

Laid to rest ... legacy lives on



Top: Late Amir's coffin during the prayer at Bilal bin Rabah Mosque. Above: The body of the late Amir being readied for burial.

Amiri Diwan photos

Kuwait Amir receives condolences on passing of Sheikh Nawaf

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 17, (KUNA): The late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah was laid to rest on Sunday amid presence of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal led the mourners, namely His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and members of the gracious Al-Sabah Family.

Earlier in the day, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah performed Sunday prayers on the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Belal bin Rabah Mosque in Siddeeq district.

The prayers on the deceased were also performed by National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun, senior Sheikhs, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-

Sabah, senior officials and citizens.

Mosques perform absentee funeral prayer

Mosques in Kuwait performed absentee funeral prayer for late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah who was laid to rest early on Sunday.

In a showing of sincere emotions and gratitude to the late Amir, mosque attendees prayed for Sheikh Nawaf who had a long illustrious career as a statesman and father figure to all Kuwaitis and residents alike during his tenure as the leader of the nation.

Elsewhere, absentee funeral prayers were carried out in Prophet's (PBUH) and Al-Haram Al-Shareef mosques in the holy cities of Madinah and Makkah for the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Sunday.

Attendees prayed for the late Sheikh Nawaf in a gesture, displaying the loss of a great figure for the Arab and Islamic worlds.

The rituals were performed at both holy Islamic sites after Dhuhr (midday) prayers.

Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa instructed holding absentee funeral prayers at all mosques of the Kingdom after the Sunday noon prayers in

mourning for Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah who passed away on Saturday.

King Hamad prayed for Allah, the Almighty, to lodge the soul of the late Amir in Paradise, according to a press release from the Royal Court of Bahrain.

Kuwait Amir receives condolences

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Sunday a cable of condolences from National Assembly Speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun over demise of His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In his cable, Al-Saadoun expressed his deepest sorrow on behalf of the parliament members over the demise His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Al-Saadoun also paid his condolences to the people of Kuwait over this great loss, remembering the late Amir's historic stance and wisdom in leading the country to more progress.

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Laid to rest ... legacy lives on



The late Kuwait Amir Sheikh Nawaf laid to rest.

Amiri Diwan photo

Continued from Page 1

The parliament speaker prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow mercy on the late Amir, protect Kuwait and its people under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal also received a cable of condolences from His Highness Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah over demise of the late Amir, offering consolations to His Highness the Amir and to the people of Kuwait over the loss of an exceptional ruler adding that his demise is a loss for the Arab nations and the world, as he was a wise leader, who dedicated his life to support humanitarian efforts and serve his people.

With his passing, Kuwait has lost one of its key figures who added to the country's history and helped it overcome various challenges, steering Kuwait to be a more prosperous nation, His Highness Sheikh Salem added.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal also received a cable of condolences from His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

paying tribute to His Highness the late Amir over his demise.

In his cable, Sheikh Nasser said that Kuwait had lost a merciful, kind loving father who dedicated his life to serve his people and was an example of giving, sacrifice and a fervent advocate for spreading peace and solidarity among his people.

Sheikh Nasser expressed his sorrow and deep condolences for the great loss of the late ruler praying to Allah Almighty to grant him eternal peace in his last resting place.

Moreover, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal received a similar cable from His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah over demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

His Highness the prime minister expressed his deepest sympathy over the demise of the late Amir and implored Allah Almighty to bestow mercy on him, protect Kuwait and its people

He added that Kuwait, the Arab and Islamic nations have lost a prominent ruler who dedicated his life to make great achievements, supported humani-

tarian values and philanthropic action, and left prominent marks in rebuilding the country, promoting its renaissance and achieving the aspirations of the people.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal sent reply cables to Al-Saadoun, His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali, His Highness Nasser Al-Mohammed and His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf, expressing gratitude for the cables he received, stressing that the demise of His Highness the late Amir is a great loss to Kuwait and its people.

His Highness the Amir added that the late Amir dedicated his life to Kuwait and its people and his legacy will be engraved in his people's memory as he had always called on them to cherish the country's democracy and traditions, affirming that Kuwaitis would be strong and productive through their unity and sacrifice.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow mercy on the late Amir and wished good health and prosperity to the people of Kuwait.

Kuwait shrouded with grief over Sheikh Nawaf's loss



Kuwaitis and residents coming out of the Bilal bin Rabah mosque after the funeral prayer.

Photo by Mahmoud Jadeed

'Kuwait, Arab, Muslim nations lose wise leader'

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 17, (KUNA): The grieving people of Kuwait on Sunday paid tribute to the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as regular life came to a standstill throughout the country and traffic that usually jam the roads at start of the weeks turned quite thin.

As Kuwait was predominated with an air of sorrow and sadness with shutdown of businesses, schools and government facilities, the newly-announced Amir, His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, took part in prayers for the deceased at Bilal bin Rabah Mosque in Al-Siddeeq district, accompanied by sheikhs and senior officials.

Upon their departure from the mosque with uniformed elite personnel carrying the coffin, wrapped in the green-black-white-red Kuwait Flag, the freshly-proclaimed new Amir, His Highness Sheikh Mishal, was visibly quite sad while sitting in his vehicle, while the coffin was laid in a large dark-colored Amiri Diwan vehicle, as the motorcade proceeded to the cemetery.

A number of sheikhs took part in the actual burial, looked upon by a throng of tearful mourners, deeply saddened along with many Kuwaiti citizens and non-Kuwaiti peoples here and abroad, watching the sorrowful event live on television. Kuwait has declared shutdown of businesses and facilities for three days and 40 days mourning for demise of Sheikh Nawaf, as the audio-vidoe media stopped regular programs, broadcasting Quranic verses round the clock.

Yesterday, after the sorrowful announcement of Sheikh Nawaf's death, Sheikh Mishal (the Crown Prince), was proclaimed the new Amir of the State of Kuwait -- the 17th ruler of the North Gulf country.

'Kuwait, Arab, Muslim nations lost wise leader'

Minister of Information and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi said with the death of Kuwait's Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Kuwait and the Arab and Muslim nations lost a wise leader.

In a statement to KUNA on Sunday, the minister said Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad throughout his life, had worked hard to serve Kuwait and its people, also supporting humanitarian work around the world.

Private Universities Council halts study for three days

The Private Universities Council (PUC) decided to suspend study and exams at all private universities for three days as of Sunday, in mourning for Kuwait Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Study will resume on Wednesday, December 20, based on the declaration of national mourning for 40 days, the PUC Secretariat said in a press release. The Cabinet had declared the 40-day national mourning and suspended work at all state departments for three days until Tuesday evening in mourning for the late Amir who passed away earlier Saturday.

Chief of Nat'l Guard mourns demise of late Amir

His Highness Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah expressed his deep and sincere condolences over demise of His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In a statement on Sunday, Kuwait National Guard mentioned that Sheikh Salem extended his condolences to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and the Kuwaiti people.

His Highness Sheikh Salem implored Allah Almighty to bestow mercy on the late Amir, protect Kuwait and its people under the leadership of His High-



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

Kuwaitis praying at the grave of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah

ness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Deputy Commander of National Guard mourns Amir's death

Deputy Commander of Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah mourned on Sunday death of the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In a press release, the National Guard stated that Sheikh Faisal expressed sincere condolences to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Kuwaiti people.

Figures from Kuwaiti society mourn Amir's passing

Heads of several bodies in sports, humanitarian action, science, and planning mourned on Saturday the passing away of late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, recalling his fragrant march of giving for the prosperity and welfare of the homeland.

They agreed, in separate statements to KUNA, that the late Amir supported humanitarian values and philanthropic action, and left a prominent marks in rebuilding the country, promoting its renaissance and achieving the aspirations of the people.

President of the Kuwaiti Olympic Committee Sheikh Fahd Nasser Al-Sabah, on behalf of the Board of Directors and the Kuwaiti sports family members, mourned the late Amir of the country, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad.

Director-General of the Public Sports Authority Yousef Al-Baidan said in a press statement on his behalf and in the name of the authority's officials and employees that the late Amir spent his life serving Kuwait in all the positions he held until he reached power.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society Dr. Hilal Al-Sayer extended his sincere condolences to the honorable Al-Sabah family and the Arab and Islamic nations on the death of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

The Director General of the Arab Planning Institute, Dr. Abdullah Al-Shami, expressed to KUNA his sincere condolences and sympathy on the death of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwaiti Science Club Talal Al-Kharafi mourned the death of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah after a career total of giving and achievements in serving his people and the Arab and Islamic nations and championing their causes.

Minister of Social Affairs Sheikh Feras Saud Al-Sabah said the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will be always remembered for his landmark contributions to the prosperity and welfare of the homeland.

The late Amir had left outstanding achievements to the modernization of the Ministry of Social Affairs, a portfolio he between April 20, 1991, and October 17, 1992, Sheikh Feras told KUNA.

The minister expressed sincere condolences to His Highness the new Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, praying for Allah, the Almighty, to lodge the soul of the late Amir in Paradise.

On his part, President of the Municipal Council Abdullah Al-Mehri said the passing away of the Amir Sheikh Nawaf is a great loss to the Kuwaiti people, and the Arab and Muslim nations.

The late Amir has left a great legacy of achievements and giving to the prosperity and progress of the homeland, Al-Mehri added.

Japanese PM offers condolences

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Saturday expressed his sincere condolences on the demise of the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, saying it is a serious loss for the international community.

"We cannot help but be deeply saddened to learn of the passing of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf. On behalf of the government of Japan and the Japanese people, I extend our deepest condolences to the government and people of the state of Kuwait," Kishida said in a message released by the government.

"His Highness Sheikh Nawaf played an important role in building close relationships with other countries and achieving peace and stability in the Gulf region and the Middle East.

His Highness Sheikh Nawaf also dedicated his efforts to domestic reconciliation and the maintenance of peace and stability in the Middle East region with his outstanding wisdom and tolerance," the premier said.

"The passing of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf is not only a great loss for the people of Kuwait, but also for the international community.

"Japan will always stand with Kuwait, while the people of Kuwait overcome this great sadness," Kishida added.

Kuwait bourse closes in homage to late Amir

Bursa Kuwait declared on Sunday its closure from Sunday until Tuesday in homage to Saturday's demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The Kuwait bourse (the national stock exchange) said on its website the halt of operations was due to the tragic event; demise of "His Highness the State of Kuwait Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah who passed away yesterday." The Amiri Diwan has issued a statement expressing deep sorrow and sadness, mourning the deceased Amir to the Kuwaiti people, the Arab and Muslim nations.



Photo by Mohammad Morsi
The grave of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

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IICO condoles demise of late Amir

KJA , Arab journalists mourn death of late Amir



The roads in Kuwait wear a deserted look as the country shut down after the demise of HH the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Photo by Rizk Taufiq

KUWAIT CITY , Dec 17 , (KUNA) :Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA) extended Sunday its deepest and sincere condolences to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Al-Sabah family and the Kuwaiti people on the passing away of the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In a statement, the KJA voiced hope for security, stability and unity in the country under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as he constantly emphasized unity of Kuwaiti people and their devotion in serving the country and boosting its development.

The statement added as the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah loved his people, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah affirmed that his leadership of the country would be aimed for the benefit of the people of Kuwait, praying to Allah the Almighty to bestow his blessing upon His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad.

FAJ bemoans late Amir's demise

The Federation of Arab Journalists (FAJ) on Sunday eulogized the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber who passed away Saturday recalling his long record of accomplishments at the domestic and external levels.

The Cairo-headquartered union said in a statement that the late Amir was a wise and faithful leader for his country and people, was keen on boosting relations among Arab States and supporting causes of the Arab and Muslim nations.

It also expressed sympathies and solace to the State of Kuwait, the people the gracious Al-Sabah family, praying for his soul and voiced sympathies with Sheikh Nawaf's bereaved family.

IICO condoles demise of late Amir

The Chairman of the International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO) Dr. Abdullah Al-Ma'atouq mourned on Sunday the demise of the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah stressing, his journey which was filled with humanitarian and giving stances. In a press release Dr. Al-Ma'atouq said that the

world have lost a wise and sincere leader that was loyal to his country and people.

"Until the last moment of his life, His Highness late Amir left behind, a journey that demonstrates his support for the humanitarian and development path of the State of Kuwait" as well as sustainable projects in different parts of the world", he stated.

Al-Ma'atouq added that history would record the wise directives of His Highness the late Amir to launch humanitarian initiatives and popular relief campaigns one after the other to support the afflicted and needy around the world.

These directives topped the humanitarian scene with the earthquake in southern Turkey and northern Syria, the earthquake in Morocco, the violent storms in Libya, and the conflicts in Sudan, to extend Kuwaiti relief bridges to the victims of these crises and disasters.

He pointed out also to the Kuwaiti relief bridge, on which His Highness the late Amir left ordered to help the people of Gaza and the Palestinians, which has to date reached 30 relief trips to alleviate the suffering of the afflicted and provide medical, shelter, food and other assistance.



The Kuwait Stock Exchange remains closed as Kuwait grieves the loss of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Photo by Rizk Taufiq



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The late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (left) and His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. KUNA photo

'He loved his people, his country'

MoH, PAFN and AMR express condolences over Amir's loss

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 17: The Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadi mourned the passing away of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, by saying, "We, the employees of the Ministry of Health, the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN), and the Authority for Medical Responsibility (AMR), extend our deepest condolences and sincere sympathy to the entire honorable Al-Sabah family, the loyal Kuwaiti people, and the Arab and Islamic nations over the death of our dear deceased father and leader of our journey, the late Amir of the country, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. We ask Almighty Allah to overwhelm him with His vast mercy, and dwell him in His spacious Paradise."

He explained that the career of His Highness the Amir of the country the late Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah was characterized with justice and achievements that will continue as his legacy, which he generated in record time and led the country to be placed in its appropriate place among the ranks of developed countries.

The Amir loved his people and his country. Even though he has physically left us, his approach and honorable humanitarian and patriotic stances will remain a beacon for us in sincerity, dedication, and love of the homeland.

He prayed to Almighty Allah to cover him with His vast mercy, and to dwell him in His spacious Paradise.

Meanwhile, the former Minister of Health Dr. Muhammad Al-Haifi extended his sincere condolences to the Al-Sabah family and the people of Kuwait over the death of the late Amir of the country.

Dr. Al-Haifi said, "We extend our condolences to ourselves, the honorable Al-Sabah family, and the entire world for the loss of the nation, our father, our late Amir, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Amir of the people, the Amir of forgiveness, and the Amir of tolerance. Until the last day of his life, his heart was for the nation and the people."

The late Amir, during the last three years, brought joy to the people with radical changes in the country's internal policy and had strengthened the relationship with brotherly and friendly countries.

Our condolences are due to the presence of his support His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah."

In this regard, the Director of Farwaniya

Hospital Dr. Ali Al-Mutairi said the affliction is great and the nation has lost one of its greatest and most noble men, adding that the people have lost a merciful father and a wise leader who was able to unite ranks and ward off strife during the past three years.

He said, "We mourn with hearts overwhelmed with grief and sadness over the death of the Amir of pardon and tolerance. He was a man of career and continuous giving due to which he was able to achieve successes year after year. We pray to the Almighty to cover him with His vast mercy and dwell him in His spacious paradise with the righteous ones, who are the better companions."

Meanwhile, a consultant in ophthalmology and surgery at Jaber Hospital Dr. Yousef Al-Dhafiri expressed his deep sadness over the loss of the Amir of the people and hearts - the late Amir of the country Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

He said, "We rarely find a personality like that of the late Amir. He combined humility and generosity of morals, and was crowned with a name that will remain on the tongue of every Kuwaiti for a long time. The Amir of pardon has qualities that we rarely find in a ruler who humbled himself before Allah. We ask the Almighty to cover him with His vast mercy and allow him to enter into the spaciousness of His Heaven."

Furthermore, the oncology consultant at the Kuwait Cancer Control Center Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh said the deceased was known for his piety, reform and tolerance.

He said, "He was truly the Amir of tolerance, forgiveness and pardon. We pray to Almighty Allah to grant him forgiveness and pardon and make his abode Paradise, for a person who always does good in this world will find it in the afterlife."

The late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah was known by the Kuwaiti people as a humble leader who loved his people. He was always asking about them, checking on them, and making sure to pray among them such that they became accustomed to seeing him in the first rows of the mosque side by side with his people and those residing on his good land. May Almighty Allah have mercy on the deceased of the nation and grant him Paradise."

In addition, a urology consultant Dr. Saud Al-Dhafiri expressed condolences over the passing away of the Amir of the Nation.

With words filled with sadness and sorrow, he said, "We bid farewell to the late Amir who preferred the humanitarian side before the political.

Ambassadors accredited to Kuwait mourn death of Amir

'Deepest sympathies to Kuwaiti people, Al-Sabah family'

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 17, (Agencies): The ambassadors and heads of diplomatic missions accredited to Kuwait have expressed their condolences to the Ruling Family, the government and the people of Kuwait on the death of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, praying for God's mercy upon him. They fondly recalled his noble virtues and significant role in enhancing bilateral relations between their respective countries and Kuwait.

They mourned the loss of the nation's leader, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, expressing profound sorrow and heartfelt condolences.

In individual statements the ambassadors and diplomats conveyed their deepest sympathies to the Kuwaiti people and the esteemed Al-Sabah family.

Anne Kuenstine, the European Union Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, lamented the news of the late Emir's passing, extending sincere condolences on behalf of the European Union delegation. She highlighted Sheikh Nawaf's devoted service to his country, emphasizing his lasting impact on regional stability and communication between peoples.

The diplomatic missions of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and sister Arab countries, through their official accounts on social media platforms, extended their deepest condolences to the honorable Al-Sabah family and the Kuwaiti people on the passing of the nation's deceased leader, may God have mercy on him.

American Embassy

The US Embassy, on its official account on the X website, expressed its sincere condolences on the death of His Highness.

The US ambassador added: "We extend our sincere condolences to the Amir's family and to the Kuwaiti people on the death of the late Amir of the country Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. We share your sorrow over this painful loss, and we also salute his great contributions to the development and progress of his country."

The British Ambassador Belinda Lewis said, "I learned with great sadness and regret of the death of His Highness.

He devoted his life to serving the State of Kuwait, including its relations with its allies and friends.

His Highness will remain in everyone's memory for his efforts to support those in need, and his humanitarian leadership in the face of natural disasters and conflicts.

His Highness will also be remembered as a great friend of the United Kingdom, and for everything he did to strengthen relations between the United Kingdom and Kuwait. "On behalf of the British government, I would like to extend my sincere condolences to Al-Sabah's family, friends and the people of Kuwait."

France

The French Ambassador Claire Le Flecher said in her account on the X website: "It is with great sadness that I learned of the death of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and on behalf of France, I extend my deepest condolences to the Al-Sabah family, the government and the people of Kuwait."

The Italian Ambassador Lorenzo Morini expressed his sincere condolences to the ruling family, the government and the people of Kuwait.

He added, "The Italian government and the Italian community residing in Kuwait extend their deepest condolences and sympathy on the death of His Highness the Amir of the country."

The Spanish Ambassador, Miguel Moro Aguilar, said: "My deepest personal condolences and those of the government of the Kingdom of Spain on the sad news of the death of His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, and may his abode be in Paradise."

Germany

The German Ambassador to the country, Hans Christian, expressed his sincere condolences to the government and people of the State of Kuwait on the death of the late Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, God Almighty willing.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the country, Michael Mavros, said, "It is with great sorrow and sadness that we received the sad news of the death of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, who was characterized by wisdom and dedication in leading the country."

Mavros added that the State of Kuwait witnessed, during the reign of the late Amir, more development, prosperity, national unity, stability and security, while it completed its estimated mediation process for Gulf reunification and strengthening its position on the Arab, regional and international levels.

