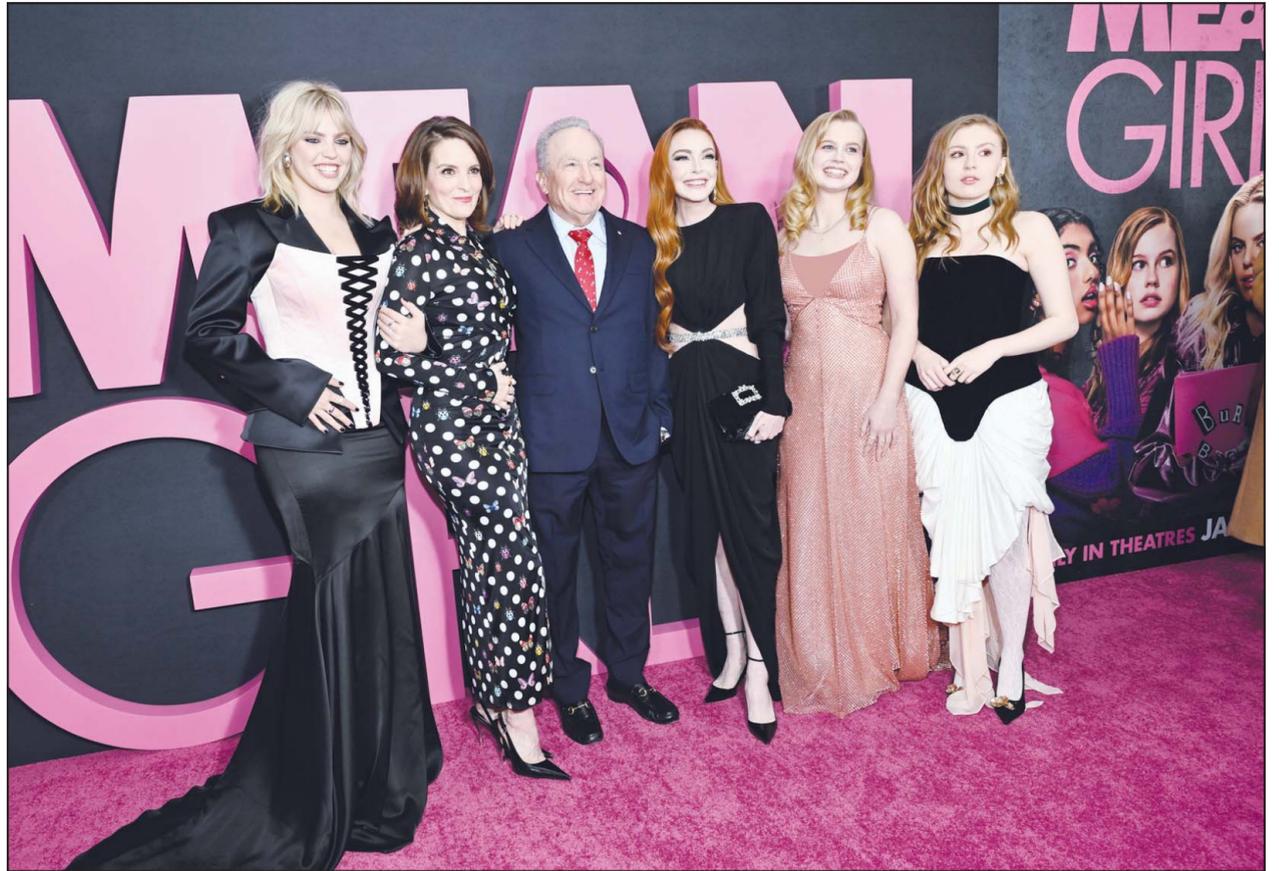
Michael Parkinson, 88. The renowned British broadcaster who interviewed some of the world's most famous celebrities of the 20th century from Muhammad Ali to Miss Piggy. Aug. 16.

Jiri Cerny, 87. A legendary Czech music critic who introduced Western music to generations of listeners behind the Iron Curtain and became one of the voices of the 1989 anti-communist Velvet Revolution. Aug. 17.

James Buckley, 100. The former New York senator was an early agitator for then-President Richard Nixon's resignation and winner of a landmark lawsuit challenging campaign spending limits. Aug. 18.

John Warnock, 82. The Silicon Valley entrepreneur and computer scientist who helped invent the PDF and co-founded Adobe Systems. Aug. 19.

To be continued



From left: Renée Rapp, Tina Fey, Lorne Michaels, Lindsay Lohan, Angourie Rice and Bebe Wood attend the world premiere of 'Mean Girls' at AMC Lincoln Square on Monday, Jan. 8, in New York. (AP)



Coco Jones poses for a portrait on Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023, in Los Angeles. (AP)

Variety

LAS VEGAS: Attorneys for a former Los Angeles-area gang leader charged with orchestrating the killing of hip-hop music legend **Tupac Shakur** in 1996 say prosecutors are wrong - that their client is facing danger, not witnesses - and he should be released from jail to house arrest ahead of his trial in June.

In a Monday court filing ahead of a bail hearing Tuesday, **Duane "Keffe D" Davis'** court-appointed attorneys accuse prosecutors of misinterpreting a jail telephone recording and a list of names provided to Davis' family members, and misreporting to the judge that Davis poses a threat to the public if he is released.

Davis "never threatened anyone during the phone calls," deputy special public defenders **Robert Arroyo** and **Charles Cano** said in their seven-page filing. "Furthermore, (prosecutors') interpretation of the use of 'green light' is flat-out wrong."

The "green light" reference is from a recording of an October jail call that prosecutors **Marc DiGiacomo** and **Binu Palal** provided last month to **Clark County** District Court Judge **Carli Kierny**.

"Duane's son was saying he heard there was a greenlight on Duane's family," the attorneys wrote, using Davis' first name. "Duane obviously did not know what his son was talking about."

Arroyo and Cano declined Monday to comment about the filing. The court filing made no reference to Davis instructing anyone to harm someone, or to anyone associated with the case being physically harmed. But the prosecutors added that, "In (Davis') world, a 'green light' is an authorization to kill."

Davis' lawyers on Monday also used Davis' first name asking Kierny to consider what they called "the obvious question."

"If Duane is so dangerous, and the evidence so overwhelming," they wrote, "why did (police and prosecutors) wait 15 years to arrest Duane for the murder of Tupac Shakur?"

Prosecutors point to Davis' own words since 2008 - in police interviews, in a 2019 tell-all memoir and in the media - that they say provides strong evidence that he orchestrated the September 1996 shooting.

Davis' attorneys argue that his descriptions of Shakur's killing were "done for entertainment purposes and to make money."

