



Amir receives PM-designate, Interior Minister

Kuwait unveils new measures to combat 'Caller ID spoofing'

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Director of the Information Security and Emergency Response Department at the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority, Eng. Layali Abdullah Al Mansouri, has announced the implementation of a comprehensive...

Opinion

Sheikh Mohammad, hire the strong and trustworthy

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

FOR three decades, Kuwaitis have been trying to rejoice about any change in the Council of Ministers, and hoping that it will be the beginning of their way out of the impasse.

They hence rejoiced when the Amiri order was issued to assign Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem to form the Council of Ministers. However, when reports about the possibility of certain individuals entering the ministry were leaked, those hopes began to fade.

Kuwait has endured governmental experiments, most of which, if not all, were failures. They cast their shadow over the country's situation, while the improvised solutions generated some phenomena that people were not accustomed to.

Retrospection at various levels has also become a general feature. This undoubtedly has had a negative impact on the economy, society, culture and the arts. While the world is moving towards openness, our country is closing itself.

It is as if what is coming is worse than what we have already gone through. On the other hand, other Gulf countries have taken great steps in opening their doors based on controls that Kuwaitis cannot even dream of.

A few days ago, the Saudi government issued five new categories of residency to attract foreign investments, and for the localization of local capital, as well as to encourage economic movement, not to mention the facilities in the Emirates, Qatar, the Sultanate of Oman, and the Kingdom of Bahrain. All of this encouraged the diversification of sources of income for those countries.

The rate of revenues generated from the industrial sector in Bahrain was 18 percent, and in the UAE, it was 21 percent, but in Kuwait it constituted only about 6.6 percent of the gross domestic product.

Therefore, the questions we ask in this regard are - What is the strategy that the state has used, not from the time of liberation but from the time of independence until today, to benefit from the wealth to enhance productive sectors. Did successive governments establish a welfare state? Will this matter be part of the program of the new Council of Ministers?

There is no doubt that the lack of progress in Kuwait was not limited to industry only, but also extended to health and education, and infrastructure, which is not befitting a country with such great wealth.

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Kuwait banks tighten purse strings for expat borrowers

Credit shifts

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: A majority of the banks in Kuwait have started the year 2024 with a stricter lending policy towards expatriates compared to 2023. This indicates that the focus on credit is primarily directed towards Kuwaiti customers and a selective segment of non-citizens, particularly elite and specialists, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to banking sources, several banks have tightened their credit criteria for expatriates, narrowing down the types of jobs eligible for financing. Some banks have excluded low-income individuals and clients with salaries below 600 dinars per month, especially those working for non-listed companies.

The preferred list for lending to expatriates has become more concise, focusing on sectors such as education and healthcare, including doctors, nurses, and technicians, as well as individuals in elite positions whose work requires specialized skills. Stable government jobs with little competition from Kuwaitis in the medium term, managers in well-known companies, and professionals in stable positions are also included.

Banks are targeting customers with a high-quality credit record and appropriate end-of-service benefits. The consumer loan limit for non-Kuwaitis is set at 25,000 dinars for those earning salaries of approximately 1,250 dinars with service periods exceeding 10 continuous years.

Banks are cautious about lending to newly appointed expatriates and individuals over 55 years old with salaries below a thousand dinars and non-university educational certificates. Lending to this segment is selective and with low-risk credit limits.

During the past year, there were no new loans for expatriates in the government sector in most banks, except for some specialized banks. The decline in the appointment of non-Kuwaitis in government jobs in 2023 contributed to this situation.

The slow credit growth for non-Kuwaiti individuals' loans segment is expected to continue at least until the end of the first quarter of this year. Some banks are more open to financing expatriates on favorable terms compared to others, especially those unable to compete in the Kuwaiti retail sector.

These banks are expanding lending to expatriates to seek credit growth in their portfolios.

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File photo shows decreased horizontal visibility due to fog.

Kuwait set for foggy spell, Meteorological chief raises caution

Anticipating a reduction in horizontal visibility, Director of the Meteorological Department, Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi, has indicated the potential formation of fog in specific areas starting Sunday evening.