He pointed out that under the leadership of the late Amir, Kuwait maintained its established policy of moderation, tolerance, respect for all countries, non-interference in their internal affairs, adherence to international law, and the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

Swiss Ambassador

The Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic in the State of Kuwait H.E. Mr. Ioannis Plotas expresses his deep and sincere condolences for Al Sabah Family and the People of Kuwait on the passing away of the Amir HE Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah and praying for the Almighty God for his soul to rest in peace.

Swiss Ambassador Tiziano Palmelli said: "On behalf of the Swiss Federal Council, I extend our sincere condolences to the ruling family, the government and the people of Kuwait on the death of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad."

He added: "I know that His Highness was a true friend of Switzerland, a country that he knows well and appreciates its authenticity, a quality we share between our two peoples."

The Swiss envoy personally lowered his country's flag at half-mast over his house and the embassy building.

The Canadian Ambassador Alia Mawani said, "On behalf of the embassy's staff, I extend my deepest condolences and sympathy to the honorable Al-Sabah family and the dear people of Kuwait on the death of His Highness."

The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Kuwait, Mohammad Totonji, said on his behalf and "on behalf of the government and people of my country, we offer our sincere condolences and sincere sympathy to His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the honorable Al-Sabah family, and our loved ones and brothers in sisterly Kuwait, on the death of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, Amir of Amnesty and Humanity."

Totonji asked God Almighty to bestow His mercy on the late Amir, "and may God reward you and give you the best condolences. We belong to God and to Him we shall return."

The Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the country, Emil Karimov, mourned with great sadness and sorrow the death of the Amir of the country, may God have mercy on him, "as the Arab and Islamic nations lost, with his passing, a human being who spent his life achieving the achievements and contributions of its values, principles and morals to which history attests."

Ambassador Karimov added, "I and the government and people of the Republic of Azerbaijan, were saddened by the news of the death of His Highness, may God have mercy on him. We ask the Almighty to bestow his mercy on him and place him in His spacious paradise."

Turkey

The Turkish Ambassador Tuba Nur Sönmez said, "We received with great sadness the news of the death of His Highness Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, the compassionate leader with the right vision."

She added, "His legacy will remain a beacon that lights the way for future generations in Kuwait, and we ask God Almighty to cover His Highness with His vast mercy and forgiveness."



Funeral prayers offered in absentia at the Khaldiya Mosque for the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Inset: The 'imam' directs the prayer.

KUNA photos

As for the Palestinian Ambassador, Rami Tahboub, he said, "It is with great sadness and grief that I mourn in the name of the Palestinian community in the State of Kuwait and in the name of the staff of the Embassy of the State of Palestine, and in my personal name as a leader, a great Arab human being, who devoted his life in the service of his country, Kuwait."

The UAE Ambassador Dr. Matar Al-Neyadi, said: "We extend our sincere condolences to the leadership, government and people of Kuwait on the death of the late Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the country, and the memory of His Highness will remain immortal in everyone's memory for his wise leadership and his many exploits at the Arab and international levels."

He added, "We share the great grief of the Kuwaiti people with the passing of the late, and we pray to God Almighty to bless the deceased with His vast mercy and to inspire his family with patience and solace." We take this occasion by congratulating His Highness Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on assuming the position of Amir of the sisterly State of Kuwait, while wishing His Highness good luck and success, and the Kuwaiti government and people progress and prosperity.

The Omani Ambassador, Dr. Saleh Al-Kharusi, said in condolence, "The late Amir exerted his effort and energy to serve Kuwait and its loyal people. He also worked with his brothers, the kings and presidents of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, to achieve progress and elevation for their peoples."

The Peruvian Ambassador to Kuwait, Carlos Velasco Mendiola, on behalf of the Embassy of the Republic of Peru, said with condolences, "His Highness was a respected leader who led Kuwait through times of prosperity and challenge."

The Austrian Ambassador to Kuwait, Marian Wrba, mourned His Highness, saying, "We will always remember His Highness as a man of great justice and mercy."

Bahrain

The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Salah Al-Maliki, extended his sincerest expressions of condolences and great sympathy to His Highness the Amir of the country, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad, and to the members of the ruling family and the brotherly Kuwaiti people on the death of His Highness.

The Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait, Morino Yasunari, said: "On behalf of the government and people of Japan, I would like to express our sincere condolences on the death of His Highness."

The Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Emil Karimov, said with condolences: "The Arab and Islamic nation has lost a human being who spent his life achieving the achievements and contributions of its values, principles and ethics that history attests to."

Romanian Ambassador Mugurel Stanescu said: "I would like to express my deep sadness at the news of the death of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, and to convey my country's sincere regret to his family and all Kuwaiti citizens."

The Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus, Michael Mavros, said: "It is with great sorrow and sadness that we received the sad news of the death of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, the sixteenth Amir of the State of Kuwait."

The Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ambassador Jo Myung-chul, said: "I received with great sadness the news of the death of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad. In this great loss, I express my sincere condolences and sympathy to the leadership, government and people of Kuwait."

The pastor of St. Mark's Cathedral in the State of Kuwait, "the Egyptian Church," Archbishop Begol Bishop Bishoy, expressed great sadness for the great loss of Kuwait, His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, may God Almighty have mercy on him, and said, "Although humanity is accustomed to saying goodbye to its great leaders, the cultural legacy they leave behind is a great national heritage that remains immortal in the memory of history and a beacon that guides us at all times."

Father Begol pointed out that "His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad is one of these greats," pointing out that "His Highness, may God have mercy on him, always carried the values of tolerance, brotherhood, and love, and nurtured the values of peace and harmony."

The Patriarchal Vicar of the Melkite Greeks in Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf, Archimandrite Boutros Gharib, said: "It is with great sadness and grief that I extend, in my name and on behalf of the parishioners of the Roman Catholic Church, my warm heartfelt condolences to the Al Sabah family and to the government and people of the State of Kuwait on the death of the late His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait. May the God have mercy on him and placed him into his heavens."

The Resident Representative of the World Bank Group in the State of Kuwait and the State of Qatar, Dr. Ziad Naket, mourned His Highness, saying: "During his life, the late Amir worked hard to develop and prosper Kuwait, leaving behind an honorable legacy."

The International Organization for Migration mourned His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, extending to the leadership, government and people of the State of Kuwait its deepest condolences, expressing sincere prayers that His Highness may have mercy on him and enter his spacious paradise.

The Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization, Zurab Pololikashvili, expressed his sincere condolences and sympathy to Kuwait, its leadership and its people on the death of the late, God Almighty willing, His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, who passed away next to his Lord.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Housing and Urban Development, Hardeep Singh Puri has arrived in Kuwait to convey condolences to the leadership of Kuwait on behalf of the Government of India on the sad demise of late Amir, HH Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The Kuwaiti embassies in Turkiye, Mauritania, and Bulgaria mourned on Sunday the demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, releasing statements and receiving condolences over this sorrowful event.

In Ankara, the embassy released a statement expressing deep sadness over the death of late Sheikh Nawaf, saying that it was a great loss for the Arab and Muslim worlds.

The embassy also affirmed that a three-day period would dedicate to mourn the late Amir of Kuwait.

Similarly, the Kuwaiti Embassy in Nouakchott released a statement lamenting the death of Sheikh Nawaf, saying that the late Amir had served his country and people throughout his number posts and leadership of Kuwait.

It revealed a three-day of mourning would be held with Ambassador of Kuwait Badah Al-Dousri receiving those offering condolences.

In the same vein, the Kuwaiti Embassy in Sofia said that a three-day mourning period would be held on December 17-19 lamenting the loss of late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The Kuwaiti embassies in Riyadh, Cairo, and Lisbon held on Sunday their respective ceremonies to mourn the death of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the embassy announced three days of mourning and the opening of the condolences book to honor the late Amir.

Speaking in a statement to KUNA, Kuwaiti Ambassador

to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah expressed sorrow over the demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, saying that this was a great loss for the Arab and Islamic worlds.

He commended the late Sheikh Nawaf for his illustrious career that spanned over six decades, affirming that he will always be remembered as a great ruler and leader.

Onwards to Egypt where the embassy there had held a similar event to lament the passing away of late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Kuwaiti Ambassador to Egypt Ghanem Al-Ghanem and Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the Arab League Ambassador Talal Al-Mutairi received those offering condolences at the embassy.

Amongst those offering condolences are Egyptian Minister of Commerce and Industry Ahmad Samir, Assistant Arab League Secretary for Palestine and Occupied Arab Lands Ambassador Saeed Abu-Ali, and Saudi Ambassador to Egypt Osama bin Ahmad Nugali.


In Portugal, the Kuwaiti embassy in Lisbon held a ceremony to mourn the death of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf.

The embassy opened the condolences book and announced a three-day mourning period.

Speaking on this occasion, Kuwaiti Ambassador Hamad Al-Hazeem expressed sorrow over the demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, offering his condolences to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the government, and Kuwaiti people.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ



The Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines joins the people of the State of Kuwait in mourning the passing of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

His dedication to his country and his love for its people will always be remembered.

May God have mercy on him and give him his place in paradise.

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ



Shutters down at Souq Mubarakiya and the surrounding markets.

Photo by Rizk Taufiq

'His memory will be immortal'

'We offer condolences to Kuwait, Arab, Islamic nations'

By Mohammad Ghanem, Enas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff & Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 17: The Municipal Council member Dr. Hassan Kamal said, "We offer condolences to ourselves and all the people of Kuwait, and the Arab and Islamic nations over the passing away of our father, leader, and Amir of forgiveness, tolerance, and humility His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. He was a man of honorable positions and good influence, an ascetic, worshipper, and lover of all. His memory will be immortal in the hearts of his people who loved him and whom he loved.

"We ask God to have mercy on him and place him in spacious gardens, as well as inspire us patience and solace over his loss. We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return."

Another member of the Municipal Council Nasser Al-Jada'an said, "Kuwait lost its compassionate leader and ruler who was known for his humility and forgiveness. He humbled himself before the One and Only Allah who raised him in status. May God have mercy on him, as he was a ruler who loved his people and was merciful to his people, a ruler who adhered to the Constitution and democracy in order to preserve the prosperity of Kuwait and the stability of its people. Advancement was his main concern.

"We ask God to forgive him, have mercy on him,

admit him into His spacious Paradise, inspire us with patience and solace, and help His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber to carry the trust and grant him a good lining so that he may be the best successor to the best predecessor."

Also, another member of the Municipal Council Eng. Farah Al-Roumi expressed her deep sadness for the loss of Kuwait, the Arab and Islamic nations, and the entire world through the passing away of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad (May God have mercy on him).

She said, "With great sadness and sorrow, we received the news of the death of our late Amir and father. We extend our sincere condolences to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Al-Nawaf, all members of the honorable Al-Sabah family, and to the Kuwaiti people and the Arab and Islamic nations.

"We ask God Almighty to cover the deceased with His vast mercy, and to dwell him in His spacious gardens. He is the Hearer and Answerer of prayers.

"The deceased (May Allah have mercy on him) was a wise leader, a shepherd of the homeland, and a symbol of the nation. He left clear imprints on the march of Kuwait, and his memory will remain eternal in the hearts of all Kuwaitis."

Furthermore, Municipal Council Member Muneera Al-Amir said, "We are saddened by the passing of our Amir and our father His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. He was a wise leader who devotedly served his country throughout an honorable national journey that spanned six decades in which his name was written with light in Kuwait's political history.

"This affliction is not only the affliction of our country, but rather the affliction of the entire Arab and Islamic nation. Such leaders, who are rare in their sincerity and love for the homeland, leave behind the best impact on the souls of their people. I offer condolences to myself, my family, my loved ones, and my countrymen.

"May God have mercy on our father and His Highness the Amir. We pray to God Almighty to grant His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah success in everything that is best for the country and the people, and make this country safe and reassured."

Municipal Council member Sharifa Al-Shalfan said, "With hearts full of sadness, we received the news of the death of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (May God rest his

soul). Kuwait knew him for his noble humanitarian stances, high morals, extreme closeness to citizens, and his keenness to meet their aspirations.

"We continued to witness the signs of sadness that spread throughout the country over the loss of Kuwait through the passing away of one of its great men. With letters of light, he recorded immortal pages in the journey of the dear homeland. He was keen to make the most precious sacrifices in order to raise Kuwait's banner and strengthen its position at all levels. His Highness was the best leader and caring father.

"Over the past years, we have closely observed the interest of the late Kuwaiti man in issues that concern the nation in all fields. We saw how he confronted the great challenges he faced, the tireless efforts he exerted to address all the problems that citizens suffer from, and his keenness to participate in their various occasions.

"The deceased left clear imprints in all the positions he held and held honorable national positions recorded in the history of Kuwait."

In addition, the Municipal Council member Alia Al-Farsi emphasized the high morals and noble actions of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

She said, "The eyes shed tears and the heart grieves. We are saddened by your departure "Our father Nawaf". We are saddened by the passing away of our humble ascetic Amir.

"He was kind-hearted and his mercy reached every young and old person. He was connected with his people and had the fear of his Lord in his eyes. My only consolation is that loving and accepting people is one of the best blessings that the late Sheikh Nawaf (May God have mercy on him) received.

"We conclude by offering our condolences to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (May God protect and preserve him), the political leadership, the honorable ruling family, ourselves and all the people of Kuwait and all Arabs and Muslims over the death of our dear leader His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (May God rest his soul)".

MEW mourns death of late Amir

With great sadness and sorrow, the Assistant Undersecretary for Customer Affairs at the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Eng. Falah Al-Mutairi mourned the death of the late Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, and asked the Almighty Allah to overwhelm him with His vast mercy and enter him into His spacious Paradise.

In a press statement, Al-Mutairi explained that the late Amir occupied a great place in the hearts of all Kuwaitis because of his qualities and personality that are rarely found together in one person. His good qualities included humility, forgiveness, generosity, and other qualities.

With the loss of the Amir, Kuwait has today lost one of the dearest and most precious men who wrote bright pages in the history of Kuwait with the great works he did and his integrity that will remain engraved in the memory of Kuwaitis for the rest of their lives.

His career will remain immortal in the minds and conscience of Kuwaitis. It will also remain a sermon and a role model for future generations, instilling in them loyalty and belonging to the dear homeland.

We extend our special condolences to the Kuwaiti people and to the honorable Al-Sabah family over the death of the late Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad. We pray the Almighty will shower him with his vast mercy and will inspire us all with patience and solace in this great affliction."

MPW offers condolences

The Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works Eid Al-Rashidi offered his sincere condolences to the Kuwaiti people and the honorable Al-

Sabah family over the death of the late His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad.

He prayed to the Almighty God to cover the deceased with His vast mercy and to accept him in His spacious Paradise.

In a press statement, Al-Rashidi said, "His Highness the late Amir (May God have mercy on him) was a role model for all of us in terms of humility, forgiveness and generosity. Therefore, his fragrant biography will continue to be passed on generation after generation, and history will record it with letters of light due to the contributions and sacrifices His Highness made for this country.

"This confirms beyond any doubt that Kuwait has always been and will forever be generous, and its source of patriotism will never run out.

"The death of His Highness is a great tragedy that has bled the hearts of Kuwaitis, because this man holds a great place in all of our hearts.

"We therefore ask God Almighty to place the great deeds and white hands that the late, God Almighty has provided, in the balance of his good deeds, and to reward him on our behalf with the best reward.

"His Highness was an example of forgiveness, tolerance, sincerity, dedication, piety, and seeking the pleasure of God Almighty."

KCCI Board of Directors mourn

Members of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) confirmed that His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah greatly contributed to the country's security, economic and social stability, and that His Highness fulfilled his duty with dedication and sincerity throughout the years of his rule as Amir, and even during the previous periods when he served as minister and Crown Prince, reports Al-Anba daily.

KCCI board member and Chairman of the Transport Committee at the chamber Khaled Al-Khaled asserted that Kuwait lost a beloved Amir and a good person who loved his family and country, and that he was known for his piety and religiosity.

He added that although the rule of HH the late Amir was short, he succeeded in leaving clear and visible imprints in all aspects of life as Kuwait witnessed remarkable prosperity and growth at all levels under his rule.

Another KCCI board member, Fahd Khaled Al-Dabbous, expressed his sincere condolences to the government and people of Kuwait and to the honorable Sabah Family on the death of His Highness the late Amir, stressing that Kuwait's loss is immense.

He said Kuwait witnessed bright days during the rule of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, whether on the economic or political level, as His Highness concluded his rule with a decree pardoning a segment of his citizens. The days of his rule also witnessed many economic reforms that had an impact on the private sector and on reform and development plans in general, he disclosed.

He then expressed his deepest condolences to the honorable Sabah Family, the Kuwaiti government and all the Kuwaiti people on the death of their leader. He prayed to Allah to comfort the people of Kuwait and to grant the best reward to His Highness the late Amir considering the gifts he gave to his people during his rule or the previous periods when he served as Crown Prince or any other post.

Board member Dr Muhammad Kakoli stated that the virtues of His Highness the late Amir are countless -- whether on the humanitarian, economic or social level. He added His Highness the late Amir contributed to the stability of the country security-wise, economically and socially; as well as the stability, progress and prosperity of Kuwait among countries in the region and the whole world. "His Highness the late Amir was known for his humility and direct communication with the people in and outside Kuwait," he concluded.



**The Chairman, Board Members,
Executive Management, and staff of**



**extend their
heartfelt condolences to the**

AL-SABAH FAMILY

**and the people of Kuwait,
on the sad demise of**

**His Highness the Amir
of the State of Kuwait**

**SHEIKH NAWAF AL-AHMAD
AL-JABER AL-SABAH**

May his soul rest in peace



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُنْتَهَنَةُ اجْعَلِي بَارِكًا فِي صِيَابَةِ مُرْتَبَتِي فَأَدْخِلِي عِيَابِي وَأَرْضِي حَبِيْبِي
صِدْقَةُ اللَّهِ الْعِظْمَاءُ

The Executive Management and staff of HSBC Bank

Extend their deepest condolences to the
Al-Sabah Family

And the people of Kuwait, on the sad demise of
His Highness

Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

May his soul rest in peace.



إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ

Parliament mourns national loss, pledges allegiance to HH Amir Sheikh Mishal

MPs express condolences over Amir of Humanity's passing

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 17: A number of lawmakers expressed condolences during the funeral of HH the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Sunday.

Deputy National Assembly Speaker MP Muhammad Al-Mutair expressed condolences for the people of Kuwait and the Sabah Family over the passing of HH the Amir of Humanity and Amnesty. He implored Allah Almighty to help HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in carrying out the task and to complete the reform process. He affirmed that the Assembly will be the first to support HH the Amir, such that Kuwait occupies its place among the prosperous and advanced countries.

MP Fahd bin Jame'e expressed condolences for the Sabah Family, people of Kuwait, and the Arab and Muslim nations. He prayed that Allah Almighty will have mercy on the soul of HH the late Amir, while asking Him to help HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal in continuing the pro-reform path launched by HH the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf.

MP Falah Al-Hajri said the entire Kuwait is deeply saddened by the passing of HH the late Amir. "Since Kuwait is one big family, everyone is expressing condolences for each other in every diwaniya and Kuwaiti house. HH the late Amir loved his people and the people loved him in return. May Allah Almighty have mercy on HH the late Amir and help HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal who is the best successor to the best predecessor," he added.

MP Khalid Al-Otaibi also implored Allah Almighty to have mercy on HH the late Amir and to put him in the highest place in Paradise.

MP Muhammad Al-Huwaila expressed condolences for the people of Kuwait and the Sabah Family; indicating HH the late Amir served his people well, including the Arab and Muslim nations. He said HH the late Amir was very close to the citizens and he was keen on fulfilling their demands.

Former MP Badr Al-Dahoum pointed out that despite the short reign of HH the late Amir, the country witnessed unprecedented political stability where the corrupt was punished and the rule of law was enforced; hence, the people were satisfied. He prayed to Allah Almighty to have mercy on HH the late Amir of Amnesty and Justice.

