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Amir receives PM, newly-appointed Cabinet Affairs minister



Left: His Highness the Amir receives His Highness the PM. Right: Shereeda Abdullah Al-Moushejri swears constitutional oath as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs.

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Sunday at Seif Palace His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem who presented Shereeda Abdullah Al-Moushejri as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs.

The newly appointed Minister swore in the constitutional oath before His Highness the Amir and in attendance of high-level officials.

Earlier, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah signed a decree, Sunday, appointing Shereeda Abdullah Al-Moushejri as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs.

The decree states that His Highness the Prime Minister inform the National Assembly and publish it in the official gazette.

Deputy Amir, ministers to swear oaths in special session Monday

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The National Assembly will hold a special session on Monday as per the request of the government for HH the Deputy Amir and Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and the ministers to take the constitutional oath.

The session will start with the reading of the Amir's orders and decrees on the formation of the government, followed by the oath-taking of the ministers who do not occupy the member of parliament post as per Article 91 of the Constitution.

Article 91 states that: "Before taking up his functions at the Assembly or at its Committees a member of the National Assembly shall, at a public meeting of the Assembly, take the following Oath: "I swear by God Almighty to be loyal to the Amir, to respect the Constitution and the laws of the State, to defend the people's liberties, their interests and their properties, and to perform my duties faithfully and sincerely."

After this, HH the Deputy Amir and Prime Minister will take the oath as per Article 63 of the Constitution, which states: "At a special session of the National Assembly

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Opinion

Where there is a will, there's a way

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

WE have been screaming for years from the pain of the scenes that everyone is witnessing in Kuwait in terms of the deterioration of all services.

We are talking not only about the roads, but also the large piles of garbage on the sidewalks of the streets. Some areas seem to be from another world due to the manifestations of lawlessness and poor services.

Unfortunately, it seems as if we are screaming in a desert where no one could hear us. This is because the ministers are either busy making deals with the parliamentarians, or they assume positions as compensation for services in order to get out of it with certain privileges, or for an excellent retirement salary plan. It also seems

as though they put up glass barriers between them and the citizens, and made their office director the final authority, which led to sluggishness in the sectors of their ministries.

There is an old Italian proverb - "Where there's a will, there's a way". Because the will did not exist among ministers in some previous governments, everyone noticed the deterioration in all ministries.

This made reform an arduous process that required many efforts from each minister and the need for them to perform their work honestly.

In the past few days, we have noticed initiatives from some ministers; rather, from their boss who visited the northern region on a Saturday.

By the way, this is the first time in years that a senior official has visited that area, which was at the core of the concerns of the late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, the spearhead of the Northern Economic Zone project, the Silk Road and its city, which today has become a paper tiger.

For this purpose, the late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad visited Iraq in order to revitalize economic relations between Iraq and Kuwait, starting from this region.

We also noticed the Minister of Public Works Noura Al-Mashaan, and her activity in remote areas.

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Family visa rush in Kuwait as 7 nationalities in limbo

Expats submit applications after 18-month pause

By Munaif Nayef

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Residency Affairs departments yesterday morning started receiving applications for family visas from expatriates after a hiatus of about a year and a half.

A number of them flocked to the Residency Affairs departments in all six governorates to submit the family visa applications based on the conditions that their monthly salary is not less than KD 800, and their university degree is of the same specialty as their profession.

It is worth highlighting that the Residency Affairs departments have not yet received instructions about the transactions from individuals of the banned nationalities, namely Iraqi, Syrian, Afghan, Pakistani, Iranian, Yemeni and Sudanese.

A Syrian national, who works in Kuwait Municipality and is part of the category of those excluded from the decision, explained that he went to the Residency Affairs Department in Hawally where they told him to go to the Residence Affairs Department in Dajeej. After arriving at that department and submitting the application, the employees told him to come after two days because they had not yet received any instructions regarding the banned countries.

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Al-Jarallah



Minister of Social Affairs and Minister of State for Family and Childhood Affairs – Sheikh Firas Al-Malik, observes a collection of vintage items at the inauguration of the Makshat-2 project on the northern island of Jaber Al-Ahmad Bridge. – See Page 2

Photo by Samer Shiker

NewsWatch

ISTANBUL: An armed attack took place during a religious ceremony in Santa Maria church in Istanbul on Sunday, killing one person and injuring others, according to the local media.

Minister of Interior Ali Yerlikaya said that at around 11:40 a.m., during church services, one of the attendees was attacked by two masked individuals and had died.

He added that "a large-scale investigation is underway to catch the suspects. We strongly condemn this heinous attack."

The Turkish security forces barricaded the area after the attack and several police teams were sent to the scene. (KUNA)

TEHRAN: Iran said on Sunday it simultaneously launched three satellites into the orbit using Simorgh (Phoenix) rocket.

The three satellites, named Mehda, Kayhan-2 and Hatf-1, were launched together carried by the rocket Simorgh, which is a two-stage, liquid-fluid designed to place the satellite into a low earth orbit, said the Iranian TV. (KUNA)

MANAMA: The Kingdom of Bahrain will host next Wednesday the third General Assembly

meeting of the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO), in the presence of ministers and officials from representatives of the organization's 15 member states, including Kuwait.

The meeting, which is chaired by Chairperson of the Digital Cooperation Organization and Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications Mohammad Al-Kaabi, will discuss the organization's plans and initiatives aimed at promoting digital prosperity.

It would also discuss strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing global digital cooperation, in addition to highlighting the current state of the digital economy, and ways to overcome the challenges it faces to achieve comprehensive and sustainable growth.

On this occasion, Al-Kaabi said that the meeting would discuss the achievements and activate opportunities and initiatives aimed at achieving digital prosperity and growth in member states.

Through joint international action and cooperation, the organization seek to promote comprehensive and sustainable growth of digital transformation and maximize the benefit of all countries from the opportunities and initiatives available to develop the digital economy, he stressed. (KUNA)

Kuwait envoy heads delegation

Arab League discusses unified Arab position after ICJ's ruling

CAIRO, Jan 28, (Agencies): The League of Arab States (LAS) held an extraordinary session at the level of permanent delegates on Sunday to discuss a unified Arab position vis a vis the resolution of International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Israeli occupation forces.

The meeting, headed by Morocco, was held in response to a request by Palestine and in coordination with Morocco, Egypt, and Jordan -- supported by member states of the LAS.

The conferees are scheduled to discuss the ICJ resolution, demanding that the Israeli occupation forces must adhere to the rules in accordance with case that had been filed by South Africa against the Israeli occupation forces for committing genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza.

Kuwait's delegation to the extraordinary session is headed by the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the League of Arab States, Ambassador Talal Al-Mutairi.

Meanwhile, the secretary-general of the United Nations on Sunday called on countries to resume funding the main agency providing aid in the Gaza Strip after a dozen of its employees were accused of taking part in the Hamas attack on Israel that ignited the war four months ago.

The dispute engulfing the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees came as U.S. officials said negotiators were closing in on a ceasefire agreement. The emerging deal would bring a two-month halt to the deadliest-ever Israeli-Palestinian violence, which has stoked instability across the Middle East.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned that the agency known as UNRWA would be forced to scale back aid to more than 2 million Palestinians in Gaza as soon as February. The coastal enclave is in the grip of a severe humanitarian crisis, with a quarter of the population facing starvation as fighting and Israeli restrictions hinder the delivery of humanitarian aid to the besieged territory.

"The abhorrent alleged acts of these staff members must have consequences," Guterres said in a statement.

Traffic jam on agenda

'Unity' key against terrorism, says MP

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: Chairman of the parliamentary Interior and Defense Affairs Committee MP Mohammad Al-Hewaila disclosed that the committee will invite Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Yusuf Al-Sabah and senior security officials to a meeting soon to discuss the preparations and procedures for thwarting terrorist attacks or threats.

He said the current challenges put all countries in a battle against terrorism; adding that Kuwait is concerned about international and regional security challenges which require everyone to maintain national unity and loyalty to the political leadership in order to combat terrorism, extremism and organized crimes. He asserted that national security is a red line, while commitment to national unity is the strongest weapon for foiling terrorist attempts.

He hailed the efforts exerted by the Ministry of Interior in arresting members of the terrorist cell, specifically the hardworking security authorities that work incessantly to guarantee the citizens' safety and security.

In another development, the parliamentary Human Resources Committee on Sunday met with representatives of the Ministry of Oil and Kuwait National Petroleum Corporation (KNPC) to discuss the bill on amending the Private Oil Sector Law. The bill is aimed at ensuring job security and privileges for nationals working in the private oil sector like their counterparts in the public oil sector.

On the other hand, MP Abdullah Al-Anbai submitted a number of proposals to address the traffic jam in several residential areas as follows:

- Establishment of a roundabout at the intersection of street numbers six and 101, opposite the wedding hall in Ali Sabah Al-Salim;
- Immediate maintenance of the exit and entry points in Dhahr and Jaber Al Ali residential areas, especially the road from Dhahr roundabout in Block Two to King Fahd Highway;

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Kuwait's money supply reaches KD 39b in Dec

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28, (KUNA): Central Bank of Kuwait announced on Sunday that the broad money supply (M2) settled last December on a monthly basis at KD 39 billion (about USD 128.7 billion).

Local banks' private sector deposits dropped by 0.1 percent to reach KD 35.5 billion (about USD 117 billion), said the CBK's economic research department in a release to KUNA, including statistical tables.

Private sector deposits in foreign currency increased by 0.6 percent to reach KD 1.8 billion (about USD 5.9 billion), while total local banks claims on the CBK represented by CBK bonds settled at KD 3.3 billion (about USD 11 billion).

Total local banks' assets rose by 0.5 percent to reach KD 87 billion (around USD 287 billion), while the net foreign assets increased by 3.5 percent to KD 12.2 billion (around USD 40.2 billion).

Meanwhile, time deposits with the CBK dropped by 12.9 percent, in December, to KD 1.5 billion (around USD 4.9 billion), whereas balance of utilized cash credit (loans) rose by 0.2 percent to KD 53.5 billion (around USD 176 billion).

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Labor shelter issue clouds talks' future

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: As the crisis of the domestic worker shortage intensifies, exacerbated by Sri Lanka revising recruitment prices, the ongoing discussions between Kuwait and the Philippines for a renewed dialogue between officials from both nations to find common ground and pave the way for the resumption of new domestic workers from Manila is likely on the cards virtually through the "Zoom" platform, reliable sources told Al-Jarida daily.

Bassam Al-Shammari, an expert in domestic labor affairs, said the Kuwaiti government entities, including the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior, along with the Public Authority for Manpower, are currently reviewing the Philippine request to recommence negotiations.

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Prayer Timings

Fajr	05:18	Asr	15:02
Sunrise ..	06:40	Maghrib ..	17:23
Zohr	12:01	Isha	18:42

Local

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

'Increase in entertainment, tourism points eyed'

Minister launches 'Makshat-2' on island north of Jaber Bridge

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Minister of Social Affairs, Minister of State for Family and Childhood Affairs, and acting Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Firas Al-Malik says the Makshat-2 project is an extension of the idea that was introduced last year.

During the opening of the Makshat-2 project yesterday afternoon on the northern island of Jaber Al-Ahmad Bridge in the presence of the head of the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies and a number of officials from the ministry, the minister highlighted the participation of a number of small and medium enterprise owners in the project in addition to social assistance recipients in the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Sheikh Firas affirmed that the role of the ministry is educational, social and tourism, adding that the project aims to create an outlet for families with the participation of government agencies in order to organize various activities in the project.

He expressed his happiness with what he saw in the completion of this project, and expressed gratitude to all those who participated in the project, including young people and government agencies employees for providing many recre-

ational activities in the project, which is a new and distinguished addition to existing projects in Kuwait.

Meanwhile, the acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Abdulaziz Al-Mutairi affirmed that the implementation of the project was the result of the efforts of a specialized work team and the Cooperative Projects Committee.

He explained that the committee's goal is to serve citizens and shareholders in cooperative societies, and keep pace with government ideas in increasing entertainment and tourism points in Kuwait. This was done last year in Makshat-1 and now in Makshat-2 in a larger area and with multiple, more involved activities.

The Makshat project is one of the projects of the Cooperative Projects Committee, which includes the establishment of hospitals and many health activities that serve all government agencies. It is an entertainment project in Kuwait that represents the heritage of the desert and the people of the sea in a modern way in order to diversify activities to satisfy the tastes of young and old citizens.

He revealed that he receives pioneers daily throughout the week from 3:00 pm to 11:00 pm, adding that the opening took place through the efforts of the work team and the Cooperative Projects Committee.



One of the stalls at the 'Makshat-2'.



Minister of Social Affairs Sheikh Firas Al-Malik talking to the press. Photos by Samer Shaqir

Anxieties over joblessness

Poor education, market imbalance pose challenge

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: As per the weekly report from the Al-Shall Economic Center, the Central Administration of Statistics has disclosed data on registered unemployed Kuwaitis, indicating that by November of the previous year, 8,727 individuals, constituting approximately 1.8% of the Kuwaiti labor force, were without employment, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The report sheds light on concerns regarding gender distribution, with males accounting for 48% of the unemployed and females at 52%. Despite an equal split in public sector employment (51.4% women and 48.6% men), anxieties about unemployment persist.

Additionally, the report outlines fluctuations in unemployment concerning different time frames. The number is 297 for those unemployed for one month, rising to 4,670 for individuals unemployed between one and five months. Subsequently, the figure decreases to 1,602 for those unemployed between six and eleven months, only to rise again to 2,158 for those unemployed for twelve months or more.

The report does not provide an explanation for these variations.

The Center underscores the challenge of distinguishing between decisions that are popular and those that are populist, emphasizing the serious implications of the current characteristics of unemployment.

In the short term, many unemployed individuals appear to be awaiting opportunities in the public sector, potentially inflating disguised unemployment figures.

This trend is driven by the appeal of public sector jobs with their favorable working hours, high wages, and additional benefits.

The age composition of the unemployed raises particular concerns, with about 69.7% falling between the ages of 20 and 29, and an additional 15.1% between the ages of 30 and 39. This signifies that approximately 84.8% of the unemployed are young people, suggesting potential social repercussions.

Another alarming trend highlighted by the report is that 60.5% of the unemployed hold diplomas to doctorate degrees. This raises concerns about the misalignment between the labor market's needs and the education system, as well as potential issues related to the authenticity of academic credentials.

In conclusion, the report emphasizes that poor education and an imbalance in the national labor market pose significant challenges to public administration.

The responsibility lies in differentiating between decisions that benefit the entire population, popular decisions, and those that cater to specific individuals at the expense of broader societal well-being, populist decisions.

Judge extends detention of trio in terrorism case

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Detention Renewal judge yesterday decided to extend to February 11 the detention of three Tunisian individuals who are accused of forming a terrorist cell, joining ISIS, and planning to bomb three mosques and Husseiniyat.

During the renewal session, the three defendants denied the charges of joining ISIS and carrying out a hostile action against Kuwait.

When they were brought before the detention renewal judge, the defendants demanded that they be released as soon as possible so that they could complete their work, insisting that they had come to Kuwait to work in a delivery company.

When they were asked about appointing a lawyer, they said, "We do not want to appoint one in order to avoid the case from being dragged on. We just want to leave to return to work."

However, the detention renewal judge asked them the question for the second time, and they appointed a lawyer, who demanded their release on any bail amount the court deems appropriate.

In another case, the renewal judge ordered the extension of the detention of a Kuwaiti citizen, who was accused of joining ISIS, for 14 more days. He too had denied the allegations leveled against him.

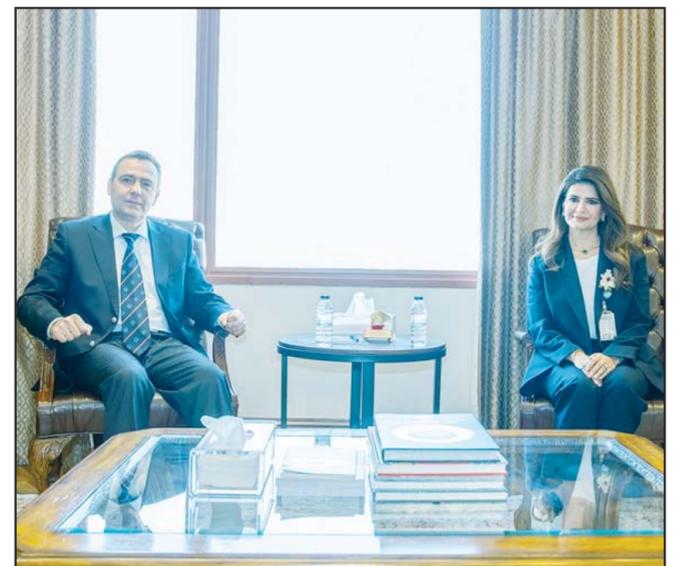
According to informed sources, the prosecution is still investigating the two cases. Three citizens who are accused along with the citizen in the last case will be presented on Thursday to the renewal judge.

The State Security investigations presented the prosecution with evidence, adding that "The smallest details are being completed to determine the plans of the accused."

HH Amir receives Defense Minister

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace on Sunday the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and the Acting Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also received at Seif Palace on Sunday Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council Jassem Al-Bedaiwai.



Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Dr. Fatima Al-Salem with Russian Ambassador Vladimir Zheltov. KUNA photo

KUNA head, Russian envoy meet

Call to boost media cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28, (KUNA): Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Dr. Fatma Al-Salem discussed with the Russian Ambassador to the State Kuwait, Vladimir Zheltov cooperation strengthening joint media.

During reception at KUNA's headquarters on Sunday, Dr. Al-Salem and Ambassador Zheltov also touched on various media topics of common interest.

Dr. Al-Salem pointed out the importance of bolstering media cooperation between Kuwaiti and Russian Media institutions, noting the need to work on the agreements between KUNA and the Russian News Agency (TASS) in exchanging news and professional expertise in

training. KUNA Director also stressed the importance of cultural openness among people which portrays the real image of their cultures and values, and to achieve a civilizational dialogue and human communication.

The Russian Ambassador, on his part, affirmed the depth of the Russian-Kuwaiti ties which are witnessing constant development, pointing to the recent increase of Kuwaiti tourists in Russia.

Ambassador Zheltov praised the freedom of the Kuwaiti media whether official or private, noting that Media is considered one of the important modes of communication between people.

'Fifth safest place in Arab world'

Kuwait City cheapest to live in Gulf

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: Numbeo ranked Kuwait City as the cheapest place to live in the Gulf and the fifth safest place in the Arab world, reports Al-Rai daily.

Numbeo is one of the biggest databases of living prices in the world. It ranked Kuwait as the cheapest Gulf city and 218th globally in the cost of living index for the year 2024.

The index measures the prices of consumer goods in 362 cities around the world; including the prices of groceries, restaurants, transportation and utilities, but the accommodation expenses such as rent or mortgage are excluded.

Meanwhile, the most expensive Gulf cities are Dubai in first place, followed by Abu Dhabi, Doha, Manama, Riyadh, Jeddah, Sharjah, Muscat and Kuwait.

On the other hand, Numbeo ranked Kuwait as the fifth safest country in the Gulf and the Arab world, and 30th globally, for the year 2024 with a score of 67.1 out of 100.

The index measures the level of safety in 84 countries based on four main criteria

as follows:

1. Perceived safety: The index measures the responses of residents and visitors regarding their feelings of safety while walking during the day and at night.

2. Concerns about specific crimes: The index measures fears related to burglary, theft, car theft, physical attacks by strangers, harassment in public places, and discrimination based on factors such as skin color, race, gender or religion.

3. Property crimes: This is intended to assess the extent of property-related crimes, such as burglary, theft, vandalism and others.

4. Violent crimes: This is intended to assess the perception of violent crimes, including assault, murder, sexual crimes and others.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) ranked first in both the Arab world and globally, followed by Qatar in second place internationally, Oman in fourth place internationally and Saudi Arabia in 20th place internationally.

Court Cases

'Case over, can't question trooper'

Kuwaiti to die for killing his friend, burying body at site

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Fawzan Al-Anjari, sentenced to death a Kuwaiti citizen who was convicted of killing his friend in Umm Al-Hayman and burying his body in the Eighth Ring Road project site. The court also sentenced the citizen's brother to two-year imprisonment for setting the victim's vehicle on fire.

According to the case file, Umm Al-Hayman witnessed a heinous murder when a 32-year-old Kuwaiti citizen killed his 33-year-old friend by stabbing him several times, then carried his body and buried it in the Eighth Ring Road project site, after which he set fire to his car and then went to Umm Al-Hayman Police Station where he surrendered himself.

The police officers at Umm Al-Hayman Police Station were surprised when the citizen confessed to killing his friend, burying his body in the Eighth Ring Road project site, and setting his friend's vehicle on fire with the help of his brother.

They immediately detained him and made sure he was mentally sound and he was talking about a real incident.

They informed the Deputy Public Prosecutor, who ordered the officers to go with the citizen to the place where he claimed to have buried his friend's body.

After the citizen informed the officers about the location of the body and the vehicle that he set on fire, forensic officers, a forensic doctor, and the deputy public prosecutor went to that location. The body was exhumed by forensic evidence officers and examined by the forensic doctor. It was discovered that the victim had been stabbed multiple times, including a deep stab wound to the neck, which led to his death.

'Case over, can't question': The Criminal Court ruled that it is not permissible to question a soldier in the Ministry of Defense who was accused of killing his colleague inside the camp by shooting him. The court instead referred him to psychiatry.

The Public Prosecution had held investigations with the soldier, and decided to detain him in pretrial detention. It then demanded that he be tried for the murder of his colleague after firing four bullets at him. However, the psychiatric report proved that he was not responsible for his actions.

It is worth mentioning that the soldier had killed his colleague by shooting him four times following a dispute between them on the morning of the incident. After committing the act, the soldier fled from the scene but later surrendered himself to officers of the Ministry of Interior.

When a report was received of a murder in a camp in the Capital Governorate, paramedics rushed to the location and discovered that the soldier, a Kuwaiti citizen, had died as a result of gunshot wounds.

Case goes to Prosecution: The Court of Cassation decided to release two citizens - a businesswoman and a businessman - who were sentenced to five-year imprisonment and eight-year imprisonment respectively, and imposed a fine of KD 3 million for selling 'dubious' chalets in Khairan. The court instead ordered that the case be returned to the Public Prosecution for investigation.

Earlier, the Court of Appeals overturned the ruling issued by a lower court which acquitted a businessman, and had sentenced him to eight-years imprisonment in the case of fake chalets.

It also sentenced two Iraqis to ten-year imprisonment and a Kuwaiti businesswoman to five-year imprisonment, and obligated them all to pay compensation of KD 30 million.

Fake doc hearing Feb 7: The Detention Renewal judge decided to extend to February 7 the detention of an Arab female doctor who was accused of impersonating a Kuwaiti male citizen and entering Kuwait.

According to the case file, the accused took advantage of his passport and changed her gender and features to resemble those of a Kuwaiti citizen. She was arrested when trying to enter Kuwait after the passport officer at the airport became suspicious.

'Punish ex-minister': The investigation committee headed by Dr. Omar Al-Masoud referred a report to the Court of Ministers and demanded that a former minister be punished based on five charges, most notably infringement on public funds and abuse of power.

According to the report, the former minister had transferred two industrial plots, one when he was an MP in the National Assembly, and the other after he assumed the ministerial portfolio.

He registered the two plots under the name of a retired soldier, so that the charge would not be proven against him.

This was discovered after the former soldier, who was referred with him in the same case to the Court of Ministers, sold one of the two plots and transferred the amount of KD 700 thousand to the accused minister's account.

The accused minister did not disclose this matter to the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority "Nazaha". He also purchased a residential apartment in London with public funds.

Informed sources revealed that the permanent investigation committee for prosecuting ministers is currently investigating complaints submitted against four former ministers on charges related to infringement on public funds.

Other Voices

The dominant deputy in 'Brothers' embrace

By Ahmad alsarraf

One of the representatives tweeted, saying that he lived for many years in the incubators of the Muslim Brotherhood in Kuwait, from his childhood, until the beginning of his university studies, and he has many friends among them, and he bears witness to God that he heard nothing but goodness and concern for the homeland, its development, and prosperity from them. They have no plans to undermine the stability of the country and the safety of its regime!



alsarraf

We will assume that the representative is pretending to be naive, and that he has not heard of the Brotherhood's crimes, but we have the right to assume his good intentions, and to show him some of what is hidden.

Hassan Banna Al-Saati founded his radical religious movement in 1928, with the aim of reviving the Caliphate, which had fallen in Turkey four years earlier, with Egypt as the headquarters for him, the guide and caliph.