In a press statement, Al-Qarawi reported

a significant drop in visibility at dawn today, with some areas experiencing only 100 meters of visibility due to fog. He mentioned that visibility gradually improved due to moderate southeasterly winds and scattered rain.

Al-Qarawi expects the resurgence of fog in some areas from this evening until Monday morning. This is expected as the winds shift from southeasterly to northwesterly, leading to intermittent decreases in horizontal visibility at times. (KUNA)

Other Voices

ICJ decision will be test for humanity

By Tareq Yousef AlShumaimry

Israel and South Africa have each made their cases in public hearings at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) last week (January 11, 12, 2024). Now that the public hearings are over, what can we expect next? And how long will we have to wait for any outcomes?

In a matter of weeks "provisional measures" will take priority over all the cases and a decision is expected to be taken.

The decisions of the ICJ are binding upon countries and cannot be appealed. However, the ICJ has no way of enforcing its rulings and they are sometimes completely ignored.

In its filing to the ICJ, South Africa asked for the court to issue several orders to be placed upon Israel. These include having Israel "immediately suspend" its Gaza offensive, stop forced displacement of Palestinians in the territory and enable humanitarian access, as well as preserve evidence.

The ICJ can order all of the measures requested by South Africa. It could also decline to order anything. It could order something completely different, or even decide it is not competent to judge.



AlShumaimry

After the court decides whether or not to apply emergency measures, it will then look at the broader case "on the merits" - South Africa's charge that Israel is in breach of the UN Genocide Convention. A ruling of the broader case "on the merits" on the other hand will probably take several years.

It is important to note that the ICJ rules on questions of state responsibility—that is, on when a state has violated a rule of international law or an international legal obligation. It is not a criminal court. It does not decide, for example, on individual criminal responsibility. A different, unrelated court in The Hague, the International Criminal Court (ICC), serves this function, and South Africa, with other like-minded states, has already referred the situation in Gaza to it for investigation. While the ICC was set up to investigate and prosecute individuals at the highest levels who are accused of planning and directing war crimes, the ICJ exists to peacefully settle disputes between nations.

The ICJ proceedings allow South Africa to make a clear statement in an official venue about Israel's actions in Gaza: that there is international support for Palestinians and that the past three months of relentless bombardments, as well as the denial of access to the necessities of life, is an urgent matter of international concern.

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MP immunity lifted

Committees address housing grievances, defense contracts

By Abdul Rahman Al-Shammari Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Ten parliamentary committees met on Sunday to discuss various items in their agendas and the tasks that the National Assembly assigned to them.

The Human Rights Committee, chaired by MP Mohamed Haif, studied the grievances submitted by citizens who have not obtained rental homes for 30 years in the presence of the director general of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW). They talked about the reasons why these people have yet to obtain rental home contracts, even though majority of the ap-

plications are more than 30 years old.

The investigation committee in charge of the Caracal helicopters and Eurofighter deals discussed the Eurofighter contract with representatives of the State Audit Bureau (SAB) and reviewed the full report of the bureau. Sources, who attended the meeting, confirmed that the committee will continue holding meetings this month in preparation for the final report. They clarified that the Eurofighter contract is completely different from the Caracal, because there are no technical issues and the violations are limited to commissions obtained by some parties. They affirmed that the report will be ready within a month.

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Bibi defiant

Israel-Gaza war enters 100 days

RAFAH, Gaza Strip, Jan 14, (AP): Israel will pursue its war against Hamas until victory and will not be stopped by anyone, including the world court, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a defiant speech, as the fighting in Gaza approached the 100-day mark.

Netanyahu spoke after the International Court of Justice at The Hague held two days of hearings on South Africa's allegations that Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians, a charge Israel has rejected as libelous and hypocritical. South Africa asked the court to order Israel to halt its blistering air and ground offensive in an interim step.

"No one will stop us, not The Hague, not the axis of evil and not anyone else," Netanyahu said in televised remarks Saturday evening, referring to Iran and its allied militias.

The case before the world court is expected to go on for years, but a ruling on interim steps could come within weeks. Court rulings are binding but difficult to enforce. Netanyahu made clear that Israel would ignore orders to halt the fighting, potentially deepening its isolation.