Somber atmosphere enveloped

As a somber atmosphere enveloped the National Assembly members following the demise of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, may God have mercy on him, and in reflection of his accomplishments in obituary statements, representatives declared their allegiance to His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, the newly appointed Amir of the country, following the Council of Ministers' call for his leadership.



A billboard showing late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Photo by Rizk Taufiq

Representative Marzouq Al-Ghanim affirmed, "We pledge whole-hearted allegiance to you, entrusting God Almighty to safeguard Kuwait and its people, steering it towards paths of prosperity, development, and righteousness under your esteemed leadership, may God protect and preserve you.

May Your Highness be granted a long, comfortable life, abundant health, and continued well-being, enabling you to perpetuate the journey of constructing and advancing our generous homeland initiated by the honorable ruling family.

MP Badr Sayyar said, "I extend my deepest condolences to His Highness the Amir of the country, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may God protect him, and to the ruling family.

We pledge allegiance to you, offering our commitment to listen and obey in times of adversity and ease, in both favorable and challenging circumstances."

MP Dr. Muhammad Al-Mahan stated, "We pledge allegiance to His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, a solemn commitment to listen and obey, whether active or obligatory.

We beseech God to grant him success, protect him with His care, guide his steps on the right path, and assist him in leading Kuwait towards further progress and prosperity. We implore God to safeguard Kuwait and its people from all harm."

MP Dr. Jenan Bushehri affirmed, "In endorsing His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, may God protect and preserve him, as Amir of the country, we pledge allegiance to His Highness in accordance with the provisions of Article (4) of the country's Succession Law, as the leader of our beloved homeland and the Amir of our esteemed people.

"I pray to the Almighty to aid His Highness, may God protect and preserve him, in carrying the entrusted responsibility, ensuring his success in the path of goodness and development, and guiding his steps towards everything beneficial for the nation and its citizens."

Strengthen his support with a virtuous lining

Representative Khaled Al-Munayes prayed, "Oh God, grant him success in what is beneficial for the country and its people. Unite through him the voice of the nation for good, be his helper and supporter, and bless his steps with guidance. Strengthen his support with a virtuous lining that aids him in per-

forming good deeds for Kuwait and its people, both in word and action. I implore God to appoint His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to bear this great responsibility."

MP Saad Al-Khanfour affirmed, "We pledge allegiance to His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, recognizing him as the worthy successor to the best predecessor. I pray to God to guide his steps in what is beneficial for this country."

MP Mubarak Al-Hajraf expressed, "Oh, the kindest of people, a soul joined by a body... I entrust that soul and body to God." He continued, "We mourn the passing of His Highness, our Amir, the righteous Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, and we pray to God to include him among the heirs of the Paradise of Bliss."

Representative Hamad Al-Madlej conveyed, "There is neither power nor strength except in God." Oh God, bestow your mercy upon our late Amir, forgive him, and grant him residence in your expansive Paradise. Oh God, our Amir was devoted to his people, displaying kindness through pardons and forgiveness; may you reciprocate this love, pardon him, and erase his sorrows."

MP Muhammad Haif remarked, "We belong to God, and to Him, we shall return. May God shower mercy upon the Amir of Pardon, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad. I beseech God to pardon him, forgive him, have mercy on him, and elevate him to the highest paradise in Paradise."

Representative Abdul Wahab Al-Issa attested, "We bear witness to God that he was a just, reformative, merciful, and humble ruler. Throughout his governance, we experienced nothing but goodness, security, and righteousness until his final acts -- an altruistic pardon for his people (so whoever pardons and reconciles, his reward is with God).

May God have mercy on His Highness (the Amir of Pardons), Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and may God reward him on our behalf with the most excellent recompense.

Heartfelt condolences to Kuwait, its people, and the Arab and Islamic nations... We belong to God, and to Him, we shall return."

MP Badr Nashmi implored, "Oh God, bestow your mercy upon your servant Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and forgive him. Oh God, dignify his abode, widen his entrance, and cleanse him with water and snow. Oh God, we testify that he carried the trust, safeguarded it, and fulfilled his duty to his Lord, his conscience, and his citizens... We entrust our Amir to God."

Representative Muhammad Al-Sayer reflected, "An extraordinary era, marked by love, forgiveness, and tolerance, was penned by an exceptional Amir, whose name gleamed in letters of light on a page of Kuwait's political history.

May God extend His mercy to His Highness, the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, forgive him, and reward him on behalf of us and the Kuwaiti people with the most excellent recompense."

Continued on Page 8

Condolences continue to pour in to HH Amir, Royal Family

'Oh God, give him place in your blessed abode'

Continued from Page 7

MP Saad Al-Khanfour fervently prayed, "Oh God, have mercy on our leader, our beloved, and our ruler, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad... Oh God, give him place in your blessed abode. Oh God, include him in the abodes of friends, martyrs, and righteous individuals, providing him with worthy companions. Oh God, transform his resting place into gardens of Paradise."

Representative Muhalhal Al-Mudhaf implored, "Oh God, forgive Your servant Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and grant him a place in Your expansive gardens... Oh God, we were content with him, and may You be content with him... Oh God, he loved Kuwait and its people, and in return, Kuwait and its people loved him... We only utter what pleases You. We belong to God, and to Him, we shall return."

MP Abdullah Al-Mudhaf expressed, "With profound sadness and sorrow, we mourn the illustrious departed soul of our late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, the Amir of correction and forgiveness, the Amir of humility, asceticism, and faith... May God bestow His blessings upon him and grant him a spacious abode in Paradise, and may God reward him on behalf of his people and nation with the utmost goodness."

Representative Dr. Abdul Karim Al-Kandari appealed, "May God augment our reward and the reward of the people of Kuwait through our Amir, His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad... May God compensate him on our behalf and on behalf of the Islamic nation and Muslims with the most excellent recompense... I implore God to include him among the benefactors whom He loves... O God, forgive him and shower Your mercy and generosity upon him. Lower him, expand his entrance, and designate his grave as one of the gardens of Paradise."

Condolences to HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal

Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Muhammad Al-Mutair, added, "We extend our condolences to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, the honorable Ruling Family, ourselves, and all Arabs and Muslims on the passing of the leader of the march, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, may God have mercy on him and grant him residence in His spacious paradise."

"Oh God, make the day of his return to You the happiest of his days, considering the tribulations he endured. His final era was one of distress. To Allah, we belong, and to Him, we shall return."

MP Dr. Hassan Johar prayed, "May God have mercy on you, Your Highness... You defended the nation and pardoned your children, so may God reward you with the finest recompense for your virtuous deeds."

Representative Majid Al-Mutairi lamented, "We grieve the loss of our dear Amir, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad (the Amir of Pardon), and we implore God to enshroud him in His vast mercy and admit him to paradise."

"We bear witness to God that the departed was benevolent and compassionate, cherishing his people, advocating for wisdom and stability, and rejecting discord among all."

He extended condolences, saying, "Our heartfelt sympathies go out to His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Al-Nawaf, all members of the ruling family, and the entire population of Kuwait."

MP Hamad Al-Olayan prayed, "I beseech God to establish your abode in the heights of His paradise. May God have mercy on you, O Prince of Pardon."

Representative Shuaib Al-Muwaziri expressed, "I implore God, the Most High, the Great, the Most Merciful, to forgive you and have mercy on you, to pardon you, to make you steadfast when sought, to transform your grave into a garden among the gardens of Paradise, and to grant you residence in the highest Paradise without judgment or prior torment... Those whom you loved and cared for reciprocated that love; they supplicate for your mercy and forgiveness."

He continued saying, "Oh God, we bear witness that deposits with You, Glory be to You, are not lost. Oh God, we entrust you with Nawaf Al-Ahmad."

MP Saud Al-Asfour expressed, "May God have mercy on the Amir of Pardons, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah... He initiated and concluded his reign with pardons... He exchanged love and sincerity for his people... Oh God, enlarge his resting place, fortify him when sought, and admit him to Your expansive paradise... We belong to God, and to Him, we shall return... There is no power nor strength except in God."

Representative Ahmed Lari remarked, "Today, we and the Arab nation, the Islamic nation, and the free world suffered a loss... an Amir and a sagacious leader. We lost an Amir of forgiveness and humanity." He added, "With deep sorrow, I mourn the passing of the late His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, the Amir of the country, and I beseech God to envelop him in His vast mercy and settle him in His spacious paradise."

My condolences to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, to the honorable people of Kuwait, and to everyone residing in this benevolent land."

MP Muhammad Al-Raqib conveyed, "With hearts resigned to God's will and destiny, we received the news of the passing of our father, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad... We implore God Almighty for forgiveness and mercy for him, and we extend our sincere condolences to His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, to His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Al-Nawaf, and to all the Kuwaiti people."

Oh God, we attest to his God-fearing nature

Representative Shuaib Shaaban expressed, "Oh God, we attest to his God-fearing nature among his people. Oh God, forgive him, have mercy on him, and grant him the highest levels of Paradise."

"O God, pardon him, bestow mercy upon him, bless him with good health, honor his abode, widen his entrance, cleanse him with water, ice, and cold, purifying him of sins and transgressions, just as a white garment is purified of filth."

MP Abdullah Fahhad remarked, "The affliction of the nation and our own is immense and profound with the passing of His Highness the Amir



Top and above: Some photos showing shops in different areas of Kuwait remain shut in view of the observance of the 3-day mourning period.

Photos by Rizk Taufiq

Britain's King Charles III sends condolences

HH Amir receives cables from Russia, China and Djibouti presidents over demise of Amir

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 17, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a cable of condolences Sunday from Russian President Vladimir Putin expressing his sorrow and sincere sympathy over the demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In his cable, Putin remembered the outstanding contributions of the late Amir, and progress of Kuwait in various fields and his personal efforts to strengthening Russian-Kuwaiti friendly relations.

Putin added that the late Amir had a great position in the Middle East and has done a lot for the social and economic development of Kuwait and the strengthening of its position on the international arena.

In turn, His Highness the Amir sent a cable to the Russian president, expressing his deep thanks and appreciation for the sincere feelings of sympathy, affirming on the historical and close relations that bind the two countries and people.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad

Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday a condolence from Chinese President Xi Jinping, in which he expressed his sincere condolences and sincere sympathy over the demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In his cable, the Chinese leader remembered the outstanding contributions of the late Amir, to the renaissance and progress of the dear homeland in various fields and his constant endeavor to strengthen the bonds of distinguished relations between the State of Kuwait and the friendly People's Republic of China.

In turn, His Highness the Amir sent a cable to the Chinese leader, expressing his deep thanks and appreciation for the sincere feelings of sympathy, affirming on the historical and close relations that bind the two countries and peoples.

Also, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday a cable of condolences from Britain's and Northern Ireland King Charles III, in which he expressed his sincere condolences and sincere sym-

pathy over the demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In his cable, King Charles praised the late Amir's contributions and service to his country and efforts to help those in need in various parts of the world.

In turn, His Highness the Amir sent a cable to the British leader, expressing his deep thanks and appreciation for the sincere sentiments on the occasion.

In the meantime, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday a cable of condolences from Djibouti President Ismail Omar Guelleh, in which he expressed his sincere condolences and sincere sympathy over the demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In his cable, President Guelleh praised the late Amir's contributions and service to his country.

In turn, His Highness the Amir sent a cable to the British leader, expressing his deep thanks and appreciation for the sincere sentiments on the occasion.

of the country, the humble and generous worshiper, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, may God have mercy on him. His noble conclusion in this earthly realm was marked by his generous pardon for a group of his fellow citizens, bringing joy to the hearts of all Kuwaitis."

Dr. Muhammad Al-Huwaila conveyed, "We extend our condolences to ourselves, His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, may God protect and preserve him, the political leadership, all the honorable Al-Sabah family, the esteemed Kuwaiti people, and the Arab and Islamic nations on the demise of our father and leader, the prince of forgiveness, humility, and asceticism, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, may God have mercy on him."

MP Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqabi added, "We share our condolences with ourselves and the Kuwaiti people on the passing of the Amir of Pardon, His Highness the late Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, praying to God to envelop him in His vast mercy and grant him residence in His spacious Paradise."

He continued saying, "The Messenger of God, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, said, 'You are God's martyrs on earth.' Oh God, we bear witness that he pardoned, reformed, and loved his people, and they reciprocated that love."

MP Dr. Abdul Hadi Al-Ajmi in expressing his sentiments said, "There is no power nor strength except in God, the Most High, the Great. The tragic and sorrowful news for all of Kuwait. We only utter what pleases God... May God have mercy on the Amir of Pardon, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad

Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and may he rest in peace as a reward for the significant contributions he made to the Kuwaiti people throughout his journey in serving Kuwait, its people, and the Arab and Islamic nations."

He added, "May God have mercy on the one who departed, leaving the people content with his merciful and generous pardon for a large group of his children... Oh God, grant him residence in your expansive paradise and secure a prosperous future for Kuwait and its people."

MP Osama Al-Zaid expressed, "Our condolences go out to the entire Kuwaiti populace, the ruling family, and especially to His Highness the Crown Prince, particularly in light of the demise of His Highness the Amir of the country, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, may God have mercy on him."

He added, "Oh God, we testify that he pardoned and sought reconciliation, then he departed to You, anticipating the reward You have promised."

MP Dr. Adel Al-Damkhi conveyed, "May God shower His mercy upon our Amir, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad, the Amir of Pardon and the Amir of Humility, whom we cherished, and who reciprocated that love. Everyone who knew him was acquainted with his righteousness and goodness. We implore God to place him in His expansive Paradise."

Representative Jarrah Al-Fawzan appealed, "We beseech God for mercy and forgiveness for the Amir of Pardon, Tolerance, and Moderation, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad... Oh God, we attest that he was a

wise, humble, compassionate, and just Amir."

Kuwait has bid farewell to prince of love

MP Dr. Muhammad Al-Mahan remarked, "Kuwait has bid farewell to the prince of love, tolerance, and humility, and we solemnly declare before God that he was an affectionate, humble, and equitable leader..."

"We beseech Almighty God to have mercy on him, forgive him, grant him steadfastness in the face of questioning, and elevate him to the ranks of the righteous, martyrs, and virtuous, treating him as an esteemed companion."

Representative Khaled Al-Munayes stated, "With hearts resigned to God's will and destiny, and with profound sadness and grief, we mourn the Amir of Pardon, His Highness the Amir of the country, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad... Our heartfelt condolences and sympathy go to the esteemed Al-Sabah family and the entire Kuwaiti populace on his passing, and we implore God for mercy and forgiveness for him, as well as patience and solace for Kuwait and its people."

For his part, MP Badr Sayyar said, "I extend to the place of His Highness the Amir of the country, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may God protect him, with my deepest condolences and to the ruling family, and we pledge allegiance to you for listening and obedience in times of hardship and ease, both good and bad."

Representative Hamad Al-Obaid expressed his condolences, saying, "I extend my heartfelt condolences to the leadership and people of Kuwait on the passing of our father and leader, the Amir of Amnesty and Tolerance, His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad... His goodness, devoutness, and love for his people were witnessed far and wide... I implore God Almighty for His mercy, forgiveness, and the granting of a residence in the highest levels of Paradise."

Demise of late Amir a 'great loss'

The Republic of Venezuela expressed its deepest condolences on Sunday over the demise of His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah saying, "His demise is a great loss to international community."

Venezuelan Presidency said in a statement to KUNA, "On behalf of the Government and People of Venezuela, we extend our most heartfelt words of condolence to the Government and People of the sisterly nation of Kuwait and joins in the mourning for the physical departure of His Highness Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah."

The demise of His Highness the late Amir leaves a deep void in the international community, since with his nobility, humanistic vision and solidarity, he contributed to the formation of a more just and understanding world, the statement added.

The Venezuelan Government also expressed sentiments of solidarity and deep respect for the Royal Family and the fraternal Kuwaiti people.

Venezuela also congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for assuming power as Amir of the country, "a responsibility that we are certain that he will carry out with all pride and sincerity for the best interest of his people," the statement concluded.

Azerbaijan president expresses sorrow

Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev expressed in a statement on Sunday his condolences and sorrow over the demise of late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, which passed away yesterday.

In a statement received by KUNA, President Aliyev expressed deep sorrow to the Kuwaiti leadership, government, and people on the occasion.

Riyadh Season halts musical concerts

The Riyadh Season festival halted on Sunday its musical concerts for a period of three days in a show of respect and mourning of the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah who passed away Saturday and was laid to rest early Sunday.

In a statement its official X account, the Riyadh Season indicated that the concerts would be suspended for three days due to the death of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

UAE President's Rep. in Kuwait

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday at the Amiri Airport the Representative of the President of UAE Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayid Al-Nahayan, Member of UAE Higher Council and Al-Fujairah Ruler, Sheikh Hamad bin Mohammad Al-Sharqi and his accompanying delegation who arrived in Kuwait to offer condolences over the demise of late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Sheikh Hamad extended his condolences on the occasion to His Highness Sheikh Nasser Mohammad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and to a number of Sheikhs.

Upon arrival, Sheikh Hamad was received by Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Sabah.

Late Amir's funeral coverage over int'l media

International media have broadcasted the demise of late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah via their websites, digital platforms and newspapers.

The Cabinet mourned in its extraordinary meeting Saturday to the Kuwaiti people, the Arab and Muslim nations and the world the demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and named His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait.

The Cabinet also declared official mourning for a period of 40 days and the closure of official government office for three days, ending on Tuesday evening December 19th.

The late Amir was laid to rest this morning, as His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah headed the group of mourners.

World News Roundup

Europe

'Absolutely indisputable'

Russia ruling party backs Putin's 'bid' for reelection

MOSCOW, Dec 17, (AP) — Delegates from Russia's ruling party unanimously backed President Vladimir Putin's bid for reelection at a party conference in Moscow on Sunday, state agencies reported, just a day after the Kremlin leader's supporters formally nominated him to run in the 2024 presidential election as an independent.

A little-known Russian presidential hopeful who calls for peace in Ukraine also inched closer towards formally registering as a candidate, securing a nomination from a group of more than 500 supporters in the Russian capital.

Dmitry Medvedev, United Russia's chairman and a former Russian president and prime minister, called on fellow party members to "mobilize all activists and supporters" in support of Putin before the vote, scheduled for March 15-17, according to reports by Russian state agencies.



Putin

In a speech at the conference, Medvedev referred to Putin as "our candidate," and asserted that his reelection for a fifth term as head of state "should be absolutely logical, legitimate and absolutely indisputable."

"We must mobilize all activists, all supporters in order to prevent any disruptions during the election campaign, stop any attempts to influence the course of the campaign from the outside, arrange provocations, disseminate false, harmful information or violate public order," Medvedev said.

Russia, Ukraine exchange attacks: Russia and Ukraine launched over a dozen drones at each other's territory for a second straight day Sunday, one of which apparently targeted a Russian military airport.

At least 35 Ukrainian drones were shot down overnight over three regions in southwestern Russia, the Russian Defense Ministry said in a post on the messaging app Telegram.

A Russian air base hosting bomber aircraft used in the war in Ukraine was among the targets, according to a Russian Telegram channel critical of the Kremlin. The channel posted short videos of drones flying over low-rise housing in what it claimed was the Russian town of Morozovsk, whose air base is home to Russia's 559th Bomber Aviation Regiment.

Vasily Golubev, the governor of Russia's Rostov province, separately reported "mass drone strikes" near Morozovsk and another town farther west, but did not mention the air base. Golubev said most of the drones were shot down and there were no casualties. He did not comment on damage. (AP)

Pope Francis turned 87: Pope Francis turned 87 on Sunday, closing out a year that saw big milestones in his efforts to reform the Catholic Church as well as health scares that raise questions about his future as pope. Francis celebrated his birthday with cake during a festive audience with children Sunday morning, and there were "Happy Birthday" banners in St. Peter's Square during his weekly noon blessing.