Because of the difficulty of achieving the goal, with the group's very modest financial and moral capabilities, Al-Banna sought aid from the British-French Suez Canal Authority, and obtained 500 pounds, but he soon discovered that achieving his dreams through traditional methods, after his failure in the elections, it is not an easy matter, and he has no choice but violence if he wants to Islamize the state and reject the constitution and the parliamentary system.

His use of violence was met with corresponding violence from the monarchy and later from the republican regime, resulting in hundreds of deaths on both sides, including two prime ministers, Maher and Al-Nakrashi, a senior judge and a famous public prosecutor, and a group of thinkers, in addition to the attempts to assassinate presidents that followed, the last of which was an assassination of President Sadat.

Thousands of Brotherhood leaders and cadres were also thrown into prisons over a period of 90 years, and many of them are still languishing there, with the repeated dissolution of their organization, the confiscation of their property, and their displacement outside Egypt.

This history and long bloody conflict shows that the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt repeatedly sought to reach power by force, and their slogan represented by the two swords and the word "and prepare" is the best evidence. The experience of ruling Egypt through Morsi was miserable and demonstrated the emptiness of their thought.

Therefore, the Kuwaiti Brotherhood cannot differ in their goals from the Egyptian Brotherhood, and anyone who believes otherwise is naive, as listening and obedience are to the guide, and to no one else.

It is clear from all of this that Representative Al-Ghalban's words that he heard nothing but goodness and concern for the homeland and its prosperity from them, and that they have no plans to undermine the stability of the country and the safety of its regime, have no meaning.

When Saddam's brutal invasion of our homeland took place, when the representative was perhaps ten years old, and often in the embrace of 'brothers', the homeland was bleeding due to the loss of the lives of its children, the burning of its wealth, and the betrayal of its children by the "Brotherhood."

We were crushed with rage in front of the television screens and radios as we saw and heard. The efforts of the international organization of the Brotherhood, including the Kuwaiti Brotherhood, to thwart the liberation process, and their movement from Lahore to Baghdad to Amman to rally support for Saddam, and their trampling on our feelings by repeatedly meeting with him, and all of these matters are "documented", in audio and video, as evidence of their betrayal of their homeland.

After the liberation, their financial and party interests forced them to abstain from betraying the international organization of Kuwait, and subsequently disavow all affiliation with it, after severing all ties with it, and changing their political name away from it.

But as soon as they were reassured of the strength of their position, after a few years, they returned and declared that they were an integral part. It is separated from the Muslim Brotherhood, and all the evidence for this is available on the Internet. After all that, does the representative believe that the Brotherhood, in whose embrace he lived as a child and a young man, are keen on their country and its prosperity, and have no intention of undermining its stability and the safety of its regime?

Has the representative ever asked himself why their organization was banned in dozens of countries, and was fought fiercely in others, and was classified as a terrorist organization in a number of them, including those to whom we owe great respect?

Why were tens of thousands of Brotherhood cadres killed and imprisoned over a period of nearly 100 years? What is the reason for their "clustering" to amass wealth through dozens of charities, commercial activities, investments, and supporting party candidates for elections?

Why insist on choosing the most evil people to represent them and speak on their behalf? Is it because this religious party believes that the end justifies the means, even if they are dirty?



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The company selling expired food items and molasses sees its doors shut.

Expired food, molasses seized

In a proactive move aimed at upholding laws and regulations and ensuring the well-being of the public, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has taken decisive action against a food company operating in the Shuwaikh Industrial Area. The company was found guilty of stockpiling expired food items and molasses, manipulating their expiration dates, and subsequently distributing them to restaurants and cafes. This reprehensible practice posed a significant threat to the health and safety of consumers, reports Al-Rai daily.

In response to this violation, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has taken

swift measures, including the closure of the implicated company. Legal proceedings against the perpetrators are currently underway, as the authorities are committed to upholding consumer safety and well-being.

This intervention highlights the government's commitment to enforcing regulations within the business sector and safeguarding the integrity of the food and beverage supply chain. The decisive actions taken serve as a deterrent to others who may engage in similar illicit practices, sending a clear message that such activities will not be tolerated.

Court frees man in violent theft of car, beating cops

Duo acquitted in drugs use, peddling

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Court of Cassation canceled the verdict of a lower court which sentenced an individual to five-year imprisonment for stealing a vehicle using violence, resisting security personnel, and assaulting them. The court instead acquitted him due to the lack of the elements of the crime and their proof against him, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Public Prosecution had charged the accused with stealing a vehicle using violence, and threatening to use a sharp instrument (a cleaver) against its driver. He was also charged with deliberately damaging - and with intent to harm - the vehicle and the police patrol owned by the Ministry of Interior, resulting in material damage.

The Public Prosecution stated that the accused assaulted and resisted with force and violence the police officers who were on duty. He recklessly and negligently drove the vehicle, exceeding the maximum speed limit and causing danger to others. He violated the traffic law and its executive regulations, which led to an accident that harmed private property. He drove the vehicle without the knowledge and consent of its holder and owner.

During the court session, the defense counsel lawyer Abdullah Al-Alanda said the elements of the crime of theft were absent against his client and that he did not have criminal intent.

He stressed that the incident officer presented an incorrect picture of the facts of the case, taking from the statements of the

prosecution witnesses despite their lack of credibility and contradiction.

It was also established that the court was certain that the elements of the crimes attributed to the accused were not available and that they were proven against him, as long as it concluded with him the use of clemency towards him.



Acquitted in drugs case: The Criminal Court acquitted two individuals who were accused of possessing psychotropic substances for the purpose of trafficking and abuse. The court decided to acquit them due to the invalidity of the Public Prosecution's warrant, the lack of seriousness of the investigations, and other factors.

According to the case files and based on the Public Prosecution's investigations, the incident officer discovered that the first accused had obtained and possessed narcotic substances with the intention of using them. The officer obtained a warrant from the Public Prosecution and went to the location where his secret source said the first accused would be. He arrested him and searched him to find a blue bag containing 30 sachets of psychotropic substances.

He was referred to the Public Prosecution, which in turn referred him to the General Department of Criminal Evidence. His urine sample was tested and it revealed the presence of psychotropic substances. However, the defense counsel lawyer Ali Haider, during the court session, insisted that the Public Prosecution's warrant for the first accused was invalid due to the lack of seriousness of the investigations and the absence of the place where it was issued.

The subsequent procedures against him were considered invalid, and the documents sent to the General Department of Investigations were invalid because the Public Prosecution mixed the documents seized in the possession of the first accused with the documents seized from the second accused.



Ali Haider



Al-Alanda

Bid to prevent disease spread

MoH advice: 'Avoid shaking hands'

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Ministry of Health has asked the Kuwait Municipality to advise mourners in cemeteries to refrain from shaking hands to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The daily obtained a copy of the letter that Undersecretary of the ministry Dr Abdul-Rahman Al-Mutairi sent to Director General of the Municipality Eng Saud Al-Dabbous on the need to raise public awareness about not shaking hands and to limit greetings to looking at the graves in order to protect the health of everyone.

This is part of the fruitful cooperation between the ministry and Municipality in taking the necessary precautionary and preventive measures to limit the spread of infectious diseases, and out of the ministry's commitment to prevent the spread of infection as a result of shaking hands among mourners in cemeteries.

A health sector source explained to the daily that this is one of several measures taken regularly to protect public health, while affirming that the health situation in

the country is very good and there is no reason to panic. The source pointed out that the ministry regularly sends official letters to the concerned authorities to contribute to taking preventive measures.

Meanwhile, Dr Ahmad Al-Otaibi, a public health doctor, reassured everyone that no new viruses are spreading in the country. He clarified that the ministry's letter to the Municipality is just a reminder to take precautionary measures to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

He said many germs that cause respiratory diseases are spread through droplets from coughing and sneezing.

He added: "These germs usually spread from one person to another when uninfected people are in close contact with a sick person. Some people may become infected by touching something that contains germs, and then touch their mouth or nose." He pointed out that the best way to help prevent the spread of respiratory germs is to avoid contact with droplets or saliva, mucus and tears.

3,273 citations issued, 76 cars seized

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The General Traffic Department (GTD) at the Interior Ministry carried out a traffic security campaign in compliance with the directive of Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security, Traffic and Operations Affairs Major General Abdullah Al-Rajab covering various governorates, and the ring and main roads, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Officer at the Public Relations and Traffic Awareness Section at GTD Major Abdullah Bu Hassan revealed that the campaign resulted in the issuance of 3,273 citations for various traffic violations, while 76 vehicles were impounded.

He said the traffic officers arrested two

people for behaving recklessly and referred them to the Traffic Police Unit in preparation for their referral to the Traffic Court. He added the officers also arrested a person wanted by the Sentence Enforcement General Department as he has been sentenced to jail, in addition to impounding seven vehicles used in committing crimes.

He also confirmed the arrest of two juveniles for driving without a license, indicating that Major General Al-Rajab ordered their referral to the Juvenile Police Department and Criminal Investigation General Department in preparation for referring them to the Juvenile Prosecution.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'World in throes of expanding political, moral, social chaos'

"IS the contemporary world immersed in an age of widespread disorder? There seems to be chaos in political, moral, social, and environmental realms. It is evident that established systems have failed to prevent conflicts and wars, ensure sustainable food and fuel security, and enforce environmental regulations, posing a global threat to human existence. The situation appears uncontrollable, with no discernible leaders capable of navigating through this tumultuous impasse," columnist **Suad Fahd Al-Mojil** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.



Suad Al-Mojil

"The Ukrainian conflict, initially perceived as a short-lived event, has persisted for almost three years. Meanwhile, the conflict between the Zionist entity and Gaza looms large, potentially evolving into a regional catastrophe with global repercussions.

"Last October, just before the Gaza conflict, American writer Thomas Friedman labeled the current era as "post-Cold War," predicting limited prosperity and predictability due to the absence of new capabilities.

"Over the past 30 years, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, Friedman pointed out that four world leaders -- Putin of Russia, Xi Jinping of China, Trump of the United States, and Netanyahu of Israel -- share a common belief in the indispensability of their leadership.

"Their determination to cling to power at any cost contributes to global instability, with Israel becoming a questionable ally and a significant source of regional instability.

"Once, the fixation on power and holding onto leadership was seen as an exclusive Arab characteristic. However, the "advanced" world now exhibits a similar reverence for power. The United States, for instance, proposed a constitutional amendment abolishing term limits, allowing former President Roosevelt to start his fourth term in 1945.

"While power has an allure that can blind minds and eyes, history shows that its effects are not always benign. The dismissal of Khalid ibn al-Walid by Omar ibn al-Khattab serves as an illustrative example, revealing the potential dangers when authority becomes an obsession. Even a victorious and heroic figure like Khalid accepted his dismissal without objection, highlighting the destructive nature of unchecked authority.

"Order, synonymous with authority, fulfills the human need to organize society. However, when this authority transforms into an obsession, it becomes a destructive force, as seen in the cases of Saddam Hussein, Gaddafi, and others.

"This obsession, once thought to be an Arab phenomenon, became evident in the leaders of "advanced" Western countries during the Ukraine war. Trump's obsession and Netanyahu's desperate grip on power transformed the world into a chaotic and hopeless state, prioritizing military superiority over vital economic and developmental transformations.

"Today's world is enveloped in chaos across various dimensions, with no clear signs of a successful and rational vision emerging. Military superiority, guided by financial and arms tycoons, takes precedence, as leaders violate political norms to secure their positions. The chaos is no longer confined to specific regions; it is a global phenomenon, driven by power and greed in a post-Cold War era where former adversaries face each other with unprecedented ferocity."

Also:

"The recent decision from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) dealt a significant blow to Israel and its Western allies. This decision, while a precautionary and temporary measure is not the final ruling and the issuance of the ultimate judgment is expected to take a considerable amount of time. The majority of judges, excluding the objection from the Ugandan judge who echoed Israeli media claims about the Zionist entity's right to self-defense, supported the decision in favor of South Africa," columnist **Hassan Al-Issa** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"The court's ruling did not explicitly demand that Israel cease its aggression against Gaza, a plea made by the plaintiff, the State of South Africa, which had sought to characterize Israel's actions as genocide.

"Instead, the court urged Israel to adhere to international law standards regarding crimes of genocide. This outcome represents a victory for the plaintiff and raises questions about Western countries that allegedly violate democracy and human rights. The English Financial Times, known for its neutrality, described the decision as a scandal for those countries.

"Interestingly, even the Israeli judge in the court did not align with the position taken by the Ugandan judge. The Financial Times, due to its perceived neutrality, is considered closer to media credibility compared to other major Western newspapers.

"In contrast, The Economist, a prominent economic newspaper, departed from its usual impartiality and threw its support behind Israeli aggression. It claimed that the court's decision might weaken the international treaty for crimes of genocide, citing the court's reliance on weak evidence and a low standard of proof in its previous ruling.

"This raises concerns about the challenges faced by the court in determining crimes of genocide if substantial evidence such as scenes of destruction, displacement, the bodies of children, and images of famine do not suffice as reliable proof of Israeli crimes."



"Triumph of values ... The historic ruling of the Court of Cassation stipulates that it is not permissible to enter homes without the permission of the residents. This is a victory for Article 38 of the Constitution, which protects and preserves the sanctity of homes," columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"This ruling was published on the front page of Al-Seyassah daily. The ruling should be written in gold and it is a remarkable position for our ever great judiciary. It is considered a victory for the values and social codes that have characterized the Kuwaiti society since ancient times. We call it the "reuter" lease and it was established by the Constitution.

"Finally, the ruling of the Court of Cassation confirmed that it is not permissible to enter a home based on suspicion that a person wanted by law is hiding there, unless it is the official residence of the wanted person and unless there is strong evidence indicating his presence in this place.

"In this wonderful ruling, there is an emphasis on Islamic values stipulated in the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH), and people continued following them until they became the values of society. This is called "renting tenant", that is, when one enters a house other than his own, he comes next to the owner of the house until he leaves it, as he will not sit in this house forever. He must leave later. He can be arrested after he leaves easily and conveniently without the need for arbitrariness or attack on suspicion without confirmation, and falling under the penalty of the law in the end!

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes

One dead, one injured

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: A citizen, in his 20s died, and another was seriously injured in a horrific traffic accident on the Seventh Ring Road recently, while an Arab sustained serious injuries when he fell from the roof of a commercial complex in Fahaheel, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In a press statement, the Public Relations and Media Department at Kuwait Firefighting Force (KFF) said the Operations Unit received a report about a vehicle that collided with another and then rolled over on the Seventh Ring Road.

Firefighters from Istiqlal Fire Station were immediately dispatched to the location where they found that the citizen, who was in one of the cars, already died, while the other got serious injuries. The firefighters rescued the injured person and handed him over to the medical emergency workers. The remains of the citizen were referred to Forensics.

On the other hand, the Operations Unit received another call at dawn, stating that an Arab worker fell from the roof of a commercial complex in Fahaheel.

Firefighting and rescue teams from Fahaheel Fire Station and the Search and Rescue Center were dispatched to the location. They discovered that the worker had fractures in different parts of his body and he was referred to the Medical Emergency Team.

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Kuwait's leader extends well wishes to King Charles III

Amir receives congratulations and invitation from Costa Rican President

Al-Hajraf surveys readiness of Shuaiba, Zour South stations

Minister commends Kuwaiti youth in energy sector

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: As part of the inspection tours carried out by the Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and the Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr. Salem Falah Al-Hajraf, he visited the Shuaiba and Zour South power stations and water distillation plants yesterday morning.

The minister was accompanied by the Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Power Stations and Water



Dr Al-Hajraf

Distillation Plants Eng. Muhammad Khazal Al-Enezi. They held a meeting with the directors, supervisors and engineers at the Shuaiba and Zour South stations in order to follow up on the maintenance work and their preparations for the 2024 summer season.

Minister Al-Hajraf delivered a speech in which he thanked all workers in the power and water distillation stations sector for their efforts to secure electricity and water for everyone who lives in Kuwait.

He also indicated that he welcomes any suggestions or comments that would help overcome the challenges and develop and advance the work.

Meanwhile, the station managers gave a brief presentation on the various technologies used in the Shuaiba and Zour South stations.

They explained that the production capacity of the Shuaiba station is 1,420 megawatts of electricity and 75 million imperial gallons of water per day, and the production capacity of the

MPW achieves full digital transfer in e-governance

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Ministry of Public Works has achieved a milestone by attaining 100% electronic correspondence, aligning with the government's commitment to complete digital transformation across public sectors, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This accomplishment comes as a result of explicit directives from the acting Undersecretary of the Ministry, Eid Al-Rashidi.

This initiative aims to enhance the efficiency of transaction processes by adopting electronic correspondence among various sectors within the Ministry. The move towards electronic communication not only accelerates transaction completion but also fosters an eco-friendly work environment, aligning with the broader goal of transitioning towards a paperless setting.

KU opts for smart entry system in its administrative bldg and parking lots

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: Dr. Fayez Al-Dhafiri, the Acting Secretary-General of Kuwait University and the university's spokesperson, has announced that the Security and Safety Department is set to implement the smart entry system in the administrative building and its parking lots at Sabah Al-Salem University City starting today, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This initiative is part of Kuwait University's ongoing commitment to enhancing safety, protection, and efficiency, meeting the expectations of the university community.

Dr. Al-Dhafiri emphasized that, besides its security significance, the smart entry system reflects the university's dedication to continuous

development and the utilization of modern technology for entry and exit processes on campus. The system, more efficient and flexible than traditional manual entry methods, aims to facilitate seamless movement within university facilities.

Muhammad Al-Sulaiman, the Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Facilities Management Affairs, highlighted the user-friendly nature and efficiency of the smart entry system. Employees, auditors, and visitors can access authorized departments, work centers, and parking lots by simply swiping their smart cards at designated readers located at various entry points in the administrative building.

Zour South station is 5,560 megawatts of electricity and 140 million imperial gallons of water per day. The Zour station is considered the connection point for the national electrical grid with the Gulf electrical interconnection system.

Minister Al-Hajraf was also briefed on the progress of work at the Shuaiba and Al-Zour South stations.

He praised the national role played by the Kuwaiti youth and their dedication to performing their duties to the fullest extent. He urged them to continue giving the best knowledge and skills they possess, developing technical capabilities, and constantly learning about the latest global technologies in the field of energy and water.

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday a cable from President Rodrigo Chaves Robles, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, congratulating His Highness on assuming office.

In the cable, President Robles said that he looks forward to the continuation of strengthening the bilateral relations between the two nations and conveyed his best wishes to the Amir, wishing him good health and more prosperity and progress to Kuwait.

President Robles also extended an invitation to His Highness the Amir to pay an official visit to the Republic of Costa Rica.

On his part, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal

Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a reply cable to President Robles thanking him for the heartfelt sentiments and for the invitation to visit the Republic of Costa Rica, wishing President Robles good health and wellbeing and more progress and prosperity for the Republic of Costa Rica.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable to King Charles III, the Monarch of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and North Ireland, expressing his hope for a speedy recovery following his admission to the hospital due to a setback and routine check-up.

His Highness the Amir wished King Charles II all the best, the UK and North Ireland optimum progress and prosperity.



Participants in the International Horticultural Expo 2023 in Qatar.



Mohammad Alarbeed



KFH honors Eng. Samira Al Kandari.

'Green Desert, Better Environment'

KFH demonstrates its 'pioneering' sustainability efforts at Expo Doha

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: As part of its leadership and role in sustainability, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) participated in the International Horticultural Expo 2023 in Qatar.

The Horticultural Expo 2023 Doha, from October 2023 until March 2024, is held for the first time in the Middle East, with the participation of 80 countries and 3 million visitors.

Under the slogan "Green Desert, Better Environment", the event attracts a number of public, private, and non-governmental sectors, in addition to universities and experts. The aim of Expo Doha is to identify solutions and promote green living through international collaboration, modern agriculture, innovation, technology, environmental awareness, and sustainability.

On the sidelines of Expo 2023 Doha, the Kuwait pavilion hosted a discussion session titled "The Role of Private Sector in Sustainability", and it was organized as part of the "Responsible Banking Services towards achieving Sustainable Growth" event.

During the discussion, KFH Executive Manager Governance and Sustainability, Mohammad Alarbeed, showcased KFH's experience in promoting sustainability and integrating ESG practices into all its operations. He underlined the Bank's ceaseless efforts in introducing green finance products and aligning its business with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Alarbeed discussed the banking policies and procedures that would maintain the pre-

vious implementation of effective strategies to achieve sustainable growth.

He also shed light on the (Keep it Green) campaign, the umbrella of KFH's sustainable and environmental initiatives.

Alarbeed explained that the sustainability strategy of KFH is founded upon its rich history in sustainable Islamic finance, its role as the largest bank in Kuwait and the second largest Islamic bank in the world, and its wide network spanning nearly all continents. "Being a key in its strategy, sustainability is integrated into all operations of KFH," said Alarbeed.

Meanwhile, Environment Public Authority (EPA) Acting General Manager, Eng. Samira Al Kandari commended KFH's participation in the event and lauded its sustainability and environmental efforts. "KFH is one of the renowned institutions the EPA collaborates with in the different sustainability and environmental activities," added Al Kandari.

KFH achieved notable success in its sustainability endeavors in 2023, earning several prestigious awards. For example, Euromoney granted KFH the "Best Islamic Bank for ESG- global category" award for the year 2023. This serves as a testament to the bank's unwavering commitment to ESG practices across its entire range of banking activities. Also, KFH was honored with the Sustainability Award in the Middle East from EMEA Finance and was named as Kuwait's Best Bank for Sustainable Finance by Global Finance.

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Kuna Photo

Cairo International Book Fair in its 55th session opening day.

NCCAL's diverse publications draw attention

Cairo International Book Fair reaches one million visitors since opening day

CAIRO, Jan 28, (KUNA): The Egyptian Ministry of Culture announced, Sunday, the Cairo International Book Fair achieved record-breaking numbers in its 55th edition with over three million visitors after three days of its opening.

The Minister of Culture, Dr. Nevine Al-Kilani, affirmed in a statement that the significant crowd attendance at the fair marks a promising start, indicating the exceptional nature of this edition of the fair's history, reflecting its importance, cultural impact, and artistic content it offers to the public, in addition to maintaining progress and developments in diverse fields.

Furthermore, Dr. Al-Kilani added that the number of visitors on the third day reached 404,931 people, praising the interest of the Egyptians and their eagerness to receive "cultural nourishment."

She also acknowledged their awareness of the value of knowledge to better and

build societies.

The current edition of the book fair is held from January 25th till February 6th in Cairo's International Exhibition Center under the sponsorship of the Egyptian President, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi with the slogan, "we create knowledge, we preserve the word."

Kuwait's participation in the fair includes an impressive pavilion with publications from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Information and the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), and Center for Research and Studies on Kuwait (CRSK), and many more.

Publications of the NCCAL have a long history of attracting interest of Arab visitors, an official said on Saturday.

This came in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) by Saad Al-Enezi, Director of NCCAL's book fairs department and Kuwait International Book Fair during his participation in 55th session of the Cairo International Book Fair (CIBF).

LOCAL

Where there

Continued from Page 1

There is a lot of equipment that we have never seen in restoration and repair operations, especially in the city of Wafra, and other areas.

Here we beg to ask - Where was all this equipment? Why was it not used in recent years?

Perhaps the answer to this question is not difficult, since the justifications were ready.

In the past, as soon as a minister assumes his ministry, he works on either shifting blame on those who preceded him, or saying that the budget is not enough, or that the National Assembly is obstructing projects, or that they did not get orders from above. In reality, all of them are weak justifications that indicate inability and hide many personal interests.

This kind of sluggishness sends any official in another country to go to prison, after being dismissed from his position. However, in Kuwait, it is the other way round.

Today, there is an apparent enthusiasm that must continue, such that it is not just a matter of recording a position among all ministers.

Treatments should be carried out according to the wishes of the people who have lost their voices after screaming about what they are suffering in all sectors of the state.

We will not repeat the talk about the huge potential that exists in Kuwait, through which it is able to get out of its development impasse. However, this is not possible with false slogans that hide behind them many personal ambitions and the agendas of powers and sects.

We recently saw what the peaceful Kuwait was about to endure, but Allah protected us as always.

What is required of all ministers, each in his or her own field of specialization, and of their boss as well, is to work on continuing the flame of enthusiasm among everyone.

They should not be content with this temporary flurry of activity, because its mere cessation will have a negative impact on them and on Kuwait.

This is why we say over and over again - Where there's a will, there's a way.

Does the current Council of Ministers have the will to find a way?

Family visa

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, a security source revealed that the Residency Affairs departments in the six governorates and the main building in Dajej received a number of family visa applications on the first day.

He stressed that the departments are working on these visas after completing the necessary legal procedures.

Furthermore, the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Acting Minister of Interior Fahad Al-Yousef issued a decision to amend some provisions of the ministerial resolution No. 957/2019 in the executive regulations of the foreigners' residence law, specifying the conditions for obtaining regular family residency permit.