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Newswatch

DUBAI: Two Iranian journalists who were serving long prison sentences over their coverage of the death of Mahsa Amini have been released on bail pending their appeal, Iranian media reported Sunday.

Niloufar Hamedia, who broke the news of Amini's death while in police custody for wearing her headscarf too loose, and Elaheh Mohammadi, who wrote about Amini's funeral, were sentenced to seven and six years in prison, respectively, in October, on charges including collaborating with the U.S. government.

The two women had been in prison for 17 months. The semi-official ISNA news agency reported that they were each released on \$200,000 bail and they are banned from leaving the country until the appeal is heard. (AP)

WASHINGTON: Two U.S. Navy SEALs are missing after conducting a nighttime boarding mission Thursday off the coast of Somalia, according to three U.S. officials.

The SEALs were on an interdiction mission, climbing up a vessel when one got knocked off by high waves. Under their protocol, when one SEAL is overtaken the next jumps in after them.

Both SEALs are still missing. A search and rescue mission is underway and the waters in the Gulf of Aden, where they were operating, are warm, two of the U.S. officials said. (AP)

ANKARA: The Turkish Ministry of National Defense said Saturday its forces neutralized 48 members of the terrorist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in northern Iraq and nine others in northern Syria in the past 24 hours.

The Turkish operation came in the wake of a PKK terrorist attack on a Turkish military base in the Operation Claw-Lock zone in northern Iraq, where nine were killed yesterday, according to a military statement.

The statement reaffirmed Turkey's resolve to root out the PKK terrorists who seek to establish a separatist state in southern Turkey. (KUNA)

CAIRO: Egypt's President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi on Sunday called for an immediate and definitive ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, saying such a measure was imperative to protect Palestinians facing a humanitarian catastrophe.

Discussing the latest developments in the Middle East conflict, the Egyptian president told visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi during talks that Cairo is determined to shoulder its "humanitarian and historic" obligation of allowing the delivery of urgent aid for the Palestinians, his spokesman Ahmed Fahmy said in a statement. (KUNA)



Denmark's Queen Margrethe II, centre, signs a declaration of abdication in the Council of State at Christiansborg Castle in Copenhagen, Sunday, Jan. 14, 2024. Queen Margrethe II has signed her historic abdication, a step that paves the way for her son Frederik X to immediately become king. (AP) — See Page 6

## Prayer Timings

Fajr .....	05:20	Asr .....	14:51
Sunrise ..	06:44	Maghrib ..	17:10
Zohr .....	11:57	Isha .....	18:31

# Local

## Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Mild and cloudy to partly cloudy with light to moderate northwesterly wind to moderate northwesterly wind with speeds of 08-32 km/h.

## Weather

<b>By Night:</b> Rather cold to cold to partly cloudy with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 15-35 km/h.	Kuwait Airport	26	12
	Abdaly	26	09
	Jahra	26	12
	Salmiyah	22	18
<b>Station</b>	<b>Max Exp</b>	<b>Min Rec</b>	
Kuwait City	25	17	14
			11
			25
			11

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

## Bid to shed light on potential changes to corporate income tax

# KPMG tax event to focus on Kuwait joining inclusive framework on BEPS

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: In view of Kuwait's commitment to address the tax challenges emerging from digitalization of the economy, KPMG in Kuwait will be conducting its annual tax event Talking Tax on 23 January, 2024.

On 15 November, 2023, Kuwait joined the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework on BEPS (Inclusive Framework), joining 140+ countries that are already signatories, to strengthen the efforts against tax avoidance.

Commenting on the significant step, Zubair Patel, Head of Tax, KPMG in Kuwait, said, "This measure is a positive shift toward attaining tax transparency both locally and globally. Kuwait's participation in the implementation of the BEPS package of 15 measures will make for increased coherence of international tax laws."

In its announcement regarding Kuwait joining the Inclusive Framework, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) mentioned that Kuwait had agreed to take part in the Two-Pillar Solution to bring about reforms in the tax laws and ensure that multinational enterprises paid their fair share



Zubair Patel

of taxes in the regions they operated.