One early present came Saturday, when a Vatican tribunal handed down a mix of guilty verdicts and acquittals in a complicated trial that Francis had supported as evidence of his financial reforms. The biggest-name defendant, Cardinal Angelo Becciu, was convicted of embezzlement and sentenced to 5½ years in prison. (AP)

Populists tighten grip on power: Serbia's populist President Aleksandar Vucic is looking to further tighten his grip on power in an election on Sunday that has been marred by reports of major irregularities during a tense campaign.

The main contest in the parliamentary and local elections is expected to be between Vucic's governing right-wing Serbian Progressive Party, or SNS, and a centrist coalition that is trying to undermine the populists who have ruled the troubled Balkan state since 2012. The Serbia Against Violence opposition list is expected to mount the biggest challenge for the city council in Belgrade. An opposition victory in the capital would seriously dent Vucic's hard-line rule in the country, analysts say.

"Changes in Serbia have started and there is no force that can stop that," said Dragan Djilas, the opposition coalition leader, after he voted in Belgrade. "We, as the strongest opposition list, will defend people's will by all democratic means." (AP)

Political prisoners face abuse: During his three years in a Belarusian penal colony, human rights activist Leanid Sudalenka says he and other political prisoners were regularly deprived of family visits, phone calls and parcels. He nearly died when COVID-19 swept through the facility. And he was forced to spend the last nine days of his sentence in a damp punishment cell, sleeping on the concrete floor with a roll of toilet paper for a pillow.

He had to wear a yellow tag on his uniform - as do all the estimated 1,473 political prisoners held in Belarus - so they're easily identifiable to guards who he said routinely bullied, abused and humiliated them. "The Belarusian authorities deliberately create terrible detention conditions for political prisoners, which qualify as torture," Sudalenka said in an interview with The Associated Press after he finished his time behind bars and fled to neighboring Lithuania. (AP)

Cardinal convicted of embezzlement: A Vatican tribunal on Saturday convicted a cardinal of embezzlement and sentenced him to 5½ years in prison in one of several verdicts handed down in a complicated financial trial that aired the city state's dirty laundry and tested its justice system.

Cardinal Angelo Becciu, the first cardinal ever prosecuted by the Vatican criminal court, was absolved of several other charges and his nine co-defendants received a mixed outcome of some guilty verdicts and many acquittals of the nearly 50 charges brought against them during a 2½ year trial. (AP)

Author receives German prize: The Russian-American writer Masha Gessen received a German literary prize Saturday in a ceremony that was delayed and scaled down in reaction to an article comparing Gaza to Nazi German ghettos.

The comparison in a recent New Yorker article was viewed as controversial in Germany, where government authorities strongly support Israel as a form of remorse and responsibility after Adolf Hitler's Germany murdered up to 6 million Jews in the Holocaust. (AP)



Republican presidential candidate and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis speaks at an annual Basque Fry at the Corley Ranch in Gardnerville, Nev., Saturday, June 17, 2023. The mother of a transgender girl sobbed in federal court Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2023, as she contemplated having to move away from her Navy officer husband to get health care for her 12-year-old if Florida's ban on gender dysphoria treatments for minors is allowed to take effect. (AP)

Top strategist resigns from DeSantis-backing super PAC

The top strategist for the embattled super PAC backing Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' campaign for the White House resigned Saturday night in the latest sign of trouble for the GOP hopeful less than one month before voting begins with Iowa's kickoff caucuses.

Jeff Roe, the top adviser to Never Back Down, is the latest senior staffer to exit Never Back Down, which has been the largest outside group supporting DeSantis' candidacy.

He announced his departure on X, the site formerly known as Twitter, hours after The Washington Post published a story focused on internal disputes and suspicions between Never Back Down, the campaign, and other DeSantis allies that included accusations of "mismanagement and conduct issues, including numerous unauthorized leaks containing false information."

"I can't believe it ended this way," Roe wrote on X, sharing a statement in which he said he "cannot

in good conscience stay affiliated with Never Back Down given the statements" in the story, which he said were false.

Numerous senior members of Never Back Down have been fired or resigned in recent weeks, including two chief executives, the group's chairman and its communications director. At the same time, DeSantis' Florida allies have created a new super PAC, Fight Right, which had earned the public blessing of the DeSantis campaign. (AP)

Politics

Biden urged to rethink immigration policies

Latino Democrats break silence

WASHINGTON, Dec 17, (AP) — Prominent Latinos in Congress looked on quietly, at first, privately raising concerns with the Biden administration over the direction of border security talks.

Democratic Sen. Alex Padilla of California was on the phone constantly with administration officials questioning why the Senate negotiations did not include any meaningful consideration of providing pathways to citizenship for longtime immigrants lacking the proper legal documents.

New Mexico Democrat Sen. Ben Ray Lujan made similar arguments as he tried to get meetings with top-level White House officials.

But when the talks didn't seem to make enough difference, the influential lawmakers started leading the open opposition.

"A return to Trump-era policies is not the fix," Padilla said. "In fact, it will make the problem worse."

Padilla even pulled President Joe Biden aside at a fundraiser last week-end in California to warn him "to be careful" of being dragged into "harmful policy."

The Latino senators have found themselves on shifting ground in the debate over immigration as the Democratic president, who is reaching for a border deal as part of his \$110 billion package for Ukraine, Israel and other national security needs, has tried to reduce the historic numbers of people arriving at the U.S. border with Mexico.

The negotiations, which intensified Saturday at the Capitol as lawmakers race to draft a framework by this week-end, come as the Biden administration has increasingly endured criticism

over its handling of border and immigration issues - not just from Republicans, but from members of the president's own party as well. Democratic cities and states have been vocal about the financial toll that they say migrants have been taking on their resources.

But left off the table in the talks are pro-immigration changes, such as granting permanent legal status to thousands of immigrants who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children, often referred to as "Dreamers," based on the DREAM Act that would have provided similar protections for young immigrants but was never approved.

A few days after his conversation with the president, Padilla, Lujan and Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., aired their concerns prominently at a Congressional Hispanic Caucus news conference in front of the Capitol.

Concessions

They slammed Senate Republicans for demanding the border policy changes in exchange for Ukraine aid, and they criticized Biden for making concessions that they say ultimately undermine the United States' standing as a country that welcomes immigrants.

Padilla said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., has promised him and several other senators to allow them to see proposals before there is a final agreement. But Latino lawmakers have largely been left outside the core negotiating group.

On Saturday, White House Chief of Staff Jeff Zients spoke on a call with the Hispanic Caucus, and several lawmakers raised concerns, according to two people granted anonymity to dis-

cuss the situation.

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, who had been engaged in talks at the Capitol, also joined the call.

Biden is facing pressure from all sides. He has been criticized about the record numbers of migrants at the border and he is also trying to address the political weakness before a potential campaign rematch next year with Donald Trump, the former Republican president, who has promised to enact far-right immigration measures.

And the issue is now tied to a top Biden foreign policy goal: providing robust support for Ukraine's defense against Russia.

The White House and Senate leaders are pushing for a framework of the border deal by Sunday, in preparation for possible votes in the week ahead.

"We'll need to have some kind of framework by the end of the week-end," Sen. James Lankford of Oklahoma, the key Republican negotiator, said Saturday during a break in talks.

Recently during the negotiations, the White House has pushed to include provisions that would legalize young immigrants who came to the U.S. illegally as children, according to two people with knowledge of the closed-door talks. But others said that was quickly taken off the table by Republicans.

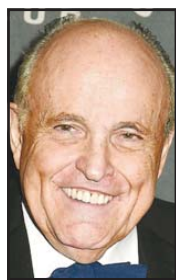
Sensors said they are running into the complex nature of U.S. immigration law. "Byzantine," said Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn..

"We're not at an agreement, but as we get closer into an agreement, the details really matter," Murphy said. "The drafting of the text is really hard and difficult."



Former President Donald Trump greets the crowd at a campaign rally Saturday Dec. 16, 2023, in Durham, N.H. Trump asked New Hampshire voters on Saturday to help him secure the Republican presidential nomination before any rivals find their footing with the 2024 campaign's opening contest just weeks away.

The appearance in Durham was part of a swing taking the former president through early nominating states as he cites his wide polling lead over a dwindling field of GOP hopefuls. (AP)



Giuliani



Bradley Jr

America

Giuliani awaits criminal trial: A criminal trial awaits Rudy Giuliani in Georgia. He is an alleged unnamed co-conspirator in a federal indictment against Donald Trump. And now he's been ordered to pay a sum he surely cannot afford.

The \$148 million verdict in a defamation case brought by two former Georgia election workers marks a new low point for the man once lauded as "America's mayor," whose advocacy of Donald Trump's false election claims has led to criminal charges and hefty legal bills. And the jury's verdict could be a troubling sign for Giuliani as he gears up to defend himself against charges in Georgia that could land him behind bars.

A defiant Giuliani vowed Friday to appeal, calling the damages award for Ruby Freeman and her daughter, Wandra "Shaye" Moss, "absurd." Outside Washington's federal courthouse after the verdict, he repeated his claims that the 2020 election was stolen from Trump. And in a video later on X, formerly known as Twitter, he insisted he did nothing wrong, and suggested he will keep pressing his claims even if it means losing all his money or ending up in jail.

"If they want to put me in jail for it, if you want to shoot me for it... you're not going to get me to lie," Giuliani said. (AP)

Washington state man charged: A Washington state man in jail awaiting trial in one murder case has been charged with three more killings, and prosecutors say he lured all four victims by asking them to help dig up buried gold.

Richard Bradley Jr., 40, was charged in May 2021 with first-degree murder in the

death of 44-year-old Brandi Blake, whose body was found buried in a sprawling park in the town of Auburn, Washington. In the last two weeks, prosecutors have filed three more murder charges against Bradley. The Seattle Times reports, in the shooting deaths of a father and adult son in May 2021 and

in the 2019 death of a man whose remains were found near Blake's grave.. (AP)

Small plane crashes: A small plane

crashed into power lines in Oregon late Saturday afternoon and killed all three people on



A man salutes after placing a wreath at Arlington National Cemetery, Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023, in Arlington, Va. A Confederate memorial is to be removed from Arlington National Cemetery in northern Virginia in the coming days, part of the push to remove symbols that commemorate the Confederacy from military-related facilities, a cemetery official said Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023. (AP)

board, police said. Polk County emergency services received the report of the single engine plane crash in Independence around 4:55 p.m., the Independence Police Department said in a statement posted on social media.

Police said the initial investigation found the collision with electrical power lines resulted in a small brush fire and a power outage in the community about 12 miles (19.3 kilometers) southwest of Salem.

Pacific Power said at least 375 customers were without power in Independence after the crash, the Statesman Journal reported.

The Independence police and the Federal Aviation Administration are investigating, police said. (AP)

Large fire burns 2nd residential site:

Firefighters in the Denver metro area responded to the second large fire at an Aurora construction site in three days on Saturday.

Officials have not yet determined the cause for either fire and have not suggested that they were related, but both are under investigation.

Saturday's five-alarm fire was reported shortly before 1 p.m., said Aurora Fire Rescue spokesperson Andrew Logan, at a large apartment building that was still under construction. Responding crews went to the top floor of the five-story building where the blaze was reported to have started, but the dangerous conditions soon forced crews from several different agencies to focus on fighting the flames from outside the structure. (AP)

Africa

Newly-formed party emerges

South African ex-Prez Zuma denounces ANC

JOHANNESBURG, Dec 17, (AP) — Former President **Jacob Zuma** on Saturday denounced the governing African National Congress party and announced that he would vote for a newly-formed political formation in South Africa's general election next year.

Zuma, who was president of the ANC from 2007 to 2017, said that he's backing the newly-formed Umkhonto we Sizwe party that is named after the ANC's now-defunct military wing, which was disbanded after the liberation struggle.

Zuma, 81, called on other South Africans to vote for the new formation, saying it would be "a betrayal to vote for the ANC" of President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The country's general election scheduled for 2024 is expected to be highly contested, because the ruling ANC, which has governed the country since Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first democratically-elected leader in 1994, faces a myriad of challenges.

Recent polls have suggested that the ANC could for the first time garner less than 50% of the national vote in next year's election and may need to form a coalition government to remain in power.

Briefing journalists in Johannesburg's Soweto township on Saturday, Zuma described the ANC and Ramaphosa as a "proxy for white monopoly capital," and he described his decision as part of rescuing the ANC.



Zuma

UN peacekeeping lauds strong support: The United Nations peacekeeping chief says he was very satisfied with the strong support of many countries for its far-flung operations at a recent ministerial meeting, despite "headwinds and challenges and problems."

Jean-Pierre Lacroix, the undersecretary-general for peace operations, said in an interview with The Associated Press that the biannual ministerial meeting in Ghana's capital, Accra, earlier this month was attended by nearly 100 countries.

He said that 33 countries made pledges of 117 military and police units for the U.N.'s peacekeeping operations - and 45 countries made more than 100 pledges related to training peacekeepers and partnerships.

"We had really a strong level of support towards peacekeeping, which is great ... and the pledges were very good," Lacroix said.

There are now 12 peacekeeping operations in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East and that number will drop again following demands by the leaders of Mali and Congo for U.N. troops to leave, complaining that the peacekeepers failed in their primary mandate to protect civilians from armed groups. (AP)

Kanu's terrorism charges upheld: Nigeria's Supreme Court on Friday overturned a lower court ruling dismissing terrorism charges against a popular separatist leader whose trial has been blamed for an outbreak of violence in the country's southeast region.

The Court said Nnamdi Kanu, leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) separatist group that seeks independence for Nigeria's southeastern region, still faces terrorism charges despite the lower court ruling. Kanu, who also holds British citizenship, has already pleaded not guilty to the charges.

In announcing the decision, Justice Garba Mohammed said that although Nigeria's secret police violated Kanu's rights during his arrest and extradition from Kenya in 2021, the Court of Appeal was wrong to rule in October last year that the violation was grounds for the dismissal of the charges. (AP)

Kenya's death toll rising: Kenya's military hastened efforts Thursday to evacuate hundreds of people trapped by raging floods that have hit many parts of the East African country.

Floods have killed at least 170 and displaced more than 600,000 since the onset of heavy rains in November, according to the Red Cross, which is helping to coordinate the rescue efforts.

Tens of thousands of people in Northern Kenya have lost livestock, farmland and homes due to the floods described by aid groups as the worst in 100 years. An international team of scientists reported last week that human-caused climate change has made the ongoing rains in Eastern Africa up to two times more intense. (AP)

ECOWAS accused of destabilizing acts: Nigerian military spokesman Col. Amadou Abdramane strongly denounced the Economic Community of West African States for inviting the prime minister of the deposed regime to the ECOWAS summit meeting held in Abuja, capital of Nigeria, on Sunday.

The Nigerian transitional government, army and people are firmly opposed to such provocative acts by ECOWAS which seek to destabilize Niger, he told reporters on Thursday.

The repeated provocations can only undermine the efforts to reach a negotiated settlement to the political situation in Niger, he said, noting that the West African grouping should not persist in disregarding the incumbent rulers of Niger or invite fugitive to represent the country illegally at such summits. (KUNA)

Senegal's Sonko could run for prez: Senegal's opposition leader Ousmane Sonko was ordered to be reinstated on the electoral list Thursday, which could allow him to run for president in February's election.

The court of first instance's decision overturned a November ruling by the Supreme Court that effectively barred the detained opposition leader's bid to run. The state has 10 days to appeal, but has yet to say if it will.

"Law and truth were with us. Ousmane Sonko will be reinstated on the lists and he will take part in the presidential election," Sonko's lawyer Bamba Cisse said. (AP)

Kenyan police deployment ramp up: The head of Haiti's national police visited Kenya Thursday, as local authorities prepare for the deployment of Kenyan police to the Caribbean nation plagued by gang violence.

Kenyan authorities said Thursday that Frantz Elbe, on a fact-finding mission, met Kenyan police chief Japhet Koome Thursday.

Elbe "is on a three-day official visit to Kenya for bilateral security discussions between the two law enforcement agencies," a statement from Koome's office said. No more details were given. (AP)



This photo provided by the North Korean government shows what it says is an intercontinental ballistic missile in a launching drill at the Sunan international airport in Pyongyang, North Korea on March 16, 2023. Independent journalists were not given access to cover the event depicted in this image distributed by the North Korean government. The content of this image is as provided and cannot be independently verified. Korean language watermark on image as provided by source reads: 'KCNA' which is the abbreviation for Korean Central News Agency. (AP)

North Korea fires ballistic missile toward South Korean eastern waters

South Korea's military said Sunday that it had detected that North Korea fired at least one ballistic missile toward its eastern waters, adding to a torrent of weapons' tests in recent months that has elevated tensions.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff didn't immediately say what type of missile it was or how far it flew.

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula are at their

highest in years, with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un accelerating the expansion of his nuclear and missile program, and flaunting an escalatory nuclear doctrine that authorizes the preemptive use of nuclear weapons.

The United States, South Korea and Japan have responded by increasing the visibility of their trilateral partnership in the region, and strengthening their combined military exercises, which Kim condemns

as invasion rehearsals.

North Korea's latest launch followed high-level security talks between American and South Korean officials in Washington over the weekend, where they agreed on plans to incorporate nuclear operation scenarios in their combined military exercises next year to cope with the North's evolving threats, according to details announced by Seoul's presidential office. (AP)

Asia

China defends bounties on Hong Kong dissidents

Japan, ASEAN bolster security, economy ties

TOKYO, Dec 17, (AP) — Leaders from Japan and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, at a special summit in Tokyo on Sunday, adopted a joint vision that emphasizes security and economic cooperation while respecting the rule of law, amid growing tensions with China in regional seas.

Ties between Japan and the 10-member ASEAN bloc used to be largely based on Japanese assistance to the developing economies, in part due to lingering bitterness over Japan's wartime actions. But in recent years the relationship has focused more on security amid China's growing assertiveness in the South China Sea, while Japan's postwar pacifist stance and trust-building efforts have fostered friendlier relations.

The summit marks the 50th anniversary of official Japan-ASEAN ties, which started in 1973 with trade talks over Japanese synthetic rubber exports.

The leaders, in a joint statement, called for strengthening their "mutually beneficial" partnership and working together for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific, especially in maritime security. They also called for economic security and greater supply chain resilience for the region and to promote the movement of one another's nationals. "We affirm the shared view to promote a rules-based Indo-Pacific region that is free and open (and) embraces key principles such as ASEAN's unity and centrality, inclusiveness (and) transparency," according to the joint statement.

The leaders stressed "respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, settlement of differences or disputes by peaceful means and renunciation of the threat or use of force."

They did not specifically mention China. During the summit meeting, they raised concerns over the "situation in East and South China Sea" and noted the importance of upholding international law, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The leaders adopted an implementation plan for 130 projects. Japan called for stepping up security and defense cooperation, such as arms technology and equipment transfers, cybersecurity and tackling disinformation. Tokyo also pledged to reinforce support for efforts against climate change, green technology and digital transformation, as well as investment, including in the region's automotive industry.

"As divisions and confrontations deepen and the world faces compounded crises, Japan will tackle the issues together with ASEAN, which is the linchpin of a 'free and open Indo-Pacific,'" Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told a joint news conference with Indonesian President Joko Widodo, this year's ASEAN chair.

Mutual trust

"Based on our mutual trust, we will tackle new issues, and contribute to peace and prosperity of the region in order to create a world where people can benefit while their dignity is respected."

Japan adopted a new security strategy last year and has been rapidly building up its military and expanding its military partnerships to better counter China's growing assertiveness in the region. On Saturday, on the sidelines of the summit, Kishida held a series of bilateral talks as Japan seeks to step up bilateral security ties with ASEAN countries. Kishida and his Malaysian counterpart, Anwar Ibrahim, signed a 400 million yen (\$2.8 million) deal to bolster Malaysia's maritime security capability as part of a Japanese official security assistance program specifically for militaries of friendly nations to help strengthen their law enforcement and security capabilities.

Also:

BEIJING: China on Friday defended controversial bounties offered for the capture of Hong Kong dissidents who have fled abroad that have been heav-

ily criticized by foreign governments and human rights groups.