The first article of the decision stated that -

Article 29 of the aforementioned ministerial resolution No. 957/2019 is amended to as follows:

"To obtain a regular residence permit to join a family for those coming from abroad, the monthly salary of the foreigner residing in the country must not be less than KD 800. The monthly salary of a foreigner is considered as the wage resulting from work in his profession on the basis for which he was granted residency in the country.

He must have university qualifications and his profession in the country should be consistent with his specialization.

A resident foreigner who works in professions stipulated in article 30 of the decision is excluded from the requirement of obtaining a university qualification."

Regarding granting regular residency to join a family for those residing or born inside the country, and those born outside the country who are not more than five years old to parents residing in the country, the Director General of the General Department of Residency Affairs is responsible for excluding them from the salary requirement referred to in the first paragraph of this article in accordance with the controls and conditions determined by the General Department of Residency Affairs.

The second article of the decision stipulates that the undersecretary is tasked with implementing this decision, and it will come into effect from the date of its publication in the official gazette.

Last Thursday, the Ministry of Interior had announced the resumption of family visa issuance but under new controls and conditions.

According to the statement issued by the Ministry of Interior, based on the instructions of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, applications for joining a family will be received in the various Residency Affairs departments in the country according to new controls and conditions as of Sunday.

This is following the issuance of ministerial resolution No. 56/2024, which set new conditions and regulations that regulate the process of issuing entry visas to join a family. These conditions include the need for the minimum salary requirement to be KD 800, and for the applicant to hold a university qualification that is consistent with his profession.

Deputy Amir,

Continued from Page 1

and before assuming his functions, the Deputy Amir shall take the oath prescribed in Article 60 to which shall be added the phrase 'and to be loyal to the Amir.' Should the Assembly not be in

session, the aforementioned oath shall be taken before the Amir."

Article 60: At a special session of the National Assembly and before taking over his functions, the Amir shall take the following Oath: "I swear by God Almighty to respect the Constitution and the Laws of the State, to defend the people's liberties, their interests and their properties, and to safeguard the Nation's independence and the safety of its territories."

In response to the request of the government, Assembly Speaker Ahmed Al-Saadoun called for the special session as per Article 72 of the National Assembly Law. This article gives the Speaker the authority to call for a session that will be held within at least 48 hours or less than the stipulated period if he deems it necessary or if the government requested for it or if at least 10 MPs called for it.

On Wednesday last week, an Amiri order was issued appointing HH the Prime Minister as Deputy Amir while HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is outside the country.

Kuwait's money

Continued from Page 1

Average interest rate on one-year treasury bonds settled last December at 4.625 percent, while financing of Kuwaiti imports went up 34.9 percent to KD 819 million (about USD 2.7 billion), while the average exchange rate of US Dollar against Kuwaiti Dinar dropped by 0.2 percent to .3078fils.

Narrow money supply indicates total volume of money in circulation including notes, coins and operational money deposits, whereas the broad money supply includes time deposits and saving accounts, as well as liquid money.

Labor shelter

Continued from Page 1

The preference is for virtual meetings rather than physical delegations. Al-Shammari emphasized the urgency for prompt and earnest governmental intervention to navigate the discussions initiated by Kuwait last month, which exhibited positive outcomes. However, Manila's insistence on utilizing labor shelters established by its embassy in Kuwait remains a point of contention.

Al-Shammari cautioned against an impending labor shortage crisis in the Kuwaiti market within the next two months unless swift action is taken to eliminate obstacles hindering local recruitment offices. These impediments currently impede their ability to fulfill their role in bringing in new workers that align with the demands and requirements of citizens.

Highlighting the significance of Filipino domestic workers, who constitute around 200,000 or 50% of the total domestic workforce in Kuwait, Al-Shammari underscored the importance of their services to both Kuwaiti and expatriate families. Reasons cited include the ease of communication, high educational levels, and familiarity with societal customs and traditions.

'Unity' key

Continued from Page 1

- Establishment of a four-lane two-way road connecting Wafra to Shaddadiya;

- Establishment of a direct exit from Sabahiya leading to King Fahd Highway to Nuwaiseeb.

In addition, Al-Anbai asked Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah if the cash bonus was paid to the employees of the subsidiaries of the Interior Ministry after the issuance of Civil Service Commission (CSC) decision number 32/2023.

He also asked Minister of Finance Anwar Al-Mudhaf about the rationale behind the suspension of the diesel subsidy for fishermen since Nov 1, 2023. He pointed out this led to the increase in fish prices, because of the increase in fishing cost.

Moreover, Chairman of the Kuwaiti-Turkish Parliamentary Friendship Group MP Mohammad Hayef revealed that more than 300 Kuwaitis invested in the Babaz real estate project before the company went bankrupt. He said the committee asked the Kuwait Investment Office in Turkey to appeal to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to complete the project after the settlement with the bankrupt company in order to protect the investments of Kuwaitis and the citizens of other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

He added he asked the officials at the Turkish Ministry of Interior to lift the entry ban on Kuwaitis whose names are similar to individuals prevented from entering Turkey for committing certain crimes.

Also, the Kuwaiti-Austrian Parliamentary Friendship Group consisting of MPs Hamad Al-Elyan, Shuaib Shaaban, Abdulwahab Al-Essa and Osama Al-Zaid recently met with a number of committees at the Austrian Parliament.

Al-Elyan said the meeting with the chairman and members of the Education Affairs Committee included a presentation on the Austrian experience in education, which is distinguished among the European countries. He affirmed that the group will pass the information they obtained to the senior officials at the Ministry of Education in Kuwait in order to benefit from the Austrian experience.

He revealed that they talked about the possibility of an exchange of ideas and experience about scholarships, training courses and research between the two countries.

He said the Kuwaiti delegation invited the members and chairman of the Austrian parliamentary Education Affairs Committee to visit Kuwait's National Assembly to further strengthen ties for the benefit of all parties.



Zain's team with the participants at ZINC.

Cultivating culture of creativity by empowering use of technology

Zain hosts drone photography workshop

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Zain Innovation Campus (ZINC) hosted a special workshop that covered the basics of drone photography and videography, presented by the talented Kuwaiti photographer and content creator Omar Al-Sayed Omar. The workshop was joined by many enthusiasts and beginners looking to explore aerial photography and improve their skills.

This session is a continuation of a series of specialized workshops Zain hosts from time to time to foster a culture of creativity in the community using technology. Through such initiatives, the company hopes to empower individuals to use tech innovation and pursue their passion for art, by bringing the best local content creators to share their insights and expertise with them.

During the workshop, Omar Alsayed Omar, a talented Kuwaiti photographer



Omar Alsayed Omar presenting the workshop.

and popular content creator, explained the basics of aerial photography and videography using drones, focusing on both theoretical and practical approaches. He also asserted the importance of obtaining

official permits before flying drones and emphasized the necessary steps to ensure safety while flying.

Omar Alsayed Omar also shared tips and tricks on how to operate drones,

how to use the controller, how to prepare shots and take unique angles not possible with traditional cameras, and how each and every photographer can reflect their own personal touch in their work.

The workshop was well-received, having featured participation from many photography and camera enthusiasts. The participants varied in their skill levels, with beginners, intermediate, and advanced photographers successfully enrolling to upskill their passion in aerial photography and videography.

Zain continues to cultivate a culture of creativity in the community by empowering talented people to take advantage of technology. The company continues to collaborate with local content creators to offer programs and sessions to encourage the public - especially young people - to pursue their passions and foster their innovation, creativity, and technology skills.

Private sector union to launch unprecedented 'job fair' at KU

2,700 career opportunities to be provided for Kuwaitis

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: Head of the Private Sector Workers Union Khaled Al-Enezi revealed that the union will organize the largest job fair in Kuwait at Kuwait University.

It will be sponsored by the Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Sheikh Firas Al-Malik and will be held from February 27 to 29 during which 2,700 career opportunities will be provided for Kuwaitis.

Al-Enezi indicated that the fair will also provide more than 1,200 part-time job opportunities in co-operative societies for Kuwaitis studying in the university, and 1,500 full-time jobs in the oil, banking, communications and electricity sectors.

Opportunities

He said such a fair is the first of its kind, as it focuses on providing job opportunities for Kuwait University students in order to increase their experience prior to their graduation in line with the state's policy of supporting national cadres in the private sector.

Al-Enezi affirmed that Taqa Petroleum Services Company, affiliated with the Saudi Investment Fund, will participate in the fair and will offer many job opportunities for Kuwaitis in all its branches both inside and outside Kuwait.

He called on private sector companies to attract Kuwaiti youth to work in this sector, adding that he hopes the number of national workers in the private sector will rise from 64,000 to more than 100,000 this year.

Ministry addresses appeals 'verdict' in Ardhiya project suit

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Minister of Commerce and Industry, Abdullah Al-Joa'an, has affirmed that there is ongoing coordination between the Public Authority for Industry and the Fatwa and Legislation Department, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The aim is to take all necessary measures to monitor and conclude the legal proceedings related to the recent ruling by the Court of Appeal concerning a lawsuit filed by a company against the "PAL, connected to the Crafts and Small Industries Complex project in the Ardhiya area."

Last Wednesday, the Court of Appeal issued a verdict on Appeals Nos. 1989, 2063, and 2064 of 2021 Commercial Civil Government/8.

The ruling obligated both the Minister of Trade and Industry and the Director General of the Public Authority for Industry to provide financial compensation to the aforementioned company. It's noteworthy that this legal matter originated in 2007 and is still under consideration in court.

Al-Majren outlines modernization plans

MoC accelerates digital transformation

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Communications Dr. Ahmed Al-Majren says the ministry is currently working on completing the billing system project, which aims to automate all services and transform them into digital services.

He stressed that the project will see the light soon to move forward in developing and modernizing work mechanisms within the ministry, and keep pace with the changes of the times in a way that contributes to achieving the New Kuwait 2035 vision, which all government agencies seek to achieve in coordination and cooperation among themselves.

Dr. Al-Majren explained in an interview with Al-Seyassah that in parallel with the electronic services that are provided through applications or websites, and in order to serve the elderly or those who are unable to use electronic applications, the ministry is currently seeking to work on establishing a call center to provide visitors' services entirely via telephone service. Its operation will be completed during the coming period.

The ministry is currently also seeking to provide a center for people with special needs, which includes sign language translation services for the deaf and mute, either through their attendance in person at the service center, which will be called the "Diwan for People of Disabilities" or via video contact with the service center.

Question: Firstly, what are the most important and prominent developments within the ministry? What are the most important plans through which it seeks to develop and modernize its services?

Answer: It is no secret that the Ministry of Communications is one of the ministries that provides direct services to citizens and residents. These services need to be developed continuously to keep up with everything that is new, so we always strive to achieve this aspect by developing the existing systems in the ministry, as well as developing the services provided.

These services include, but are not limited to the fiber optic project, which is considered a qualitative leap in the world of communications due to its advanced modern advantages such as providing very high ranges of information transfer speeds, especially Internet service speeds, which can reach hundreds of MB. These services are provided by the ministry through Internet service provider companies. Kuwait is one of the leading countries among the Gulf countries in using this type of technology.

Q: Where have the plans and programs aimed at automating services reached?

A: The ministry has direct dealings with the public, and also works within the government system. This requires us, as officials of the ministry, to keep pace with the development of government work, which aims to accelerate the digitization of electronic services and keep pace with global technological development.

It is natural that accelerating the steps to digitize services would improve the dimensions of the level of performance of the services provided by the ministry.

If we go back in memory a little, specifically during the COVID-19 pandemic, and recall the circumstances that the world went through the curfew, we find that Kuwait is an integral part of this world, and is not isolated from any circumstances or challenges. We found that the process of rushing to digitize all services has become an urgent necessity. Almost all emergency plans necessitated us to rush in this direction, as it will save time and effort, as well as speed up the completion of transactions without the need to visit the ministry. It will also ensure that work is not interrupted under any circumstances.

Q: Where is the Ministry of Communications on the map of the government program "Sahel"? What is the extent of cooperation and coordination between the ministry and the application?

A: The Ministry of Communications is always proactive in providing all means that would provide better service to



Dr Al-Majren

citizens and residents. Since the start of the Sahel app, the ministry has been present in this app through the services it provides.

For example, the issuance of a "clearance certificate," which previously required the person to personally attend one of the ministry's centers to extract it and submit it to the concerned authority, as it is a basic requirement in many government departments to complete some transactions.

However, we noticed that this procedure is difficult for clients. From here, we began coordinating with those in charge of the Sahel app to include it among the electronic services in the ministry's Sahel program. Obtaining the certificate became much easier than before, as requesting a certificate only requires the individual to enter his civil number, and then extract the certificate and present it to the concerned authority in the event that it does not exist.

If there is a financial claim, the person can also pay through the Sahel application to obtain a clearance certificate. It is available to everyone, irrespective of whether the person deals with the ministry or not, using just the civil ID number.

Q: To what extent is the demand for completing the ministry's transactions on the Sahel application?

A: All services in the Sahel app associated with the ministry are successful and in demand. For example, in the past, payment of dues was done in a purely traditional way by coming to the exchange and paying, but today we find that almost 90 percent of the payment of financial dues and phone subscriptions is done through Sahel.

Q: What are the latest developments in fiber optics?

A: We have come a long way, and as everyone knows, we have many services in various sectors. As I mentioned at the beginning, the ministry is now seeking to convert all areas of Kuwait from the copper telephone network to fiber optics.

Q: Where is the law for establishing a Kuwaiti postal company?

A: We have made important strides in this through the completion of the company law. We are now awaiting its approval in the National Assembly so that we can complete the work on this law, which will be considered a qualitative leap for developing services as it is one of the most important pillars of e-commerce to meet the needs of citizens and residents, in addition to regulating postal activities that were exploited by many companies without regulation, which had a significant impact on their acquisition of the largest share of postal services.

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World News Roundup

Europe

'Officials stole \$40m'

Finland votes in tight presidential election

HELSINKI, Jan 28, (AP): Voters in Finland were electing a new president Sunday at an unprecedented time for the Nordic nation that is now a NATO member with its eastern border with Russia closed - two things almost unthinkable a few years ago.

Polls across the country opened at 9 am (0700 GMT) and will close at 8 pm (1800 GMT).

Unlike in most European countries, the president of Finland holds executive power in formulating foreign and security policy, particularly when dealing with countries outside the European Union like the United States, Russia and China.

The president also acts as the supreme commander of the Finnish military, a particularly important duty in Europe's current security environment.

Some 4.5 million citizens are eligible to vote for Finland's new head of state from an array of nine candidates - six men and three women. They are picking a successor to hugely popular President Sauli Niinistö, whose second six-year term expires in March. He is not eligible for re-election.

No candidate is expected to get more than 50% of the vote in Sunday's first round of voting, pushing the race into a runoff

in February.

Recent polls suggest that former prime minister Alexander Stubb, 55, and ex-Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto, 65, are the leading contenders.

Stubb, who represents the conservative National Coalition Party and headed the Finnish government in 2014-2015, and veteran politician Haavisto, an ex-United Nations diplomat running for the post for the third time, are each estimated to garner 23%-27% of the votes.

They are followed by Parliament speaker and former leader of the far-right Finns Party Jussi Halla-aho with around 18%. Bank of Finland governor and former EU Commissioner Olli Rehn is expected to receive about a 14% share of the votes.

Finland's new head of state will start a six-year term in March in a markedly different geopolitical and security situation in Europe than did incumbent Niinistö after the 2018 election.

Abandoning decades of military non-alignment in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Finland became NATO's 31st member in April, much to the annoyance of President Vladimir Putin of Russia, which shares a 1,340-kilometer (832-mile) border with the Nordic nation.

Boosted

NATO membership, which has made Finland the Western military alliance's front-line country toward Russia, and the war raging in Ukraine a mere 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) away from Finland's border have boosted the president's status as a security policy leader.

In line with consensus-prone Finnish politics, months of campaigning have proceeded smoothly among the candidates. They all agree on major foreign policy issues like Finland's future policies toward Russia, enhancing security cooperation with the United States and the need to continue helping Ukraine both militarily and with humanitarian assistance.

"I think (campaigning) has been done in a civilized mode because of the security situation," Pekka Haavisto told The Associated Press during his last campaign event at a music bar just outside the capital, Helsinki, late Saturday.

"We (candidates) don't disagree on basic questions. But it's a question of the credibility of the new president and his previous experience in foreign and security policy," said Haavisto, who as foreign minister signed Finland's historic accession treaty to NATO last year and played a key role in the membership process.

Also:

KYIV, Ukraine: Employees from a Ukrainian arms firm conspired with defense ministry officials to embezzle almost \$40 million earmarked to buy 100,000 mortar shells for the war with Russia, Ukraine's security service reported.

The SBU said late Saturday that five people have been charged, with one person detained while trying to cross the Ukrainian border. If found guilty, they face up to 12 years in prison.

The investigation comes as Kyiv attempts to clamp down on corruption in a bid to speed up its membership in the European Union and NATO. Officials from both blocs have demanded widespread anti-graft reforms before Kyiv can join them.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was elected on an anti-corruption platform in 2019, long before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Both the president and his aides have portrayed the recent firings of top officials, notably that of Ivan Bakanov, former head of the State Security Service, in July 2022, as proof of their efforts to crack down on graft.

Security officials say that the current investigation dates back to August 2022, when officials signed a contract for artillery shells worth 1.5 billion hryvnias (\$39.6 million) with arms firm Lviv Arsenal.

After receiving payment, company employees were supposed to transfer the funds to a business registered abroad, which would then deliver the ammunition to Ukraine.

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KYIV, Ukraine: Officials in Ukraine said Russia has provided no credible evidence to back its claims that Ukrainian forces shot down a military transport plane that Moscow says was carrying Ukrainian prisoners of war who were to be swapped for Russian POWs.

The Ukrainian agency that deals with prisoner exchanges said late Friday that Russian officials had "with great delay" provided it with a list of the 65 Ukrainians who Moscow said had died in the plane crash in Russia's Belgorod region on Wednesday.

Ukraine's Coordination Staff for the Treatment of Prisoners of War said relatives of the named POWs were unable to identify their loved ones in crash site photos provided by Russian authorities. The agency's update cited Ukraine's military intelligence chief, Lt. Col. Kyrylo Budanov, as saying that Kyiv had no verifiable information about who was on the plane.

The Russian Defense Ministry said Wednesday that missiles fired from across the border brought down the transport plane that it said was taking the POWs back to Ukraine. Local authorities in Belgorod, which borders Ukraine, said the crash killed all 74 people onboard, including six crew members and three Russian servicemen.



Texas Department of Public Safety officers guard an entrance to Shelby Park on Jan. 11, 2024, in Eagle Pass, Texas. The Justice Department on Jan. 12, asked the Supreme Court to order Texas to stop blocking Border Patrol agents from a portion of the US-Mexico border where large numbers of migrants have crossed in recent months, setting up another showdown between Republican Gov Greg Abbott and the Biden administration over immigration enforcement. Inset: US Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump speaks at a campaign event on Jan 27 in Las Vegas. (AP)

Politics

Border state clashes with Biden administration

Trump praises Texas governor Abbott

LAS VEGAS, Jan 28, (AP): Former US president Donald Trump lavished praise on Texas Gov Greg Abbott for not allowing the Biden administration entry to remove razor wire in a popular corridor for migrants illegally entering the US in an escalating feud over immigration.

In a speech focused overwhelmingly on border security, Trump said Texas should be given full support in its measures to deter migrants along the US-Mexico border. The state is restricting the US Border Patrol after the Supreme Court cleared the way for these federal agents to cut or remove the sharp metal barrier.

"When I'm president, instead of trying to send Texas a restraining order, I will send them reinforcements," Trump told a crowd of supporters in Las Vegas, where he rallied on an indoor soccer field in a largely Latino neighborhood. "Instead of fighting border states, I will use every resource tool and authority of the US president to defend the United States of America from this horrible invasion that is taking place right now."

Trump largely avoided talking about a verdict delivered by a jury in a defamation case Friday, ordering him to pay an additional \$83.3 million to columnist E. Jean Carroll, who he called a liar for accusing him of sexual assault.

Securing

The former president, who is getting closer to securing the Republican presidential nomination, said he was the victim of the Biden administration weaponizing law enforcement against him as he faces 91 criminal charges in four indictments accusing him of trying to overturn the 2020 presidential election, mishandling classified documents and arranging payoffs to a star.

"What they're doing with elections and election interference as an example of what they do with me," he said. "Look at yesterday, look at all this crap that's going on, but we keep marching forward, we just keep going and somehow it all works out."

Annabelle Weislocher, 51, a nurse who retired from the Navy and the Air Force Reserve, said she felt the cases against Trump are attempts to weaken him and drain him from his resources. "They know he's leading. They know

he's strong. And they're doing everything just to lower him," she said. "That's what they're trying to do, take his money thinking he won't have enough funds to campaign. That's the goal."

Trump's support among Hispanics has grown since he first ran in 2016. And on Saturday, he drove that point, drawing loud cheers when he claimed he was doing very well in that voter demographic.

The Republican candidate said Hispanic and Black families hurt most from the arrival of migrants into the country and said President Joe Biden should not have ended restrictions implemented during the Trump administration to deter migration.

Process

"I'll get it solved and I'll get it solved and start the process on day one - on day one, we will start that process," he said. "That's why we're going to win the record share of Latino votes."

The historic number of migrants arriving at the US border with Mexico during Biden's term is one of the main challenges of his reelection campaign.

Immigration was a top issue during Iowa's Republican caucuses earlier this month, when Trump won. An AP VoteCast survey found about 9 in 10 caucusgoers backed building a wall along the US-Mexico border, with about 7 in 10 expressing strong support for the idea.

Bidding to salvage a border deal in Congress that also would unlock money for Ukraine, President Joe Biden offered fresh assurances Saturday night that he would be willing to close the US-Mexico border if lawmakers would only send him a bill to sign.

Biden - also eager to disarm GOP criticism of his handling of migration at the border - said at a political event in South Carolina that he would shut down the border "right now" if Congress passed the proposed deal. The framework hasn't been formally agreed to by Senate Democrats and Republicans and would face an uncertain future in the GOP-controlled House.

"A bipartisan bill would be good for America and help fix our broken immigration system and allow speedy access for those who deserve to be here, and Congress needs to get it done," Biden said. "It'll also give me as presi-

dent, the emergency authority to shut down the border until it could get back under control. If that bill were the law today, I'd shut down the border right now and fix it quickly."

The deal being negotiated in Congress would require the US to shutter the border if roughly 5,000 migrants cross illegally on any given day. Some one-day totals last year exceeded 10,000.

Issues

Trump has been pressuring Republicans for weeks to kill the negotiations. He's loathe to give a win to Biden on an issue that animated the Republican's successful 2016 campaign and that he wants to use as he seeks to return to the White House. Negotiators had appeared to be closing in on a deal, but it started to fray after Trump's admonitions to conservative lawmakers grew stronger.

In a written statement on Friday evening, Biden said the deal would allow him "a new emergency authority" to close the border. He added: "And if given that authority, I would use it the day I sign the bill into law."

It was a stark claim from a Democratic president that was met with astonishment and shock from immigrant advocates who have said his policies do not reflect the progressive approach they had expected.

"Voters want to see our elected leaders do the hard work to fix our frayed immigration system," said Deirdre Schiffeling, chief political and advocacy officer at the American Civil Liberties Union. "President Biden and Congress must abandon these proposals and heed voters' demands for fair and effective immigration policies that manage the border and treat people seeking safety with dignity."

But Biden is struggling across multiple fronts, dealing with an influx of asylum seekers even as he cracks down on those who cross into the U.S. illegally. Democrats are increasingly frustrated because asylum seekers are streaming into cities that lack the resources to care for them.

In a letter Saturday responding to Biden's comments, House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., insisted that Biden doesn't need congressional action to close the border and called on him to "take executive action immediately to reverse the catastrophe he has created."

One deputy fired at one of the people, and that person was killed, the sheriff's office said.

The second person was arrested and charged with assault, the sheriff's office said. (AP)

□ □ □

13 injured in vehicles crash: Crashes involving more than 40 vehicles closed all lanes on the heavily-traveled US 50 Bay Bridge in Maryland on Saturday, injuring 13 people and snarling traffic for about six hours, authorities said.

The Maryland Transportation Authority said on X, formerly Twitter, that the morning crashes on the westbound lanes closed the bridge and caused major delays for motorists. The transportation authority said in a later post that eastbound and westbound traffic were alternating turns on the eastbound bridge, but the westbound bridge remained closed. Westbound lanes reopened Saturday afternoon, the transportation authority said on X.

Two people were taken to hospitals with serious injuries, authorities said. Eleven others also were hurt. None of the injuries were considered life threatening.