Davis, originally from Compton, **California**, is the only person still alive who was in the car from which shots were fired in the drive-by shooting that also wounded rap music mogul **Marion "Suge" Knight**. Knight is now serving 28 years in a California prison for an unrelated fatal shooting in the Los Angeles area in 2015. (AP)

NEW YORK: Sotheby's defended itself at a trial Monday against accusations that it helped defraud a Russian oligarch out of tens of millions of dollars, saying it knew nothing of wrongdoing by an art buyer who advised the billionaire on buying works by famed artists like **Amedeo Modigliani** and **Leonardo da Vinci**. Sotheby's attorney **Sara Shudofsky**

Music

From Disney to Grammy nods and Bel-Air stardom

Coco Jones aims for EGOT glory

LOS ANGELES, Jan 9. (AP) - Coco Jones was so obsessed with fine tuning her skills as a singer that she tried to mimic Beyoncé's Olympic-style training of singing while running on a treadmill.

Jones didn't own a treadmill, but her father and former NFL player, Mike Jones, had an elliptical machine she often used as an alternative. Since her Disney child-star days, the singer-actor has been determined to apply the same work ethic as the best in hopes of breaking through on her terms.

For Jones, that time is now following several pivotal moments: After she starred on the 2012 Disney Channel musical "Let It Shine," she struggled to maintain stardom and fell out of the spotlight until she created a new buzz through viral TikTok videos before unveiling her reshaped image as Hilary Banks on Peacock's "Bel-Air."

Jones went on to earn five Grammy nominations through her well-received EP "What I Didn't Tell You." It was anchored by her hit ballad "ICU," which garnered a remix from Justin Timberlake. She's up for best new artist, R&B album, traditional R&B performance, R&B song and R&B performance.

In a recent interview, Jones spoke with The Associated Press about pushing through her rough patches, EGOT status possibly being on her vision board and her thoughts after Taraji P. Henson's passionate words on Hollywood's pay disparity.

AP: When you recorded your EP, did you foresee Grammy nominations?

Jones: I definitely didn't think "How far could this go?" I was only focused on what was in front of me, who I wanted to present myself to as in front of the world. I hadn't released music with a label since I was 16 years old, so my expectations were all over the place. I don't even think I really understood how it works as an adult to release a project and what it means to have a rollout. I was a kid when all of those conversations were being had way above me. My expectation was within myself and my leaving everything in this booth every time. I'm giving the world the most fearless version of myself. ... My expectations have been blown out of the water.

AP: How much did your fame through "Bel-Air" play a role in re-establishing yourself?

Jones: It really opened a lot of doors, because before my music came out, "Bel-Air" came out. It's always so helpful for people to see a rebranded version of you - especially if you're trying to change, if

you're trying to give something new. A very powerful way to be projected to the world is through TV and film as well as music. It all helped with shifting the narrative that I'm not that little kid from the Disney Channel anymore. I can be this upper echelon Bel-Air girl, and I can be an artist, and you're going to respect both of them because they're both going to hit hard in different way.

AP: You went through a phase after "Let It Shine" when you put out music with little fanfare. How did you maintain your confidence?

Jones: Finding confidence in the in-between stage was only through God. I had placed my value in this industry. If I had a great show, great movie, great song, anything worth talking about, then yeah, you should be confident. Look at what you've done. Look at what you're presenting to the world. When I didn't have those things, I didn't really know what to say or what to sing about. I didn't really fit into the roles that were being sent to me. I didn't know when my next perfect match would be an opportunity that I didn't feel like was forced or I could do better. I didn't have much to brag about. I had to find a different version of value that really comes from my passion and my tenacity.

AP: Who helped you through those tough times?

Jones: I leaned on my mama the most during the rough patches of my career. My mom was my first everything. She was my first vocal coach, first stylist, hair and makeup, glam manager, tour manager, first co-writer, first co-producer. She was everything. When there was nobody to believe in me, she helped me prove myself and continue to push through those hurdles.

AP: Which is your biggest passion: Singing or acting?

Jones: If we're talking in general, singing or acting. Yes, singing for sure. It's not about playing a role. It's genuinely therapeutic to just peel back all the layers and say the rawest, realest version of your truth. I think that's the most comfortable second nature. But acting. There are films and shows that just eat the content and the quality. ... You get to relive a movie that just holds you tight. That is also really dope. I love them for different reasons. I love acting because it's a challenge, and you kind of get to separate you personally from the job. Sometimes it's a nice little break. I can't wait to play a role where I get to be like crazy because I feel like I'm very composed. I'm a little goofy, but I can get crazy. One day I'll get to do that through acting.

AP: You've dealt with colorism in your career. What were your thoughts after hearing about Taraji P. Henson shedding tears regarding the gender and racial pay gap in Hollywood for Black women?

Jones: Everything can and will get better. But it doesn't get better if we don't do anything, if we don't say anything, if we aren't transparent and honest. I think hiding and pretending that everything's OK will perpetuate stagnant energy. But being honest and being vocal about things that you want to change, can always make change and always inspire. It just makes your platform worth any meaning. That's why I try to speak up so much on colorism and on being patient with your journey because we're Black women, and it does take a different path with us to get where we rightfully deserve to be.

I'm so grateful for women like Viola (Davis) and Kerry (Washington) and Angela Bassett and Taraji. They all have paved a way for me, and it'll just get better with time because they'll continue to kill it at every opportunity and speak up and not be afraid to push back and be honest and demand more. They'll teach us the same. Then we'll teach the next generation. And one day, maybe when my kids are my age, it won't be such a surprise that we are all the same. You see Black women as much as you see white women and you see any color of women. It's just all normal because that's the real world.

We are all these different stories that deserve to be represented in music and in TV and film. With time, it'll get there. We just have to keep pressing the narrative.

AP: When should we expect your debut studio album?

Jones: If it was up to me, I would want my debut album to come out in March or April because I would want to go on tour when it's warmer. It was so cold this tour. We need to warm it up, but that's just me.

AP: You have a photo of Beyoncé holding several Grammys, but you replaced her face with yours. Have you created a similar vision board for an EGOT?

Jones: I did tell myself that (this new) year I need to take my goals up higher. I pretty much did everything that I wanted to do so far. I have to believe bigger. I have to expect more from myself. To be an EGOT is a huge, huge, huge flex. I've done theater before. I could do it again. I don't see why not. Maybe it'll be on the vision board, maybe it'll be added. I definitely want to go bigger and dream bigger.

told a jury in an opening statement in Manhattan federal court that billionaire **Dmitry Rybolovlev** was "trying to make an innocent party pay for what somebody else did to him."

Shudofsky said the fertilizer magnate, a savvy businessman who has run highly successful businesses, had "good reason to be angry with himself" after spending hundreds of millions of dollars to buy art masterpieces without taking "the



Shakur



Rybolovlev

most basic steps" to protect himself from a broker who cheated him. "Sotheby's didn't know anything about those lies," the attorney said. "Sotheby's had no knowledge of and didn't participate in any misconduct."