Rewards of 1 million Hong Kong dollars (\$128,000) have been offered for information leading to the capture of 13 opposition figures accused of violating the semi-autonomous Chinese city's sweeping National Security Law.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson **Mao Ning** said China rejected the outside criticism, saying the arrest orders were "necessary and justified and ... in line with international law and practice."

Without directly mentioning the bounties, Mao said other countries also have extraterritorial aspects to their laws on national security, adding that foreign governments' support for those on the list was merely cover for their aim of destabilizing Hong Kong, an Asian financial center that was roiled by 2019 anti-government protests.

"We strongly oppose and deplore the individual countries slandering Hong Kong's national security law and interfering in the judicial system," Mao told reporters at a daily briefing.

BANGKOK: State prosecutors in Thailand indicted a member of the country's Senate on six charges involving narcotics trafficking, money laundering and association with a transnational criminal organization, said a statement received Friday from the attorney-general's office.

The senator, **Upakit Pachariyang-kun**, denied all the charges when he appeared Thursday at criminal court in Bangkok, and was granted release on bail of 10 million baht (\$286,000).

Upakit's case is linked to that of Tun Min Latt, an influential businessman from neighboring Myanmar who is reportedly close to that country's ruling military and especially its army chief, Senior Gen. **Min Aung Hlaing**. The general came to power in Myanmar after ousting the elected government of **Aung San Suu Kyi** in February 2021.



Jimmy Lai walks through the Stanley prison in Hong Kong, on July 28, 2023. The trial of Hong Kong's most famous activist publisher who was arrested under China's crackdown on dissidents will start on Monday, Dec. 18, 2023 after being delayed for over a year. Jimmy Lai broke into the city's once freewheeling media world about three decades ago, armed with the belief that delivering information is equal to protecting freedom. (AP)



Pinochet



Freyhoffer

Lat/Am

Chileans to vote on new charter: Chileans are voting Sunday on whether to approve a new constitution that will replace the country's dictatorship-era charter.

The vote comes over a year after Chileans resoundingly rejected a proposed constitution written by a left-leaning convention and one that many characterized as one of the world's most progressive charters. The new document, largely written by conservative councilors, is more conservative than the one it seeks to replace because it would deepen free-market principles, reduce state intervention and might limit some women's rights.

If the new charter is rejected, the Pinochet-era constitution - which was amended over the years -- will remain in effect.

One of the most controversial articles in the proposed new draft says that "the law protects the life of the unborn," with a slight change in wording from the current document that some have warned could make abortion fully illegal in the South American country. Chilean law currently allows the interruption of pregnancies for three reasons: rape, an unviable fetus and risk to the life of the mother.

Another article in the proposed document that has sparked controversy says prisoners who suffer a terminal illness and aren't deemed to be a danger to society at large can be granted house arrest. Members of the left-wing opposition have said the measure could end up benefiting those who have been convicted of crimes against humanity during the 1973-1990 dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet. (AP)

Int'l court rules against Guatemala: Guatemala violated Indigenous rights by permitting a huge nickel mine on tribal land almost two decades ago, according to a ruling from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights Friday.

The landmark verdict marks a monumental step in a four-decade struggle for Indigenous land rights and a long, bitter legal battle, which has at times spilled into the streets of northern Guatemala.

It also comes at the close of the U.N. climate summit COP28, which stressed the importance of renewables and energy transition minerals like nickel more than ever.

According to a verdict read from Costa Rica in the early hours of the morning, the Guatemalan government violated the rights of the Indigenous Q'eqchi' people



Haitian migrants wade through water as they cross the Darien Gap from Colombia to Panama in hopes of reaching the U.S., May 9, 2023. Once nearly impenetrable for migrants heading north from Latin America, the jungle between Colombia and Panama this year became a speedy but still treacherous highway for hundreds of thousands of people from around the world. (AP)

to property and consultation by permitting mining on land where members of the community have lived at least since the 1800s. (AP)

Chile arrests 55 people: Chile's police on Friday arrested at least 55 people in a fiscal fraud case that could be one of the biggest in the country's history, amounting to about \$275 million and implicating small and mid-sized companies in different parts of the country.

Marcelo Freyhoffer, a high officer at Chile's tax agency, told journalists those arrested were associated with companies that did not render real services and committed fraud through false tax documents. Their goal was to pay less tax or obtain fraudulent tax returns, he said.

Freyhoffer said the suspects will stand trial for tax crimes, criminal association, money laundering, customs fraud and making false declarations, and could be jailed for up to 15 years in what he called the country's biggest fraud case ever.

The investigation started in 2016 and touched companies operating in a wide range of areas, varying from construction to exporters of cell phones. (AP)

Chile's President Gabriel Boric said the arrests show that "the institutions work against those who commit crimes, against those who commit white-collar crime, against those who commit acts of corruption." (AP)

Nissan boosts research collaboration in China

Nissan Motor Co. is expanding its research ties with a leading Chinese university as it and other foreign car companies try to claw back market share in the important Chinese market. The Japanese automaker announced Sunday that it would launch joint research next year with Tsinghua University on reaching Generation Z - defined for this project as those born between 1995 and 2009 - and on the social responsibility of

automakers in battery recycling, charging stations and other electric vehicle-related issues.

The major auto companies were caught flat-footed by a boom in electric vehicles in China that has given rise to new Chinese competitors that have gobbled up market share at home and are now moving into Southeast Asia, Europe and other overseas markets. Nissan's sales in China plunged 34% in the six months from April to

September compared with a year earlier.

"Market conditions in China have become extremely tough," Masashi Matsuyama, the head of Nissan's Chinese investment company, said at a news conference in Beijing. Nissan plans to develop 10 further new-energy vehicles for the Chinese market, four under its own brand by 2026 and the other six for Chinese joint venture partners. (AP)

Turkey's national carrier, Turkish Airlines is placing an order for 220 new planes from Airbus as it seeks to expand its fleet.

In a statement to Turkey's public disclosures platform, KAP, Turkish Airlines announced that it will buy 150 narrow-body A321 Neo aircraft in addition to 50 wide-body A350-900 jets, 15 of the A350-1000 planes and five A350F cargo aircraft. The company also would pro-

Turkish Airlines orders 220 Airbus jets

quire engine maintenance services and spare engines for the A350 aircraft from Rolls-Royce, according to the statement.

Airbus said the latest order increases Turkish Airlines' total order to 504 planes, adding that 212 have already been delivered.

"By modernizing our fleet with more efficient and environmentally friendly aircraft, we are reinforcing our leading position in

global aviation and contributing to the nation's prominence as an aviation hub," Turkish Airlines board Chairman Ahmet Bolat said in a news release from Toulouse, France-based Airbus.

The airline is vying to turn its hub in Istanbul into a major center for international transport.

Turkish Airlines spokesman was not available for further information on the deal. (AP)

Market Movements

17-12-20123

Change Closing pts

		Change	Closing pts
SAUDI	- Tawadul	+57.79	11,600.72
EGYPT	- EGX 30	+69.32	24,792.14



Business

US homelessness soars 12pct amid rent hikes, aid reduction

'For those on frontlines of this crisis, it's not surprising'

WASHINGTON, Dec 17, (AP): The United States experienced a dramatic 12% increase in homelessness to its highest reported level as soaring rents and a decline in coronavirus pandemic assistance combined to put housing out of reach for more Americans, federal officials said Friday.

About 653,000 people were homeless, the most since the country began using the yearly point-in-time survey in 2007. The total in the January count represents an increase of about 70,650 from a year earlier.

The latest estimate indicates that people becoming homeless for the first time were behind much of the increase.

A rise in family homelessness ended a downward trend that began in 2012.

"For those on the frontlines of this crisis, it's not surprising," said Ann Oliva, chief executive officer at the National Alliance to End Homelessness, an advocacy group. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Marcia Fudge said the data underscored an "urgent need" to support proven solutions that help people quickly exit homelessness and that prevent homelessness in the first place.

Going back to the first 2007 survey, the U.S. then made steady progress for about a decade in reducing the homeless population as the government focused particularly on increasing investments to get veterans into housing. The number of homeless people dropped from about 637,000 in 2010 to about 554,000 in 2017.

The numbers ticked up to about 580,000 in the 2020 count and held relatively steady over the next two years as Congress responded to the COVID-19 pandemic with emergency rental assistance, stimulus payments, aid to states and local governments and a temporary eviction moratorium. Jeff Olivet, executive director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, a federal agency, said the extra assistance "held off the rise in homelessness that we are now seeing." He said numerous factors are behind the problem.

"The most significant causes are the shortage of affordable homes and the high cost of housing that have left many Americans living paycheck to paycheck and one crisis away from homelessness," Olivet said.

Within the overall rise, homelessness among individuals rose by nearly 11%, among veterans by 7.4% and among families with children by 15.5%.

People who identify as Black make up about 13% of the U.S. population but comprised 37% of all people experiencing homelessness. People who identify as Hispanic or Latino make up about 19% of the population but comprised about 33% of those experiencing homelessness. Also, more than a quarter of the adults experiencing homelessness were over age 54.

HUD said that rental housing conditions were "extraordinarily challenging" in 2022, with rents increasing at more than twice the rate of recent years. It noted that trend has subsided since the January count. Such relief could show benefits when volunteers and housing officials around the country begin the next homeless count in just a few weeks.

Budget

Officials also noted that President Joe Biden's budget for this fiscal year has recommended guaranteed vouchers for low-income veterans and youths aging out of foster care, among other investments designed to reduce homelessness.

More than half the people experiencing homelessness in the country were in four states: California, New York, Florida and Washington. While about 28% of the nation's homeless are estimated to be in California, its increase was only about half the national rate. New York's homelessness went up more than three times the national rate, according to HUD's report.

New Hampshire, New Mexico and Colorado along with New York saw the largest percentage increases in homelessness. In all, the number of people experiencing homelessness increased in 41 states and the District of Columbia, and decreased in just nine states.

Dave Giffen, executive director of The Coalition for the Homeless in New York City, said the cost of rental housing soared after the pandemic.

"So when we saw the pandemic-era protections go away, we did start to see homelessness starting to increase again. We saw more people being evicted, housing instability," Giffen said. "But then all of that got kind of masked by the sudden, very rapid influx of new asylum seekers, and that is a crisis for which the city and state were more unprepared to deal with."

Starting in the summer of 2022, New York City's homeless shelter system has been overwhelmed by waves of international migrants who are being bused into the city from southern U.S. border states. More than 150,000 migrants have been in the city's shelters for some period of time.

Mayor Eric Adams has pleaded with the federal government for aid to help defray the cost of housing migrants, which he says will run into the billions of dollars over the next few years. He has chastised the governor of Texas, for arranging to bus migrants out of that state to New York. Adams, a Democrat, has also asked for legal and bureaucratic changes that would allow migrants to get work permits more easily.

HUD did not get data that enabled it to separate out the specific impact of migrants and asylum seekers on homelessness, but some communities indicated it did affect their increase. The Biden administration has provided more than \$1 billion in grant funding to cities and states to fund critical needs for migrants. It's also identifying potential federal land and buildings that can be made available for shelter and other services for migrants, said a senior HUD official not authorized to publicly discuss the report.



In this photo illuminated by an off-camera flash, a tarp covers a portion of a homeless person's tent on a bridge overlooking the 101 Freeway in Los Angeles, Thursday, Feb. 2, 2023. The United States experienced a dramatic 12% increase in homelessness as soaring rents and a decline in coronavirus pandemic assistance combined to put housing out of reach for more Americans, federal officials said Friday, Dec 15, 2023. (AP)

Fed tackles inflation, averts recession

WASHINGTON, Dec 17, (AP): It was the most painful inflation Americans had experienced since 1981, when "The Dukes of Hazard" and "The Jeffersons" were topping the TV charts. Yet the Federal Reserve now seems on the verge of defeating it - and without the surge in unemployment and the deep recession that many economists had predicted would accompany it.

Inflation has been falling more or less steadily since peaking in June of last year at 9.1%. And when the Fed's preferred inflation gauge for November is reported next week, it's likely to show that in the past six months, annual inflation actually dipped just below the Fed's target of 2%, economists at UBS estimate.

The cost of goods - such as used cars, furniture and appliances - has fallen for six straight months. Compared with a year ago, goods prices are unchanged, held down by improved global supply chains.

Housing and rental costs, a major driver of inflation, are growing more slowly. Wage growth has cooled, too, though it still tops inflation. Milder wage growth tends to ease pressure on restaurants, hotels and other employers to increase their prices to cover their labor costs. "I think it's really good to see the progress that we're making," Chair Jerome Powell said at a news conference Wednesday after the Fed's latest policy meeting. "If you look at the ... six-month measures, you see very low numbers."

On Friday, the Congressional Budget Office, a nonpartisan agency, estimated that inflation will drop to 2.1% by the end of next year.

There will likely be bumps on the road toward getting inflation fully under control, officials have said. Powell insisted that "no one is declaring victory." And he reiterated that the central bank wants to see further evidence of falling inflation before it would feel confident that it is sustainably headed back to the 2% target.

Yet many economists, normally a cautious lot, are now willing to declare that inflation is nearly back under control after two-plus years in which it imposed hardships on millions of American households.

"It appears that inflation has returned to 2%," said Tim Duy, chief economist at SGH Macroeconomics. "The Fed looks like it has won that battle."

Prices spikes are also moderating overseas, with both the Bank of England and European Central Bank keeping their benchmark interest rates unchanged this week. Though inflation is still at 4.6% in the United Kingdom, it has fallen to 2.4% in the 20 countries that use the euro currency.

With inflation cooling, Powell said the 19 officials on the Fed's policy setting committee had discussed the prospects for rate cuts at this week's meeting. The officials also projected that the Fed will cut its key interest rate three times next year.

That stance marked a drastic shift from the rate-hiking campaign the Fed began in March 2022. Beginning then, the central bank raised its benchmark rate 11 times, from near zero to roughly 5.4%, its highest level in 22 years, to try to slow borrowing, spending and inflation. The result was much higher costs for mortgages, auto loans, business borrowing and other forms of credit.

Powell's suddenly more optimistic words, and the Fed's rate-cut projections, sent stock market indexes soaring this week. Wall Street traders now foresee a roughly 80% likelihood that the first rate cut will occur when the Fed meets in March, and they are forecasting a total of six cuts in 2024.

On Friday, John Williams, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and a top

lieutenant of Powell's, sought to pour some cold water on those expectations. Speaking on CNBC, Williams said it was "premature to be even thinking" about whether to cut rates in March. But he also mentioned that his forecast was for inflation to move down "sustainably" to 2%.

The week's events represented a departure from just two weeks ago, when Powell had said it was "premature" to say whether the Fed had raised its key rate high enough to fully conquer high inflation. On Wednesday, he suggested that the Fed was almost certainly done with rate increases.

Recent data appeared to have helped shift Powell's thinking. On Wednesday, a measure of wholesale prices came in lower than economists had expected. Some of those figures are used to compile the Fed's preferred inflation gauge, which, as a result, is expected to show much lower inflation numbers next week.

Powell said some Fed officials had even updated their economic projections on Wednesday, not long before they were issued, in light of the lower-than-expected wholesale price report. "The speed at which inflation has fallen has been like an earthquake at the Fed," Duy wrote in a note to clients Wednesday.

Fears

And yet in the meantime, the economy keeps growing, defying widespread fears from a year ago that 2023 would bring a recession, a consequence of the much higher borrowing rates the Fed engineered. A report on retail sales Thursday showed that consumers grew their spending last month, likely encouraged by increased discounting that will also lower inflation. Such trends are supporting the growing belief that the economy will achieve an elusive "soft landing," in which inflation is defeated without an accompanying recession.

"We think the Fed cannot believe its luck: We are back to 'immaculate disinflation,'" Krishna Guha, an economic analyst at investment bank Evercore ISI, wrote in a client note.

Economists credit the Fed's rapid rate hikes for contributing to inflation's decline. In addition, a recovery in global supply chains and a jump in the number of Americans - and recent immigrants - searching for jobs have helped cool the pace of wage growth.

Jon Steinsson, an economics professor at the University of California, Berkeley, said that by aggressively raising their key interest rate in about 15 months - the fastest such pace in four decades - Fed officials kept Americans' inflation expectations largely in check. Expectations can become self-fulfilling: If people expect higher inflation, they often take actions, such as demanding higher wages, that can send prices higher still.

"They played a crucial role," Steinsson said. Still, a continued decline in inflation isn't guaranteed. One wild card is rental prices. Real-time measures of new apartment leases show those costs rising much more slowly than they did a year ago. It takes time for that data to flow into the government's figures. In fact, excluding what the government calls "shelter" costs - rents, the cost of homeownership and hotel prices - inflation rose just 1.4% last month from a year earlier.

But Kathy Bostjancic, an economist at Nationwide, said she worries that a shortage of available homes could raise housing costs in the coming years, potentially keeping inflation elevated.

The Fed's rate hikes, Bostjancic said, could actually prolong the shortage. Today's higher mortgage rates may limit home construction while also discouraging current homeowners from selling. Both trends would keep a lid on the supply of homes and keep prices elevated.

'Treasury is finally realizing it'

US Treasury issues tax credit for aviation fuel

WASHINGTON, Dec 17: The Biden administration released long-awaited guidance on Friday around tax credits for aviation fuel that reduces emissions of greenhouse gases compared with fuel made from crude oil.

Some environmentalists expressed concern that the Treasury Department guidelines could allow credits for fuel made from corn and other crops that they consider poor choices because of the water and other resources needed to grow them.

Midwest lawmakers and companies that produce corn-based ethanol praised the guidelines, although their enthusiasm could be short-lived.

Congress approved the credits as part of President Joe Biden's Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, which included provisions designed to boost cleaner energy. The credits are designed to increase the supply and bring down the current high price of sustainable aviation fuel, or SAF.

Producers will be eligible for tax credits ranging from \$1.25 to \$1.75 per gallon, depending on how much their fuel reduces emissions compared with conventional products such as kerosene-based jet fuel.

On a key issue - and after months of deliberations - the Treasury Department accepted measuring those emission reductions by using a model that was developed by the U.S. Energy Department and which is supported by the ethanol industry.

However, Treasury said the Biden administration plans to update the model by March 1, leaving uncertainty around the eventual tax treat-

ment of ethanol used to power airplanes.

Treasury said the update will include "new modeling of key feedstocks and processes used in aviation fuel," and will consider the impact on emissions from growing crops used to make the fuel.

The Environmental Defense Fund said it would withhold final judgment on the guidelines until March, but that Friday's guidelines could put the U.S. out of step with international standards.

"Our initial assessment is that this would be a blank check for fuels made from sugar cane, soybean and rapeseed - none of which are sustainable or consistent with Congress' intent," said the group's senior vice president, Mark Brownstein.

Ethanol supporters countered that the Energy Department model provides a precise way to measure the benefits of agricultural feedstocks used in sustainable aviation fuel.

The standard "is great, and I'm glad that Treasury is finally realizing it," said Sen. Joni Ernst, a Republican from Iowa, a major corn-producing state. Airlines for America, a trade group for the biggest U.S. carriers, praised the Treasury guidelines, which it said "will help to accelerate the production and availability of SAF and stimulate new investment."

Around 2% to 3% of global greenhouse gas emissions come from aviation, according to estimates, but that share is expected to grow as air travel continues to boom. Widespread use of electric-powered airplanes is generally considered decades away.

'Introduces new tax tools'

Airbnb agrees to \$621 million settlement in Italy tax dispute

ROME, Dec 17, (AP): Short-term rental platform Airbnb has agreed to pay 576 million euros (\$621 million) to settle a years-long dispute over unpaid taxes in Italy but said it won't try to recover the money from its hosts.

In November, Italian prosecutors said Airbnb owed about 779 million euros (\$840 million) in short-term rental taxes it had failed to pay on behalf of Italian landlords who used the platform between 2017 and 2021.

The San Francisco-based company said in a statement on Wednesday that it was working on introducing new tools for hosts to have their taxes withheld automatically and paid to the Italian tax authorities on their behalf.