This change would mean that any Kuwaiti multinational company, including government entities, that are operating outside Kuwait and have an annual revenue greater than 750m euros (~KD 245m) will be subject to 15% tax on their profits in Kuwait. The implementation is expected to be in place 2025 onwards.

As a second phase for 2026, it is anticipated that the Kuwait Government will introduce new legislation in the form of Business Profits Tax Law (BPT Law) whereby all Kuwaiti companies/businesses will be subject to local corporate tax. Kuwait's current corporate income tax rate stands at 15% and applies only to non-Kuwaiti companies that are earning income of Kuwait source. More details about the potential impact on Kuwaiti companies can be found in the tax alert KPMG in Kuwait published in November 2023.

Speaking about the Kuwait's evolving tax ecosystem, Fahim Bashir, Partner — Tax & Corporate Services, KPMG in Kuwait, emphasized on the need for businesses to stay on top of the changes that the Kuwait Government may make in terms of the BEPS minimum standards along with the implementation of the BPT Law in Kuwait.

He said, "These changes are setting the stage to have meaningful conversations,

seek consensus and collaborate with finance functions in Kuwaiti companies. Companies are not only seeking to understand the financial impact and disclosure requirements of new taxes but also identify what changes in finance functions are necessary given that more resources will be dedicated to tax matters.

This is in addition to recognizing which systems or tools will be required to support those responsible for tax matters in an organization and planning in advance where changes are required."

"In our event, we will cover the potential changes to Kuwait's corporate income tax framework and provide key information around BEPS Pillar 2 that businesses can leverage to plan ahead as further announcements are made by the Kuwait Government."

The event will also comprise panel discussions on matters pertaining to tax as well as Kuwait's economic landscape and include guest speakers: Daniel Kaye, Group Chief Economist, National Bank of Kuwait, Mubeen Khadir, Partner and Head of Tax & Corporate Services, KPMG in Bahrain, and Anand Krishnan, Director — International Tax Services, KPMG in Qatar.

The in-person event will be held at the Four Seasons Hotel, Kuwait City, on 23 January, 2024.

## Bid to nurture students skills

# Kuwait National Robotics 2024 competition to kick off March 2

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Kuwait University has announced that the Kuwait National Robotics Competition 2024, is scheduled to take place from March 2 to 4 at its Al-Shaddadiya headquarters, reports Al-Anba daily.

The competition targets middle to university students and is organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, specifically the General Technical Guidance for Computers; strategically partnered with Zain Kuwait and the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, aiming to nurture creative and digital skills among students.



Al-Khashti

enriching experience for participants. The competition aims to enhance teamwork skills, problem-solving, and critical thinking, providing a unique opportunity for participants to apply academic knowledge in a competitive and cooperative environment.

Dr. Hussein Al-Mahri, the acting head of the Computer Science Department, emphasized the commitment to organizing the competition to enhance skills in artificial intelligence, contributing to the advancement of Kuwait's knowledge economy.

Dr. Noura Al-Jari, the head of the organizing committee, highlighted the competition's significance in consolidating practical education with theoretical knowledge, bridging the gap between education and labor market requirements.

Zain Kuwait's CEO of Corporate Relations and Affairs, Walid Al-Khashti, stated that the strategic partnership reflects effective cooperation between the public and private sectors to nurture the next generation of innovators in Kuwait. This collaboration aligns with Zain's initiative, "Homeland of Innovation," supporting technology, engineering, science, and mathematics to enhance creativity and technical skills.

Nada Al-Deehani, the Director General of the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, emphasized that the competition is a significant step toward establishing the next generation of scientists and technology leaders. The center prioritizes educating students about robotics to keep pace with technological progress and foster a spirit of competition and creativity among students.

# Father killer hearing adjourned

Saudi, Iraqi, Iranian get life, Kuwaiti gets 15 yrs in drug peddling

By Jaber Al-Hamoud/Munaif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Fawzan Al-Anjari, yesterday adjourned the case filed against a Bedoun, who was accused of consuming drugs and murdering his father in Firdous, until a waiver was submitted by the accused's mother and siblings.**

During the cross examination of the accused at the court session, he confessed that he was not in full senses as he was under the influence of drugs, and he did not know that he had killed his father until two days later.