She spoke after Rybolovlev's lawyer, **Daniel Kornstein**, insisted that a London-based Sotheby's executive was part of a group of executives who were in on an elaborate fraud. (AP)

The Conversation

Impact of disease goes beyond physical pain

Millions of women grapple with endometriosis in silence

By Kristina S. Brown

Adler University

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

Endometriosis causes physical, sexual and emotional pain. About 190 million people around the globe have endometriosis, including one in 10 American women, but there has historically been a deafening silence about the disease and the pervasive impact it can have on a person's life.

While endometriosis is a chronic gynecological illness that can affect anyone with a uterus it often goes undiagnosed because its symptoms can be attributed to other physical or psychological concerns. Patients presenting with this pain are often told it is "all in your head."

However, endometriosis is becoming a more visible illness, thanks in part to celebrities such as Lena Dunham, Chrissy Teigen, Amy Schumer, Whoopi Goldberg and others who have begun sharing their stories publicly. After going undiagnosed for 23 years, Padma Lakshmi, a popular cookbook author, actress and host of the TV show "Top Chef," founded EndoFund, previously Endometriosis Foundation of America, in 2009 so that others do not have to go through what she did.

I am a couple and family therapy professor, clinician and researcher. My own endometriosis diagnosis at the age of 19 has inspired my work exploring how this illness affects others beyond the physical symptoms.

Experiences

To better understand the impact of endometriosis on relationships, I interviewed 10 couples about their experiences of diagnosis, treatment and living with this disease. Through their stories of how endometriosis-related pain can affect every aspect of daily life, including their intimate relationships, I provide some specific recommendations. The quotes I have included in this article are from my doctoral dissertation research.

When a person has endometriosis, the endometrial cells that line their uterus "implant" in places outside the uterus, such as the ovaries, fallopian tubes and the lining of the abdomen - called the peritoneum. At the end of each menstrual cycle, the uterus sheds its lining, which exits the body via the cervix and vagina. The "misplanted" endometrial cells also shed, but they have no place to go - resulting in internal bleeding, inflammation and pain.

An endometriosis diagnosis is described in stages related to the visual presence of the disease, from minimal, or Stage 1, to severe, or Stage 4. However, there is no connection between the stage and the experience of pain.

One symptom of endometriosis is intense pain during the menstrual cycle. Another is pain with sex. Because pain with menses can be attributed to "normal" pain, a history of sexual abuse or psychiatric reasons such as a dislike of intimacy, some people with endometriosis wait an average of seven years for diagnosis, which can be visually confirmed only through a procedure called laparoscopy.

In addition to these and other types of severe pain, endometriosis can also cause infertility, and patients who want to have children must often undergo medical or surgical in-

terventions to conceive.

Physical pain from endometriosis can be debilitating. Adolescents with endometriosis may struggle to keep up with their classes, friends, homework or extracurricular activities when the pain becomes too severe. They may shift to home-schooling or virtual learning to complete their studies.

The pain can also deeply affect a career trajectory. "I almost lost my job because of time off," one interviewee told me. "In fact, when I had to get my hysterectomy, I walked in to tell my manager and he goes, 'Well, I hope you're not going to tell me that you have to have a hysterectomy and have to be out for six weeks!' And I just broke down in tears."

All of my participants shared experiences where doctors dismissed complaints of sexual pain - called dyspareunia - from endometriosis. This can delay diagnosis and treatment.

Sex and intimacy often become nonexistent, while some couples shared that they have come to accept that pain is part of sex. One woman shared with me: "I don't want to be touched or have my naked body seen because I feel bloated and ugly and I'm in horrible pain!"

Effects

Partners can also be affected emotionally. These experiences of pain, of not being believed by doctors and professionals, of negative effects on education and career and of intimacy destroyed create a heavy emotional burden on individuals and relationships.

When I was diagnosed with endometriosis, it changed the course of my life. My partner and I learned to expand our definition of intimacy and to redistribute household responsibilities when I was incapacitated. As the risk of infertility only increases without intervention, we started conversations about having children earlier than anticipated. My diagnosis also led me to focus my professional identity as a medical family therapist to help others deal with endometriosis and chronic illnesses.

Based on this experience, here are some ways to break this silence:

Learn about endometriosis. It directly helps when one's support systems are educated.

Separate the person from the disease. When the pain you are experiencing from endometriosis is debilitating, help those around you who are also affected to understand that it is because of your endometriosis and it is not personal.

Speak from your own experience, saying, "I ..." rather than "You ..." When we do this, it decreases the other person's defenses and opens up the communication, making space for connection.

My research participants shared their own recommendations with me, especially the importance of believing that their pain is real; accept that what they are sharing is their very real experience, and let them know that they are believed.

Bestselling author and social work researcher Brené Brown has said, "Empathy fuels connection, sympathy drives disconnection." Approaching someone with endometriosis from a position of empathy sends a message that you want to work with them collaboratively.

By practicing these important relationship skills, we can break the silence around endometriosis. (AP)

Art of narrative competence in healing

Why humanities needed in health care

By Irène Mathieu

University of Virginia



People wearing face masks as a precaution wait for a doctor appointment inside a hospital in Barcelona, Spain, Monday, Jan. 8. (AP)

Spike in respiratory illnesses

Spain makes face masks 'mandatory' in hospitals

MADRID, Jan 9, (AP) - Face masks will be mandatory in hospitals and healthcare centers in Spain starting Wednesday due to a surge in respiratory illnesses, the Health Ministry said.

The new leftist minority coalition government is imposing the measure despite opposition from most of Spain's 17 autonomous regions.

"We are talking about putting on a mask when you enter a health center and taking it off when you leave," Health Minister Mónica García told Cadena Ser radio late Monday.

"I don't think it is any drama. It is a basic and simple measure of the first order," she added.

Spain's hospitals have come under immense pressure in recent weeks following a spike in cases of flu, COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses.

García's ministry decided to impose the measure after failing to

reach an agreement with regional health authorities, many of whom argued that mask use should be recommended but not obligatory.

Regional governments are in charge of healthcare although the central government can intervene if it deems it necessary.

Six regions have already introduced the measure and masks have been commonly used on streets and public transport and in health centers in recent months.

Spain declared a formal end to the health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic last July, saying people no longer needed to wear masks in health and care centers and pharmacies. Over the previous two years, Spain had gradually ended mandatory mask wearing, first in public and then on public transport.

The country registered more than 14 million cases and some 120,000 deaths from the coronavirus.

Conflict

I was preoccupied with characters in the books I read - who lived in conflict zones, who as children were working instead of playing, who had struggles I couldn't imagine - and wondered why I had my life and not theirs. What intangible forces shaped their lives in ways different from my own? Now I can directly trace my early infatuation with the written word to my chosen career as a pediatrician and public health researcher.