"The vast majority of hosts on Airbnb in Italy are ordinary families that are using the platform for supplemental income," the company said in its statement. "We hope the agreement with the Italian Revenue Agency and recent legislative changes will provide these families with certainty about the rules around hosting for years to come."

The Court of Justice of the European Union ruled in 2022 that member countries could require short-term rental platforms to collect income taxes.

Airbnb said it welcomed clarity provided by the Italian government in next year's budget law on how platforms should withhold income taxes from non-professional hosts in Italy.

"These improvements will make it easier for historic centers such as Venice and Florence to see who is hosting and how often, and to develop proportionate policy solutions in response. Airbnb is committed to working with Italian authorities to make the rules a success," the company added.

Italy is a key market for Airbnb, with tens of thousands of hosts using the platform to rent their properties.

The far-right government led by Premier Giorgia Meloni has pledged to crack down on tax evasion related to short-term rentals and aims to raise the tax rate for owners from 21% to 26%.

\$273 million dodged

Amazon prevails as EU court ends long-running tax battle

LONDON, Dec 17, (AP): Amazon won't have to pay about 250 million euros (\$273 million) in back taxes after European Union judges ruled in favor of the U.S. e-commerce giant Thursday, dealing a defeat to the 27-nation bloc in its efforts to tackle corporate tax avoidance.

Amazon welcomed the ruling, saying it confirms that the company "followed all applicable laws and received no special treatment."

The ruling by the EU's top court is final, ending the long-running legal battle over tax arrangements between Amazon and Luxembourg's government and marking a further setback for a crackdown by antitrust chief Margrethe Vestager.

The commission said it "will carefully study the judgment and assess its implications."

The case dates back to 2017, when Vestager charged Amazon with unfairly profiting from special low tax conditions since 2003 in tiny Luxembourg, where its European headquarters are based. As a result, almost three-quarters of Amazon's profits in the EU were not taxed, she said.

The EU has taken aim at deals between individual countries and companies used to lure foreign multinationals in search of a place to establish their EU headquarters. The practice led to EU states competing with each other and multinationals playing them off one another.

People & Places

Books

Adoption tale

True Account tests the limits of reality

By Donna Edwards

Hannah Masury, for a brief time, was a pirate. At least, according to the mysterious manuscript that shows up on Professor Marian Beresford's desk, brought by a bright-faced student excited at the possibility of finding the treasure that Hannah left behind.

Novelist and historian Katherine Howe embarks on a dazzlingly fun historical fiction, "A True Account: Hannah Masury's Sojourn Amongst the Pyrates, Written by Herself: A Novel" — aptly named given the way it tests the boundaries between reality and imagination.

When undergrad Kay Lonergan brings Hannah's found manuscript to her professor, Marian's years of cynicism have hardened her. She highly doubts its authenticity and even points out the more doubtful details, verging on breaking the fourth wall. But Kay convinces Marian to approach her famous explorer of a father and persuade him, and his expedition society club, to back their trip in search of long-lost pirate booty.



Howe

And is that jealousy we detect in the professor? The further the story gets, the more it seems that Kay is everything Marian wishes she was: young, exciting, fashionable, carefree, commanding, self-assured. But Hannah's manuscript might be just the thing to spark some excitement into Marian's dull life — and to finally win her father's attention and approval.

History buffs will appreciate the accurate inclusion of figures such as pirate William Fly and Puritan preacher Cotton Mather. Those who aren't so thrilled about history will enjoy Hannah's wry take on the happenings of the early 1700s.

Mirrored in Hannah's restlessness with the status quo is Marian's inability to fit into the mold set for women of the early 1900s. She quickly becomes endeared to the young pirate who disguised herself as a cabin boy and went bravely adventuring with one of the world's most notoriously vicious pirates, Edward Low.

Manuscript

Hannah's manuscript, which is about half of the book, follows only hints of the linguistic style of 18th-century American literature. Mercifully, she's far more readable than Mathers.

"A True Account" is a slow start that picks up quickly into a wild voyage of satisfying twists and an even more satisfying ending. The story ties threads of fact and fiction into an intricate knot that's just as enjoyable to look at as it is to untangle.



Susan Kiyo Ito always knew she was adopted, but uncovering her birth family became a decadeslong process marked by moments of warm connection and icy divides — raw stories compiled into a memoir that's alternately touching and heartbreaking.

Opening on the fateful moment when Ito is about to meet her birth mother for the first time, "I Would Meet You Anywhere" transcends a title and becomes a refrain throughout the book.

Ito's relationship with Yumi is fraught from the beginning, but her birth mother holds the key to the information she needs to find the other half of her DNA. Ito meets Yumi when and where the latter deems convenient — New Jersey, California, a small Midwestern town; in a house, a hotel, a hospital. And Ito would meet her anywhere.

In the process of finding her birth parents and piecing together her origins, Ito explores the theme of family — and what it means to occupy the various roles within it — pondering the symmetry in the first 17 years she spent living with her mom, Kikuko, taking care of her to the last 27 years of her mom's life when their roles reversed.

Meanwhile, Yumi flits in and out of the story, leaving the impression of her taking up more space than her physical presence.

Ito is left wondering about the reproductive choices that have shaped her life, starting with her conception. After all, what choice did Yumi have? Her family had started over with nothing after the United States forced them into internment camps, along with an estimated 120,000 other Japanese Americans and Japanese nationals.

There aren't many things Yumi refuses to talk about, but these topics are frustratingly the most important ones, big question marks that threaten to burn answerless into oblivion.

Unlike Yumi, the author is totally open about her thoughts, feelings and experiences. Ito's prose follows her mood; the default of easy conversational writing becomes stilted when she's upset, flowing when she's hopeful.

Part 2 ends in a burst of poetry disguised as prose, an astounding compilation of similes and squishy adjectives that perfectly capture a feeling that rests right on the periphery of language. It's an absolutely surreal moment of her life described the only way one can truly capture such a confluence of happenstance: with uncanny poetic prose that verges on nonsense, if it weren't so utterly fitting.

Also:

NEW YORK: Six hundred employees at independent bookstores — from Chapter One in Victoria, Minnesota, to The Cloak & Dagger in Princeton, New Jersey — will be receiving \$500 holiday bonuses from author James Patterson.

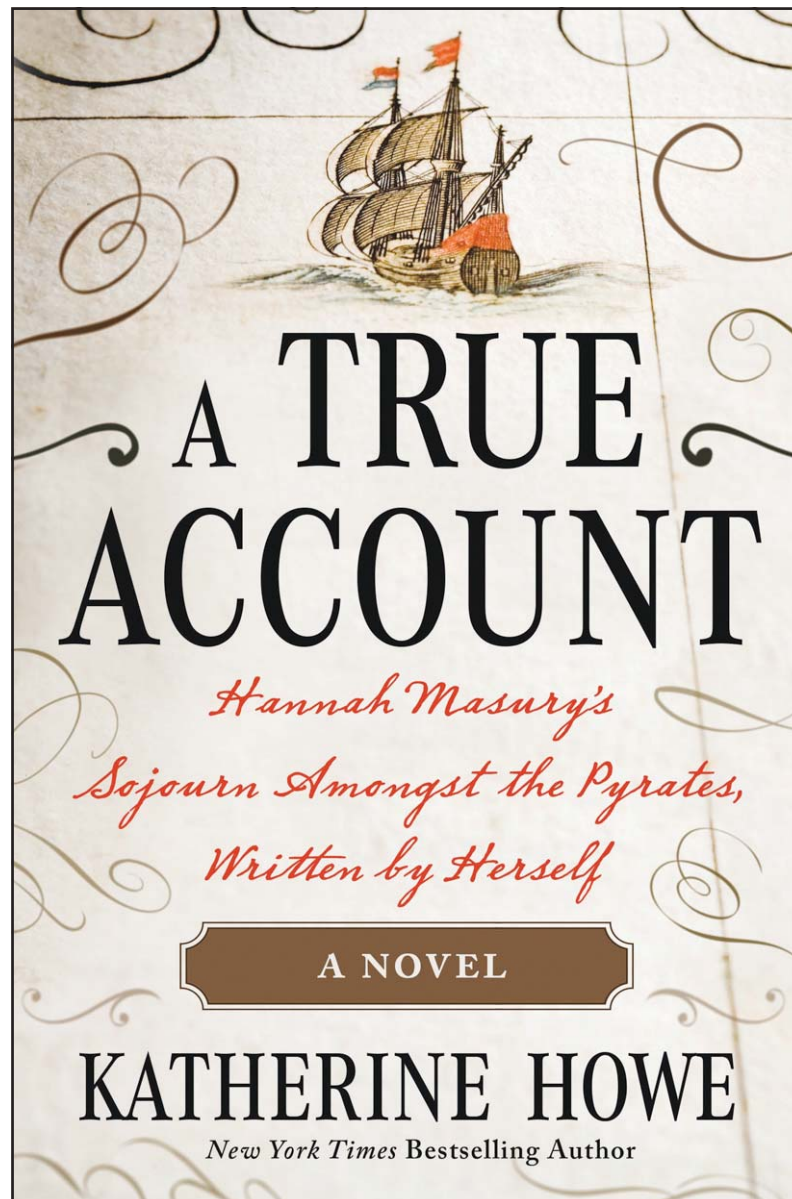
Employees were able to nominate themselves, or be recommended by store owners, managers, peers, community members and others.

"I've said this before, but I can't say it enough — booksellers save lives," Patterson said in a statement Wednesday. "What they do is crucial, especially right now. I'm happy to be able to acknowledge them and their hard work this holiday season."

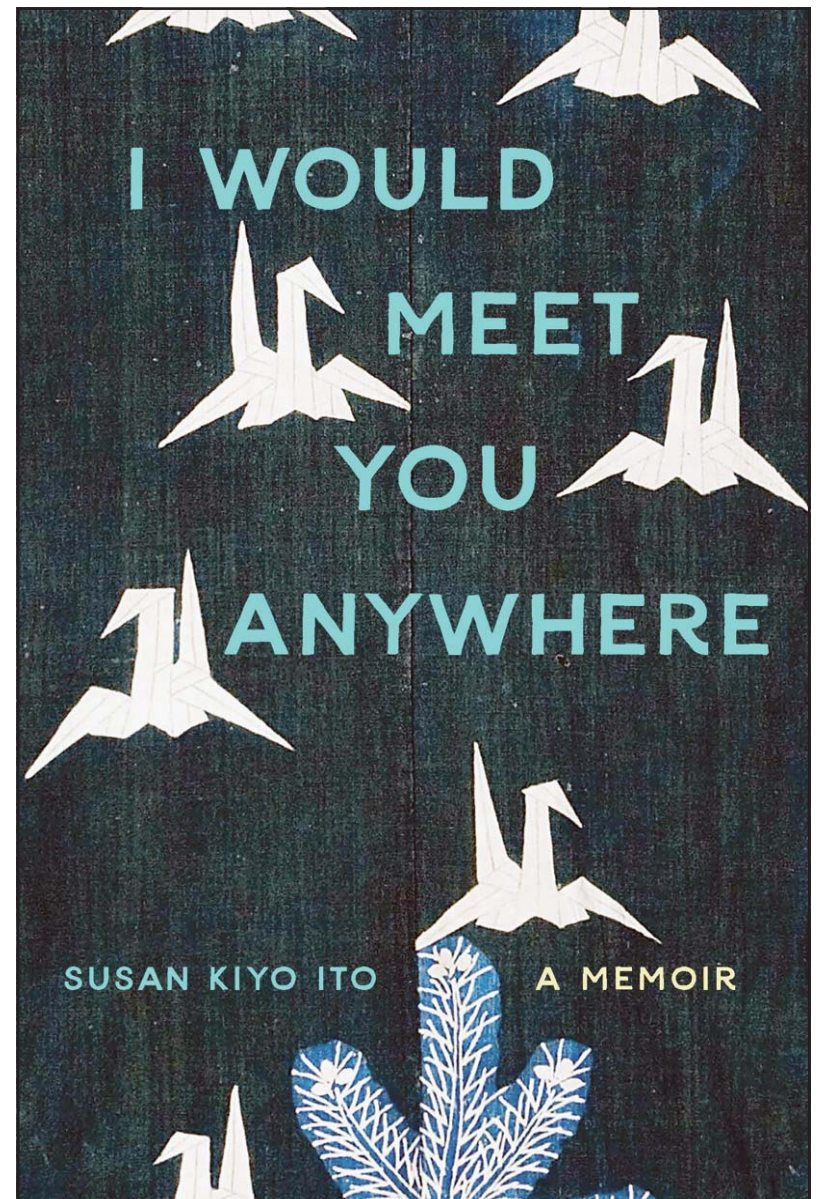
One of the world's most popular and prolific writers, Patterson has given millions of dollars to booksellers, librarians and teachers. In 2015, the same year he began awarding employee bonuses, he was presented an honorary National Book Award for "Outstanding Service to the American Literary Community."

Patterson has even co-authored a tribute book, "The Secret Lives of Booksellers and Librarians," which Little, Brown and Company will release in April.

"We all continue to be awed by, and grateful for, Mr. Patterson's continuing support of independent booksellers," Allison Hill, CEO of the American Booksellers Association, said in a statement.



This cover image released by Henry Holt shows 'A True Account: Hannah Masury's Sojourn Amongst the Pyrates' by Katherine Howe. (AP)



This cover image released by Mad Creek Books shows 'I Would Meet You Anywhere' by Susan Kiyo Ito. (AP)



Actor Jessica Chastain poses backstage before discussing the film 'Memory,' at The 92nd Street Y, Friday, Dec. 15, in New York. (AP)

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Australian drummer Colin Burgess, an original member of the hard rock band AC/DC in the early 1970s, has died, the band confirmed on its social media accounts. He was 77.

"Very sad to hear of the passing of Colin Burgess," says an unsigned post on the band's official Facebook page late Friday. "He was our first drummer and a very respected musician. Happy memories, rock in peace Colin."

No cause of death was given. Burgess was recruited in November 1973 to help form AC/DC with Malcolm Young on rhythm guitar and his brother Angus on lead guitar, lead vocalist Dave Evans and bassist Larry Van Kriedt.

The band fired Burgess in February 1974, accusing him of being drunk on stage, and he later said someone had spiked his drink. He was followed by a succession of drummers and filled in for one for a few months in 1975.

Before AC/DC, Burgess played with the Australian rock group The Masters Apprentices, which was inducted into the Australian Recording Industry Association Hall of Fame in 1998. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Mayim Bialik won't be giving answers as a host of "Jeopardy!" anymore.

"The Big Bang Theory" actor posted news of her departure on Instagram on Friday.

"Sony has informed me that I will no longer be hosting the syndicated version of Jeopardy!" Bialik wrote. "I am incredibly honored to have been nominated for a primetime Emmy for hosting this year and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of the Jeopardy! family."

Former show champion Ken Jennings has been hosting season 40 of the syndicated show by himself.

Sony Pictures Television in a statement noted Bialik was the one who announced her departure.

"We made the decision to have one host for the syndicated show next season to maintain continuity for our viewers, and Ken Jennings will be the sole host for syndicated Jeopardy!" Sony said. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Matthew Perry died from the acute effects of the anesthetic ketamine, according to the results of an autopsy on the 54-year-old "Friends" actor released Friday.

The Los Angeles County Department of Medical Examiner said in the autopsy report that Perry also drowned in "the heated end of his pool," but that it was a secondary factor in his Oct. 28 death, deemed an accident.

Words

Unforgettable terms that shaped 2023

A year in expressions and phrases

NEW YORK, Dec. 17. (AP) — Many sentiments are universal. Many words are not. As 2023 ends, The Associated Press reached out to colleagues around the world for terms that emerged this year and seized or crystallized the popular mood.

Some were newsy, some cultural. A couple were kind of delightful. Whatever the language, the emotions came through. Some might consider AI, or artificial intelligence, as "the" word of 2023, while Merriam-Webster went with "authentic" and Oxford University Press named "rizz," a riff on charisma.

We wanted to share diverse examples of what folks in Germany call a "gefuegtes Wort," or "word with wings."

■ **Password child:** Australia

The Macquarie Dictionary in Australia has named a "word of the month" all year. One was "cozzie livs," slang for cost of living. Another was "murder noodle" for snake, both cute and accurate in a country that's home to the world's most venomous one.

But we're going with "password child," which families anywhere can appreciate. It refers to a child seen as favored over siblings because their name is used in parents' passwords.

■ **Kitawaramba:** Kenya (kiSwahili) It will come back to haunt you

This was uttered by Kenyan pastor Paul Mackenzie, who was accused of leading a starvation doomsday cult that led to the deaths of more than 400 people.

He said it as people confronted him while he waited to be driven to court. The unfamiliar word appeared to be a threat, and it quickly took on a life of its own. Kenyans used it to warn others that something bad may happen to them for their actions.

The word captured the mood with the rising cost of living. With every new economic policy by President William Ruto's administration, some Kenyans say the related term "kime-turamba" — that electing him has come back to haunt them.

■ **Bwa kale:** Haiti (Creole) Peeled wood

This became a death cry against violent gangs in Haiti this year. Civilians chanted the phrase as they pursued suspected criminals. The vigilante movement has killed more than 300 suspected gang members, according to the United Nations.

The term had long been used in Haitian street slang to insinuate male dominance and power. Now it has spread overseas, with a video on social media showing a group of Latino soccer fans — it was not clear from what country — chanting "Bwa kale!" after their team beat an opponent.

Some businesses even use the

phrase to promote their wares. One restaurant featured a "bwa kale" special: a hamburger skewered by a stick with two small chunks of meat on top. It came with a side of nachos and three bottles of Prestige, a local beer.

■ **Spy balloon:** United States

Perhaps no other term this year defined the growing wariness between the world's two largest economies. It began, movie-like, with Americans noticing a mysterious white orb in the sky. Some watched as fighter jets circled and shot down the balloon that for days had wandered across the continental United States.

"I did not anticipate waking up to be in a 'Top Gun' movie today," one witness said.

China rejected allegations of surveillance and insisted that balloon and others were purely for civilian purposes. It never used the term (zhan tan qi qiu), or spy balloon, and instead used (qi xiang qi qiu), meaning "weather balloon."

■ **Kuningi:** South Africa (isiZulu) It's a lot

This word gained popularity among South Africans to express frustration over multiple controversies occurring at the same time.

In 2023, some South Africans wondered if they could handle much more. They faced record electricity outages. The government was under fire for its close relationship with Russia. Soaring incidents of crime included a daring prison escape by a convicted murderer who faked his death.

On days that seemed too much, "kuningi" captured how overwhelmed South Africans could become.

■ **C'est la hess:** France (French) It's a bummer

Young people insist on keeping the French language plastic despite efforts, backed by law, to preserve it from foreign encroachment.

"C'est la hess" speaks to the multiculturalism of France even as some views continued to harden this year against immigration, shown by the steady progression of the far right.

The phrase is among dozens of words and expressions derived from Arabic, which those under 25 in France have made their own. France has the biggest Muslim population in Western Europe and a long history of immigration from former colonies in North Africa.

■ **(zei):** Japan (Japanese) Taxes

In a closely watched event on Tuesday, the top Buddhist monk at the Kiyomizu Temple in Kyoto used a brush to write the kanji character of the year on the temple balcony.

The Japanese public chose "zei" to best represent 2023 amid speculation about tax hikes to fund the country's military buildup.

Under the latest national security strategy, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government is pursuing a five-year plan to double Japan's annual defense spending to about 10 trillion yen (\$69 billion). That would make the country the world's No. 3 military spender after the United States and China.

■ **The nones:** Global: Nonbelievers In many countries, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of people who are nonbelievers or unaffiliated with any organized religion. They have become known as the "nones" — atheists, agnostics, or nothing in particular — and they comprise 30% or more of the adult population in the United States and Canada, as well as numerous European countries.

Japan and Uruguay are among other nations where large numbers of people are secular.