Twenty-three vehicles were involved in the initial chain-reaction crash and investigators believe about 20 others were involved in a series of secondary crashes, the transportation authority said. (AP)



A local resident looks at the debris of an industrial building surrounded by apartment houses after a night of Russian rocket attack in Sloviansk, Ukraine on Jan 27. (AP)



McGeeney



Muniz

America

'4 dead in murder-suicide': Four people are dead following what police in Los Angeles characterized as a murder-suicide in the Granada Hills area on Saturday.

Officers responded shortly before 7 pm to a report of a shooting in the 11600 block of Lerdo Avenue and found four people who were pronounced dead at the scene. Investigators determined the shooting was a murder-suicide, the Los Angeles Police Department said.

After receiving the call, there was no answer when the officers arrived and knocked at the door, police said.

Police forced entry into the home and a survivor of the shooting directed them to three victims. The deceased included a man in his late 40s and two women, one in her late 40s and another who was about 80. They all died of gunshot wounds, police said.

"The witness was inside and fortunately was not harmed during the incident and was able to barricade themselves and call the police," LAPD Capt Kelly Muniz said during a press briefing. (AP)

□ □ □

'No sign of foul play': It has been three weeks since three Kansas City fans joined friends to watch the Chiefs play the Los Angeles Chargers in the final game of the regular season. Their bodies were found in a friend's backyard two days later. Police still haven't said how the men died, but affirmed Saturday amid intense public speculation that they still have no evidence of foul play.

It's common for police to decline to comment much on an investigation before it's complete. So here's a look at what's known and not known in a mystery that has gained widespread attention on social media and the internet despite - or perhaps because of - the lack of solid information.

Police accounts say Ricky Johnson, 38; Clayton McGeeney, 36; and David Harrington, 37; went to the home of a friend in Kansas City, Missouri, to watch the Chiefs game Jan 7. None of them made it home. Two nights later, McGeeney's fiancé went to the home looking for him. (AP)

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Deputy fatally shoots man: Authorities in South Carolina were investigating

on Saturday the fatal shooting of a man by sheriff's deputy.

Deputies with the Greenville County Sheriff's Office responded Friday night to

a call about a disturbance and a possible assault, a sheriff's office news release said.

Deputies encountered two people, and at least one had a gun, the sheriff's office said.



People wait in to cast their ballots at a polling station during presidential elections in Helsinki, Finland on Jan 28. (AP)

Lat/Am

4 officers killed

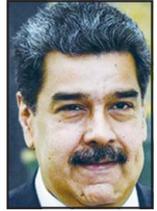
US slams Venezuela ban on oppn leader

CARACAS, Venezuela, Jan 28, (AP): The US government and nearly 30 conservative world leaders on Saturday condemned the decision of Venezuela's highest court to block the presidential candidacy of opposition leader María Corina Machado.

The Biden administration, however, remained non-committal about reimposing economic sanctions on Venezuela, which it has threatened to do if the government of President Nicolás Maduro failed to ensure a level playing field for the country's presidential election this year.

"The United States is currently reviewing our Venezuela sanctions policy, based on this development and the recent political targeting of democratic opposition candidates and civil society," US State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said in a statement.

Machado won a presidential primary held in October by the faction of the opposition backed by the US. She secured more than 90% of the vote despite the Venezuelan government announcing a 15-year ban on her running for office just days after she formally entered the race in June.



Maduro

The former lawmaker and longtime government foe was able to participate in the primary because the election was organized by a commission independent of Venezuela's electoral authorities. Machado insisted throughout the campaign that she never received official notification of the ban and said voters, not ruling-party loyalists, were the rightful decision-makers of her candidacy.

Venezuela's Supreme Tribunal of Justice on Friday upheld the ban, which was based on alleged fraud and tax violations, and accuses Machado of seeking the economic sanctions the US imposed on Venezuela.

The ruling came more than three months after Maduro and the US-backed opposition reached a deal to work on basic conditions for a fair election. The two sides agreed to hold the election in the second half of 2024, invite international electoral observers, and create a process for aspiring presidential candidates to appeal their bans.

The deal led Washington to ease some economic sanctions on Venezuela's oil, gas and mining sectors.

Commitments

Miller said Friday's decision from Venezuela's Supreme Tribunal of Justice "runs contrary to the commitments made by Maduro and his representatives" under the agreement signed in October on the Caribbean island of Barbados. He said the appeal process "lacked basic elements, as Machado neither received a copy of the allegations against her nor was afforded the opportunity to respond to those allegations."

Gerardo Blyde, the chief negotiator for the opposition group known as the Unitary Platform, said Saturday that the court's ruling violates the Barbados accord. He asked for backing from the international community, specifically the presidents of France, Emmanuel Macron; of Brazil, Luis Inácio Lula da Silva, and of Colombia, Gustavo Petro - all of whom have supported the negotiation process.

Blyde also urged Maduro's allies to reverse the court's decision, arguing it constitutes a "violation of due process and the right to due defense" of Machado, who was never granted an opportunity to defend herself.

But Hector Rodríguez, a governor and member of Maduro's negotiating delegation, told reporters that Venezuela's government has followed the terms of the accord and plans to hold the presidential election this year. He added that the court's decision is a thing of the past in the eyes of his delegation.

Also:

ACULCO, Mexico: The corral gate swings open and an energetic calf charges in, only to be wrestled struggling to the ground and immobilized by having its legs tied. The men go to work vaccinating the calf and marking its number with a burning iron on its back.

It happened in one of the sessions of a workshop that José Arturo Jiménez gave this past week at his ranch in Aculco, a town in the State of Mexico near Mexico City, attended by about 40 university students and others.

The event was part of an initiative by the Mexican Association of Bullfighting to attract new followers for the centuries-old tradition of bullfighting by educating young people about the different activities that surround the breeding of fighting bulls.

The association is trying to counter the growing global movement driven by animal defenders who seek to abolish bullfighting, which they consider torture of bulls.



MEXICO CITY: Four municipal police officers are dead following an ambush-style attack on a road in Mexico in the north-central state of Guanajuato, authorities said Thursday.

The four policemen belonged to the municipal police force of the city of Celaya. The police department said the officers died late Wednesday on a rural road near Celaya.

The identity of the attackers was not immediately clear, but Celaya has long been the scene of attacks and fighting between the local Santa Rosa de Lima gang and the Jalisco drug cartel.

Celaya is one of the most violent cities in Guanajuato, a state which itself has the highest number of homicides in the country.

Guanajuato also has the highest number of police casualties in Mexico, with around 60 killed in 2023, according to the civic watchdog group Causa en Común.



SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico: A man in southwestern Puerto Rico fatally shot his former girlfriend and two members of her family before killing himself, police said Thursday.

The incident occurred late on Wednesday in the coastal town of Yauco, where the bodies of the man's former girlfriend, 30, her brother, 28 and their mother, 51, were found inside a house.

Police said they later found the body of 33-year-old Wilfredo Hiram Santiago, who is suspected of killing the three, at his brother's home in the same town.

Police told local media that Santiago had a criminal record involving previous unrelated cases of domestic violence, and that the former girlfriend he killed had a restraining order against him.

Police said the former girlfriend, Linnette Morales, has two young children who were not home at the time of the shooting.



In this image taken from a video released by Xinhua News Agency, China Coast Guard (CCG) ships patrol the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean, on Aug 27, 2023. China's coast guard said on Jan 27 its officers ordered a Japanese fishing vessel and several patrol ships to leave waters surrounding tiny Japanese-controlled islands in the East China Sea. It marked the latest incident pointing to lingering tensions between the sides. (AP)

Asia

China orders Japanese fishing boat to leave waters

'NKorea fired several cruise missiles'

SEOUL, South Korea, Jan 28, (AP): South Korea's military said Sunday that North Korea fired several cruise missiles that flew over waters near a major military shipyard on the country's eastern coast, extending a streak in weapons tests that are worsening tensions with the United States, South Korea and Japan.

The launches followed a separate round of North Korean cruise missile tests last week and a Jan 14 test-firing of the country's first solid-fuel intermediate-range ballistic missile. Those tests reflect North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's efforts to expand his arsenal of weapons designed to overwhelm missile defenses in South Korea and Japan and remote US targets in the Pacific, including Guam.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said they detected the missiles over waters near the North Korean port of Sinpo, where the North has a major shipyard building key naval vessels, including missile-firing submarines.

The South's military didn't immediately provide specific launch details, including the number of missiles fired, how far they flew and whether they were launched from land or naval assets.

Development

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula have increased in recent months as Kim continues to accelerate his weapons development and issue provocative threats of nuclear conflict with the US and its Asian allies.

The US, South Korea and Japan in response have been expanding their combined military exercises, which Kim portrays as invasion rehearsals, and sharpening their deterrence strategies built around nuclear-capable US assets.

North Korea said its launches last week involved a new cruise missile called Pulhwasal-3-31 and described the test as part of regular efforts to develop its military. The North described that missile as "strategic," implying a possible intent to arm it with nuclear weapons.

North Korea's cruise missiles supplement the country's huge lineup of ballistic missiles, including intercontinental ballistic missiles designed to reach the U.S. mainland.

While North Korean cruise missile activities aren't directly banned under UN sanctions, experts say those weapons potentially pose a serious threat to South Korea and Japan. They are designed fly like small airplanes and fly along landscapes where they could be harder to detect by radar.

Since 2021, North Korea has conducted at least 10 rounds of tests of what it described as long-range cruise missiles fired from both land and sea. The country claims its weapons are nuclear-capable and their range is up to 2,000 kilometers (1,242 miles), a distance that would include US military bases in Japan.

Also:

BEIJING: China's coast guard said Saturday its officers ordered a Japanese fishing vessel and several patrol ships to leave waters surrounding tiny Japanese-controlled islands in the East China Sea. It marked the latest incident pointing to lingering tensions between the sides.

China says the islands belong to it and refuses to recognize Japan's claim to the uninhabited chain known as the Senkakus in Japanese and Diaoyutai in Chinese. Taiwan also claims the islands, which it calls Diaoyutai, but has signed access agreements for its fishermen with Japan and does not actively take part in the dispute.

Coast guard spokesperson Gan Yu said in a statement that the vessels "illegally entered" the waters, prompting its response. "We urge Japan to stop all illegal activities in the waters immediately and to ensure similar incidents would not happen again," the statement said. But the statement did not specify whether the vessels complied with the order.

China's insistence on sovereignty over the islands is part of its expansive territorial claims in the Pacific, including to underwater resources in the East China Sea, the self-governing island republic of Taiwan with its population of 23 million, and virtually the entire South China Sea, through which an estimated \$5 trillion in international trade passes each year. As with the Senkakus, China largely bases its claims on vague historical precedents. Taiwan, a former Japanese colony, split from mainland China in 1949 amid the Chinese Civil War.

The islands lie between Taiwan and Okinawa, 330 kilometers (205 miles) off the Chinese coast. Following World War II, they were administered by the United States and returned to Japanese sovereignty in 1972.



BEIJING: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told US national security adviser Jake Sullivan that Washington should stand by a commitment not to support independence for Taiwan, during their high-level talks in the Thai

capital, the Chinese foreign ministry said Saturday.

Wang said that Taiwan's recent election didn't change the fact that the island is part of China and the biggest challenge in US-China relations is the issue of "Taiwan independence," according to a statement from the ministry.

US President Joe Biden has said he does not support Taiwanese independence, but US law requires a credible defense for Taiwan and for Washington to treat all threats to the island as matters of "grave concern."

Wang also said that both sides should use the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries this year as an opportunity to reflect on past experiences and treat each other as equals, rather than adopting a condescending attitude.

Both sides should "be committed to mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and win-win cooperation, building a correct way for China and the U.S. to interact," the statement quoted Wang as saying.

Wang and Sullivan met in Bangkok on Friday and Saturday, with statements from both governments hailing their discussions as "candid, substantive and constructive." The two previously met on the Mediterranean island nation of Malta and in Vienna last year before a high-profile meeting between Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping in November.



SYDNEY: Prime Minister Kauea Natano reportedly lost his seat in parliament in elections on the tiny Pacific island nation of Tuvalu.

The election for the 16-seat parliament, which could have implications for China, Taiwan and Australia, saw eight newcomers win seats, according to Radio New Zealand. The report couldn't be independently confirmed.

Tuvalu, with just over 11,500 people, is one of the smallest nations in the world. But the election has gained international attention because Tuvalu, a British colony until 1978, is one of only 12 countries that have official diplomatic relations with Taiwan, the self-governing democratic island that China claims as its territory.

Natano is a supporter of Taiwan. Another contender for the top job, the reelected Finance Minister Seve Paeniu, has said he wants to review Tuvalu's relationships with both Taiwan and China.



Thousands, mostly women protesters march against the runaway cases of femicide, in downtown Nairobi, Kenya on Jan 27. (AP)



Mngangwa

Theuri

Africa

Thousands march against femicide: Thousands of people marched in cities and towns in Kenya during protests Saturday over the recent slayings of more than a dozen women. The anti-femicide demonstration was the largest event ever held in the country against sexual and gender-based violence.

In the nation's capital, Nairobi, protesters wore T-shirts printed with the names of women who became homicide victims this month. The crowd, composed mostly of women, brought traffic to a standstill.

"Stop killing us!" the demonstrators shouted as they waved signs with messages such as "There is no justification to kill women."

The crowd in Nairobi was hostile to attempts by the parliamentary representative for women, Esther Passaris, to address them. Accusing Passaris of remaining silent during the latest wave of killings, protesters shouted her down with chants of "Where were you?" and "Go home!"

"A country is judged by not how well it treats its rich people but how well it takes care of the weak and vulnerable," Law Society of Kenya President Eric Theuri, who was among the demonstrators, said. (AP)



Zimbabwe oppn leader quits: Zimbabwe's main opposition leader said he has quit his party, accusing the country's ruling party of hijacking the organization and causing the removal of dozens of his members of parliament and councilors.

Nelson Chamisa, 45, was President Emmerson Mnangagwa's main rival in the 2018 and 2023 disputed elections. On Thursday, he accused Mnangagwa of decimating the opposition by authoritarian means.

In a 13-page statement on his social media platforms and on the party's page on X, formerly Twitter, Chamisa criticized the economically and politically troubled southern African country's record of authoritarianism.

"With immediate effect, I no longer have anything to do with CCC (Citizens Coalition for Change)," he said.

Chamisa said he would remain active in public service and told supporters "there are fresh things we need to do," urging them "to rally behind fresh politics" as he prepares to announce his next step. (AP)



3 soldiers sentenced to death: A high court in Ghana has sentenced to death three people, including three soldiers, after con-

victing them of plotting to carry out a coup against the country's government in 2019.

The sentencing renewed calls from rights activists for the death penalty to be abolished.

ished.

The conviction and death-by-hanging sentence handed down on Wednesday was the culmination of a treason trial that started



A TV screen shows a file image of North Korea's missile launch during a news program at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea on Jan. 28. South Korea's military said Sunday that North Korea fired several cruise missiles that flew over waters near a major military shipyard on the country's eastern coast, extending a streak in weapons tests that are worsening tensions with the United States, South Korea and Japan. (AP)

in 2021. It was the first treason conviction in several decades in Ghana, one of Africa's most stable democracies, and comes amid a surge of coups in the continent.

Their conviction "sends a strong signal to the nation that to destabilize or organize to overthrow the constitution will not be countenanced and will be taken quite seriously," said Attorney General Godfred Yeboah Dame, who prosecuted them.

The court acquitted three others charged in the case, two of whom are military officers. (AP)



Man charged with murder: A man was charged with 76 counts of murder and 86 counts of attempted murder for allegedly causing a deadly fire at an apartment building in South Africa last year that was one of the country's worst disasters.

Prosecutors said he made a written confession in which he admitted starting the nighttime fire that ripped through the five-story building in Johannesburg in August, killing 76 people and leaving dozens injured.

The suspect, Sithembiso Lawrence Mdalose, was also charged with arson and was ordered to be kept in police custody until a hearing next month when his lawyer is expected to say if he will apply for bail.

He faces a possible sentence of life in prison. South Africa has no death penalty. (AP)

dollar stable

The US Dollar exchange rate against the Kuwaiti Dinar was stable at KD 0.307 on Sunday, while the Euro dropped 0.20 percent to KD 0.333 compared to last Thursday, said the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) on Sunday.

The CBK added in its online daily bulletin that the exchange rate of the Pound Sterling was stable at KD 0.390, the Swiss Franc at KD 0.355, and the Japanese Yen at KD 0.002. (KUNA)

gold prices drop to \$2018 per ounce

Gold prices dipped to USD 2018 an ounce at last week's trading, recording losses for two consecutive weeks, Dar Al-Sabaek reported on Sunday.

Dar Al-Sabaek said that the positive American economic data negatively affected the price of gold, as investors turned their to the US market after the personal consumer spending index rose by 2.6 percent.

It added the US economy improvement lines with the expectations of economists to slow inflation pressure and thus ease the US Federal Reserve (the Central

Bank) of its tough measures towards raising interests on the Dollar, which leads to increased optimism in future rises for the US stock market.

The US economy has shown more flexibility despite higher borrowing costs amid expectations that the United States will make the first interest rate cut next May, noting that investors are awaiting the comments of Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, which will be released soon, which could provide more information about the beginning of the interest rate reduction cycle. (KUNA)

PwC hosts its annual tax seminar

PwC Middle East in Kuwait successfully hosted its annual tax seminar, "Navigating tomorrow's possibilities," on Tuesday, January 23, at the Waldorf Astoria in Kuwait.

The seminar attracted over 200 clients, including industry professionals, policymakers, and key stakeholders. Distinguished guests from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce and Industry ("MOCI"), Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority ("KDIPA"), and representatives from various embassies graced the occasion.

The seminar delved into crucial topics, encompassing Kuwait market updates and the evolving tax landscape. A focus on current tax challenges and opportunities was addressed by in-depth discussions on Pillar 2, a particularly relevant subject as Kuwait had recently joined the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework on BEPS.

Other key areas of discussion included UAE Corporate Income Tax, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) considerations, transfer pricing strategies, and more.

Market Movements

28-01-2024

	Change	Closing pts	Change	Closing pts
SAUDI EGYPT	Tadawul EGX 30	+102.61 +959.58	12,264.17 28,625.76	

Business

ECB maintains rates at 4.0%, rules out imminent cuts

Strong US PMI and 3.3% GDP growth signal robust economic expansion

By National Bank of Kuwait

United States

US PMI

PMI figures released out of the United States show improved sentiments and expansion, with composite PMI rising from 50.9 to 52.3. Services PMI accelerated to 52.9 from 51.4 previously. Meanwhile, the manufacturing index moved into expansion territory, with PMI coming in at 50.3 in January from 47.9 in December. The report indicated that firms were optimistic about the outlook and improvement in operating conditions, especially as new orders rose while inflation continues to drop.

US GDP q/q

The US economy stunned the market in the fourth quarter, with the latest GDP q/q growth of 3.3% eclipsing the forecasted growth figure of 2.0%. Economists believe that the ever so resilient labor market is the driver behind the unexpected growth in the economy, exhibited by low layoffs and significant wage gains. That is backed by the fact that personal spending was the economy's main growth engine, rising at 2.8%. Business investment and housing also helped fuel the larger-than-expected advance last quarter. All eyes will be on the Fed's meeting next week, although expectations remain that the Fed will keep its policy rate unchanged at the 5.25%-5.50% range.

PCE Price Index

The latest core PCE price index m/m figure increased 0.2% last month, after dropping by 0.1% in November, in line with expectations. For the third consecutive month, the annual increase in inflation remained below 3%. Additionally, this is the sixth month in the last seven where monthly inflation has printed at a rate equal to or below the Fed's 2% target. On a year-to-year basis, the Core PCE Price Index increased by 2.9%, marking the smallest gain since March of 2021. As the PCE Price Index is seen as the Fed's preferred gauge for inflation, the latest data allows the Federal Reserve to happily start thinking about cutting interest rates imminently.

The US Dollar index closed the week at 103.433.

United Kingdom

UK PMI

The latest PMI data to be released from the UK was better than expected. The Flash Manufacturing PMI came in at 47.3,

Highlights

- US Manufacturing PMI rises to expansion territory at 50.3, while the Services PMI rises to 52.9.
- GDP q/q grows 3.3% vs expectations of 2.0% growth.
- For the third consecutive month, the annual increase in inflation remained below 3% in the US.
- ECB keeps rates unchanged at 4.0%, as the ECB maintains that rates cuts are not imminent.
- Business activity in the eurozone declines in January.
- The unexpected strength of growth in the UK could push the BOE to keep interest rates higher for longer.
- The Bank of Japan keeps its short-term rate unchanged at -0.1%.
- China's central bank reveals bigger than expected RRR cuts.

exceeding the 46.7 forecasted figure. Similarly, The Flash Services PMI, posted at 53.8, was better than the forecasted 53.1 figure. For a third consecutive month, business activity has grown in the UK, and business confidence as a result has increased to the highest since May. The surprising strength of growth in January may push the BOE to keep interest rates higher for longer, despite market expectations of imminent rate cuts, especially amidst fears of inflation in manufacturing as a result of trade being disrupted in the Red Sea.

The GBP/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.2702.

Europe

ECB Monetary Policy Statement

In line with expectations, the European Central Bank kept interest rates unchanged at 4% on Thursday. The ECB stopped its vicious rate hike cycle in September and markets are now anticipating rate cuts, however, ECB President Christine Lagarde boldly stated that "the consensus around the table was that it was premature to discuss rate cuts." Lagarde made it clear that the ECB's future decisions will largely rely on in-

Rates - 28th January 2024

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.0890	1.0811	1.0932	1.0852	1.0730	1.0915	1.0893
GBP	1.2690	1.2646	1.2774	1.2702	1.2615	1.2790	1.2709
JPY	148.27	146.64	148.70	148.16	147.40	149.20	146.10
CHF	0.8681	0.8605	0.8728	0.8644	0.8520	0.8700	0.8563

coming data, and that the fight against inflation continues by adding that "we need to be further along the disinflation process to be confident that inflation will be at target - sustainably so." When asked about the impact of the disruptions to trade because of attacks on shipping in the Red Sea, Lagarde stated that ECB "are observing it very carefully," amidst fears of energy and freight costs adding onto inflation.

Eurozone PMI

Business activity in Europe was seen declining in the month of January, with the euro zone Composite PMI rising to 47.9. While the PMI data shows a slight rise from December's 47.6 figure, manufacturing remains in contraction territory for the 8th consecutive month. A closer look at the PMI figures shows a slight recovery in manufacturing in Germany and France, Europe's two largest economies with the index rising to 45.4 and 43.2 respectively. Meanwhile, the flash services PMI showed a decline for the two economies, at 47.6 and 45.0.

The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.0852.

Asia Pacific

Japan Monetary Policy Statement

The Bank of Japan decided to maintain its ultra-loose monetary policy settings in its latest meeting in January. Keeping the short-term rate unchanged at -0.1%, and the 10-year bond limit

at 1%, maintaining its yield curve control policy. The move made by the BoJ was considered widely expected, as policymakers see a sustainable path to 2% inflation. The news release came amid a surge in Japanese equities to 34-year highs, with the Nikkei index climbing 1%, bringing year to date gains to 9.8%.

China Benchmark Lending Rate

China's benchmark lending rates were held steady as expected, with the one-year loan prime rate remaining at 3.45%, and the five-year rate staying at 4.2%. This comes at a time when consumer demand in the country remains fragile, while the property sector is still facing issues. Moreover, the latest data indicate that China is facing deflationary pressures, as elevated rates are increasing real borrowing costs. Policymakers in China are trying to balance between introducing fiscal stimulus to boost demand and achieve a rebound in prices, while also making sure that the Yuan does not fall behind major currencies, especially the US Dollar, which could result in further devaluation.

The USD/JPY currency pair closed the week at 148.16, while the USD/CNY currency pair ended the week at 7.1763.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30745.

Boursa Kuwait surpasses five stock exchanges in GCC states

Gulf financial markets experience mixed performance

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: According to the Al-Shall report, the Boursa Kuwait surpassed five out of seven stock exchanges in the Gulf region in the number of listed companies, with the only exception being the Saudi market, reports Al-Jarida daily.

As of the end of 2023, the number of companies listed on various Gulf exchanges stands at 232 in Saudi Arabia, 149 in Kuwait, 102 in Abu Dhabi, 95 in Muscat, 71 in Dubai, 51 in Qatar, and 42 in Bahrain. The Saudi market notably leads in terms of the sheer number of listed companies.

Liquidity concentration is a prominent aspect in the Gulf stock exchanges, with the exception of the Saudi market. The report highlights the concentration reaching a maximum of 92.5 percent for the 10 most liquid companies on the Bahrain Stock Exchange, followed by 83 percent for the Muscat Stock Exchange, 75.9 percent for the Dubai market, 66.6 percent for the Abu Dhabi market, 62.1 percent for the Qatar Stock Exchange, and 60.7 percent for Kuwait.