Narrative medicine is the practice of close reading and reflective writing to build narrative competence. Physician and narrative medicine scholar Rita Charon describes narrative competence as "the ability to acknowledge, absorb, interpret and act on the stories and plights of others."

Narrative competence, then, could inspire a person to pursue a career in health care and possibly make them a better clinician. In fact, studies of narrative medicine programs have demonstrated that they tend to not only increase students' empathy and communication skills but also their tolerance for ambiguity and self-confidence. They also improve their open-mindedness, ethical inquiry and perspective taking.

Books introduced me to the breadth and diversity of human experiences and perspectives, as well as to searing inequalities in life outcomes. I wanted to positively change those outcomes in some way - a desire that led me into the arms of medicine, despite my initial misgivings about it.

Might narrative competence also expand clinicians' understanding of health disparities and urge them to act in ways that lectures full of statistics couldn't?

The burgeoning field of critical health humanities theorizes that stories and art can help clinicians understand the unequal realities of different people's lives and make clinician-patient relationships more therapeutic. It can do this by cultivating clinicians' awareness of the power differences and structural forces that affect their

patients and themselves.

Defining features of this field are collaboration between disciplines - such as between medicine and literature - and a broad understanding of narrative medicine beyond the clinical encounter. Understanding not only human biology but also fields like the history of medicine, queer and disability studies, critical race theory and other forms of knowledge can inform and improve clinical practice.

For example, a clinician might turn to research from the social sciences to learn about the experiences of people with disabilities. This could lead her to make her practice more accessible to her patients - an action that would improve equity in health care for people with disabilities.

Before ever meeting my first patient, I gained an expanded knowledge of the diversity of human experience from the books I read. It made me curious about my patients' stories. And when I felt this curiosity flagging because of stress, exhaustion or burnout, refocusing on the stories seemed to help.

However, medical students are inundated with information about the human body in their training and barely have time to learn about the nonmedical aspects of patient experiences. This negates the fact that disease and health happen in varied and disparate social, cultural and political contexts.

For example, diabetes is a very different illness for a patient experiencing homelessness and racism compared with a wealthy patient who doesn't experience racism. A patient's access to resources and their interactions with health care staff affect their ability to get the care they need and the degree to which their basic needs are being met. Rarely are these nuances discussed in a medical school's endocrinology lecture about diabetes.

I believe that physicians must find ways to practice their humanity - perhaps using the humanities - if they wish to be effective healers. But how might they actually do this?

There are ways to fit in more health humanities in all the busyness and bustle of notoriously grueling medical education. As a senior resident, I often distributed poems to my team, printing and posting them above the computers in our cramped hospital workrooms or attaching them to email updates about patient care. Once, during a rare quiet moment in the pediatric ICU, with permission from my colleagues, I read a couple of poems out loud. I remember watching my colleagues' eyes close and their bodies visibly relax as the words washed over them.

Workshops

Since then, I have shared poems - my own and others' - in talks at my institution and across the country. I've also led other health care providers in creative writing exercises during workshops, lectures and classes. Many institutions host book clubs, story slams, film screenings and other opportunities for medical learners to engage with the humanities.

While poetry can be intimidating to some, many contemporary poems provide approachable emotional experiences.

Pieces like Safiya Sinclair's "Notes on the State of Virginia, II" viscerally illustrate how a place that seems innocuous or even beautiful to some can be haunting and traumatic for others. (AP)

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Crowded field of contenders jostling to dethrone Senegal



Manchester United's Raphael Varane, (right), challenges for the ball with Wigan Athletic's Thelo Aasgaard during the English FA Cup third round soccer match between Wigan Athletic and Manchester United at the DW Stadium, Wigan, England, Monday, Jan. 8, 2024. (AP)

Red Devils ease through to 4th round of FA Cup

Man United blank third-tier Wigan 2-0

WIGAN, England, Jan 9, (AP) - Manchester United avoided becoming the highest-profile casualty in the third round of the FA Cup by easing past third-tier Wigan with a 2-0 win on Monday.

SOCCER

Portugal internationals Diogo Dalot and Bruno Fernandes - with a penalty - scored United's goals at DW Stadium to set up a match in the last 32 against either Newport County or Eastleigh, two more lower-league teams.

United, which reached the FA Cup final last season before losing to Manchester City, had lost four of its previous six games in all competitions - increasing the pressure on manager Erik ten Hag - but produced a dominant display against a team that was last in the Premier League in 2013.

That was the same year Wigan won the FA Cup, beating City in the title match in one of the competition's biggest shocks.

Dalot curled in the opening goal in the 22nd minute, finding the far corner with a precise finish from the edge of the area. Fernandes added the second in the 74th after he had been tripped by Liam Shaw.

There have been no major shocks so far in the third round, though Premier League teams West Ham, Nottingham Forest and Luton were all held to draws at home by lower-division opponents.

Man City will continue its title defense with a trip to Tottenham in the standout match in the draw for the fourth round, which was made just before kickoff of the Wigan-Man United game.

There are three other guaranteed all-Premier League matchups: Chelsea vs. Aston Villa, Fulham vs. Newcastle and Sheffield United vs. Brighton.

Wrexham, the fourth-tier Welsh club owned by Hollywood actors Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney, must travel to second-tier Blackburn.

4th round draw
Watford vs. Southampton
Blackburn vs. Wrexham
Bournemouth vs. Swansea
West Bromwich Albion vs. Brentford or Wolverhampton

West Ham or Bristol City vs. Nottingham Forest or Blackpool
Leicester vs. Hull or Birmingham
Sheffield Wednesday vs. Coventry
Chelsea vs. Aston Villa
Ipswich vs. Maidstone United
Liverpool vs. Norwich or Bristol Rovers

Tottenham vs. Manchester City
Leeds vs. Plymouth Argyle
Crystal Palace or Everton vs. Luton or Bolton
Newport County or Eastleigh vs. Manchester United
Sheffield United vs. Brighton
Fulham vs. Newcastle

Tottenham vs. Manchester City
Leeds vs. Plymouth Argyle
Crystal Palace or Everton vs. Luton or Bolton
Newport County or Eastleigh vs. Manchester United
Sheffield United vs. Brighton
Fulham vs. Newcastle

Coppin State takes down Maryland-ES

BALTIMORE, Jan 9, (AP) - Greg Spurlock had 17 points and 12 rebounds, both career highs, in Coppin State's 58-55 overtime victory against Maryland-Eastern Shore on Monday night. Ryan Archev made a 3-pointer from the right wing just before the regulation buzzer to force overtime tied at 45-all. The Eagles scored the first eight points of overtime on 3-pointers by Spurlock and Camaren Sparrow, and a dunk by Aa'Rayon Munir-Jones.