In a recent package of stories, The Associated Press Religion Team took an in-depth look at how this phenomenon is playing out in several places.

■ **(shan dao hou zi):** Taiwan (Mandarin) Mountain roadmonkey

This first emerged as a grumbling way to refer to riders who treated Taiwan's winding mountain roads as a racetrack. But the term became a popular shorthand for young people's economic pressures in August, when a YouTube user dropped a 20-minute film called the "Life of a Mountain Roadmonkey." It touched a nerve, attracting nearly 7 million views.

The "roadmonkey" is a motorcyclist who tries to become an Instagram influencer. He lends his girlfriend money to upgrade her bike, but she cheats on him and leaves him. In debt, he works overtime to rebuild his savings, becoming isolated from friends. Ultimately, he dies in a crash.

His story touched off a discussion about the low wages and long hours for many in Taiwan, where housing and traditional "success" are often out of reach.

■ **Bharat:** India (Sanskrit) India When a dinner invitation sent to guests of the G20 meeting in India featured the word "Bharat," the immediate question for many was whether the country of more than 1.4 billion people would now be called by its ancient Sanskrit name.

Many saw "Bharat" as a political move by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government. The word resonated with Modi's supporters, who argued it would salvage the country from the taint of colonialism. But Muslims and other minority groups felt even more uncomfortable.

The name has now been used at various international forums. But there has been no formal announcement of a name change.

The report says coronary artery disease and buprenorphine, which is used to treat opioid use disorder, also contributed.

The amount of ketamine detected "would be enough to make him lose consciousness and lose his posture and his ability to keep himself above the water," said Dr. Andrew Stolbach, a medical toxicologist with Johns Hopkins Medicine who reviewed the autopsy report at the request of The Associated Press. (AP)



Burgess



Perry

People close to Perry told investigators that he was undergoing ketamine infusion therapy, an experimental treatment used to treat depression and anxiety. But the medical examiner said the levels of ketamine in Perry's body were in the range used for general anesthesia during surgery, and that his last treatment 1 1/2 weeks earlier wouldn't explain those levels. The drug is typically metabolized in a matter of hours.

Bucks hand Pistons 23rd straight loss as Warriors snap 3-game skid

Clippers continue good run

MILWAUKEE, Dec 17, (AP): Damian Lillard scored 33 points, Bobby Portis had a season-high 31 and the Milwaukee Bucks trounced Detroit 146-114 on Saturday to hand the Pistons their 23rd consecutive loss.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 22 points, eight rebounds and six assists while shooting 7 of 9 in his first game since scoring a franchise-record 64 points Wednesday night against Indiana.

Detroit matched the NBA's third-longest skid in on season. The 1995-96 Vancouver Grizzlies, 1997-98 Denver Nuggets and 2011-12 Charlotte Bobcats also lost 23 straight.

The longest losing streak within a single season is shared by the 2010-11 Cleveland Cavaliers and 2013-14 Philadelphia 76ers, who both dropped 26 consecutive games. The 76ers also had a 28-game losing streak that started in the 2014-15 season and carried over to 2015-16.

BASKETBALL

Cade Cunningham scored 25 points for Detroit.

Warriors 124, Nets 120

In San Francisco, Stephen Curry scored 12 straight fourth-quarter points on the way to 37, Klay Thompson added 24 points with back-to-back timely 3-pointers in the closing minutes, and Golden State beat Brooklyn to snap a three-game losing streak.

Cam Thomas scored 41 points on 15-for-24 shooting with five 3-pointers for New Jersey. The Nets lost for the third time in four games during their five-game trip.

Golden State played its first home game and second overall since Draymond Green received an indefinite suspension from the NBA to work on his behavior after he hit Phoenix center Jusuf Nurkic in the face.

Clippers 144, Knicks 122

In Los Angeles, Kawhi Leonard scored 36 points, Paul George added 25 and Los Angeles routed New York for its NBA-best seventh straight victory.

The Clippers used a 42-point second quarter to lead 77-66 at the break.

George was back in the lineup after



Los Angeles Clippers center Ivica Zubac (40) shoots during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the New York Knicks in Los Angeles, Saturday, Dec 16, 2023. (AP)

missing a game because of a sore hip. He overcame a slow start in the first half when he had six points.

New York's Jalen Brunson followed up his career-high, 50-point effort in Phoenix on Friday night with 22 points. Julius Randle also had 22.

Kings 125, Jazz 104

In Sacramento, Keegan Murray made 12 3-pointers, two shy of the NBA record, and scored a career-high 47 points to lead Sacramento past Utah.

Murray scored a franchise-record 26 points in the third quarter and had Klay Thompson's NBA record of 14 3-pointers in his sights after making 12 of his first 13 attempts. But the second-year forward missed his final two attempts from behind the arc while becoming the seventh different player to make 12 or more 3s in a game.

Domantas Sabonis added 20 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists. The Kings shot 22 of 45 from the 3-point line, the third time this season Sacramento made at least 20.

Colin Sexton scored 28 points for Utah.

Thunder 118, Nuggets 117

In Denver, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander

hit a turnaround jumper with a second left and Oklahoma City rallied to beat Denver.

Jalen Williams scored 25 points and rookie Chet Holmgren had 17 points, 11 rebounds and a career-best nine blocks for the Thunder. His previous high in blocks was seven, which came against Cleveland in his second NBA game.

Mavericks 131, Trail Blazers 120

In Portland, Luka Doncic had a triple-double with 40 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists to help Dallas beat Portland.

Doncic scored 30 points in the first half and wrapped up the triple-double in the third quarter. He has five triple-doubles this season and 61 in his career.

Heat 118, Bulls 116

In Miami, Jimmy Butler hit a step-back jumper as time expired to lift Miami past Chicago.

Butler came up the left side of the floor, then went to the right, headed toward the lane and coolly hit the step-back over Coby White.

76ers 135, Hornets 82

In Charlotte, Joel Embiid had 42 points and 15 rebounds and Philadel-

phia handed injury-depleted Charlotte its worst loss in franchise history.

Tyrese Maxey added 21 points for the 76ers, who shot out quickly when Embiid outscored the Hornets by himself in the first quarter and built a 29-point halftime lead.

Timberwolves 127, Pacers 109

In Minneapolis, Karl-Anthony Towns scored a season-high 40 points and grabbed 12 rebounds, Anthony Edwards had 37 points and Minnesota routed Indiana.

Naz Reid added 17 points for Minnesota. The Timberwolves are 11-1 at home and tied with Boston for the NBA's best record at 19-5.

Cavaliers 127, Hawks 119

In Cleveland, Jarrett Allen had 25 points and 14 rebounds, Donovan Mitchell added 22 points and a career-high 13 assists and Cleveland beat Atlanta.

The Cavaliers built a 23-point lead in the first half of their first game since announcing that starting power forward Evan Mobley and former All-Star point guard Darius Garland will likely be out until February. Cleveland snapped a three-game losing streak.

Edwards 'retains' welterweight belt

LAS VEGAS, Dec 17, (AP): Leon Edwards successfully defended his welterweight belt Saturday night, unanimously outpointing Colby Covington at UFC 296.

In a bout that hardly lived up to its billing, Edwards (22-3) showed poise and patience as he picked his spots to outclass Covington (17-4), beating the former interim champion at his own game.

Rather than using his strengths on his feet as a striker, Edwards chose to grapple and counter whenever Covington took shots for a takedown.

After entering the arena draped in an American flag, Covington made a pit stop to share a quick word with former President Donald Trump before stepping into the octagon.

Trump sat ringside, with UFC CEO Dana White, musician Kid Rock and UFC chief business officer Hunter Campbell.

BOXING

In the co-main event, Alexandre Pantoja (27-5) successfully defended his flyweight belt in his first title defense, winning a unanimous decision over Brandon Royval (15-7).

Pantoja used a methodical approach by dominating with his agility and grappling ability to wear down Royval, the second-ranked flyweight in the world.

It was the second time Pantoja beat Royval, the first coming by way of a second-round submission with a rear naked choke during a UFC Fight Night event on Feb. 6, 2021.

Shavkat Rakhmonov (18-0-0) kept his unblemished record intact when he made Stephen Thompson (17-7-1) submit with a rear naked choke at 4:56 of the second round in their welterweight battle.

Paddy Pimblett (21-3) used a dominating first round to set the tone against crowd favorite Tony Ferguson (25-10). Pimblett was quicker, more accurate and used his grappling skills to earn a unanimous decision in the lightweight bout.

Josh Emmett (19-4) opened the main card with an overhead right to the top-left side of Bryce Mitchell's head in their featherweight match. Slipping a right jab, Emmett countered with a devastating punch that knocked Mitchell (16-2) out cold at 1:57 of the first round of the scheduled three-round 145-pound bout.

Odermatt edges Zubcic

Brignone dominates to win World Cup super-G

VAL D'ISERE, France, Dec 17, (AP): Federica Brignone dominated to win a World Cup super-G on Sunday and trim the gap in the overall standings to Mikaela Shiffrin, who skied out at Val d'Isere.

Brignone beat Kaisa Vickhoff Lie by almost half a second, finishing 0.44 ahead of the Norwegian skier, who was a surprise second to prevent an Italian one-two in the French Alps.

The 33-year-old Brignone, who won a pair of giant slaloms at Tremblant, Quebec earlier this month, yelled in joy and put her head in her hands when she saw her time after crossing the line.

It was Lie's fourth podium and her first in super-G since another second place in Garmisch, Germany almost three years ago.

SKIING

Brignone's Italian teammate Sofia Goggia was third after impressively managing to atone for an early mistake. Goggia, who is shaking off a cold, won the only other super-G so far this season earlier this month.

Shiffrin failed to finish after missing a turning gate on a blind section that troubled several athletes on Sunday. Olympic champion Lara Gut-Behrami also skied out.

Shiffrin, who skipped Saturday's downhill on the Saslong course, still leads the overall World Cup standings where she is bidding for a record-tying sixth title.

However, the American skier saw her lead cut to 63 points ahead of 2020 champion Brignone, who is enjoying her best start to a season.

Meanwhile, Marco Odermatt won another World Cup giant slalom Sunday at Alta Badia but by a more slender margin than the two-time defending overall World Cup champion is used to.

Odermatt heaved a sigh of relief as the Swiss star crossed the line with a combined time just 0.19 seconds faster than Filip Zubcic, who could only shake his head and smile wryly.

Zubcic had seemed set for a first victory in nearly three years and yelled in joy after a perfect run down the Gran Risa saw the Croatian finish more than two seconds ahead of Zan Kranjec.



The winner Italy's Federica Brignone celebrates after an alpine ski, women's World Cup Super G race, in Val d'Isere, France, Sunday, Dec 17, 2023. (AP)

But Odermatt is almost unbeatable in his favored discipline.

The Olympic, world and World Cup champion in giant slalom had led after the first run and also laid down a strong second one to claim his 14th victory in the past 19 World Cup races in the event.

The 26-year-old Odermatt, who had also won in Alta Badia in each of the past two years, won the only other giant slalom so far this season last week by almost one full second.

No one apart from Zubcic could even get close on Sunday, with Kranjec 2.26 seconds behind.

"When I came to the finish area I saw the gap, it was like two seconds in front of everybody, but I knew that Marco is on the start so I wasn't celebrating yet because you know this guy he's absolutely ... crazy," Zubcic said.

"I want to say congratulations to him because in 99.9% with this run you win but today was not enough obviously."

There is another giant slalom in Alta Badia on Monday in the last of a series of five races in five days.

The season-opening giant slalom at Soelden, Austria was abandoned.

O'Neal's 19 lead Jackson State past Howard 81-74 at HBCU Challenge

LAS VEGAS, Dec 17, (AP): Jordan O'Neal's 19 points helped Jackson State defeat Howard 81-74 Saturday night at the HBCU Challenge.

O'Neal shot 9 of 12 from the floor for the Tigers (3-7). Chase Adams scored 15 points and added seven assists and three steals. Jayme Mitchell shot 4 for 5 from beyond the arc and 3 of 4 from the free-throw line to finish with 15 points.

The Bison (4-7) were led in scoring by Marcus Dockery, who finished with 20 points. Bryce Harris added 15 points and two steals for Howard. Isaiah Warfield also had 12 points, five assists and two steals.

Tennessee 79, N.C. State 70

In San Antonio, Josiah-Jordan James had 23 points, Zakai Zeigler added 20 and No. 12 Tennessee held off N.C. State 79-70 in the Hall of Fame Series on Saturday night.

"We know that when we play teams like this, it's going to be a physical game," Tennessee coach Rick Barnes said. "These guys are used to it. The neat part for me at the end I thought their composure, their togetherness on the bench was terrific. They knew what they had to do. I had to say very little during the timeout."

The Volunteers (8-3) held the Wolfpack (7-3) to 10 points in the final seven minutes to secure the victory, including a 3-pointer with 24.1 seconds remaining.

"That's what we hang our hats on," James said. "We knew that in crunch time, that's what we had to be able to rely on. I was proud of how we executed at the end."

Jahmai Mashack added 11 points for Tennessee, which has won four straight.

D.J. Horne had 16 points for N.C. State. D.J. Burns Jr. added 15 and Jayden Taylor had 11.

It was a frenetic and physical contest, with the teams combining for 22 turnovers and 36 personal fouls.

"It was one of those games that kind of felt like a late (or) middle of January, early February ACC game," Wolfpack coach Kevin Keatts said. "It was a good thing."

Tennessee has not lost since dropping three straight, including losses against then-No. 1 Kansas and No. 2 Purdue in the Maui Invitational during Thanksgiving week.

N.C. State opened 3 for 4 on 3-pointers in taking a 15-11 lead. The Wolfpack were 2 for 7 on 3s the remainder of the first half.

Volunteers guard Santiago Vescovi opened the second half with his own 7-2 run to put Tennessee up 41-33. After its lead was cut to 56-55, Vescovi cut to the rim for a layup with 8:25 remaining.

Vescovi finished with nine points on 3-for-6 shooting.

"We fought," Keatts said. "It was a good game. If you're sitting there watching the game, you're saying, 'Man what a great game that is.' It's a lot to build on. We're never going to take a moral victory in this program, but boy we saw some good things."

BASKETBALL

N.C. State junior Kam Woods debuted after sitting out the start of the season when the NCAA denied his initial waiver request. Woods, who played at North Carolina AT&T last season, finished with nine points.

Tennessee: The Volunteers were tested after winning their last three games by an average of 15.3 points. Tennessee was able to force 11 turnovers, which led to 16 points.

N.C. State: The Wolfpack were 8 for 18 on 3-pointers after a fast start. N.C. State entered the game shooting 34 percent from 3-pointers but shot 44 percent against Tennessee.

Grand Canyon 91, Portland -63

In Phoenix, Gabe McGlothan had 26 points in Grand Canyon's 91-63 win over Portland on Saturday night at the Jerry Colangelo Classic.

McGlothan added 11 rebounds for the Antelopes (9-1). Tyon Grant-Foster scored 20 points while shooting 8 for 15 (2 for 7 from 3-point range) and 2 of 5 from the free-throw line, and added five assists and three steals. Rayshon Harrison shot 4 for 8, including 2 for 5 from beyond the arc to finish with 11 points, while adding six rebounds and five assists. The Antelopes picked up their sixth straight victory.

The Pilots (6-6) were led in scoring by Tyler Robertson, who finished with 17 points. Tyler Harris added 13 points and nine rebounds for Portland. Vukas Masic also had 12 points.



Arizona State guard Frankie Collins (1) leaps to shoot as TCU forward Emanuel Miller (2) defends during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game in Fort Worth, Texas. (AP)

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Australia's Nathan Lyon gestures as he leaves the field at the end of play on the fourth day of the first cricket test between Australia and Pakistan in Perth, Australia. (AP)

Sports

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Singh picks up his maiden five-wicket haul

India rout South Africa in first ODI with dominant all-round display

JOHANNESBURG, Dec 17, (AP): Left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh picked up his maiden five-wicket haul as India beat South Africa by eight wickets in the first ODI on Sunday.

Singh recorded 5-37 in 10 overs, and shared nine wickets with Avesh Khan, who took 4-27 in eight overs, as the Proteas were bowled out for a paltry 116 in 27.3 overs.

In replay, India coasted to 117-2 in 16.4 overs with debutant opener Sai Sudharsan scoring an unbeaten maiden half-century.

The victory gives India a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. Gqeberha will host the second ODI on Tuesday, while the third will be played in Paarl on Thursday.

Opting to bat first, South Africa's batting line-up duly collapsed. Singh bowled Reeza Hendricks for an eight-ball duck, and then trapped Rassie

van der Dussen lbw for a golden duck.

From 3-2 in the second over, opener Tony de Zorzi resisted and attacked the bowling. He scored 28 off 22 balls, with two fours and two sixes, before a mishit pull was caught behind.

It was one-way traffic after that, with Singh and Khan finding a lot of movement.

CRICKET

Skipper Aiden Markram played on off Avesh Khan for 12 runs. Heinrich Klaasen was out similarly off Singh for six.

Khan ran through the middle order, with David Miller caught behind for two. He then trapped Wiaan Mulder lbw for a golden duck.

There was no escape for South Africa as it went from 42-2 to 58-7 in the space of 32 deliveries.

Both pacers searched for their fifth wickets, but only Singh managed to get to the landmark. He picked up Andile Phehlukwayo lbw, after he top scored with 33 off 49 balls.

His runs allowed South Africa to cross the 100-run mark and avoid complete embarrassment.

Wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav bowled Nandre Burger for seven, thus denying Khan a chance at his milestone.

In reply, India started poorly as Mulder trapped Rituraj Gaikwad lbw for five runs.

While there was movement on offer, it wasn't as exaggerated as it had been in the first innings and allowed the Indian batters to settle down.

Shreyas Iyer, playing his first game on tour, counter-attacked and scored 52 off 45 balls. He hit six fours and a six.

In doing so, he put on 88 off 73 balls with Sudharsan holding anchor at one end. He hit nine fours and reached his maiden half-century off 41 balls.

Sudharsan became the fourth Indian opener - and the 17th batter overall - to score 50-plus on his ODI debut.

It was India's fourth biggest win in terms of balls remaining with 200.

South Africa had won the toss and opted to bat, with its primary pacers rested. Markram is again in charge of South Africa with Temba Bavuma only returning for the two-test series beginning on Dec. 26.

Lokesh Rahul is leading India in the absence of skipper Rohit Sharma. Star India batter Virat Kohli is also unavailable for this series.



India's Shreyas Iyer plays a shot during the first One Day International cricket match between South Africa and India, at the Wanderers in Johannesburg, South Africa. (AP)

Australia crush Pakistan by 360 runs in first Test 'inside' 4 days

Lyon achieves 500-wicket landmark

PERTH, Australia, Dec 17, (AP): Australia skittled Pakistan on a treacherous Perth pitch to record a thumping 360-run victory in the first Test inside four days with Nathan Lyon achieving the elusive landmark of 500 Test wickets on Sunday.

Pakistan was blown away for 89 all out in 30.2 overs in the final session on Day 4 for its 15th consecutive Test defeat in Australia after the home team set up a daunting 450-run target when it declared its second innings at 233-5 around half an hour after lunch.

Pakistan's top-order batters crumbled against the relentless pace of Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and captain Pat Cummins on a wicket that had variable bounce with plenty of batters taking body blows.

Hazlewood and Starc snared six wickets between them, while Cummins nicely setup former Pakistan captain Babar Azam (14) before finding the outside edge of his bat as the visitors had no answer to Australia's nippy fast bowling.

CRICKET

Lyon reached the 500-wicket landmark when he successfully went for a leg before wicket referral against Faheem Ashraf and was embraced by his teammates. The off-spinner raised the ball to the applause of the Perth crowd as he became the third Australian bowler after the late Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath to join the exclusive club of eight players.

Lyon said the match victory doubled his delight at reaching the landmark.

Lyon then clean bowled Aamer Jamal in the same over off a delivery that bounced no higher than ankle height to finish with 2-18 in his memorable test match.