The Saudi market, in contrast, exhibits a lower concentration, with its share not exceeding 30.2 percent.

The report raises concerns about the unhealthy phenomenon of liquidity concentration among the top 10 companies in the Gulf stock exchanges.

It emphasizes the need for periodic analysis and review to address potential risks and corrections. Although the Boursa Kuwait appears to have a slightly lower concentration, when factoring in its superior number of listed companies, the concentration level is actually higher compared to other Gulf exchanges. This poses a risk of corrections and raises concerns about potential issues arising from exceptionally highly liquid companies.

The report also touches upon Kuwait's historical trend of high popularity in stock exchange listings, resulting in undue premiums on the prices of listed companies. In the absence of these premiums and with the climate crisis changing market dynamics, the report predicts an ac-

celeration in withdrawal rates from listing, potentially reducing the percentage of liquidity concentration.

Also:

KUWAIT CITY: During last week's trading, most financial market indices in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries witnessed substantial gains, with six markets showing growth while only one experienced a decline, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The Kuwait Stock Exchange maintained its positive momentum, with the Main Market index increasing by 1.56 percent, or 112.92 points, closing at 7,342.98 points and raising its gains for the year to 7.6 percent. The primary market's gains were even more significant, jumping to 1.78 percent, closing at 8062.68 points and achieving a year-to-date gain of 7.8 percent. The main market index 50 experienced the best gains, rising by 2.13 percent, closing at 5,973.82 points.

The Dubai Financial Market Index took the lead among gainers, surging by 2 percent, or 81.62 points, closing at 4163.33 points. This brought its year-to-date gains to 2.55 percent, supported by positive global financial indicators, notably the new record closes in the American markets -- Nasdaq, S&P, and Dow Jones.

In contrast, the Abu Dhabi Index recorded the weakest performance among Gulf financial markets, losing 1.49 percent during the week, closing at 9567.68 points. The Saudi market index, TASI, secured the second position with a gain of 1.69 percent, closing at 12,161.56 points.

Market variables saw varying declines, with liquidity, activity, and the number of transactions decreasing by approximately 20 percent, 24 percent, and 18 percent, respectively. Warba Capital and Al Khaliji shares reached record highs of 24 and 17 percent, while Watani and KFH shares achieved gains of 2 to 1.5 percent. Kuwaiti shares, the most active, gained 10 percent, Kuwait Real Estate and Gulf Bank shares gained 4 percent.

The Manama Market Index gained 1.11 percent, closing at 2013.74 points, surpassing the two-thousand-point level for the first time in the past two years. The Amman Financial Market Index recorded a modest increase of 0.44 percent, closing at 4607.42 points. The Qatar Market Index showed limited gains of 0.28 percent, closing at 10347.55 points.

Kuwait's growth prospects tied to regional stability, says report

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: According to its recent report, the AlShall underscored the heightened global uncertainty, which holds particular relevance for the Middle East region, including the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Acknowledging that the growth landscape for Kuwait in 2023 is now history, the report suggests that future growth rates for 2024 and 2025 may improve under the guidance of a new public administration adept at managing the economy. However, it cautions that these expectations hinge on effectively addressing the aftermath of the conflict in Gaza. Notably, since the report's release, the conflict has expanded to include Yemen in the south, with the possibility of further escalation in the north and other areas.

The World Bank's findings on January 9 regarding economic growth -- contingent on the avoidance of further conflict in Gaza -- the report projects modest economic growth rates for the six GCC nations in 2023 as the United Arab Emirates leads at approximately 3.4 percent, while Saudi Arabia exhibits a negative growth rate of -0.5 percent. Qatar and Bahrain fall in between at around 2.8 percent, followed by Oman at 1.4 percent, and Kuwait at 0.8 percent -- largely attributed to diminished oil production.

Looking ahead, the report anticipates a continuation of subdued growth rates in 2024. Saudi Arabia is expected to lead with approximately 4.1 percent, trailed by the United Arab Emirates at 3.7 percent, Bahrain at 3.3 percent, Oman at 2.7 percent, Kuwait at 2.6 percent, and Qatar at 2.5 percent.

Projections for 2025 also see Saudi Arabia at the forefront with around 4.2 percent, followed by the UAE at 3.8 percent, Bahrain at 3.2 percent, Qatar at 3.1 percent, Oman at 2.9 percent, and Kuwait at 2.7 percent. Kuwait ranks lowest in terms of achieved and anticipated growth for the years 2023 and 2025, securing the second-to-last position for expectations in 2024.

The report laments the World Bank's projection of a 6 percent contraction in the subsistence Palestinian economy in 2024, predominantly affecting Gaza and exacerbating the region's instability.

Conference unveils opportunities in financial markets

Kamco Invest and Burgan Bank to host investment conference

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: Kamco Invest and Burgan Bank are set to co-host an exclusive investment conference at St. Regis Kuwait on Monday, 12th of February 2024. The event will bring together an elite gathering of thought leaders, industry experts, and institutional investors for in-depth discussions on crucial topics spanning the global economy, geopolitics, and various asset classes.

Under the theme "Global Perspectives: Uncovering Challenges and Opportunities Ahead," the conference aims to dissect the complexities of the global economy, unravel the dynamics of geopolitics, and explore forthcoming challenges and opportunities across diverse asset classes. In a world marked by constant change and evolving market dynamics, this conference is positioned as a compass, offering valuable insights



M. Shehab

and strategic foresight to help navigate the intricate landscape of the financial world. The distinguished lineup of speakers and panelists, including executives from Kamco Invest, prominent figures, and

respected guests from renowned regional and international asset management firms, will contribute to a robust exchange of ideas and insights. This collaborative effort is designed to foster a collective understanding of how to thrive amidst uncertainties, leveraging the combined expertise of industry lead-



Sana A.

ing this, Farouk Bastaki and Kamel Al Harami will participate in a panel on geopolitics, shedding light on the geopolitical factors shaping the financial world. Subsequently, three engaging panel discussions will unfold, focusing on regional equities, international real estate, and venture capital.

Highlighting the collaboration between Kamco Invest and Burgan Bank, Sana Al-Hadlaj, Senior Executive Director of Wealth Management at Kamco Invest stated, "This conference underscores the strength of our collaboration with Burgan Bank. Together, we aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the financial landscape, addressing challenges and unlocking opportunities for our clients."

Meshari Shehab, Acting General Manager of Private Banking and Wealth Management at Burgan Bank added, "We are proud to collaborate with Kamco Invest in hosting this significant event. It aligns with our commitment to delivering unparalleled financial services. Our joint efforts bring together a wealth of expertise, allowing us to offer innovative solutions and insights to our clients."



KIBS team inaugurates the third cohort of the risk management leaders program

Program includes training in London

KIBS kicks off 3rd cohort of 'Risk Management Leaders Program'

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: As part of the Central Bank of Kuwait's (CBK) strategic initiative to cultivate highly qualified national talents across various financial and banking domains and to bolster risk management capabilities, crucial for enhancing the banking landscape and fortifying financial operations, the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS) announced the inauguration of the "Risk Management Leaders Program" on Sunday, January 28, 2024. This program, attended by a distinguished group of national talents, features representing banking sector and including additional participants as part of corporate social responsibility. The initiative aligns with the Kafa'a program, spearheaded by the

CBK in collaboration with Kuwaiti banks and overseen by the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS).

KIBS emphasized that the program's primary goal is to equip participants with the essential knowledge and skills necessary for making strategic decisions and developing effective risk management strategies within banks and financial institutions. The program spans almost six months and is structured into four phases. The initial two phases, conducted in Kuwait, feature training programs and practical lectures on risk management in collaboration with the London Institute of Banking and Finance in the United Kingdom and the Professional Risk Managers' International Association in the United States of America.

Wycliffe meets GCC media delegation

Replacing fossil fuels with clean solar energy the goal of ISA

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

NEW DELHI, Jan 28: The mission of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) is to replace carbon-intensive fossil fuels with clean and renewable solar energy, says Chief of Operations at ISA Joshua Wycliffe.

Wycliffe made the statement when he met the GCC media delegation recently.

During the meeting, Wycliffe made a presentation on the pivotal role of ISA in ensuring energy security and sustainable livelihoods for the 200 member-countries.

He then affirmed that several initiatives towards a green future have been implemented so far. He said one of these initiatives is the Global Solar Facility (GSF), through which ISA is keen on catalyzing clean energy access to Africa. He disclosed that this pioneering initiative aims to attract \$10 billion in investments to facilitate clean energy access for 35-40 million African households by 2030.

He said the Government of India supports ISA with a contribution of \$25 million, in addition to \$10 million from ISA and commitments of Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF).

He also revealed that STAR-



The GCC media delegation during their meeting with the Chief of Operations at ISA.

C project is keen on establishing solar technology and application resource centers in collaboration with the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs in France. He stated that ISA is working with ad-

ditional 13 countries to establish STAR centers in a bid to make solar energy the main focus of member-countries to achieve economic growth, environment and social wellbeing. He added ISA is com-

mitted to creating 30 such centers by the end of 2026.

He pointed out that ISA established the Green Hydrogen Innovation Center (GHIC) during India's G20 presidency with the aim of

serving as a comprehensive platform that consolidates efforts to encourage the production, use and trade of green hydrogen to achieve sustainability. He also stressed the keenness of

ISA to cooperate with GCC countries to enhance solar energy production. He said the GCC countries are rich in solar energy, thanks to the climate as the Sun shines in these countries most of the year.

What you should know if you're about to fly on a Boeing Max 9

BOEING 737 Max 9 jetliners are carrying passengers in the United States again for the first time since they were grounded after a panel blew out of the side of one of the planes.

Alaska Airlines resumed a limited number of flights with its Max 9s on Friday. United aims to follow suit on Sunday, but a spokeswoman said the airline might use them as spare planes Friday or Saturday.

Those are the only two U.S. airlines that operate this particular model of the Boeing 737.

After seeing video of the frightening flight of a plane with a gaping hole in its side, passengers might reasonably be asking questions about safety.

The Federal Aviation Administration has detailed the process that airlines must follow to inspect - and if necessary, repair - the panels called door plugs, one of which broke loose on Alaska Airlines flight 1282 on Jan. 5. The plugs are used to seal holes left for extra doors on the Max 9 when an unusually high number of seats requires more exits for safety reasons.

FAA Administrator Mike Whitaker says his agency's review of everything that has happened since the accident, including gathering information about inspections of door plugs on 40 other planes, gives him confidence that they will be safe so long as the new inspection process is followed.

Alaska Airlines grounded all 65 of its Max 9 jets within hours after one of the two door plugs in the back half of the cabin of flight 1282 blew away while 16,000 feet above Oregon. The FAA grounded all Max 9s in the U.S. the day after the blowout.

Even though none of the passengers were seriously injured, regulators acted quickly because the accident could have been far worse.

By a stroke of luck, the two seats closest to the panel that blew off the plane were empty when flight 1282 took off from Portland, Oregon. And the plane had not yet reached cruising altitude of more than 30,000 feet, when passengers and flight attendants might have been walking around instead of being belted into their seats.

Airlines found problems on other planes, Alaska CEO Ben Minicucci told NBC this week that "many" of the planes they inspected had loose bolts that are supposed to help secure the door plug to the airframe of the jet. United Airlines made similar findings.

The FAA is requiring airlines to conduct "detailed visual inspections" of the door plugs and other components, adjust fasteners and fix any damage they find before putting Max 9s back into service. The agency says the process was developed by what they learned from inspections of 40 grounded planes.

United says the process involves removing an inner panel, two rows of seats and a sidewall liner from the cabin. Technicians open the door plug, inspect it and the surrounding hardware, and make any necessary repairs before resealing the panel.

Alaska Airlines officials said Thursday that they have lost a few sales among people purchasing flights into February - a phenomenon called "booking away" in the airline business. They didn't say how many people have booked away from the Max 9, but they predicted it would only last a few weeks.

Minicucci, the Alaska CEO, said "at first, people will have some questions, some anxiety," but that "over time" confidence in the plane's safety will be restored. (AP)

Argentina's president faces 1-day general strike as foes seek to sabotage his plans

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, Jan 28, (AP): Argentina's President Javier Milei faced a one-day general strike Wednesday protesting his decree targeting unions as well as his proposals for economic and labor law changes, showing that his opponents are wasting no time in trying to derail his austerity agenda.

The biggest union, known by its acronym CGT, organized the strike and was joined by other unions. Strikers took to the streets in the capital, Buenos Aires, and other cities across the country, joined by social groups and political opponents, including the Peronist party that dominated national politics for decades.

Until his presidential run, Milei, a libertarian economist, was known mostly for his televised screeds against the political caste, and he secured victory last year by a wide margin before taking office just over a month ago. A self-declared "anarcho-capitalist," he pledged a drastic reduction in state spending aimed at shoring up a government budget deficit that he says is fueling red-hot inflation, which finished 2023 at 211%.

On Dec. 20, Milei issued a decree that would revoke or modify hundreds of existing laws so as to limit the power of unions and deregulate an economy featuring notoriously heavy state intervention. A court ruling has put the labor changes on hold. He also sent an omnibus bill to Congress that would enact sweeping reforms in the political, social, fiscal, legal, administrative and security fields.

It remained unclear if the strike, scheduled to end at midnight, would amount to a speedbump to his agenda or no obstacle at all.

While people have legitimate grievances - triple-digit inflation and a steep devaluation of Argentina's peso - behind the scenes the main impetus for the strike was the president's drive to weaken union power, Buenos Aires-based political analyst Sergio Berensztejn said.

"For union leaders what is at stake is

really a lot. If they don't complain, their bargaining capacity is going to drop dramatically and their influence in politics is going to dwindle," Berensztejn told The Associated Press in a phone interview. "Milei feels quite comfortable confronting these leaders. He's still very popular; union leaders are unpopular."

The walkout was Argentina's first general strike in more than four years, and it was also the quickest ever to be organized in a president's term since the return of democracy in 1983, according to a review by local media outlet Infobae. Milei's predecessor, center-left Alberto Fernández, did not face any general strikes.

"We're going to lose more rights that we worked for," teacher Karina Villagra told AP in a plaza in front of Congress. "The militancy should be stronger than ever."

Milei won the runoff election with 56% of the votes, and in his inaugural address told Argentina that things would get worse before improving. Two separate polls this month show he retains support of more than half of respondents despite accelerating inflation and mass layoffs announced at state-owned firms.

Security Minister Patricia Bullrich on Wednesday accused strike organizers of being "mafiosos" bent on preventing the change Argentine voters chose, saying on the X platform that the action would not halt the administration's progress. Milei's spokesman, Manuel Adorni, said at a news conference, "One cannot dialogue with people who try to stop the country and show a rather antidemocratic side."

His labor decree would restrict the right to strike by essential workers in hospital services, education and transport, and create new mechanisms of compensation to make it easier to fire employees. It also would enable workers to pay private healthcare providers directly, rather than channeling those resources through unions, and so dry up a significant source of their revenue.

Indian official lauds the close ties between India and the Gulf states

'Crude oil, gas and petrochemicals the axes of co-op in energy'

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

NEW DELHI, Jan 28: As part of the familiarization visit organized by the Government of India to GCC countries' media, Secretary of the Indian Minister of Oil and Natural Gas - Pankaj Jain praised the close relations between his country and the Gulf states, which began long before the discovery of oil and gas.

He explained that the strength of relations with the Gulf countries is reflected in the exchange of visits between senior officials of these countries and India; citing the visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

He said five Gulf countries are among the most important trading partners of India in the fields of oil and gas, in addition to other fields such as fertilizers and organic industries.

He affirmed that his country is cooperating with the Gulf countries regarding energy on three axes: crude oil, gas and petrochemicals. He said most of India's oil and gas imports are from the Gulf countries, as his country is the third largest consumer of oil and gas in the world after China and the United States, valued at \$119 billion. He stated that about 60 percent of his country's oil needs are covered by the Gulf countries, which are considered its most important sources of energy. Saudi Arabia comes in first place, followed by the UAE; while Qatar is the main supplier of liquefied natural gas and provides India with about 70 percent of its needs. The volume of Indian-Gulf trade exchange in 2022 reached about \$154 billion, compared to \$55.5 billion in 2000, he added.

He disclosed that his country's energy consumption is three times the average consumption of other countries. Despite India's increasing trend towards clean and renewable energy in various fields, its demand for fossil oil will continue to increase quickly; so the energy producers must take these trends into account, he added.

He also unveiled the plan of India to produce five million tons of green hydrogen by 2030, "as our annual needs are six million metric tons." He said India has another source of energy, which is extracting methanol from agricultural crops that are abundant in his country or the gas resulting from the oxidation of foods.

He affirmed that the security challenges that the region witnessed recently affected the cost of transportation in maritime shipping lines and caused prices to rise, along with an increase in the cost of insurance, which negatively affected producers and consumers.

He also hinted on the possibility of cooperation with Kuwait in the field of oil exploration and the exchange of experiences and oil refinery products, as the Indian refinery produces many materials that are not produced by Kuwaiti refineries which, in turn, could supply India with its needs in this regard.

He revealed that the India Energy Forum will be held in February, which is expected to be attended by major Gulf and international oil companies; hence, it will provide more opportunities for cooperation and the signing of agreements and contracts between the participating parties to serve the interests of everyone.



Secretary to the Indian Minister of Oil and Natural Gas - Pankaj Jain during his press briefing.



The GCC media delegation during their visit to Mumbai Metro project site.

Media delegation from the GCC visits Mumbai Metro project site

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

NEW DELHI, Jan 28: Mumbai Metro is the most complex and difficult railway project in the world; because it extends throughout Mumbai and 24 percent of the metro is underground, says Executive Director (Civil) at Mumbai Metro Phase Three C.M. Gadhav.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries media delegation visited the Mumbai Metro project site, during which Ghadav disclosed that it is aimed at reducing traffic jam in the city and easing the pressure on Mumbai railway net-

work.

He said the project has three phases that should be implemented within 15 years, indicating the target completion date for the whole project is October 2026.

He added that Mumbai Metro is the sixth longest metro in India; spanning 356.972 kilometers, while 24 percent of the metro is underground. He pointed out that the cost of expanding Mumbai Metro reached \$14.43 billion.

He conducted a presentation on the most advanced technology used to design and execute the project; as well as the engineering challenges, such as the resi-

dential areas where the metro goes through. He revealed there have been several meetings with the residents who were compensated and relocated to other modern residential areas. He affirmed the historic buildings where the tunnels go underneath were preserved well, owing to their historic and iconic value.

Gadhav said Mumbai Metro is considered a huge leap for the financial capital of India. The foundation stone of the first phase of the project was laid in June 2006 by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh; but the actual work started some years later - in February 2008.

What's On



Photos during the Embassy of Vietnam in Kuwait celebration of the Lunar New Year.

Vietnamese chef and calligrapher elevate UN-backed event

Embassy of Vietnam celebrates Lunar New Year with grand reception

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Embassy of Vietnam in Kuwait hosted a reception at the Al-Kout Beach Hotel, at the first Vietnamese coffee shop in Kuwait, to celebrate the Lunar New Year.

This celebration marked the recognition of the holiday by the United Nations. The event welcomed members of the Vietnamese community, ambassadors, UN representatives, and a large number of friends in Kuwait.

As one of the Asian countries that observe the Lunar New Year festival, typically falling in late January or early February each year, Vietnam has rich traditions and customs that have been passed down through generations.

The attendees at the reception had the opportunity to savor traditional cuisine prepared by the Vietnamese chef, Hieu Le, and receive calligraphy writings from Hoang Ngo, who is in Kuwait for an upcoming art exhibition.

The reception also featured performances by Vietnamese students studying the Arabic language at the Kuwait University.

Expressing gratitude to the Vietnamese community for their support over the years, HE Ambassador Ngo Tuan Thang emphasized the importance and meaning of the Lunar New Year, known as "Tet," which is a time for family reunions and reflection on the achievements and memories of the past year.

Ambassador Thang extended his best wishes for the upcoming Lunar New Year, expressing hope that the Vietnamese community will contribute to Kuwait's development and proudly represent their home country in the region, thereby enhancing the relationship between Vietnam and Kuwait.

Previously, in a resolution adopted on December 22, 2023, the United Nations General Assembly "acknowledged the significance of Lunar New Year, which is observed in many Member States," marking a significant step toward international recognition of traditional Asian culture in a world characterized by diverse cultures and harmony.



Ambassador H.E. Adarsh Swaika inaugurates LuLu Hypermarket's 'India Utsav' showcasing a week of Indian festivities.

Spectacular celebration showcases a week of Indian festivities

LuLu Hypermarket celebrates Indian Republic Day with 'India Utsav'



Ambassador Adarsh Swaika poses for a group photo.



Winners of the Great Indian Quiz.

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: LuLu Hypermarket, the leading retailer in the region, celebrated the 75th Indian Republic Day with a special 'India Utsav' promotion held from 24th to 30th January. The event was inaugurated by the Ambassador of India H.E. Adarsh Swaika in the presence of Sanjay K. Muluka, Counsellor - Commerce, Indian Embassy & LuLu Kuwait's top management on 27 January at the hypermarket's AIRai outlet.

During the week-long promotion, customers were treated to amazing discounts and offers on a wide range of Indian branded products. The discounts and promotional offers extended to groceries, meat, fruits and vegetables, non-food items, health and beauty products, fresh and frozen items, fashion and garments, footwear, and more. In addition, there was a special promotion where customers could receive half pay-back on Indian sarees and churidars.

The event was made even more memorable with the performance by a band of Indian school students playing traditional Indian welcome music. The students also showcased their talents by performing patriotic Indian songs during the event.

One of the highlights of the promotion was the 'Indian Fancy Dress Competition' exclusively for students of Indian schools in Kuwait. Over 400 students participated in the competition, with first, second, and third prize winners receiving valuable gift vouchers, certificates, and trophies, as well as consolation prizes for participants.

Another competition conducted specifically for students of Indian schools was the 'Great Indian Quiz', which witnessed participation by students from over 20 Indian schools in the preliminary round. The final competition took place on the day of the India Utsav inauguration at AIRai, with four top teams competing. The winning teams of the quiz received gift vouchers, special certificates, medals, and trophies.

The India Utsav promotion also featured various other attractions and highlights, including cutouts of traditional Indian monuments, vivid decorations and a creative display of India's own 'Vandhe Bharat' train. Food stalls offering popular Indian dishes, and special food sampling counters that provided shoppers with a tantalizing taste of Indian foods.

Additionally, the week-long event served as a springboard for the launch of several new Indian products, including a wide range of Indian organic products and several varieties of Indian millets.

LuLu Hypermarket's 'India Utsav' promotion was a grand celebration of India's 75th Republic Day that presented to shoppers incredible offers, engaging competitions, and a vibrant Indian cultural experience.



Ambassador Adarsh Swaika during the cutting of the cake.



Performances from the young ones.



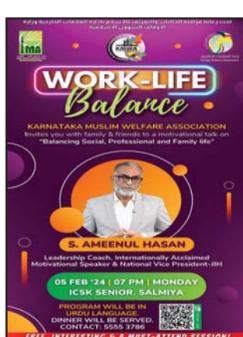
KMWA to host motivational talk on social, professional and family life

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: Karnataka Muslim Welfare Association (KMWA), Kuwait is delighted to announce a public program on the topic of 'Balancing Social, Professional and Family Life', scheduled for 5th February 2024, at 7:00 PM in the Indian Community School - Senior Branch, Salmiya.

The event will feature a motivational talk by an internationally acclaimed speaker Mr. S. Ameenul Hasan, focusing on achieving harmony in social, professional, and family spheres, followed by a Q & A session. This program presents a unique opportunity for personal growth and development. Don't miss out on the chance to gain insights and practical tips for maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

We extend a warm invitation to you and your family to join us, as this event aims to benefit not only individuals but also their loved ones.

Following the enlightening talk, a delicious dinner will be served.



KMWA flyer

To ensure your spot, please register using the link <https://forms.gle/4h2gBwFdvHMCWRts5>.

For more information and registration assistance, please contact 55553786 or 55802537

We look forward to your active participation in this enriching event!

Joint initiative aims for business dev't in Kuwait

AUK CCE and GATES forge partnership

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: The Center for Continuing Education (CCE) at the American University of Kuwait (AUK) and GATES Group collaborated on a joint initiative, aimed at providing comprehensive consulting, training, executive coaching, and fostering business transformation in Kuwait.

The newly unveiled initiative, SuCCeEd, is positioned to cater to the Kuwaiti market, offering specialized consulting services in human resources, training management, strategy, finance, accounting, and healthcare accreditation readiness. SuCCeEd will actively facilitate leaders and professionals in accessing continuous development solutions through collaborations with both local and international partners.