He said, "On the day of the incident, I returned home and took different types of drugs given to me by a friend. I later learned that a dispute occurred between my father and me over my drug use, and it later developed into a fist fight. During the fight, I took out a machine gun and fired two shots at him in the chest, killing him. I did not know that all of this had happened, and what I am narrating now is what was told to me by the detectives. They were the one who told me that I had killed my father. I learned about this only on the second day after I sobered up."

**Long-term jail in drugs case:** The Criminal Court sentenced a Saudi national, an Iraqi national, and an Iranian national to life imprisonment and a Kuwait citizen to 15-year imprisonment on charges of attempted smuggling of narcotics via sea.

According to the case file, they were being monitored by the Drug Control General Department, and the General Department of the Coast Guard. They were arrested in possession of narcotics, which they were attempting to smuggle into the country.

**'Force majeure event':** The Criminal Court rejected the grievance submitted against the Public Prosecutor's decision to file a report by the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) against the leaders of the Ministry of Public Works and the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) who were accused of inaction and wastage of KD 10 million during the rainy season in the year 2019.

In its decision, the Public Prosecution affirmed that the rainfall amounts are deemed a force majeure event, and thus, are to be preserved.

Nazaha had referred three leaders, seven directors and the heads of some departments in the Ministry of Public Works and PART, as well as the Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of a private company to the Public Prosecution.

**Bahrainis hurt in accident:** A vehicle carrying a Bahraini family overturned on Abdali Road (47 Kilo mark) yesterday, resulting in serious injuries to a 52-year old man, who was driving the vehicle, and multiple injuries to his wife and three of his children.

According to security sources, when the Ministry of Interior's Operations Room received information about the overturn accident on Abdali Road, security personnel, paramedics and firefighters immediately rushed to the site of the accident. Upon their arrival, they discovered that there was a Bahraini family in the vehicle that had overturned, and the father was seriously injured. Paramedics referred him to the nearest hospital where he was admitted in the Intensive Care Unit. His wife and three of the children were also taken to the hospital as they had sustained multiple injuries. The police have opened an investigation into the accident.

**Tow truck driver attacked:** A tow truck driver filed a case at Khaitan Police Station against two unknown individuals who attacked him when he tried to tow away their car.

According to security sources, the tow truck driver was performing his duty of removing abandoned vehicles parked in Khaitan alongside King Faisal Expressway when a car with two individuals stopped near him. One of them got out of the car and kicked him, and the other released a dog on him. They then fled from the scene.

The tow truck driver went to Khaitan Police Station where he filed a case against the two individuals who prevented him from towing their car. Police have initiated the process of finding and arresting the two assailants.

**Traffic crackdown:** In compliance with the directive of acting Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security, Traffic and Operations Affairs at the Interior Ministry Major General Abdullah Al-Rujaib, the Traffic Sector conducted an intensive traffic campaign throughout the past week, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This campaign resulted in the issuance of citations, impounding of 305 vehicles and 57 motorcycles; arrest of 49 individuals who committed various violations including reckless driving; referral of seven juveniles to the Public Prosecution for driving without a license; arrest of 27 people wanted by law for involvement in security and criminal cases; impounding of 76 vehicles wanted by security and judicial authorities; arrest of one person for the possession and consumption of narcotic substances and arrest of another for the illegal possession of a firearm.

Officer at the Public Relations and Traffic Awareness Department Major Abdullah Bu Hassan informed the daily that the Traffic Operations Sector laid down a comprehensive traffic security plan, covering highways and external roads, with the aim of controlling the traffic situation after field monitoring operations confirmed the prevalence of reckless activities on the roads, as well as the rising number of juveniles driving without a license. He affirmed that the plan was implemented by the traffic sections in the traffic departments of the six governorates, traffic operations departments, special traffic taskforce and the Traffic Investigation Department.



Fire-fighters deal with the situation at the site where the worker died.