Toto Fagbenle added 10 points while going 5 of 7 and 0 of 3 from the free throw line, and he also had five rebounds and four blocks for the Eagles (2-14, 1-1 Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference). Archev had 10 points and shot 3 for 13 (2 for 3 from 3-point range) and 2 of 3 from the free throw line. The Eagles broke a seven-game skid.

Dionte Johnson led the Hawks (4-10, 1-1) in scoring, finishing with 13 points and five steals. Chace Davis and Tyler Mack each had 12 points.

BASKETBALL

In Natchitoches, La., Shahada Wells had 18 points in McNeese's 68-59 victory over Northwestern State on Monday night.

Wells also had six rebounds, five assists, and four steals for the Cowboys (13-2, 2-0 Southland Conference). Antavion Collum scored 12 points while going 3 of 7 from the floor, including 2 for 3 from 3-point range, and 4 for 6 from the line. Javohn Garcia shot 3 for 9 (1 for 4 from 3-point range) and 4 of 5 from the free throw line to finish with 11 points. The Cowboys extended their winning streak to eight games.

Cliff Davis finished with 17 points and six rebounds for the Demons (2-13, 0-2). Braelon Bush added 11 points, six rebounds and four assists for Northwestern State. Justin Wilson also had 10 points and seven rebounds.

Morocco looking to build on World Cup momentum

ABIDJAN, Jan 9, (AP) - Even for a tournament that is always unpredictable, there is an unusually large number of title contenders looking to dethrone Sadio Mané's Senegal when the latest edition of the Africa Cup of Nations starts Saturday.

Morocco is looking to build on its unprecedented World Cup success after becoming the first African team to reach the semifinals. Seven-time champion Egypt will hope Mohammed Salah can help the team go one better after losing the 2021 Africa Cup final on penalties. Nigeria has African player of the year Victor Osimhen, Ghana is led by Mohammed Kudus as it goes for its fifth title and Ivory Coast can count on strong home support.

"This competition will be one of the strongest since I started playing in it because all the big countries are here," said Mané, who scored the winning penalty for Senegal in the final win over Egypt in the previous edition.

The 34th edition of the biennial tournament was supposed to be played in June and July last year but was postponed to avoid Ivory Coast's tropical rainy season.



Napoli's Victor Osimhen celebrates after scoring during the Serie A soccer match between Napoli and Sampdoria at the Diego Maradona Stadium in Naples, on June 4, 2023. (AP)

The 31-year-old Mané has since joined Saudi Arabian team Al Nassr.

The "Indomitable Lions" of Cameroon are returning to where they won the first of their five titles in 1984, having finished third two years ago. Besiktas forward Vincent Aboubakar, the top scorer at the 2021 Africa Cup with eight goals, is team captain. Manchester United goalkeeper André Onana is back, having quit the team after being sent home from the World Cup following a dispute with coach Rigobert Song.

Guinea is making its 14th appearance and will be relying on Stuttgart forward Serhou Guirassy for goals after he started the season by netting 17 times in 14 Bundesliga appearances.

Gambia is making just its second appearance reaching the quarterfinals in 2021.

All games will be played in Yamoussoukro, except for Gambia vs. Cameroon on Jan. 23 in Bouaké.

Group D (Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Angola)

Despite having a talented team led by former Manchester City star Riyad Mahrez, Algeria coach Djamel Belmadi has played down his team's chances of a third Africa Cup title. Algeria exited at the group stage in the last tournament, then failed to qualify for the World Cup.

Burkina Faso is looking for its first title at the 13th attempt, led from the back by serene Leverkusen defender Edmond Tapsoba, one of the German team's key players this season.

The "Stallions" finished fourth in 2021 after placing third at the previous tournament and runner-up in 2013.

All the games will be played in Bouaké, except Burkina Faso vs. Angola in Yamoussoukro on Jan. 23.

Group E (Tunisia, Mali, South Africa, Namibia)

Both Tunisia and South Africa are going for their second titles after wins in 2004 and 1996, respectively.

Tunisia will look to experienced captain Youssef Msakni for goals and is strong in midfield with Eintracht Frankfurt's Ellyes Skhiri, Manchester United's Hannibal Mejbri and Union Berlin's Aissa Laïdouni providing the platform for the team's attack.

South Africa will be led by Percy Tau, a forward who plays for Egyptian club Al Ahly, while veteran Themba Zwane was included in the squad after he was initially overlooked by Belgian coach Hugo Broos.

Broos, who led Cameroon to the title in 2017, said it had been a mistake to omit the now 34-year-old Zwane when he took over the "Bafana Bafana" in May 2021, but that he had been trying to prioritize younger players at the time.

Mali is making its 13th appearance and Namibia its fourth.

The games will be played in Korhogo, except Namibia vs. Mali in San Pedro on Jan. 24.

Group F (Morocco, Congo, Zambia, Tanzania)

After becoming the first African team to reach the World Cup semifinals in Qatar last year, Morocco is now hoping to add just its second Africa Cup title.

Walid Regragui's team defeated Belgium, Spain and Portugal before losing to eventual finalist France at the World Cup in Qatar.

Regragui was less than six months old when the "Atlas Lions" won their only Africa Cup in 1976. Now he's targeting a repeat, helped by Paris Saint-Germain star Achraf Hakimi from the back.

Congo is taking part for the 20th time and is bidding for a third title after wins in 1968 and 1974.

Zambia, which won the trophy in 2012, is coached by Avram Grant, who guided Ghana to the final in 2015, then fourth place two years later.

Tanzania is appearing for just the third time.

Matches will be played in San Pedro, except Tanzania vs. Congo on Jan. 24.

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Zain and KFA officials with the awarded players.

Zain recognizes top-performing players in Dawri Zain's 'top' flight and first division competitions

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: Continuing to support and encourage local athletes, Zain has awarded the top performing players in the latest rounds of Dawri Zain's Premier League and First Division competitions. The recognition came during the special event held at the Zain Innovation Campus (ZINC) in partnership with the Kuwait Football Association (KFA).

In attendance were Zain Kuwait's Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer Waleed Al Khashti, KFA Secretary-General Salah Al Qenaei, Head of the Technical Committee Abdulaziz Hamadah, along with committee members, KFA representatives, and Zain officials.

For the Zain Premier League, Zain presented the following players with the 'Best Player of the Round' award (KD 500): Qadisiya SC's Khalid Al Rashidi (7th round), Arabi SC's Bandar Al Salamah (8th round), Arabi SC's Sultan Al Enzi (9th round), Kuwait SC's Mohammed Daham (10th and 13th rounds), Fahaeel SC's Ahmad Raheel (11th round), and Qadisiya SC's Bader Al Mutawa (12th round).