Functioning as an integral part of CCE, SuCCeEd assumes a pivotal role in bolstering leaders' development. It provides executive coaching and consulting services tailored to meet diverse market demands in Kuwait, including the accreditation mandate by GIG, Kuwaitization of the workforce, and the objectives outlined in Kuwait Vision 2035.



CCE, AUK, and GATES logos.

This strategic partnership combines AUK's educational excellence and GATES Group's healthcare industry expertise to enhance healthcare management practices, cultivate leaders, and drive impactful business transformation.

A lifetime in music: Leventhal debuts solo album at 71

NEW YORK, Jan 28, (AP) — It's a little late for John Leventhal to be considered a hot young thing in music.

He's won six Grammy Awards for songwriting and producing records, the latter a role that he essentially fell into as a journeyman guitarist in New York who befriended artists like Shawn Colvin and Jim Lauderdale.

Besides them, Leventhal has produced music for Marc Cohn, Sarah Jarosz, Joan Osborne, William Bell, The Blind Boys of Alabama and his wife, Rosanne Cash. He's played guitar with the likes of Jackson Browne, Willie Nelson, Ry Cooder, Elvis Costello, Donald Fagen and The National.

Probably his biggest popular success was co-writing and producing Colvin's hit, "Sunny Came Home."

Now, at age 71, he's releasing an album of his own music for the first time. "Rumble Strip" out Friday on a new label of the same name he started with Cash. The eclectic mix of mostly instrumental, roots-oriented music includes songs co-written with Cash, Cohn and The National's Matt Berninger. Doubts about his own voice led him to record only three vocal tracks, two of them duets with his wife. On his sole solo vocal, "The Only Ghost," a songwriting collaboration with Cohn, Leventhal is an aging guitar-slinger who tells a listener that he probably played "your local dive" at some point.

There's a lot for Leventhal to get used to, including talking about himself as an artist, which he recently did with The Associated Press.

Answers have been edited for brevity and clarity.

AP: You're 71. What took you so long to make your own album?

Leventhal: Everybody is asking me that. I don't have a succinct answer. The snarky answer is the pandemic.

AP: But the pandemic didn't last 50 years!
Leventhal: I've always had this sort of catalog of ideas that have never found homes, so I thought I should do something with those. The thought of doing a solo record sort of crept into my consciousness and, when the pandemic hit, I really couldn't avoid it. It was an interesting journey. Making the music wasn't challenging, because I love making music. I love making records. Sort of confronting the gauntlet of being the artist, with a capital A, was complicated to understand what I wanted to, needed to and should say.

AP: How do you think a first John Leventhal album would have sounded if you made it 50 years ago?

Leventhal: Not very good. ... Everything that has happened to me was because I was a songwriter and had an arranger's sensibility. I realized I was a record producer and sort of went with it for 35 years. I don't think I would have made a good record 40 years ago because it wouldn't have been tempered by what I've learned.



Leventhal

AP: What do you hope is the audience for it, considering there are not a lot of instrumental records out there?

Leventhal: I really don't know. I made it for myself. It's interesting - when I produce for other people, that's one of the things I think about. What is the audience? Who is this going to appeal to? What are we trying to do? What is the emotion that we're trying to get across? I don't get bogged down in it and I don't let it dictate what I'm doing, but it's part of the equation. With myself, I didn't even give that a second thought. We're going to discover what the audience is, because I truly don't know.

AP: How would you describe your style and who your heroes are?
Leventhal: It doesn't matter if it's Doc Watson, Howlin' Wolf, Igor Stravinsky, Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, George Jones, the Beatles, Motown. If there's something about it that I'm moved by, I'll pay attention to it and I'll try to learn something from it.

AP: One idea you had for the debut was an album of songs co-written and sung with some of the people you produced and played with. Why did that idea get tossed out?

Leventhal: A combination of reasons. It felt, for this first one, a little bit like cheating. I can't explain it. It felt too obvious, like it was a way to get my foot in the water. ... It felt more like creating a product, like it was someone in the record industry's "good idea." And it is a good idea. I'm not putting it down. It's just not something I was particularly interested in at this point in time. It was more important to me to see if I had a voice that meant anything.

MUSIC

Variety

Features



This image released by Lionsgate shows Jenna Ortega as Cairo Sweet in 'Miller's Girl.' (AP)

Film

Colman Domingo will play Joe Jackson in 'Michael'

Ortega takes a dark turn in 'Miller's Girl'

By Mark Kennedy

Jenna Ortega's stark rise as Gen Z's goth-glam princess takes a pointless, awkward turn in "Miller's Girl," a new romantic horror movie about cerebral people that's simply tiresome.

Written and directed by newcomer Jade Halley Bartlett, the movie retells the classic story of a teenage girl smitten by her older teacher and a tumble into seduction. It wants to be close to Vladimir Nabokov, but it's more "Don't Stand So Close to Me" by The Police.

Ortega stars as 18-year-old Tennessee student Cairo Sweet, a precocious and wealthy young lady with a tragic, icy cool personality. "Literature is my solace in the solitude and writing is my only means of escape," she says, like most 18-year-olds do.

Sweet is the kind of student who reads the long list of suggested texts before school even starts and devours "Finnegans Wake" of her own volition. She has a 4.6 GPA and "crippling ennui." She also dresses like Britney Spears circa "...Baby One More Time."

Sweet latches onto unmoored literature teacher Jonathan Miller, a former writer - author of "Apostrophes and Ampersands: Six Abysmally Romantic Short Stories" - who hasn't put pen to paper since he got married and started teaching. He's played by a hand-dog Martin Freeman, wonderfully anguished and pained.

"You're not a writer," his wife baits him. "You chose to be a teacher. Why would I see you as anything else?" She's played by Dagmara Dominczyk, a half-drawn woman who is constantly working, prickly and hurtful. To prove that she's wise, she uses words like "vituperation."

Our unhappy Miller begins spending more and more time with his prize student, awakened by her writing skills and her apparent interest in him. "You're exceptionally talented," he tells her. Her hunger for approval almost bursts through the screen.

They sit around and quote memorized passages of each others' work to the other. "You do see me and I see you," she tells him. There are as many red flags waving as during hurricane season.

"Teenage girls are dangerous," his wife says. "They're full of emotional violence and vituperation. I hope you know what you're doing." He doesn't.

Ortega mimics much of her chilly Wednesday Addams in the role, undercurrents of savagery popping up now and again through the shivering stillness. There's no warmth here. Mr. Miller is being seduced by a copy of the Paris Review.

Fact and fantasy get confused between these two. Are they really lovers? Or might it all be in her head? Bartlett coyly sidesteps the depth of their relationship to leave you hanging until the end - and so whatever the filmmaker is trying to say is left hanging, too. Maybe something about the confusing lines of power, or maybe that writers are really awful people?

Two other characters - Bashir Salahuddin as another teacher and Gideon Adlon as Sweet's vampy, lollipop-licking friend - are genuinely much more interesting and so unbalance the main would-be couple.

Bartlett lets the first half drag way too long, establishing over and over the characters' plight, getting lost in the forest mist that Sweet keeps emerging from, bizarrely and with no subtlety. The second half is agonizing - all arguments and tears. Taken together, this movie might be less fun than taking the SATs.

It's notable that Bartlett's airless script, which landed among the top unproduced screenplays in 2016, predates #MeToo and feels wholly out of its time in 2024. Do we really need a spiteful Lolita threatening to lob grenades into her rivals' lives and careers? Bartlett seems to have lots to say at the beginning about art and passion, but ends with nothing other than seemingly not to believe women. That couldn't have been her intention.

"Miller's Girl," a Lionsgate release that hits theaters Friday, is rated R for "sexual content, language throughout, some teen smoking and drinking." Running time: 93 minutes. One star out of four.

Also:

NEW YORK: Colman Domingo, fresh off his Oscar nomination, has joined the upcoming **Michael Jack-**

son biopic "Michael" to play the pop star's domineering father, **Joe Jackson**.

Lionsgate announced Thursday that Domingo has been cast in **Antoine Fuqua's** currently-in-production film. On Tuesday, Domingo was nominated for best actor by the Academy Awards for his performance as the civil rights activist **Bayard Rustin** in "Rustin."

Joe Jackson, who died in 2018, was the controversial patriarch of the musical family, launching the Jackson 5 and the solo careers of Michael and Janet. But he was also an alienating manager and abusive father whose children, later in life, distanced themselves from him.

Newcomer **Jaafar Jackson**, nephew to Michael Jackson, will play the King of Pop in the film produced by **Graham King** ("Bohemian Rhapsody"). The film is being made with involvement of the Michael Jackson estate.

"I'm excited to be a part of a film that explores both the complicated soul of the legendary Michael Jackson as well as his impact on music and culture as a global icon," said Domingo in a statement. "Not only am I fortunate to have a rich, complex and flawed character to portray in Joe Jackson, but I also have a front row seat for Jaafar's incredible transformation."

"Michael" is scheduled to open in theaters in April next year.

LOS ANGELES: So **Greta Gerwig** didn't get a best director nomination this week, but the good news is that the Criterion Channel has a new series starting Thursday about some of the "Lady Bird" and "Barbie" director's favorite films. Gerwig's "adventures in moviegoing" includes **David Lean's** "Brief Encounter," **Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's** "The Red Shoes," **Max Ophüls's** "The Earrings of Madame de..." and **Claire Denis's** "Beau travail." The channel also has a series on "Interdimensional Romance" with films like "A Matter of Life and Death," "Wings of Desire," "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" and both versions of "Solaris." (AP)

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.: Harvard University's Hasty Pudding Theatricals has named **Barry Keoghan**, best known for his roles in "Dunkirk," "The Killing of a Sacred Deer," "Eternals," and "The Banshees of Inisherin," as the recipient of its 2024 Man of the Year Award.

Keoghan recently starred in the comedy psychological thriller "Saltburn" and can be seen co-starring in the series "Masters of the Air," a World War II drama focused on bomber crews.

The Man of the Year festivities will take place Feb. 2. Hasty Pudding Theatricals will host a roast for Keoghan and present him with his pudding pot. Afterwards, Keoghan will attend a performance of the Hasty Pudding Theatricals' 175th production "Heist Heist Baby!"

"With experience as both superhero and supervillain, Barry Keoghan is the perfect choice to fight to earn his Pudding pot," Man of the Year Coordinator **Aidan Golub** said.

Hasty Pudding Theatricals, which dates to 1844 and calls itself the third-oldest theater group in the world, has handed out a Man of the Year Award since 1967. Last year's recipient was **Bob Odenkirk**.

Odenkirk reprised the role of Saul Goodman in "Better Call Saul," which earned him three Critics Choice TV awards and multiple Emmy, Golden Globe, and SAG Award nominations.

Past recipients of the Man of the Year Award include **Clint Eastwood**, **Tom Hanks**, **Robert De Niro**, **Harrison Ford**, **Samuel L. Jackson** and **Ryan Reynolds**. (AP)

NASHVILLE, Tenn.: A district attorney in Tennessee has dropped charges against country singer **Chris Young** stemming from an encounter with Alcoholic Beverage Commission agents who were doing compliance checks.

In a statement released Friday, Nashville District Attorney **Glenn Funk** said charges against Young were dismissed "after a review of all the evidence."

Young was arrested Monday night and charged with assaulting an officer, disorderly conduct and resisting arrest, news outlets reported, citing arrest affidavits.

The agents were checking the **Tin Roof** bar in Nashville when

they asked to see Young's identification, the arrest affidavit said. Young then began questioning and video recording the agents.

He and others followed the agents into a neighboring bar called the Dawg House, the affidavit said. As the agents were leaving that bar, Young put his hands out to stop them and struck one agent on the



Keoghan



Young

shoulder, according to the affidavit. That agent then pushed the singer to create distance between them, the affidavit said.

When another agent approached Young, the singer stepped back and declined to follow orders, so he was arrested, the affidavit said. While agents were attempting to leave, multiple people with Young started

following them, creating a hostile situation, the affidavit said. (AP)

NEW YORK: A Seattle man who police say has been stalking and harassing **Taylor Swift** was ordered held without bail Thursday after he was arrested three times in recent days in front of the pop

star's home in **Manhattan's Tribeca** neighborhood.

David Crowe, 33, was arraigned in Manhattan Criminal Court on a misdemeanor charge of second-degree criminal contempt, according to Manhattan District Attorney **Alvin Bragg's** office. He was also ordered to undergo a psychiatric exam. (AP)

People & Places

People

DJ's image tested

Jay's 2002 murder trial finally opens

NEW YORK, Jan 28, (AP): For almost two decades, the 2002 killing of Run-DMC's Jam Master Jay stood as one of the hip-hop world's most infamous and elusive crimes, one of three long-unsolved slayings of major rap stars.

Now Jay's case is the first of those killings to go to trial. Opening statements are set for Monday in the federal murder trial of Karl Jordan Jr. and Ronald Washington, who were arrested in 2020.

"A brazen act," then-Brooklyn US Attorney Seth DuCharme said at the time, "has finally caught up with them."

Washington and Jordan are accused of gunning down Jay in his recording studio over a drug dispute, a prosecution narrative challenging the public understanding of a DJ known for his anti-drug advocacy. They have pleaded not guilty, as has a third defendant who was charged this past May and will be tried separately.

Jay, born Jason Mizell, formed Run-DMC in the early 1980s with Darryl "DMC" McDaniels and Joseph Simmons, known as DJ Run and Rev. Run. Together, the hat-wearing, Adidas-loving friends from the Hollis section of Queens built a rap juggernaut that helped the young genre go mainstream.

They were the first rappers with gold and platinum albums and a Rolling Stone cover. They were the first hip-hop group with a video on MTV, where their subsequent 1986 collaboration with Aerosmith on the classic rockers' "Walk This Way" would bust through a wall between rap and rock, literally doing so in the accompanying music video. The group was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2009.

"We always knew rap was for everyone," Jay said in a 2001 MTV interview. "Anyone could rap over all kinds of music."



Jay

They were the first rappers with gold and platinum albums and a Rolling Stone cover. They were the first hip-hop group with a video on MTV, where their subsequent 1986 collaboration with Aerosmith on the classic rockers' "Walk This Way" would bust through a wall between rap and rock, literally doing so in the accompanying music video. The group was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2009.

"We always knew rap was for everyone," Jay said in a 2001 MTV interview. "Anyone could rap over all kinds of music."

Fame

Embracing rock sounds, rap wordplay and New York attitude, Run-DMC notched hits talking about things ranging from their fame to people's foibles, including perhaps the only top-100 reference to somebody accidentally eating dog food.

The group also made clear where they stood on drugs and crime.

"We are not thugs, we don't use drugs," they declared on the platinum-selling 1987 single "It's Tricky." The group did an anti-drug public service announcement and shows, called for a day of peace between warring Los Angeles gangs, established scholarships and held voter registration drives at concerts.

Along the way, Jay opened a 24/7 studio in Hollis and a label, mentoring up-and-comers including 50 Cent.

Jay was killed at that studio on Oct. 30, 2002. His death followed the drive-by shootings of Tupac Shakur in 1996 and The Notorious B.I.G. in 1997, a trio of hip-hop tragedies that frustrated investigators for decades. A man was charged in September in Shakur's killing in Las Vegas and has pleaded not guilty; no one has been arrested in The Notorious B.I.G.'s slaying in Los Angeles.

More than \$60,000 in rewards were offered for information on Jay's death. Theories abounded. Police received enough tips to fill 34 pages, according to a court filing. But the investigation languished as investigators said they ran up against reluctant witnesses.

Prosecutors have said in court papers that the case took crucial strides in the last five years as they interviewed new people, did more ballistics tests and got important witnesses to cooperate, among other steps.

But defense lawyers have claimed the government dragged its feet in indicting Washington and Jordan, making it harder for them to defend themselves.

Authorities say the two men confronted Jay in his studio after being buzzed in. Prosecutors allege Washington brandished a gun and ordered a witness to lie on the floor, and Jordan shot the 37-year-old DJ in the head and another witness in the leg.

The motive, according to prosecutors: anger that Jay was going to cut Washington out of a plan to distribute 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of cocaine in Maryland. Prosecutors maintain the DJ had been mixed up in kilo-level coke deals since 1996. His family has insisted he wasn't involved with drugs.

Investigators were quick to eye Washington, who reportedly had been living on Jay's couch. Washington already had a record of gun, assault, drug and other convictions, and authorities said he went on a robbery spree after Jay's death, hopping among motels until being arrested three months later in the hold-ups, authorities said.

Suspect

He had told authorities and Playboy magazine in 2003 that he was present during Jay's killing but the armed men were Jordan and another man. Prosecutors publicly identified him in 2007 as a suspect.

After being arrested in the shooting - while still in prison for the robberies - he told agents he "never wanted someone else to get in trouble for something he (Washington) had put them up to," prosecutors said in court papers.

Lawyers for Washington, 59, have said in court papers that he didn't match DNA on a wool hat found at the crime scene, and they have raised questions about a witness' identification of him. A message sent Friday seeking comment on the upcoming trial was not immediately returned by his lead attorney, Susan Kellman.

Prosecutors have portrayed Jordan in court filings as a veteran drug dealer who boasted about his activities in his own raps, including a video called "Silver Spoon" - filmed in front of a mural of Jay - and a gun-filled clip titled "Aim for the Head." Authorities say they have their own videos, too: recordings of him repeatedly selling cocaine to an undercover agent in 2017.

Jordan, 40, has pleaded not guilty to gun and cocaine charges that will be decided at the murder trial. Judge LaShann DeArcy Hall said in 2020 she is "not going to hold any individual accountable for the lyrics in a rap song that is consumed by our community - and, in fact, it's consumed by me," according to the New York Daily News.

Jordan's lead lawyer, Mark DeMarco, declined to comment ahead of the trial. In court papers, he has said Jordan "adamantly denied his involvement in the murder" and was at his then-girlfriend's home when it happened.

He considered Jay to be family, since the DJ grew up across the street from Jordan's father, his defense wrote.



This image released by Prime Video shows Nicole Kidman, (right), in a scene from 'The Expats.' (AP)

Television

A gripping Hong Kong thriller promotes diversity

Kidman's emotional leap in 'Expats'

LOS ANGELES, Jan 28, (AP): Nicole Kidman captivated TV viewers in 2020 in "The Undoing," as a woman whose husband was accused of murder. In "Big Little Lies," she was a woman in an abusive marriage. And let's not forget she won an Oscar for playing 20th century writer Virginia Woolf, who battled mental illness, in the 2002 movie "The Hours."

In her new series "Expats," premiered Friday on Amazon Prime Video, Kidman once again emotionally jumps off a cliff. At the center of "Expats" are three women, played by Kidman, Ji-young Yoo and Sarayu Blue, who are each expatriates living in Hong Kong. Their lives are all altered when the young son of Kidman's character, Margaret, goes missing.

Lulu Wang ("The Farewell") directed and was the showrunner of the six-episode series, filmed on location in Hong Kong.

"When Nicole came to me, to make the series, I just felt like she was meeting me at the height of the success of 'The Farewell.' But people who know me from childhood know we were immigrants (from China)," Wang says. "I felt like the series had to represent that aspect of my life, like, yes, I'm an American expat in certain contexts, but in another context, I'm a Chinese immigrant. I wanted to really challenge this idea of a bubble that expats have."

An idea that Wang had was to make the fifth episode some 90 minutes and focus on the domestic workers, expats themselves and tasked with keeping other women's house-

holds running.

"Imagine you've just met Nicole Kidman and you're like, 'Hey, I've got this idea for an episode and you're in the background. What do you think about it?'" Wang laughs.

An executive producer, Kidman wasn't just receptive to Wang's thoughts and ideas - they spoke to a true career passion, championing others.

"What I want to do at this point in my life and career is support women like this and support the new visionaries and auteurs that are coming up and try to create paths for them," Kidman says.

Inspired

"I had never worked with a writer's room before," Wang says. "It's a very sort of solitary task to write usually. Here it was a room of women, helping to develop the story."

One of those writers on the show was Janice Y. K. Lee, whose novel "The Expatriates" inspired the series.

"She was so not precious about the book. And the reason, honestly, I wanted her in the room was so that we couldn't mess things up and so that she would be involved in the process," Wang explains. "You can't get better research than having the person who experienced it and wrote it in the room. ... We would always reference the book and quote it back to her, and she was always quite embarrassed."

In addition to the women in front of and behind the camera, Kidman is happy to share her spotlight with Brian Tee, who plays her husband.

"I'm so happy he's gotten the chance to do this and to act opposite him," she says, adding that, as on-screen spouses, they were bonded by trauma.

"We really helped each other. We were very much each other's best friend and support system. And because we're playing a married couple whose child is missing, we're doing that together," she says.

To go to those emotional places as Margaret "was harrowing at times," admits Kidman, who says she had to lose herself in the moment. "It's an exploration. ... It's like, put me in the place, put me in the scene, and let's go off to the objective and whatever comes through will come through."

Also:

LOS ANGELES: The new Amazon Prime Video series "Mr. & Mrs. Smith" is not your 2005 "Mr. & Mrs. Smith." Instead, **Donald Glover** and **Maya Erskine** star as two stranger spies who meet and are required to marry for their cover. The series was created by Glover and **Francesca Sloane**, who says she looked to reality TV like "Love is Blind" and "90 Day Fiancé" for inspiration. All eight episodes will be ready to binge on Friday, Feb. 2.

"Curb Your Enthusiasm" fans are pretty pretty pretty disappointed because the show begins its final season on Sunday, Feb. 4, on HBO. The irreverent comedy stars **Larry David** as a fictionalized version of himself who lands in awkward situations at every turn. Recurring favorites **Jeff Garlin**, **Susie Essman**, **Cheryl Hines**, and **J.B. Smoove** will be back.



Filmmaker Lulu Wang poses for a portrait to promote 'Expats' on Thursday, Jan. 18, in New York. (AP)



Thunberg



Melanie

Variety

MADRID: The annual tourism fair (Fitur) has drawn a large number of delegations representing many countries from various corners of the globe.

This year's edition, the 44th, has drawn participants from 152 countries, promoting recreation destinations and various services and products in the sector.

Representatives of companies, during the first three days of the event, interact and make deals and visitors, in the two last days, examine the offers and choose destinations, at lucrative rates, for leisure and entertainment.

In addition to the tourist attractions, the event is distinguished with promotion of traditional food, folkloric outfits, handicrafts and music. At some corners, visitors request calligraphic drawing of their names.

Spain has been holding the exhibition as part of efforts to promote its global tourist status. Preliminary information showed that the country hosted 84 million tourists in 2023, ahead of France that received 82 million tourists.

The exhibition Fitur 2024 is held at the fair ground Ifema in Madrid. Its proceeds are projected at USD 468 million. (KUNA)

LONDON: Climate activist **Greta Thunberg** joined a march in southern England on Saturday to protest the use of private jets and the expansion of an airport.

Hundreds of local residents and activists holding banners and placards that read "Ban Private Jets" marched to **Farnborough Airport**, which mostly serves private aircraft. Some beat drums while others lit pink smoke flares.

The airport, located in **Hampshire County** about 40 miles (64 kilometers) southwest of London, applied last year to increase its maximum number of flights from 50,000 to 70,000 a year.

Groups working to fight climate change, including the organizer of Saturday's protest, Extinction Rebellion, say private jets are much more polluting than commercial passenger airliners. Flights to and from Farnborough Airport carried an average of 2½ passengers per flight in 2022, the group said.

"It is clear that private jets are incompatible with ensuring present and future living conditions on this planet," Thunberg said in a video that Extinction Rebellion posted on social media.

"We're not going to let this continue. We're not going to let the rich few who are responsible for the majority of aviation emissions get away with sacrificing people and the planet," she added.

Farnborough Airport said that it was an important hub for business and corporate

travel, and that it recognized the importance of reducing its environmental impact.

"The airport's environmental footprint is a fraction that of a traditional commercial airport, yet it serves as one of the largest employment sites in the region," it said in a statement. (AP)

NEW YORK: **Melanie**, the singer-songwriter who rose through the New York folk scene, performed at Woodstock and had a series of 1970s hits including the enduring cultural phenomenon "Brand New Key," has died.

Her publicist **Billy James** told The Associated Press that Melanie died Tuesday. She was 76 and lived in central Tennessee. The cause was not immediately revealed.

"Our world is much dimmer, the colors of a dreary, rainy Tennessee pale with her absence today," her children **Leilah**, **Jeor-die** and **Beau Jarred**, said in a post on her Facebook page announcing her death.

With a voice that could shift from high-pitched and coy to a deep soulful rasp, Melanie wrote and sang hits including "Look What They've Done to My Song Ma" and "Lay Down (Candles in the Rain)."

She was best known for "Brand New Key," a song from her 1971 album "Gather Me" that she wrote about about a girl who bikes and skates past the house of a boy she longs for. It became a No. 1 hit in the U.S. and several other countries.