## 3 suffer suffocation in house fire

# Worker falls in mixer, loses life

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Tragedy struck on Sunday morning in Kabd as a worker lost his life after falling into a cement mixer at a concrete factory. Simultaneously, a distressing incident unfolded in Al-Hasawi, where a fire erupted in an Arab house, leaving three individuals struggling with suffocation. The prompt response of firefighting teams from the Jleeb and Al-Samoud centers managed to bring the situation under control, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In the Al-Hasawi incident, firefighters swiftly engaged in the battle against the flames, successfully gaining control and extinguishing the fire. Unfortunately, three people inside the house fell victim to suffocation as a result of the incident. Emergency medical services promptly attended to the affected individuals, providing necessary medical attention.

Meanwhile, in Kabd, another team of firefighters from the Kabd and Search and Rescue Centers was mobilized to address the cement mixer accident. Tragically, the worker involved did not survive the incident, succumbing to the injuries sustained during the fall. The deceased worker was subsequently handed over to the relevant authorities for further investigation.

These unfortunate events underscore the critical importance of workplace safety and the need for stringent safety measures in both industrial and residential settings. The loss of life and injuries in these incidents serve as a somber reminder of the potential dangers that individuals face in various environments. Authorities and organizations are urged to continually prioritize safety protocols to prevent such tragic occurrences and protect the well-being of their communities.

## 6,700 CCTV cams installed

# Top notch security at University City

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: More than 6,700 surveillance cameras have been installed at Sabah Al-Salem University City and this number is expected to increase to 12,000 upon completion of all colleges and departments at the university, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources from Kuwait University.

Sources confirmed that in its last meeting, the University Council approved the proposal of the Secretariat General of the Security and Safety Management Sector to lay down a mechanism for managing, operating and maintaining the entry and exit control devices and systems; in addition to activating smart cards in all university facilities.

Sources said this mechanism includes a system consisting of hardware, software and smart cards that allow managing the entry and exit process of buildings from an integrated security perspective, through which the entry and exit of people through doors, gates, elevators and parking lots are regulated.

Sources explained that the devices used in the electronic gates for people and cars are accessible through the use of smart cards, which are plastic cards with a special design that enables the storage of digital data with accurate security and regulatory features and a superior ability to control the

access of a person using the card. Sources confirmed the allocation of a direct line for telephone communication 24 hours a day, seven days a week to respond to inquiries and take the necessary action in emergency and exceptional cases through Telephone No. 224983333.

Sources added the Security and Safety Administration is concerned with the operation of entry and exit control devices and systems; indicating that if the concerned university administrations must sign contracts to install access control devices or create control rooms, they must coordinate with the Security and Safety Administration before receiving and operating the devices.

Sources said the Security and Safety Administration's tasks include monitoring entry and exit operations, reviewing surveillance camera recordings if the judicial authorities need them as proof, extracting attendance reports for the concerned authority if requested through an official letter, ensuring the proper operation of all systems, and notifying the company contracted by the Construction and Maintenance Department in the event of any defect or malfunction in the system. Sources stressed that unauthorized persons are not allowed to enter the control rooms.

## Bid to keep pace with world

# Surgical robots used at Jaber Hospital

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Ministry of Health has announced the arrival and use of the latest category of Da Vinci Xi surgical robot devices at Jaber Hospital.

The ministry stressed its keenness to provide the latest technologies and devices to keep pace with the latest global developments in this regard.

In this regard, Head of the Surgery Department at Jaber Hospital Dr. Suleiman Al-Mazidi explained that more than 130 surgical operations were performed using the Da Vinci surgical system in the hospital, including 35 cases of colorectal surgery, and 65 cases of obesity surgery, in addition to its

use in various gynecological and urological surgeries, and ear, nose and throat surgeries.

The Da Vinci Xi is the latest class of robotic devices in the world. It is currently available at Jaber Hospital and is the latest technology in the field of robotic surgery. It allows the surgeon to work on difficult operations in a faster and more accurate manner. It also has multiple arms, which improves the surgeon's control of the device and allows for making smaller incisions with high precision. Consequently, there is less blood loss during the operation. The risk is reduced afterwards, thus reducing the patient's length of stay in the hospital after the operation, and reducing patient's waiting times. Its use depends on the nature, circumstances, and specificity of the medical condition.