Pakistan slumped to 17-3 inside the first seven overs of its daunting run-chase. Opener Abdullah Shafique fell caught behind to a brilliant Starc delivery in the first over as the leftarm fast bowler got his 200th test wicket at home.

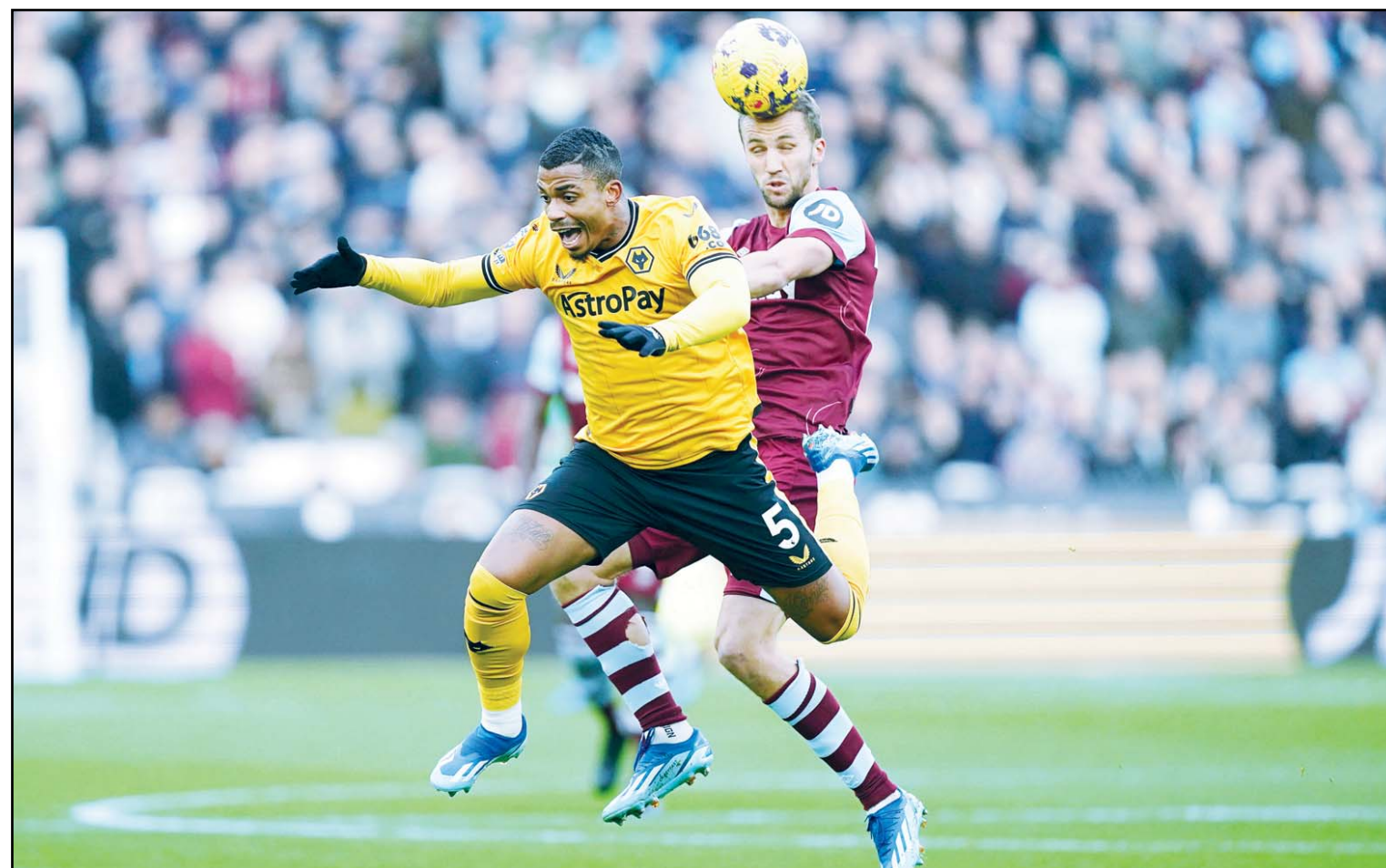
Captain Shan Masood could make only 2 before he played a loose drive off Hazlewood and Imam-ul-Haq was pinned leg before wicket by Starc with another gem of a delivery that came sharply into the left-hander.

Hazlewood quickly folded Pakistan's fragile batting by having top-scorer Saud Shakeel (24) leg before wicket and dismissing No. 11 batter Khurram Shahzad off successive deliveries.

Earlier, Usman Khawaja fell short of his century before he holed out for 90 against out of sorts Shaheen Shah Afridi as Australia looked for quick runs after lunch. Afridi had a disappointing start to the series as Pakistan's premier fast bowler returned with match figures of 2-176 off his 45.2 overs.

Left-handed Khawaja and Mitchell Marsh, who remained unbeaten on 63, shared a run-a-ball 126 with Marsh scoring his second successive half century at his home ground.

Resuming Sunday at 84-2, Australia lost Steven Smith and Travis Head in the first hour of the day as Pakistan's bowlers took advantage of the tricky



Wolverhampton Wanderers' Mario Lemina (left), and West Ham United's Tomas Soucek battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between West Ham United and Wolverhampton Wanderers at the London Stadium, London. (AP)

Sevilla fire coach Diego Alonso

Barcelona and Atletico stumble in title race

BARCELONA, Spain, Dec 17, (AP): Barcelona and Atletico Madrid stumbled in the Spanish league title race, while Sevilla said enough is enough of coach Diego Alonso.

Barcelona's 1-1 draw at Valencia makes it three straight games across all competitions without a win as Xavi Hernandez's team struggles to find the form that won it the domestic title last season.

Atletico fared even worse and was fortunate to lose only 2-0 at an Athletic Bilbao which closed on the top-four spots with its convincing victory.

Barcelona's stalemate at Mestalla Stadium means surprise leader Girona is six points ahead of third-placed Barcelona before it hosts Alaves on Monday. Atletico, despite its loss, is also just one point behind Barcelona with an extra game to play.

João Félix put Barcelona ahead in the 55th minute. He had to only tap in a cross by Raphinha after Frenkie de Jong played the Brazil forward clear with a precise lobbed pass with the tip of his boot.

Barcelona wasted chances to get a second goal before midfielder Hugo Guillamon pulled Valencia level in the 70th by scoring from the edge of the box after the visitors failed to clear a cross.

Coach Xavi Hernandez called the game "a final" after losing to Girona last weekend and then falling at Antwerp midweek in the Champions League - despite already qualifying for the knockout rounds.

"Any result other than taking the three points here is a blow for us," Barcelona midfielder Pedri González said. "We played better than we did against Girona but not good enough. It is clear that we are not in a good moment. That happens over the course of a season but we need to pull out of this now."

Spain winger Nico Williams starred in Bilbao's win over Atletico by scoring his team's second goal after he hit the post and earned a penalty that was

missed by Oihan Sancet.

After Gorka Guruzeta's 51st-minute opener at San Mames Stadium, Williams appeared to be well marked by defenders Mario Hermoso and Axel Witsel when he executed a quick cut back and lashed the ball in from a tight angle in the 64th.

"This is our fortress," Nico Williams said about San Mames, where Bilbao has only one loss in nine games. "Just go forward game by game and hope we

can reach European competitions (next season)."

Jon Rahm, whose signing for the Saudi-funded LIV tour stunned the golf world, took an honorary kickoff wearing a red-and-white scarf for the home side. Rahm's birthplace is near Bilbao in the northern Basque Country region.

Sevilla fired Alonso after the team hit a new low with a 3-0 loss at home to Getafe.

Since Alonso arrived in October, Sevilla did not win in eight league games and lost all four of its Champions League matches, finishing bottom of its group. Its only two wins since Alonso replaced José Mendilibar, who led Sevilla to the Europa League title last season, have come against lower-division rivals in the Copa del Rey.

SOCCER

Sevilla is in 16th place but level on points with Celta Vigo and Cadiz, which is in the drop zone in 18th.

Getafe striker Borja Mayoral converted a penalty for his 10th goal of the season, second most to Jude Bellingham's 12 for Real Madrid.

Rafa Benítez earned some relief after his Celta won its first home game by edging Granada 1-0 to exit the relegation zone.

The match was the first for Celta since Marián Mouriño became the first woman to preside over the club, and the only woman to lead a top-flight club in Spain.

Milan's Simic scores on debut

Wasteful Arsenal finally break down Brighton to earn 2-0 win

LONDON, Dec 17, (AP): Arsenal finally wore down Brighton's resistance despite a multitude of wasted chances to secure a 2-0 win on Sunday.

Kai Havertz only made the game safe in the 87th by finishing off a quick counterattack to double Arsenal's lead

with a rare clinical finish on an afternoon when the hosts were guilty of widespread profligacy.

Havertz's goal came from Arsenal's 25th shot of the game - compared to just two for Brighton - and eighth on target although all but one of goal-keeper Bart Verbruggen's previous saves had been fairly routine.

Arsenal had 15 shots to zero for Brighton in the first half alone but the breakthrough didn't come until the 53rd. Brighton defender Jan Paul van Hecke attempted to head clear a corner from Saka but the ball only found Gabriel Jesus, who was on hand to head it back into an empty net.

That goal forced Brighton to become more ambitious and Jack Hinshelwood finally forced a save from David Raya in the 64th, but it was a weak header straight at the Arsenal goalkeeper.

SOCCER

Arsenal kept coming close at the other end and Lewis Dunk had to clear off the line after another corner in the 68th, while Martin Odegaard drew the only quality save from Verbruggen when he drove into the area and unleashed a fierce shot that needed a one-handed stop.

Havertz headed high from six yards out after the ensuing corner, while Brighton came closest to an equalizer in the 83rd when Pascal Gross met a cross from Kaoru Mitoma but sent his shot just wide of the near post.

Just as it looked like Arsenal might be made to pay for all those misses, substitute Eddie Nketiah released Havertz on a counter and the German forward beat Verbruggen with a left-foot shot inside the far post.

The win lifts Arsenal two points ahead of Liverpool ahead of its match against Manchester United later Sunday. It also puts the Gunners five points ahead of Manchester City after the defending champion was held to a 2-2 draw by Crystal Palace on Saturday. Aston Villa is one point behind Arsenal.

A first senior goal by 17-year-old midfielder Lewis Miley set Newcastle on its way to a 3-0 win over 10-man Fulham and a seventh successive victory.

Miley, thrust into the action as a first-half substitute after Fabian Schar and Joelinton joined Newcastle's lengthy injury list, fired the Magpies to a 57th-minute lead before Miguel Almiron and Dan Burn added more goals.

Fulham striker Raul Jimenez was sent off in the 22nd for jumping into Sean Longstaff and knocking the midfielder to the ground with his backside. The Mexico international was initially given a yellow card. It was upgraded to red after a video review.

The 18-year-old center back **Jan-Carlo Simic** had a debut to remember for AC Milan, scoring 17 minutes after he came on for an injured teammate in a 3-0 win over neighboring Monza at the San Siro on Sunday.

Simic was mobbed by his teammates after redirecting in a cross from **Rafael Leão** late in the first half, having been unexpectedly thrust into action following an injury to **Tommaso Pobega**.

Tijani Reijnders and **Noah Okafor** also scored for third-place Milan, which moved within five points of second-place **Juventus**, which was held to a 1-1 draw at **Genoa**.

In a solid performance for the Rossoneri after getting eliminated from the Champions League, United States international Christian Pulisic also rattled the crossbar with a long-range shot and goalkeeper **Mike Maignan** made a difficult save on a shot from Monza standout Andrea Colpani.

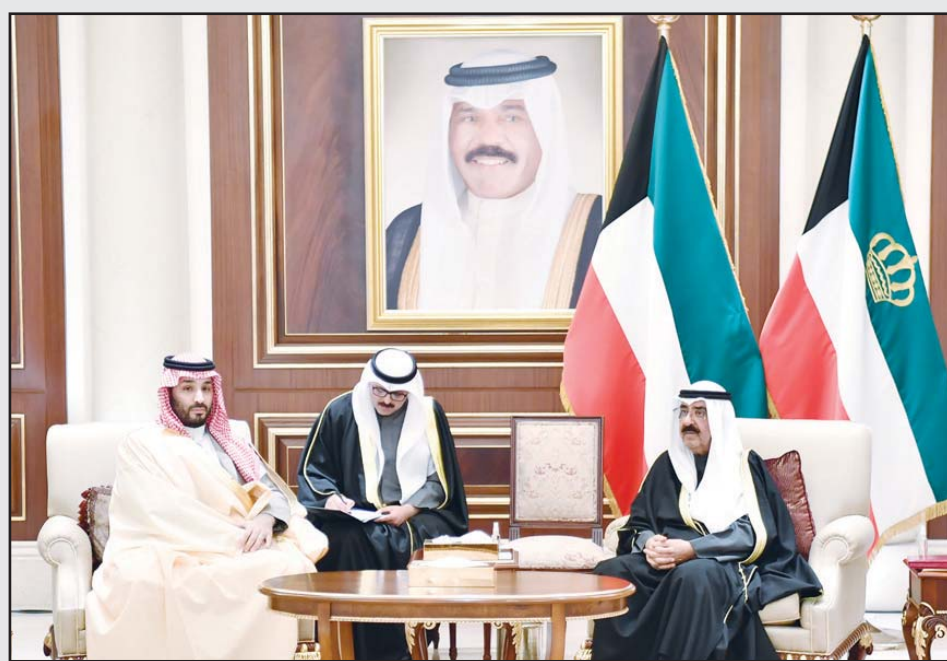
Amir welcomes heads of state for condolences



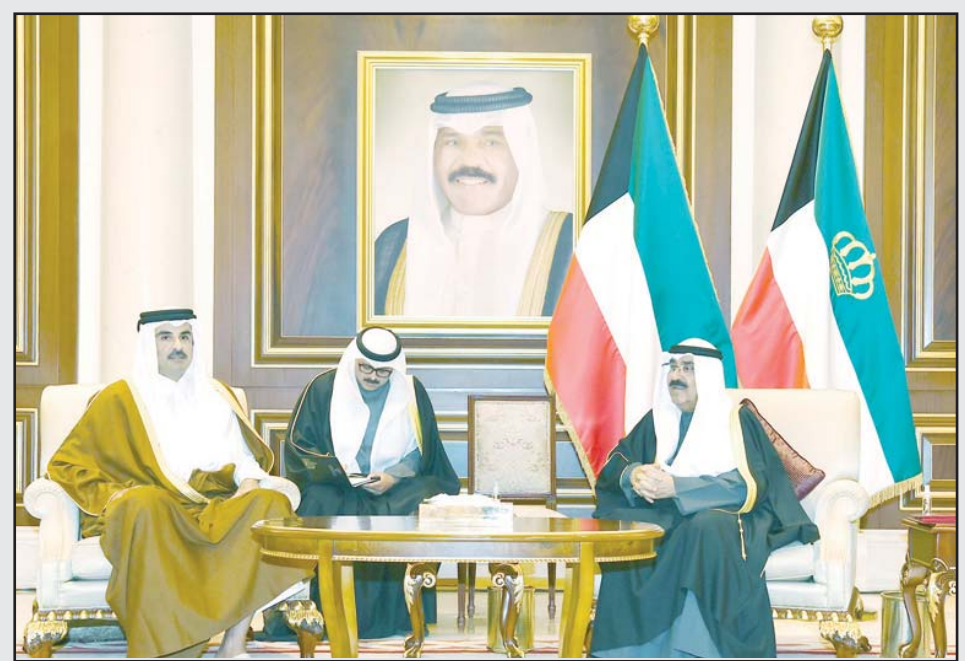
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal takes the lead in the funeral procession, guiding mourners as they solemnly escort His Highness Sheikh Nawaf to his eternal resting place.

Amiri Diwan photos

Unity in grief ... global statesmen pay homage



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal receives Saudi Crown Prince.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal receives Amir of Qatar.

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 17, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received, Sunday, at the Amiri Airport Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud and the accompanying delegation who arrived in Kuwait to offer condolences over the passing away of the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Prince Mohammad bin Salman offered condolences to His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and members of Al-Sabah family.

Amiri Diwan Affairs Minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah received the Saudi Crown Prince and the accompanying delegation at the airport's grounds.

Qatar

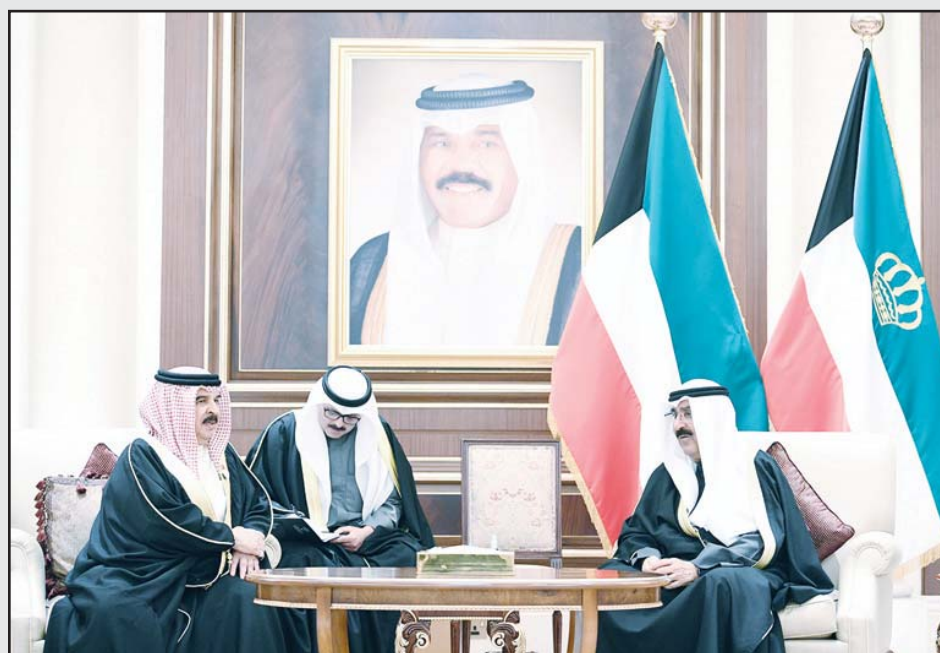
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at the Amiri Airport, Sunday, the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani and the accompanying delegation who arrived in Kuwait to offer condolences over the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Sheikh Tamim also offered condolences to His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and the Al-Sabah family.

Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah received the Qatari Amir and the high-level delegation offering condolences.

Bahrain

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at the Amiri Airport,



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal receives Bahrain King.

Sunday, King of Bahrain Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa and the accompanying delegation who arrived to offer condolences over the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

King Hamad offered condolences to His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and members of Al-Sabah family.

Amiri Diwan Affairs Minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah received King Hamad and the accompanying delegation at the airport's ground.

Jordan

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at the Amiri Airport on Sunday King of Jordan Abdullah II, Crown Prince Hussein bin Abdullah, and the accompanying delegation who arrived in Kuwait to offer condolences over the death of late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

King Abdullah II offered condolences to His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and members of Al-Sabah family.

Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and members of Al-Sabah family. Amiri Diwan Affairs Minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah received King Abdullah II and the accompanying delegation at the airport's ground.

Iraq

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday at the Amiri Airport Iraq's Prime Minister Mohammad Al-Sudani and the accompanying delegation who arrived in Kuwait to offer condolences over the death of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Prime Minister Al-Sudani also offered condolences to His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and members of Al-Sabah family.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Al-Sudani and the Iraqi delegation on the airport's ground.

Iran

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received, Sunday, at the Amiri Airport Iran's Foreign Minister and Iranian President representative Hussein Amir-Abdollahian and the accompanying delegation who are in Kuwait to offer condolences over the passing away of late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

During his stay, the Iranian Foreign Minister offered condolences to His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and members of Al-Sabah family.

Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received the Iranian official and the accompanying delegation at the airport's ground.