With echoes of the popular songs of the '20s and '30s, it combines a youthful simplicity with a winking adult sophistica-

tion in its chorus:

"Well, I've got a brand-new pair of roller skates, you've got a brand-new key, I think that we should get together, and try them on to see."

She would say in later interviews that she didn't necessarily intend sexual innuendo in the song, but those who heard it weren't necessarily wrong.

"I probably have a quirky way of writing, and I think I was misunderstood," she told the Tennessee newspaper in 2014. "I had this smiling, cherubic thing, and I think that worked against me. Girls with guitars who were relevant were angst-filled and angular."

The song has had several revivals in the decades since. It had a key place in Paul Thomas Anderson's 1997 film "Boogie Nights" and was lip-synched by Jimmy Fallon on "The Tonight Show" in 2016.

Born **Melanie Safka**, the daughter of a jazz singer, in Queens, New York, she studied at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and performed in the coffee houses of Greenwich Village and other New York folk hubs.

She released her self-titled debut album in 1969, and had hit songs in Europe with "Bobo's Party" and "Beautiful People."

That summer, she was one of only three female solo performers, along with Joan Baez and Janis Joplin, to perform at the generation-defining Woodstock Music and Art Fair in upstate New York.



Leon Preston Robinson, (from left), and Chuck D attend the premiere of 'Kings from Queens: The Run DMC Story,' at The Times Center, Saturday, Jan. 27, in New York. (AP)

CAN's campaign boosts community awareness on cancer

Kuwait trains 2,983 doctors on early thyroid cancer detection

The Conversation

Active surveillance may be a better option

Treatment can do more harm than good for prostate cancer

By Jinping Xu
Wayne State University

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

Although about 1 in 8 men in the US will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during their lifetime, only about 1 in 44 will die from it. Most men diagnosed with prostate cancer die from other causes, especially those with a low-risk prostate cancer that usually grows so slowly it isn't life-threatening.

However, until about a decade ago, most men diagnosed with low-risk prostate cancer were immediately treated with surgery or radiation. Although both can cure the cancer, they can also have serious, life-changing complications, including urinary incontinence and erectile dysfunction.

I am a family physician and researcher studying how patient-physician relationships and decision-making processes affect prostate cancer screening and treatment. In our recently published research, my colleagues and I found that men are increasingly opting against immediate treatment. Instead, they are choosing a more conservative approach known as active surveillance: keeping a close eye on the cancer and holding off on treatment until there are signs of progression.

Overdiagnosis

Prostate cancer screening is controversial because it often leads to overdiagnosis and overtreatment of cancers that would have otherwise been harmless if left undetected and untreated.

Screening for prostate cancer typically uses a blood test that measures levels of a protein that prostate cells produce called prostate specific antigen, or PSA. Elevated PSA levels may indicate the presence of prostate cancer, but not all cases are aggressive or life-threatening. And PSA levels can also be elevated for reasons other than prostate cancer, like an enlarged prostate gland due to aging.

Due to widespread PSA screening in the U.S., over half of prostate cancers detected through screening are low-risk. Concerns about overdiagnosis and overtreatment of low-risk cancers are the main reasons why screening is not recommended unless patients still want to be screened after discussing the pros and cons with their doctor.

Active surveillance is a safe and effective way to manage low-risk prostate cancer by limiting treatments such as surgery or radiation only to cancers that are growing or becoming more aggressive. It involves monitoring tumors through regular checkups and tests.

Active surveillance is different from "watchful waiting," another conservative strategy with a less intense type of follow-up that includes fewer tests and only relieves symptoms. In contrast, active surveillance involves more rigorous monitoring, with more tests to keep a close eye on cancer with the intention to cure if needed.

Active surveillance allows patients to delay or avoid invasive treatments and their associated side effects. It aims to balance keeping a close watch on the cancer while avoiding treatments unless they are truly needed.

All leading medical groups recommend active surveillance as the preferred approach to caring for men diagnosed with low-risk prostate cancer. However, until recently, the number of patients who opt for active surveillance in the US has been low, ranging from under 15% in 2010 to about 40% in 2015. The specific reasons why active surveillance is underutilized in the US are not well understood.

What factors influence treatment decisions? To answer this question, my team and I surveyed 1,341 white and 347 Black men with newly diagnosed low-risk prostate cancer from 2014 to 2017. We recruited participants from two cancer registries in metropolitan Detroit and the state of Georgia, regions with large Black populations.

Overall, more than half of the men opted for active sur-

veillance. This was much higher than a similar study our team conducted nearly a decade ago, which found that only 10% of men chose active surveillance.

Increased uptake of active surveillance is good news, but it is not where it needs to be. The U.S. is still lagging behind many European countries, such as Sweden, where over 80% of patients diagnosed with low-risk prostate cancer select active surveillance.

To figure out what influenced patients to choose active surveillance, we decided to ask them directly.

A urologist's recommendation had the strongest effect: Nearly 85% of patients who chose active surveillance stated that their urologist recommended it. Other factors included a shared patient-physician treatment decision and greater knowledge about prostate cancer. Interestingly, participants living in metro Detroit were more likely to choose active surveillance than those living in Georgia.

Conversely, men were less likely to try active surveillance if they had a strong desire to achieve a cure, expected to live longer with treatment or perceived their diagnosis of low-risk cancer was more serious. Almost three-quarters of patients who chose immediate treatment expected to live at least five years longer than they otherwise would without treatment, which is unrealistic and not based on existing evidence.

Misperceptions, unrealistic treatment expectations and biases may lead patients to choose unnecessarily aggressive treatment, suffering its harms with no survival benefit and potentially regretting their decision later.

We also found racial and geographic differences in the rate of active surveillance adoption.

On average, Black patients had a higher risk of developing and dying from prostate cancer compared with white patients. Additionally, as data supporting the use of active surveillance has been predominantly based on white men, the risks and benefits of active surveillance in Black patients are more controversial. Indeed, our study found 51% of Black patients chose active surveillance compared with 61% of white patients.

Notably, Black men reported receiving fewer active surveillance recommendations from urologists and were less engaged in shared decision-making with their doctors compared with white men. This racial difference in active surveillance rates is no longer significant after accounting for urologist recommendations, decision-making style and other factors.

Differences

But geographic differences persisted: Patients living in Detroit were more likely to undergo active surveillance than those living in Georgia. This likely reflects to some degree the entrenched care patterns of some urologists. Some studies have found that the longer a urologist was in practice, the less likely they were to recommend active surveillance to their patients.

Our findings are encouraging in that they show active surveillance has become more acceptable to both patients and urologists over the past decade. However, our results also suggest that greater physician engagement and better patient education can support increased adoption of active surveillance.

For example, when physicians appropriately describe low-risk prostate cancer as small or not aggressive, coupled with a favorable prognosis, this can give patients a sense of relief. Patients in turn feel more comfortable with undergoing active surveillance.

Conversely, a patient's misperception of how serious their cancer is may lead to unnecessary treatment. Physicians can reassure patients that active surveillance is a safe and preferred alternative. They can also explain that aggressive treatments don't improve survival for most low-risk patients and can cause significant long-term side effects.

More shared treatment decision-making involving patients and their physicians can improve the likelihood of choosing active surveillance compared with patients who make decisions on their own. (AP)

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28, (KUNA): The Cancer Awareness National Campaign (CAN) announced that it trained 2,983 doctors, mostly primary care physicians and dentists, on early detection of head, neck and thyroid cancers.

CAN board chairman Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh said in his final speech on Sunday, during the annual thyroid awareness campaign, that they would be training doctors all year round to be able to detect first signs, for a faster diagnosis and treatment.

Dr. Al-Saleh talked about the importance of training the nursing staff on dealing with cancer patients and their families, 2,585 of them were trained to raise community awareness, how to identify risk factors and signs.

Cooperation with the Ministry of Health aims to help with the readiness of medical and nursing staff, said Dr. Al-Saleh, while campaigns aim to help the target audience on recognizing the signs of thyroid cancer.

A person can get thyroid cancer at any age, but women are at most risk between the ages 40-50, while men are at most risk between 60-70 years, it is three times more common in women than in men.

Campaign officer Dr. Eman Al-



Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Cancer Awareness National Campaign (CAN), Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh, and the campaign coordinator, Dr. Eman Al-Shemmari, during the awareness campaign.

Shemmari, reiterated Dr. Al-Saleh's words by saying how important it was to raise awareness and to provide an integrated service to combat thyroid cancer from detection to treatment.

She also talked about the necessity for someone with a family history with can-

cer to do regular tests at home, seeing as how thyroid cancer symptoms are easy to detect by appearing on the skin, hair and nails, thyroid cancer is one of the curable cancers and causes few deaths if diagnosed early, it is the most common but least dangerous cancer.

Experts warn of increased risk of outbreaks

Avian flu forces 1m birds cull

PETALUMA, Calif., Jan 28, (AP): Last month, Mike Weber got the news every poultry farmer fears: His chickens tested positive for avian flu.

Following government rules, Weber's company, Sunrise Farms, had to slaughter its entire flock of egg-laying hens - 550,000 birds - to prevent the disease from infecting other farms in Sonoma County north of San Francisco.

"It's a trauma. We're all going through grief as a result of it," said Weber, standing in an empty hen house. "Petaluma is known as the Egg Basket of the World. It's devastating to see that egg basket go up in flames."

A year after the bird flu led to record egg prices and widespread shortages, the disease known as highly pathogenic avian influenza is wreaking havoc in California, which escaped the earlier wave of outbreaks that devastated poultry farms in the Midwest.

The highly contagious virus has ravaged Sonoma County, where officials have declared a state of emergency. During the past two months, nearly a dozen commercial farms have had to destroy more than 1 million birds to control the outbreak, dealing an economic blow to farmers, workers and their customers.

Merced County in Central California also has been hit hard, with outbreaks at several large commercial egg-producing farms in recent weeks.

Experts say bird flu is spread by ducks, geese and other migratory birds.

The waterfowl can carry the virus without getting sick and easily spread it through their droppings to chicken and turkey farms and backyard flocks through droppings and nasal discharges.

California poultry farms are implementing strict biosecurity measures to curb the spread of the disease. State Veterinarian Annette Jones urged farmers to keep their flocks indoors until June, including organic chickens that are required to have outdoor access.

Migration

"We still have migration going for another couple of months. So we've got to be as vigilant as possible to protect our birds," said Bill Mattos, president of the California Poultry Federation.

The loss of local hens led to a spike in egg prices in the San Francisco Bay Area over the holidays before supermarkets and restaurants found suppliers from outside the region.

While bird flu has been around for decades, the current outbreak of the virus that began in early 2022 has prompted officials to slaughter nearly 82 million birds, mostly egg-laying chickens, in 47 U.S. states, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Whenever the disease is found the entire flock is slaughtered to help limit the spread of the virus.

The price of a dozen eggs more than doubled to \$4.82 at its peak in January 2023. Egg prices returned to their normal range as egg producers built up their flocks and outbreaks were con-

trolled. Turkey and chicken prices also spiked, partly due to the virus.

"I think this is an existential issue for the commercial poultry industry. The virus is on every continent, except for Australia at this point," said Maurice Pitesky, a poultry expert at the University of California, Davis.

Climate change is increasing the risk of outbreaks as changing weather patterns disrupt the migratory patterns of wild birds, Pitesky said. For example, exceptional rainfall last year created new waterfowl habitat throughout California, including areas close to poultry farms.

In California, the outbreak has impacted more than 7 million chickens in about 40 commercial flocks and 24 backyard flocks, with most of the outbreaks occurring over the past two months on the North Coast and Central Valley, according to the USDA.

Industry officials are worried about the growing number of backyard chickens that could become infected and spread avian flu to commercial farms.

"We have wild birds that are full of virus. And if you expose your birds to these wild birds, they might get infected and ill," said Rodrigo Gallardo, a UC Davis researcher who studies avian influenza.

Gallardo advises the owners of backyard chickens to wear clean clothes and shoes to protect their flocks from getting infected. If an unusual number of chickens die, they should be tested for avian flu.

Ettamarie Peterson, a retired teacher in Petaluma, has a flock of about 50 chickens that produce eggs she sells from her backyard barn for 50 cents each.

"I'm very concerned because this avian flu is transmitted by wild birds, and there's no way I can stop the wild birds from coming through and leaving the disease behind," Peterson said. "If your flock has any cases of it, you have to destroy the whole flock."

Sunrise Farms, which was started by Weber's great-grandparents more than a century ago, was infected despite putting in place strict biosecurity measures to protect the flock.

"The virus got to the birds so bad and so quickly you walked in and the birds were just dead," Weber said. "Heartbreaking doesn't describe how you feel when you walk in and perfectly healthy young birds have been just laid out."



Chickens stand in a holding pen at Ettamarie Peterson's farm in Petaluma, Calif. on Thursday, Jan. 11. (AP)

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SPORTS

Odermatt dominates World Cup super-G

Gut-Behrami claims her 6th win in Cortina

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy, Jan 28, (AP): Olympic champion Lara Gut-Behrami is halfway to Lindsey Vonn's Cortina record after claiming a World Cup super-G on Sunday for her sixth career victory on the Olympia delle Tofane course - which again was the site of multiple crashes. Too bad the 32-year-old Gut-Behrami can't say for sure

yet whether she'll still be competing in two years at the Milan-Cortina Olympics.

In a race when many of the top favorites struggled with a tricky course-set, Gut-Behrami edged Stephanie Venier, Friday's downhill winner, by 0.21 seconds. Romane Miradoli finished third, 0.41 behind.

Asked if she will be back at Cortina next year, Gut-Behrami responded only, "We'll see."

A day earlier, Gut-Behrami said she planned to compete through next season's world championships in Saalbach, Austria.

It was Gut-Behrami's fourth World Cup win in Cortina, to go with her two gold medals at the 2021 world championships at the Italian resort.

Vonn won 12 World Cup races in Cortina - six downhill and six super-Gs.



Matthieu Pavon holds the trophy after winning the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament, Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024, in San Diego. (AP)

Pavon is 1st Frenchman to win on the PGA Tour

SAN DIEGO, Jan 28, (AP): Matthieu Pavon made an 8-foot putt for a dramatic birdie on No. 18 at Torrey Pines South for a one-shot victory in the Farmers Insurance Open on Saturday that made him the first Frenchman to win on the PGA Tour.

GOLF

Pavon raised his arms in celebration and shouted before hugging his caddie after the putt rolled in as dusk began falling at the municipal course high above the Pacific Ocean. His only birdie on the back nine saved him from a playoff.

His final-round 3-under 69 put him at 13 under, one stroke better than Nicolai Hojgaard. Pavon was two

shots ahead of Stephan Jaeger, who led after the second and third rounds, and Nicolai Hojgaard and Nate Lashley.

"I have no words. It is amazing," the 31-year-old PGA Tour rookie said moments after the victory.

Pavon took the lead on the 12th hole, built the advantage to two strokes and then missed a 3-foot putt on the par-4 17th for a bogey that cut his lead to one stroke.

He appeared to be in trouble on the par-5, 541-yard 18th when his drive landed in a sand trap, about 4 inches from the front lip. His second shot went 103 yards into the left rough, which was high because of heavy rain Monday, with 145 yards to the hole. He responded with a brilliant third shot within 8 feet. Pavon, who was born in Toulouse, was playing in just his 11th PGA Tour event.

SKIING

After Mikaela Shiffrin crashed but avoided major injury on Friday and Olympic downhill champion Corinne Suter and Swiss teammate Joana Haehlen had season-ending injuries over the weekend, there was another serious crash involving Canadian racer Valerie Grenier, who finished third on Friday.

Alpine Canada did not immediately provide injury details for Grenier, who was taken off the course by toboggan after receiving lengthy medical treatment.

Gut-Behrami, who earned her 41st World Cup victory, moved within 195 points of Shiffrin in the overall standings, with the American still out of action at least through Tuesday.

In Germany, Swiss ski star Marco Odermatt restored the pecking order in men's World Cup super-G racing with a dominant victory Sunday, a day after he missed the podium for the first time in 13 races.

Racing in sunny conditions on the same course where he placed fourth in Saturday's overcast super-G, Odermatt outpaced the field with an all-attacking run to lead runner-up Raphael Haaser of Austria by 0.30 seconds.

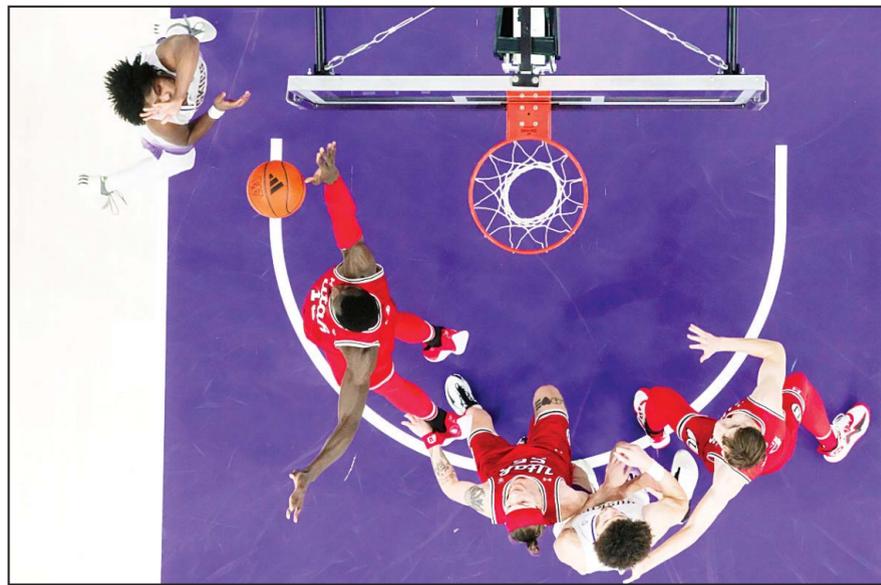
"The conditions for sure helped me. Today I knew the good snow is also next to the line, so I knew I can attack," Odermatt said. "Even if I get off of the line, I can still manage to ski clean and don't get injured and that was important for my mindset."

It was Odermatt's ninth super-G win from the last 16 races. Across all disciplines, the result marked his 33rd victory as he matched American great Bode Miller's career tally.

"It was a run on the limit. We saw at inspection it would be a completely different race," said Odermatt, referring to the iced top layer that made the course surface harder than in Saturday's race.

Odermatt said he had been "not too disappointed" after Saturday's result.

Lakers take double-OT thriller versus Warriors



Washington guard Sahvir Wheeler, left, throws up a shot against Utah center Keba Keita, second from left, during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024, in Seattle. Washington won 98-73. (AP)

Nuggets best 76ers

SAN FRANCISCO, Jan 28, (AP): LeBron James made two free throws with 1.2 seconds left in the second overtime to cap his triple-double of 36 points, 20 rebounds and 12 assists in the Los Angeles Lakers' 145-144 victory over the Golden State Warriors on Saturday night.

Warriors star Stephen Curry hit a go-ahead 3-pointer with 4.7 seconds left in the second OT and made another over Anthony Davis with 1:22 to go on the way to 46 points with a season-high nine 3s.

D'Angelo Russell connected from deep with 53 seconds left in the second OT and also hit another earlier in the period after also coming up clutch late in regulation on the way to 28 points.

James scored 12 points in the two OT periods and had his third triple-double of the season and 110th of his career. Davis added 29 points and 13 rebounds.

Nuggets 111, 76ers 105

In Denver, Nikola Jokic had 26 points and 16 rebounds, but was denied his rematch with fellow MVP contender Joel Embiid when Denver fended off short-handed but gritty Philadelphia.

Philadelphia's star center missed a game at Denver for a fourth consecutive season after the team's medical staff determined he shouldn't play on his balky left knee.

Jamal Murray added 23 points for Denver and Michael Porter Jr. had 20. Paul Reed led Philadelphia with a career-best 30 points and Kelly Oubre Jr. had 25.

The 76ers scratched Embiid minutes before tipoff after he had discomfort in his troublesome left knee during warmups. It denied basketball fans another marquee matchup between the last two NBA MVPs.

Kings 120, Mavericks 115

In Dallas, De'Aaron Fox scored 34 points and Sacramento beat Dallas, with Mavericks star Luka Doncic finishing with 28 points, 17 assists and 10 rebounds a night after scoring a franchise-record 73 points in a win at Atlanta.

Harrison Barnes had 20 points, Kevin Huerter added 18 and Domantas Sabonis had 17 points and a game-high 11 rebounds as the Kings won their third straight following a season-worst four-game losing streak.

The Mavericks split their back-to-back, having won 148-143 at Atlanta on Friday night when Doncic tied for the fourth most points in a game in NBA history behind only Wilt Chamberlain and Kobe Bryant.

Clippers 115, Celtics 96

In Boston, Kawhi Leonard scored 26 points in only 29 minutes and Los Angeles routed Boston.

Paul George added 17 points for the Clippers, who used a 21-0 run in the third quarter to win their fifth straight and avenge a 37-point home loss to Boston in December. Leonard, George and the rest of the starters sat out the fourth quarter.

BASKETBALL

It was the most-lopsided loss of the season for Boston, which lost for just the second time at home after starting the season 20-0 at TD Garden.

Jayson Tatum led Boston with 21 points. The Celtics shot 35% from the field.

Bucks 141, Pelicans 117

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 30 points and 12 rebounds in Milwaukee's blowout victory New Orleans.

Damian Lillard added 26 points, nine assists and six rebounds. Brook Lopez scored 24 points with 6-for-9 shooting from 3-point range, and Bobby Portis had 20 points.

The Bucks shot 56% as they improved to 2-1 in their third and final game with Joe Prunty as interim head coach following the firing of Adrian Griffin. Doc Rivers held his introductory news conference as Griffin's permanent replacement Saturday.

Brandon Ingram scored 26 points for New Orleans.

Spurs 113, Timberwolves 112

In San Antonio, Devin Vassell had 25 points, Victor Wembanyama added 23 points and 10 rebounds and San Antonio rallied to beat Minnesota.

Anthony Edwards had 32 points and 12 rebounds for Minnesota, and Rudy Gobert and Karl-Anthony Towns had 19 points each. Towns missed a 3-pointer at the buzzer as the Timberwolves had a two-game winning streak snapped.

Officials halted play two minutes into the game when a bat descended on the court seconds after Wembanyama made a 3-pointer.

The Spurs' mascot, The Coyote, captured the bat with a net after numerous failed attempts, much to



New Orleans Pelicans' Jose Alvarado (15) drives past a leaping Milwaukee Bucks' Damian Lillard (0) during the second half of an NBA basketball game Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024, in Milwaukee. (AP)

the delight of Wembanyama and Jeremy Sochan. The Coyote had previously corralled two bats, and Manu Ginobili swatted another to the court with his bare hand in November 2009.

Knicks 125, Heat 109

In New York, Jalen Brunson had 32 points and eight assists and New York beat Miami, winning its sixth straight and sending the Heat to a sixth consecutive loss.

Julius Randle added 19 points and nine rebounds for the Knicks, but left with 4:27 remaining after landing hard on his right shoulder when Jaime Jaquez Jr. stepped in front of him trying to take a charge on Randle's drive to the basket.

Coach Tom Thibodeau said after the game that he knew only that Randle was being checked by the medical staff and didn't know the nature of the injury.

OG Anunoby also had 19 points for the Knicks, who improved to 12-2 this month after he made his first start on New Year's Day.

Jimmy Butler scored 28 points for Miami.

Wizards 118, Pistons 104

In Detroit, Kuzma scored 30 points and Washington beat Detroit for Wizards interim coach Brian Keefe's first victory.

Keefe lost his first game Thursday, hours after Wes Unseld Jr. was moved to the Wizards' front office. Jordan Poole added 17 points to help Washington end a six-game losing streak.

Bojan Bogdanovic led Detroit with 30 points.

Jazz 134, Hornets 122

In Charlotte, N.C., Lauri Markkanen had 33 points and 12 rebounds and Utah beat Charlotte for its 11th victory in 15 games.

Collin Sexton added 24 points and 13 assists. The Jazz shot 56% from the field, made 17 3-pointers and built 36-point lead in the third quarter.

P.J. Washington tied a career high with 43 points - 31 in the second half - and Nick Richards added a career-best 26 to go with 13 rebounds for Charlotte.

Nets 106, Rockets 104

In New York, Cam Thomas scored 37 points and Brooklyn outlasted Houston to snap a three-game losing streak.

The Nets led by 28 points in the second quarter, with the Rockets rallying to cut it to one with seconds left. Mikal Bridges and Dorian Finney-Smith each had 19 points for Brooklyn. Jalen Green, Dillan Brooks and Cam Whitmore each had 19 points for the Rockets. They have lost seven of their last 10 games.