For the Zain First Division League, the company presented the following players with the 'Best Player of the Round' award (KD 200): Sahel SC's Mohammed Al Mousawi (6th round), Sahel SC's Hussain Ismail (7th round), Tadamon SC's Waleed Al Tourah (8th round), Yarmouk SC's Abdulrahman Al Hussaini (9th round), and Yarmouk SC's Nasser Al Failakawi (10th round).

Before the new season's kickoff, the Kuwait Football Association formed a special committee to outline the standards and criteria on which the prize winners will be selected. The committee is member-ed by former international players and experts Abdulaziz Hamadah (committee head), Hamad Al Enzi, Ahmad Mousa, Hussain Hakem, and Hussain Al Mutairi.

Zain remains a strong supporter of local athletes and believes that last season's prizes contributed to elevating the league's performance and quality. For this reason, the company has pledged not only to continue this support, but to also add new prize categories to reflect its interest in shouldering the local sports sector.

This season, Zain's cash prizes for athletes in the top flight are as follows: Player of the Season: KD 10,000, Best Player in the Round: KD 500 (per round), Season's Top Scorer: KD 5,000, Season's Top Local Scorer: KD 5,000, Season's Best Goalkeeper: KD 5,000, Season's Best Coach: KD 3,000,



Recognizing Qadisiya SC's Bader Al Mutawa.



Awarding Kuwait SC's Mohammed Daham.



Recognizing Arabi SC's Bandar Al Salamah.

Season's Rising Star: KD 2,000, and Best Photo of Season: KD 1000. For the Zain First Division League, the company also presents a new Best Player in the Round prize of KD 200 (per round).

The company also presents a total of KD 10,000 of cash prizes to the

winners of the first three places in the Dawri Zain Fantasy League, the first ever local fantasy league game. With this, the total of Zain's prizes for athletes and fans reaches over KD 60,000, the biggest prize pool in the local league's history.

Kuwait secure gold, bronze at Emirates Archery League

ABU DHABI, Jan 9, (KUNA): Kuwait showcased exceptional prowess at the UAE Archery League in Ras Al-Khaimah, claiming two medals among 170 participants. In a remarkable achievement, Ali Al-Zaid clinched the gold medal, while his compatriot, Bader Al-Shelahy, secured a bronze.

The Kuwaiti athletes exhibited a highly professional performance on the global stage, standing out in a field of competitors. Expressing his sentiments to KUNA, Al-Zaid emphasized that this accomplishment significantly enhances Kuwait's standing in the realm of professional sports worldwide. He extended gratitude to the Kuwait Shooting Club for



Gold medalist Ali Al-Zaid on the podium.

KUNA photos



Bronze medalist Bader Al-Shelahy with other winners and officials.

ARCHERY

their unwavering moral and financial support.

Obaid Al-Osaimi, Secretary General of the Kuwaiti and Arab archery federations, lauded the two Kuwaiti archers for their outstanding achievement on the podium. He dedicated this victory to the leadership and the supportive community of the Shooting Club.

The event, organized by the UAE Archery Federation in Ras Al-Khaimah, commenced on January 6, spanning two days. With numerous international archers participating, this marked the third stage of the 2023-2024 Emirates Archery League.

Pacers rally past Celtics after Haliburton injures hamstring

Clippers overwhelm Suns

INDIANAPOLIS, Jan 9, (AP): **Benedict Mathurin scored 26 points including a pair of free throws with 0.6 seconds remaining and the Indiana Pacers rallied to beat the Boston Celtics 133-131 on Monday night.**

Mathurin was fouled by Kristaps Porzingis on a 3-pointer. The call was reviewed and upheld. Mathurin sank the first two free throws and missed the third on purpose. He finished 8 of 15 from the field, including five 3-pointers, as Indiana split a two-game home series against the top team in the Eastern Conference.

The Pacers (21-15) played much of the game without All-Star point guard Tyrese Haliburton, who strained his left hamstring when he slipped and did the splits on a drive in the second quarter. He was carried to the locker room by two teammates.



Qayed Al-Adwani displays a picked team during the draw.

Al-Jahra and Al-Shabab absent

Draw sets stage for intense season

BASKETBALL

All-Star Jaylen Brown scored a season-high 40 points for the Celtics (28-8), who were without leading scorer Jayson Tatum, sitting out with a left ankle sprain. Jrue Holiday scored 21 points and Porzingis had 19 for Boston.

Jazz 132, Bucks 116

In Milwaukee, Jordan Clarkson and Lauri Markkanen had 21 points apiece and Utah staged off a second-half rally for a victory Milwaukee.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 25 points, 10 rebounds and 11 assists for the Bucks (25-12), who have lost four of five.

John Collins, Collin Sexton and Keyonte George each had 19 points for Utah (18-20), which has won five of its last six.

Milwaukee was without guard Damian Lillard, averaging 25.1 points per game, who was out for personal reasons. Khris Middleton added 23 points

and Malik Beasley 17 for the Bucks.

The Bucks, who trailed 77-46 at the half, scored 44 points in the third quarter to pull within 100-90 entering the final period.

Bulls 119, Hornets 112, OT

In Charlotte, Coby White scored 27 points, Andre Drummond added 21 points and 15 rebounds and Chicago overcame a 39-point performance from Terry Rozier to beat Charlotte.

Nikola Vucevic added 21 points and nine rebounds in his second game back from an injury for the Bulls (17-21), who defeated the Hornets for the second time in four nights.

Rozier had seven 3-pointers and was 12-for-12 from the foul line for Charlotte (8-26), which has lost 13 of its last 14 games.

Miles Bridges added 24 points for the Hornets, who remain without three starters due to injuries.

Clippers 138, Suns 111

In Los Angeles, Paul George scored 25 points, Ivica Zubac added 19 and Los Angeles beat Phoenix for the second time in five days.

James Harden had 19 points, seven rebounds and 10 assists for the Clippers, who won 131-122 in Phoenix last Wednesday and have won six of seven overall. Kawhi Leonard added 17 points.

Kevin Durant scored 20 of his 30 points in the first half for the Suns. Devin Booker finished with 20 points and Bradley Beal had 15 points.

Thunder 136, Wizards 128

In Washington, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 32 points, Chet Holmgren added 31 and Oklahoma City led most of the way in a victory over Washington.

Jalen Williams added 21 points and 10 assists for the Thunder (24-11), who avoided a third loss following defeats at Atlanta and Brooklyn to begin a four-game road trip.

Holmgren spearheaded that effort,



Utah Jazz's Collin Sexton tries to get past Milwaukee Bucks' Khris Middleton during the second half of an NBA basketball game, in Milwaukee. The Jazz won 132-116. (AP)

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: The draw for the upcoming sports season 2023-2024 General Handball League Championship took place at the Federation headquarters in Daiya. The event was attended by Secretary Qaid Al-Adwani and representatives from 10 clubs out of the 14 participating in the league this season. Notably, Al-Jahra and Al-Shabab will be absent, prompting the Federation to implement a modified league system for this season.