## Charity project to help strugglers

# Food assistance for needy Kuwaitis

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The charitable organization "Hi-fadh" in Kuwait has initiated the Food Basket Project, aimed at assisting 1,000 families in Kuwait by providing essential food supplies, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Adel Al-Dariban, the association's treasurer, stated in a press release that the project holds significant importance among food assistance initiatives. It serves the needs of struggling families within and outside Kuwait who face challenges in obtaining essential food due to limited resources.

Al-Dariban explained that the implementation method of the Food Basket Project varies based on the country where it is executed and the specific needs of the beneficiaries. In Kuwait, the project is carried out through the distribution of purchase coupons to needy families, enabling them to buy necessary items from stores. This approach proves beneficial for the recipients. Conversely, in locations outside Kuwait, the implementation often involves providing actual food baskets.

Highlighting the humanitarian aspect, Al-Dariban emphasized that addressing hunger is a fundamental concern in their charitable efforts. Recognizing food as a critical necessity for survival, especially for children, he pointed out the challenges faced by various regions worldwide, including some in Arab countries like Syria and Yemen.

Citing statistics from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), he mentioned that approximately 795 million people globally lack sufficient food for a healthy life.

Al-Dariban underscored the religious perspective on combating hunger, citing verses from the Holy Qur'an and hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He quoted a relevant verse, emphasizing the significance of feeding the poor, the orphan, and the captive out of love for God, without expecting any reward or thanks in return.

## Search and rescue bid

# KFF team in Qatar training

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Officers from the Search and Rescue Center at Kuwait Firefighting Force (KFF) participated in the UCC Search and Rescue Teams Coordination Cell Course held at the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) in Qatar for five days, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The Public Relations and Media Department at KFF confirmed the attendance of international experts and trainers affiliated with the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) of the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. It explained that the course focused on the ways for search and rescue teams to coordinate their efforts in dealing with crises and disasters in their respective countries.

The department pointed out that the participation of KFF is part of procedures and preparations for the international classification of Kuwaiti search and rescue teams.

On the other hand, KFF conducted a campaign under the supervision of Deputy Director of the Prevention Sector at KFF Major General Khaled Fahd, targeting shops and markets in Mubarakiya. The campaign resulted in the closure of four stores and issuance of a warning to seven others for non-compliance with fire prevention and safety regulations, and operating without a license from KFF.

## KPC launches 'K-Tendering'

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has launched the new electronic platform 'K-Tendering', which aims to unify procedures for registration, qualification, bidding, limited and general tenders, and direct purchase orders by KPC and its subsidiaries, reports Al-Anba daily.

Sources said the Central Qualification Committee at the Supreme Purchasing Committee in KPC intends to update the pre-qualification lists for companies based on their activities.

Sources confirmed that KPC started inviting companies on Sunday to begin the qualification procedures. Sources explained the entities wishing to be qualified for the first time must submit the qualification applications through the unified platform within a period not exceeding 90 days from Sunday, stressing the same period is applicable for entities that have been qualified for more than one year to submit a renewal application.

A total of 11 activities were specified for the first stage of updating the lists, while the remaining business categories will be announced successively in the next stage, sources disclosed.

KPC warned that failure to submit the application for qualification or renewing the qualification within the specified period will lead to denial of participation in the tenders that will be offered through the unified electronic platform, sources concluded.

## Citizens count on new Premier to navigate nation thru 'storm'

"THE citizens of Kuwait aspire to see their nation reclaim its former glory in all aspects and relish the abundant blessings bestowed upon it by God. They yearn for reforms that eradicate the corruption entrenched in the core of the state, compelling unity among its people in demanding accountability for those involved in or supporting corrupt practices," columnist **Khaled Al-Mutairi** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"Their vision is for Kuwait to emerge as the epitome of beauty and progress through comprehensive change and revival in every sphere.