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Gripping conclusion to the day-night Test at Gabba

Joseph inspires West Indies to stunning win over Australia

BRISBANE, Australia, Jan 28, (AP): Shamar Joseph braved a toe injury and grabbed 7-68 as the young fast bowler inspired the West Indies to its first win in Australia in 27 years in a gripping conclusion to the day-night test at the Gabba on Sunday.

Joseph, who hobbled off the field late Saturday evening when he was struck by a searing Mitchell Starc yorker from the final ball of West Indies' second innings, flattened Australia for 207 to give the West Indies a memorable win by eight runs.

Opening batter Steve Smith was left stranded with an unbeaten 91 off 146 balls as Joseph kept coming hard at the Australian batters with his pace.

The 24-year-old Joseph, who made his test debut at Adelaide

where the West Indies lost by 10 wickets inside three days, sprinted towards boundaries in joy as he clean bowled No. 11 Josh Hazlewood and leveled the two-match series 1-1.

West Indies had not beaten Australia in a test match since it won by 10 wickets at WACA in 1997, and Cameron Green and Smith well negotiated the first hour after they resumed the 216-run chase at 60-2.

But Joseph returned with a stunning spell of fast bowling to breathe life when he grabbed 6-60 off an unchanged ten overs spell before the first session ended that left Australia still needing 29.

Joseph reached speeds of close to 150 kph (93 mph) and tore through the Australian middle order in a

brehtaking spell. He bowled Green (42) to break a 71-run stand before blasting through Head's defence with a superb yorker with his next ball while bowling the lefthander from around the wicket.

It was the second time in the match that Head was dismissed first ball.

CRICKET

Mitch Marsh (10) and Alex Carey (two) both came and went quickly as Australia wobbled and belief grew for West Indies of achieving a stunning upset.

Starc made a quickfire 21 before he became Joseph's fifth wicket when he was caught by Kevin Sinclair at cover. Cummins, who scored

a career-high 64 not out in the first innings, could only manage two before he edged a ball through to Joshua da Silva with Australia still requiring 41 runs to win.

Smith and Lyon brought down the target to 29, but Alzarri Joseph had Lyon caught behind soon after the break, one ball after he couldn't grab a tough return catch.

Smith then played a superb lap-shot for a six off Alzarri Joseph over fine leg and brought the target down to single digits.

But Shamar Joseph would have the final say as he uprooted Hazlewood's off stump with another pacey delivery to seal West Indies' famous win amid wild celebrations by the tourists.



West Indies' Shamar Joseph, (left), celebrates taking the wicket of Australia's Travis Head on the 4th day of their cricket Test match in Brisbane. (AP)

Tom Hartley, Ollie Pope lead England to unlikely 1st Test victory over India

Hosts collapse from 42-0 to all out for 202 runs in 69.2 overs

HYDERABAD, India, Jan 28, (AP): Debutant Tom Hartley took 7-62 as England completed an extraordinary turnaround to beat India by 28 runs in the first test on Sunday.

Hartley returned the fourth-best figures for a debutant visiting bowler in India as the hosts collapsed from 42-0 to all out for 202 runs in 69.2 overs.

The inexplicable collapse was all the more unlikely after the hosts took a 190-run lead in the first innings, scoring 436 in reply to England's 246.

Ollie Pope's 196 runs helped England score 420 runs in its second innings, as the visitors overcame a record deficit to register a stunning win on Indian soil.

Hartley's seven-wicket haul was the second-best return for an English spinner on debut after John Langridge's 7-56 against the West Indies in 1933.

CRICKET

India's innings began after the lunch break with openers Rohit Sharma and Yashasvi Jaiswal getting off to a fast start. The pair put on 42 off 70 balls for the first wicket before the Indian collapse began.

Jaiswal didn't look comfortable against Hartley and was the first to go, caught at forward short leg by Pope in the 12th over.

Two balls later, Pope held a sharp catch off Shubman Gill who was out for a duck as India was suddenly down to 42-2.

The big blow came when Hartley trapped Rohit Sharma lbw for 39 runs. The Indian skipper opted for DRS, but the review was turned down.

Axar Patel, who batted at No. 9 in the first innings, came out to bat at five to try and negate the left-arm spin. It worked for a while as India went to tea at 95-3.

But immediately after play resumed for the evening session, Patel handed a return catch to Hartley as the collapse continued. Then it was Joe Root's (1-41) turn to get into the act and the part-time spinner trapped Lokesh Rahul lbw for 22.

Stokes produced a bit of magic to run out Ravindra Jadeja for 2. Jack Leach, nursing a knee injury, bowled two short spells and managed to dismiss Shreyas Iyer (13) in his second.

India was in a fragile state at 119-7, but Srikrishna and Ravichandran Ashwin provided some resistance, holding out for 130 deliveries.

They put on 57 runs for the eighth wicket but just as the light started fading, Hartley bowled Bharat for 28 runs to take back the momentum.

The umpires added an extra 30 minutes to the day's play to secure a result, and it duly came. Ashwin was stumped for 28 - off Hartley again - and then Mohammed Siraj was dismissed similarly to spark celebrations in the English camp.

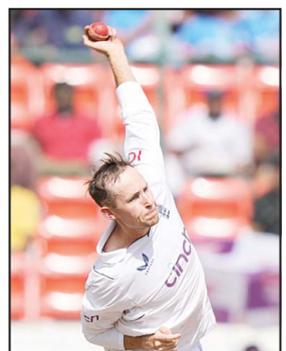
It was a record turnaround for a visiting team coming back from a deficit to beat India at home. Australia's win after turning around a 65-run deficit back in 1964 (Chennai) was the previous best.

Earlier, Pope finished with his second highest test score to set up a challenging target for India.

Hartley scored 34 runs off 52 balls,



Sheikh Talal Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah with other officials after the awarding ceremony.



England's Tom Hartley bowls on the fourth day of the first cricket Test match between England and India in Hyderabad, India. (AP)

including four fours, and his 80-run partnership with Pope for the eighth wicket put England ahead in the match. Resuming on 316-6, Pope and Rehan Ahmed (28) frustrated the Indian bowlers early in the first session.

Pope, who was playing his first competitive game in seven months after suffering a shoulder injury, passed 150 off 212 balls as England scored 400 for the first time in its second innings since 2018.

Bumrah denied Pope his second test double hundred, bowling him on 196. Pope was named player of the match.

Kuwait Club brace for high-stakes duel against Al-Rayyan at West Asian Basketball Champ'ship

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

DOHA, Jan 28: Kuwait Club is gearing up for a crucial showdown against Qatar's Al-Rayyan at 8:00 pm in the latter's arena. This clash is part of the second round of the West Asian Basketball Championship for the Gulf region's second division.

Heading into the match, Al-Ameed leads the standings with 7 points, securing the top spot over Bahrain's Muharraq in second place. Al-Rayyan and Al-Ahly of Saudi Arabia follow closely, both accumulating 5 points each.

BASKETBALL

In this competition, the top team from each of the two Gulf groups advances to the next round. Meanwhile, the second and third-placed teams in each group face off, with the winners earning a spot in the semi-finals for the Gulf region.

Despite a recent loss to Al-Muharraq, Kuwait maintained its leading position in the standings, courtesy of a favorable scoring difference in

direct confrontations.

The destiny of "Al-Abyad" lies in its hands, and securing victories in the remaining two matches would ensure qualification. Coach Peter Schumers, hailing from Germany, is optimistic about bouncing back from the setback in the last round and solidifying the team's eligibility for the

semi-finals by securing a win in today's crucial match.

Key players for Kuwait include Alexander Al-Ghais, the Adnan brothers, Muhammad and Hamad, Turki Hammoud, and the international players Marcus Hunt and Anthony Carr, along with the Haitian talent Cadi LaLanne.



Kuwait Club player goes for the basket as opponents defend.

him around \$150 million - and what the team spent to land the likes of Sergio Busquets, Jordi Alba and Luis Suarez to play with him.

The Saudis have made clear that they'll spend big for what they want; some have used the term "sportswashing" when it comes to how the kingdom has spent billions bankrolling LIV Golf and attracting Formula One, boxing, horse racing, even BMX racing and professional wrestling. Much of this comes with great criticism. Messi's fame hasn't taken a hit from his association with the Saudis. Such is his power.

"What I love about Saudi," Messi says in a marketing campaign for the country, "is that I always discover what I never expected."

The trip itself speaks to how different everything for Inter Miami has become. The club faced Florida

Sheikh Talal commends Peru's hosting of World Youth Bowling Championship

LIMA, Peru, Jan 28: Sheikh Talal Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, President of the International and Asian Bowling Federations, affirmed that the World Youth Bowling Championship held in Lima, Peru, showcased intense competition among participating teams and achieved the desired success due to excellent organization and impressive performances by all

players.

Speaking at a press conference during the tournament's closing day and the awarding of first-place honors to the victorious teams, Sheikh Talal praised Peru for its exemplary organizational efforts and meticulous preparation, setting a high standard for hosting this globally significant event. The well-coordinated efforts received acclaim from all participants, prompting gratitude towards everyone involved in the successful execution of the event.

BOWLING

Sheikh Talal emphasized the International Bowling Federation's ongoing commitment to supporting the sport's growth and advancement. This involves expanding participation opportunities and organizing tournaments that foster strong interaction among teams, facilitating the exchange of experiences and skill development.

Expressing congratulations to the teams securing top positions, Sheikh Talal extended best wishes for their continued success and progress in future tournaments. Sweden claimed the first-place title in the youth competition, while Costa Rica emerged victorious in the women's competition.

Al-Qadisiya near deal with Ghana's Kingsley

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: Al-Qadisiya is on the verge of finalizing a deal with Ghanaian talent Sarfo Kingsley (28), who arrives from the Cyprus League. Kingsley, a seasoned professional with experience in Cyprus and Switzerland, excels in the central position on the field.

The impending signing of Kingsley comes as a replacement for Tunisian player Youssef Ben Souda, who terminated his association with Al-Qadisiya in January due to performance issues.

SOCCER

Meanwhile, Kuwait Club has actively entered the winter transfer market, securing an agreement with Congolese defender Arsene Zola (28), known for his proficiency in the center of defense. Zola, currently under contract with Moroccan club Wydad, may join Kuwait Club on loan, pending the completion of the deal. This move is seen as a potential replacement for Tunisian player Bilal Al-Aifa.

In another transfer development, Al-Fahaheel football team has finalized a deal with Syrian player Nasouh Al-Nakdali (30), who arrives from the Syrian club Tishreen, where he showcased his skills over the past two seasons. Al-Nakdali, a striker, will fill the void left by Tunisian Abdelrahman Al-Hanashi, who departed the team due to a cruciate ligament injury. Al-Nakdali has previously played in the Egyptian League with Smouha Gate, Qatari Me-saimeer, and Syrian Al-Karama.

Messi and Inter Miami are in Saudi Arabia to continue their around-the-world preseason tour

FORT LAUDERDALE, Jan 28, (AP): Inter Miami played six preseason matches last season. Most were behind closed doors with few people watching, all took place in Florida and the biggest news probably came when some fans prematurely set off fireworks and got ejected from the exhibition-season opener.

It's wildly different this season.

Such is life in Lionel Messi's world. The soccer icon and Inter Miami have a two-game tour of Saudi Arabia this week, the first match on Monday against Al-Hilal and the second match coming Thursday against Al Nassr - one where Messi may share the pitch again with longtime rival and fellow great Cristiano Ronaldo, assuming the Portugal star has recovered enough from a calf injury to play.

The club already has played two exhibitions this year - one in El Sal-

vador, one at Dallas' Cotton Bowl - and has matches in Hong Kong and Japan still to come after the Saudi swing is complete. It's basically an around-the-world, big-crowd, big-money, bright-spotlight batch of preseason games for Inter Miami, which instantly became a global brand when Messi announced last summer that he was joining the Major League Soccer club.

SOCCER

"It's incredible," said DeAndre Yedlin, the Inter Miami defender who was captain until Messi arrived. "Obviously, it's not just one guy, but I think most of the focus is on Leo. So, it shows just kind of the influence that he's had on the game and has had on the game. People want to

know what he's doing. People want to know anything that he's involved with, what's going on. It's great for the league. It's great for us."

Inter Miami is in Saudi Arabia because of Messi, plain and simple. There is no bigger name in the game than the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner and captain of reigning World Cup champion Argentina, and Messi - who had an offer to play in Saudi Arabia, which he turned down to join MLS and come to Inter Miami - is a Saudi ambassador to help promote tourism.

He was even suspended once by

one of his former clubs, Paris Saint-Germain, for making an unauthorized trip to the country. But Inter Miami not only understands the value of having Messi, it welcomed this massive preseason stretch in advance of an MLS season that starts Feb. 21.

"Having the possibility of seeing Messi up close in this circumstance is really very valuable," Inter Miami coach Gerardo "Tata" Martino said in Spanish last week before the team departed on its 13 1/2-hour charter flight to Riyadh. "You have to see how many times these people are going to have this possibility."

The financial benefit of Inter Miami and Messi playing in Saudi Arabia hasn't been revealed. It's reasonable to think it's a big number, enough to help the MLS club offset at least some of Messi's salary - he's on a 2 1/2-year contract that will pay

him around \$150 million - and what the team spent to land the likes of Sergio Busquets, Jordi Alba and Luis Suarez to play with him.

The Saudis have made clear that they'll spend big for what they want; some have used the term "sportswashing" when it comes to how the kingdom has spent billions bankrolling LIV Golf and attracting Formula One, boxing, horse racing, even BMX racing and professional wrestling. Much of this comes with great criticism. Messi's fame hasn't taken a hit from his association with the Saudis. Such is his power.

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Messi



Liverpool's Darwin Nunez (left), scores his side's second goal during the English FA Cup fourth round soccer match between Liverpool and Norwich, at Anfield stadium in Liverpool, England. (AP)

Sports

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Resilient Sinner edges Medvedev to clinch historic Grand Slam title

A generation shift is arriving

MELBOURNE, Australia, Jan 28, (AP): Jannik Sinner lined up a forehand, drilled it down the line and dropped to the court on his back, giving himself a few moments to process how he'd managed to come back from two sets down to win his first Grand Slam title.

The 22-year-old Sinner found a way to turn defense into attack in his first major final and take the Australian Open title from Daniil Medvedev 3-6, 3-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 on Sunday.

"I still have to process it, because... beating Novak (Djokovic) in the semis and then today Daniil in the final, they are tough players to beat," Sinner said. "So it's a great moment for me and my team. But in the other way, we also know that we have to improve if we want to have another chance to hold a big trophy again."

It was his third straight win over a top 5 player after his quarterfinal victory over Andrey Rublev and his semifinal upset that ended No. 1 Djokovic's long domination of the tournament. Only Djokovic and Roger Federer have done that previously in a major played on hard courts.

Sinner is the first Italian to win the Australian Open and the youngest winner in a men's final here since Djokovic won his first Grand Slam title in 2008.

With Carlos Alcaraz winning Wimbledon and Sinner winning the season-

opening major, a generation shift is arriving.

He thanked his parents for not forcing anything onto him and for letting him make big life choices, including moving away from home at 14.

"It's been a hell of a journey," the 22-year-old Sinner said, wiping his long, orange fringe out of his eyes, "even though I'm only 22."

For 2021 U.S. Open champion Medvedev, the loss was his fifth in six major finals. The third-seeded Medvedev set a record with his fourth five-set match of the tournament and time on court at a major in the Open era, his 24 hours and 17 minutes surpassing Carlos Alcaraz's 23:40 at the 2022 U.S. Open.

He's also the first in the Open era to lose two Grand Slam finals in five sets after taking a 2-0 lead.

Medvedev lost back-to-back Australian Open finals - to Djokovic in 2021 and to Rafael Nadal after holding a two-set lead the following year.

TENNIS

He won three five-set matches to reach the championship match this year - his sixth Grand Slam final.

Sinner only dropped one set through six rounds - in a third-set tiebreaker against Djokovic - until he lost two straight to Medvedev.

It wasn't until a break in the sixth game of the fifth set that he really had a full grip on his first Grand Slam title.

Medvedev started like a man who wanted to win quickly, after all that time spent on the court.

In two of Medvedev's five-set matches - a second-round win over

Emil Ruusuvuori that finished at almost 4 in the morning, and a 4-hour, 18-minute semifinal win over No. 6 Alexander Zverev - he had to come back from two sets down. Nobody had done that on the way to an Australian Open final since Pete Sampras in 1995.

The 27-year-old Russian had spent 20 hours and 33 minutes on court through six rounds. That was almost six hours longer than Sinner took to reach the final.

Sinner didn't give Djokovic a look at a breakpoint as he ended the 10-time Australian Open champion's 33-match unbeaten streak at Melbourne Park dating to 2018.

Against Medvedev, though, he was in trouble early. Medvedev, standing closer to the baseline to receive serve

and going to the net more regularly than usual, in a bid to finish points quickly, broke in the third game and took the first set in 36 minutes.

He had two more service breaks in the fourth and sixth games of the second set but was broken himself at 5-1 trying to serve it out. He was successful next try.

The third set went with serve until the 10th game, when Medvedev was a point from leveling at 5-5 until three forehand errors gave Sinner the set, and the momentum.

He won the fourth set, again with a service break in the 10th game, recovering immediately to win three points after mis-hitting a forehand so far out that it shocked the Rod Laver Arena crowd.

And so the tournament equaled a Grand Slam Open era record set at the 1983 U.S. Open with a 35th match going to five sets.

In the sixth game of the fifth set, Sinner had triple breakpoint against a fatigued Medvedev. He missed with his first chance but converted with his next, a forehand winner, for a 4-2 lead. From there, he didn't give Medvedev another chance.

Medvedev had faced either Djokovic or Rafael Nadal in all five of his previous major finals. He beat Djokovic to win the 2021 U.S. Open title but lost all the others, including the 2021 final in Australia to Djokovic and the 2022 final - after taking the first two sets - against Nadal.

Medvedev has been saying through the tournament that he has more stamina than he used to, and is mentally stronger in the tough five-setters. He certainly showed incredible endurance but came up just short - again.



Daniil Medvedev of Russia plays a backhand return to Jannik Sinner of Italy during the men's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championships at Melbourne Park, in Melbourne, Australia. (AP)



Jannik Sinner of Italy holds the Norman Brookes Challenge Cup aloft after defeating Daniil Medvedev of Russia in the men's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championships at Melbourne Park, in Melbourne, Australia. (AP)

Al-Kharafi wins show jumping title

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 28: Kuwait Equestrian Club's rider, Ali Jassim Al-Kharafi, emerged victorious in the show jumping championship at Marina Beach, competing against over 500 male and female horsemen. In the Grand Prix race, where the jumps measured 140-145 cm, Al-Kharafi and fellow rider Fawaz Al-Subaie progressed to a distinctive round. Ultimately, Al-Kharafi claimed the first-place title with a flawless performance, completing the course in 49.35 seconds without incurring any penalty points. Al-Subaie secured the second position with a time of 47.15 seconds but with 4 penalty points.

The awards ceremony, presided over by Ahmed Al-Majed, Executive Director of SAFEX, and Anwar Bukhamseen, a member of the Board of Directors of Kuwait International Bank (the tournament's sponsor), saw champions being crowned. Yara Al-Hunaidi, Abdullah Al-Awadhi, Ghazi Al-Jarawi, and Anaz Al-Anaz

were among the notable participants. Expressing joy at winning the inaugural tournament at Marina Beach, Al-Fares Al-Kharafi dedicated the victory to the Kuwait Equestrian Club and all show jumping enthusiasts in Kuwait.

EQUESTRIAN

Ahmed Al-Majed, Executive Director of SAFEX Company, highlighted the continuous development of equestrian sports and the commitment to organizing exceptional tournaments. He emphasized the significance of hosting the event on the Gulf shore, showcasing Kuwait's ability to organize such prestigious competitions. Al-Majed further revealed plans for upcoming international tournaments, including a three-star event qualifying for the World Cup in two weeks, followed by a two-star international tournament.



Al Majed and Bukhamseen pose with the champions.

Amat proud of his team despite big loss

Australia rout Indonesia advance to Asian Cup quarterfinal

AL-RAYYAN, Qatar, Jan 28, (AP): Australia defeated Indonesia 4-0 on Sunday to advance to the quarterfinals of the Asian Cup.

Two goals in the first half put the 2015 continental champion in control in the second-round clash at the Jassim bin Hamad Stadium with Martin Boyle's header adding to an early own goal from Elkan Baggott.

Late strikes from Craig Goodwin and Harry Souttar scuppered any hopes that Indonesia, playing its first game at the knockout stage, may have had of getting back into the match.

"We knew they would come out here with nothing to lose today, we knew they would come and fight and run," said Australian forward Jackson Irvine, who had a hand in two goals. "In the first half they caused us some problems with their energy and intensity but our experience and professionalism shone through in the second half and I think we had too much for them on the day."

The Socceroos were 2-0 ahead at the break despite having just one attempt on target. The opener came in the 12

minute as Irvine's cross from the right took a deflection off defender Baggott, who plays for Ipswich Town in Eng-

land's second tier, into the net. Indonesia had chances, coming close after just six minutes but Rafael



Australia's Gethin Jones and Indonesia's Marselino Ferdinan vie for the ball during the Asian Cup Round of 16 soccer match between Australia and Indonesia at Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium in Doha, Qatar. (AP)

Struick fired over from close range. With half-time looming, Yakob Sayuri fired wide while unmarked on the left side of the area.

There was still time for Australia to extend its lead on the stroke of half-time. Gethin Jones swept in a curling low cross from the right and Boyle's diving header at the far post extended the lead.

Australia took greater control in the second half and, as Indonesia tired, Goodwin headed home a rebound after Ernando Ari had saved Irvine's header in the 89th minute. Goodwin then provided the cross for Leicester City defender Souttar to head his 11th international goal from close range.

"I am very proud of my team," said Indonesia captain Jordi Amat. "We knew from the start it would be a tough game. They were more clinical in the first half. We had our chances but couldn't score. We need to work and come back stronger."

Australia will face the winner of Tuesday's tie between South Korea and Saudi Arabia.

Osimhen shines

Nigeria into Africa Cup quarters with win over old foes Cameroon

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast, Jan 28, (AP): Nigeria fans chanted Victor Osimhen's name as the Super Eagles progressed to the quarterfinals of the Africa Cup of Nations by beating old rivals Cameroon 2-0.

Ademola Lookman scored both goals, the first created by Osimhen, and the second set up by Calvin Bassey after a free kick in the last minute.

But the fans' hero was Osimhen, who produced a tireless performance of running, attack-



Nigeria's Frank Onyeka (right), challenges Cameroon's Andre-Frank Zambo Anguissa during the African Cup of Nations Round of 16 soccer match between Nigeria and Cameroon, at the Felix Houphouët Boigny stadium in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. (AP)

SOCCER

ing and harrying the Cameroon defenders. Osimhen also helped in defense on the few occasions it was needed.

"Osimhen! Osimhen! Osimhen!" rang around Félix Houphouët-Boigny Stadium after the Napoli star won the ball off defender Oumar Gonzalez after a Cameroon throw-in and set up Lookman in the 36th. The ball squirmed inside the right post despite Gonzalez's attempt to keep it out.

At one stage in the second half, after Osimhen battled lone defender Gonzalez for the ball near the sideline and it went out of play, he lifted his arms to encourage the fans and they responded by chanting his name again.

Nigeria goalkeeper Stanley Nwabali went off on a stretcher in the 80th after a reckless challenge from Georges-Kévin Nkoudou, who was booked. Nwabali, who covered his face, was replaced by Francis Uzoho.

Cameroon hero Vincent Aboubakar went on for the last quarter-hour but it was Lookman, instead, who sealed the result at the other end.

Aboubakar, who scored the winning goal in the 2017 final and was the top-scorer in the last edition with eight goals, missed Cameroon's opening three games with a thigh injury.

Nigeria will next play Angola. Gelson Dala scored twice and set up another goal to fire Angola

into the quarterfinals after beating neighbor Namibia 3-0.

Both teams played the second half with 10 players in Bouaké.

Dala, who plays for Al-Wakrah in Qatar, took his tournament tally to four as he helped the Sable Antelopes reach the quarterfinals for the third time.

Angola made the better start but goalkeeper Neblú was sent off in the 17th minute when he stopped Bethuel Muzeu's attempted shot with his hands just outside the penalty area.

Replacement goalkeeper António Signori went on for midfielder Estrela, who had to give way, and produced a fine save at the bottom right corner to stop Deon Hotto from the resulting free kick.

Despite being a man short, Angola scored through Gelson Dala in the 38th when Gilberto sent Freddy through to give him an easy finish.

It became 10 vs. 10 two minutes later when Namibia's Lubeni Haukongo was sent off with his second yellow card for a foul on Mbululu.

Dala scored with a header from the resulting free kick.

He set up Mbululu to seal the win on a break in the 66th.