Scheduled to commence on February 6th, the tournament will feature two sections. The first section adopts a "one-round league" merger system among the 14 clubs. Following this

HANDBALL

stage, the top 6 clubs, determined by points from the initial section, will advance to the Premier League. The Premier League will then be played in two sections, "home and away." The team securing the highest points in the first round will clinch the league title. Simultaneously, the remaining 8 teams in the first division will engage in a single round to establish rankings from seventh to fourteenth.

Participating clubs in the league include Al-Kuwait, Kazma, Al-Salmiya, Al-Qadisiya, Al-Arabi, Fahaeel, Burgan, Al-Qurain, Yarmouk, Sulaibikhat, Khaithan, Al-Tadamon, Al-Nasr, and Al-Sahel.

The draw revealed compelling match-ups in the first round of the Hand Combined League, such as Kuwait versus Al-Arabi, Kazma against Al-Qadisiya, Al-Nasr versus Sulaibikhat, Al-Salmiya facing Yarmouk, Burgan challenging Al-Qurain, Khaithan meeting Al-Sahel, and Al-Tadamon taking on Al-Fahaeel.

The handball season will kick off with the "Super" tournament on February 3rd and 4th, featuring a knockout system based on the results and standings from the previous season's tournaments. Four teams - Al-Kuwait, the league and Federation Cup champion, Al-Qadisiya, the runner-up, Burgan, the Federation Cup runner-up, and Kazma, the third-place finisher in the cup - will participate in the tournament.

making 11 of 14 shots and going 4 of 5 from beyond the arc.

Jordan Poole scored 24 points, and Kyle Kuzma added 22 points and grabbed 15 rebounds for Washington (6-30).

Heat 120, Rockets 113

In Miami, Tyler Herro scored 28 points, Bam Adebayo finished with 22 points and 12 rebounds, and Miami topped Houston.

Kevin Love scored 15 points for Miami (21-15), while Duncan Robinson and Jaime Jaquez Jr. each had 14 for the Heat. Josh Richardson finished with 12 for Miami. Adebayo had 10 of his points in the fourth quarter.

Kuwaitis set to make a splash

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti national swimming team is gearing up for the second Arab junior championship, commencing Wednesday in Doha, Qatar. With significant participation and anticipated fierce competitions spanning six days, the team is set to compete in the 13-14 and 15-16 age categories.

Faisal Abu Al-Hassan, the head of the delegation and a member of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Aquatics Federation, shared with Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) before

SWIMMING

their departure that a total of nine swimmers would represent Kuwait in the tournament. He mentioned that the competition also includes the 17-18 age category.

The participating swimmers, including Mohammad Zabid, Hassan Jaafar, Hamad Al-Ghath, Saud Al-Enezi, Abdullah Ahmad, Hassan Zaid, and Hamoud Al-Hamoud, along with Saba Ahmad under the guidance of Kuwaiti coaches Mohammed Jassem and Simone Testasca, the coach of the Kuwaiti Italian team, are geared up for the championship.

Abu Al-Hassan highlighted the team's thorough preparation through daily training in the lead-up to the tournament, expressing optimism for their success and hoping for commendable results in the upcoming competition.



Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh celebrates with the trophy after their win in the national championship NCAA College Football Playoff game against Washington in Houston. (AP)

Sports

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Harbaugh delivers national title as Michigan overpowers Washington

Corum scores 2 TDs

HOUSTON, Jan 9 (AP): Jim Harbaugh raised the championship trophy as gold and white confetti sprayed over his team and "We Are the Champions" blared.

Nine years after he took over at Michigan, Harbaugh delivered on the lofty expectations he brought with him to his beloved alma mater.

Blake Corum ran for 134 yards and two fourth-quarter touchdowns as Harbaugh and the top-ranked Wolverines - undeterred by suspensions and a sign-stealing case that shadowed the program - completed a three-year surge to a national title by beating No. 2 Washington 34-13 Monday night in the College Football Playoff.

"We're innocent and we stood strong and tall because we knew we were innocent. And I'd like to point that out," Harbaugh said when asked about off-field issues, jumping in to answer a question posed to his players. "And these guys are innocent. And overcome that? It wasn't that hard because we knew we were innocent."

The Wolverines (15-0) sealed their first national title since 1997 when Corum, who scored the winning touch-



The technical staff meeting with fencers before their training.

Kuwait fencing teams gear up for Asian Championship with 'intensive' training

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: The training sessions for the junior and junior fencing teams commenced under the guidance of the technical staff, led by national coach Saud Al-Zamil, Senegalese coach Baba Toure, and technical director Tariq Mahdi. The training took place at Al-Ittihad Hall in Daiya, with the participation of 25 male and female players. The train-

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FENCING

ing is in preparation for the upcoming Asian Championship (men - women), scheduled to be held in the Bahraini capital, Manama, from February 16 to 25. Prior to the championship, the teams will undergo a 17-day training camp in Budapest, Hungary.

The Secretary and Chairman of the National Teams Committee of the Kuwaiti Fencing Federation, Hamad Al-Awadhi, attended the training and encouraged the players to commit to their daily training routines, emphasizing the need to elevate their technical

skills. He urged them to represent Kuwait honorably, raise the Kuwaiti flag high in the Asian Forum, and aim for podium finishes. Al-Awadhi assured full support for all team members during the Asian Championship.

Al-Awadhi expressed gratitude to the General Sports Authority, led by Director General Yousef Al-Baidan, for their substantial support. He recognized the efforts of Deputy Director-General Faisal Al-Yateem, Deputy Director-General Bashar Abdullah, and Director Khalifa Al-Tararwa for their contributions to facilitating administrative and financial procedures for the Fencing Federation.

Highlighting the commitment of Al-Baidan in overcoming obstacles, Al-Awadhi emphasized the pivotal role of the General Sports Authority in enhancing Kuwait's sports achievements both domestically and internationally. He underscored the authority's crucial role in advancing Kuwaiti sports, aligning with the aspirations and capabilities of the country's sports youth.

McCarthy had a modest game, throwing for 140 yards and running for 31. But it was enough for him to improve to 27-1 as a starter for the Wolverines.

Michigan gave Washington a taste of life in the Big Ten, where the Pac-12 champions are heading next season, and the Huskies were up for the grind for a while.

Two long touchdown runs by Dono-

van Edwards and 229 yards rushing in the first quarter put the Wolverines up 17-3 early in the second and conjured up memories of last year's historic Georgia blowout of TCU.

Washington stabilized and didn't allow the Wolverines another point in the first half. After the Huskies stopped Michigan on a fourth-and-2 from the UW 38 with 4:46 left in the second quarter, Penix went to work.

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Boniface ruled out of Africa Cup

LEVERKUSEN, Jan 9, (AP): Nigeria forward Victor Boniface has been ruled out of the Africa Cup of Nations with a thigh injury and has already returned to Germany.

His club Bayer Leverkusen said Tuesday that Boniface suffered "a muscle and tendon injury in his right adductor during the Nigerians' training camp in Dubai", and that the 23-year-old forward will need surgery.

Nigeria could call up Nice forward Terem Moffi in his place for the tournament in Ivory Coast that starts on Saturday. Leverkusen expects he can return to its squad in April.

Boniface had been expected to make an impact at the tournament after starting the season with 16 goals in 21 games for Leverkusen, but he missed Nigeria's 2-0 loss to Guinea in a warm-up match in Abu Dhabi on Monday.

Unprecedented rift

Al-Qadisiya clash with KFA over players release

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 9: In an unprecedented move, Al-Qadisiya Club has triggered a dispute with the Football Association by refusing to release nine of its players for inclusion in both the national team and Olympic team during the current preparation period.

The club, in a letter sent to the Football Association, cited a lack of communication and formal summoning of the players within the specified period, as outlined in international regulations for player status. Al-Qadisiya asserted

SOCCER

its right to withhold players, citing Article 1, Paragraph 2 of the Appendix on the International Status and Transfer of Players.

The letter concluded by expressing apologies for the inability to release players, citing the team's need for their efforts in future competitions.

The Football Association expressed surprise at Al-Qadisiya's refusal, especially given the suspension of local competitions. The national team is gearing up for matches against Qatar, while the Olympic team is preparing for the Asian Cup finals in Qatar.

Despite this rift, the national teams have proceeded with their preparations. The Blue delegation, led by Por-



Ali Jaragh - one of the players affected by Al-Qadisiya's decision.

tuguese coach Rui Pinto, includes five players from Al-Qadisiya. Meanwhile, the Olympic team, coached by Emilio Peixe, selected four players from the club.

The standoff raises concerns for the players, particularly the younger ones aspiring to represent their country. It also poses challenges for the teams, with potential repercussions on performance and overall team dynamics.

Amid the crisis, the technical staff may limit the Cairo camp to 18 players, foregoing alternative options. Notable inclusions in Pinto's selections are Suleiman Bouramia, Khaled Al-Ajaji, Othman Al-Shammari, and Abdul Mohsen Al-Ajmi. Returnees to the national team include Muhammad Al-Huwaidi, along with new faces like Abdul Rahman Kamil, Sami Al-Sanea, Fahd Al-Hajri, and others.

Barcelona arrive at this year's tournament under pressure

Real and Atletico kickoff Spanish Super Cup in Saudi Arabia

MADRID, Jan 9, (AP): With Real Madrid enjoying good momentum and Atletico Madrid on a bit of a slump, the city rivals meet in the semifinal of the Spanish Super Cup in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday in the first of three matches between the clubs in less than a month.

After the Super Cup, Madrid and Atletico will clash again on Jan. 18 in the round of 16 of the Copa del Rey, and then on Feb. 4 at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium in their second Spanish league match of the season.

Madrid have won their last five games in all competitions and are enjoying an unbeaten run of 19 consecutive matches. The team's only loss this season came against Atletico in the Spanish league, 3-1 at the Metropolitan stadium, which is where the Copa's single-elimination game will take place next week.

It's also where Atletico won 20 in a row across all competitions to tie a club record in a streak that ended with a 3-3 draw against Getafe in the Spanish league in December.

Diego Simeone's team went on a strong run after that home win against Madrid, advancing to the knockout rounds of the Champions League and getting near the top of the Spanish

league. But they have hit some speed-bumps recently, winning only two of their last five matches in all competitions.

One of their two recent losses came at Girona, the second-place team at the league's halfway point. The 4-3 defeat dropped Atletico to fifth place, outside the Champions League places. They sit 10 points behind leaders Madrid.

Atletico and Madrid also met in the 2020 final, with Madrid winning on penalties in what marked the first time the Super Cup was taken to Saudi Arabia in a lucrative multi-year deal for the clubs and the Spanish soccer federation.

The Super Cup's new "final four" format pits together the top two teams in the Spanish league last season and the last two Copa del Rey finalists.

The other semifinal will be played on Thursday between Barcelona and Osasuna, last season's runners-up to Madrid in the Copa del Rey.

Atletico forward Antoine Griez-

mann enters the game tied with Luis Aragonés as the club's all-time top scorer with 173 goals.

Madrid remain without some of their main players because of long-term injuries, including goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois and central defenders Eder Militao and David Alaba. Young Turkey international Arda Güler made his debut in a Copa del Rey match this past weekend and could have more minutes in Saudi Arabia. Vinicius

SOCCER

Júnior, Rodrygo and Jude Bellingham are set to lead Madrid's attack.

Barcelona beat Madrid in last year's Super Cup final to win their first title since the arrival of coach Xavi Hernández and the departure of Lionel Messi.

Barcelona arrive at this year's tournament under pressure after a series of lackluster performances that recently drew jeers from their home fans.

The Catalan club edged fourth-division club Barastro 3-2 in the third round of the Copa del Rey on Sunday. They were coming off hard-fought wins against last-place Almeria and midtable Las Palmas in the Spanish league, and before that they hadn't

won in three straight games in all competitions.

Barcelona is third in the Spanish league, seven points behind Madrid and Girona.

Osasuna, the surprise Copa finalists last season, also arrives at the Super Cup having struggled recently.



Mallorca's Giovanni Gonzalez tries to reach Real Madrid's Jude Bellingham during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Mallorca at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

Kuwait triumph with gold and silver at Doha Int'l Arabian Horse Beauty Show

DOHA, Jan 9, (KUNA): Kuwaiti stables achieved remarkable success at the third Doha International Arabian Horse and Horses' Beauty Show 2024, securing two gold medals and one silver.

The foal one-year-old category witnessed victory as MHS SORA from

Al-Khashab stable clinched the gold medals. In the stud category, a horse from Al-Bashir stable added to Kuwait's triumph by winning the gold medal. The foal category age two to three saw Shurai'an and Al-Rasman stable's horse securing a commendable second place and the silver medal.

Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Shurai'an, head of Al-Shurai'an and Rasman stable, expressed satisfaction with Kuwaiti participants' outstanding performance in this year's competition, which concluded recently. He em-

EQUESTRIAN

phasized the importance of the Doha International Arabian Horse and Horses' Beauty Show in preserving the tradition of horse breeding, highlighting Kuwait's prominent position among the world's leading horse breeders.

The third edition of the Doha International Arabian Horse and Beauty Show 2024 commenced last Friday, featuring participation from stables representing Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, and the host country, Qatar.