"The populace seeks stability and harmony between the two authorities to address long-standing issues, spanning decades and known since distant times. These issues encompass the housing problem, despite the availability of land and financial resources, the healthcare challenge, despite a surplus of academically accomplished students.

"Discontent arises from the limited benefits derived from serving the country in the health sector, the declining educational standards causing a loss of trust in government schools, leading to the unregulated private lessons trade burdening parents.

"The stalled infrastructure and conflicting discussions on involving foreign or local companies compound these concerns.

"The Kuwaiti people remain committed to the path of struggle and reform initiated 12 years ago. They emphasize the need for coherent planning and coordination between benevolent and reformist representatives, steering clear of personal and narrow interests. A resolute commitment to democracy and the constitution during this sensitive period.

"The representatives are urged to focus on legislative duties rather than becoming mere service providers. Confidence and decisiveness are sought in ministers, avoiding indecision and lack of vision.

"The citizens hope for radical solutions to longstanding problems that have drained the people and paralyzed the nation, suspecting that some benefit from the status quo and are reluctant to seek resolutions.

"The appointment of Sheikh Muhammad Sabah Al-Salem as Prime Minister is viewed as a pivotal moment, with the people placing him to the test to navigate through these challenges and lead the nation towards lasting solutions."

### Also:

"Upon the announcement of Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah being tasked with forming the new government, following the resignation of the esteemed former Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, a spontaneous and nationwide campaign has unfolded," columnist **Walid Al-Jassem** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

"This campaign consisted of advice, directions, and, at times, instructions directed towards Dr. Muhammad, outlining what steps he should take in tackling the challenging mission of fostering economic, social, and cultural progress, as well as restoring Kuwaiti leadership.

"While these numerous articles, video messages, and tweets circulating through various media platforms and social networks often originate from well-intentioned and patriotic perspectives, the sheer volume may inadvertently lead to confusion and premature despondency regarding the prospects of reform and change, particularly at this crucial juncture.

"I posit, acknowledging the potential for error, that the more prudent approach now is to extend a warm welcome to Dr. Muhammad, actively encourage his efforts, and express initial confidence in his qualifications, personal attributes, and judicious selection for this pivotal role.

"Dr. Muhammad's ability to diagnose the current reality and devise effective strategies for addressing shortcomings, laying the groundwork for the necessary transformations, deserves trust.

"Consequently, it is advisable to allow him the time to organize his thoughts, gather input, and meet with capable individuals.

"Rather than prematurely assuming the role of a 'shadow prime minister,' it is suggested to reserve such evaluations until after the next government formation.

"Each development will then be assessed independently, allowing for a fresh perspective, and fostering a more constructive and nuanced understanding. May we all witness positive and enduring changes in the days ahead."

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"No to the idea of a popular prime minister.

ister. The phrase 'a popular prime minister' was mentioned in **Al-Seyassah** daily, which means appointing an ordinary citizen as prime minister. We wrote more than five times that this idea is dangerous as it will destroy the country," columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"We do not say this on our own terms, that is, without thought and contemplation. Briefly, it entails: 'Leave the existing and stable political situation as it is, because any change will bring about disasters.'

"Some lawmakers have been agitating against the Prime Minister through the threat of interrogation in order to undermine the foundations of the position held by a venerable sheikh, until the State became fed up with this and considered, or accepted, a popular prime minister. Here, the disaster occurs. What happens if an ordinary citizen assumes the position? Surely, if he favors his comrades or his tribe, then the Kuwaiti society will be severely torn apart, because the hearts of Kuwaitis will be charged with the language of hatred against each other, and their rights will be lost.

"The son of a citizen will not find a job, because the son of this or that tribe obtained it through tribal favoritism. Injustice among Kuwaitis will increase even more than it is today, and discontent and anger against the authority will prevail. Some people will not rest in peace. They will ask: 'Why was this man chosen as the head of the council?' They will also say: 'Ministers are our people, not that person.' 'Internal disturbances may occur. Some of us will say: 'The Prime Minister of the Popular Council is unjust and does not deserve his position, and that he has faults and evils. We demand for his trial.' The country's situation will deteriorate. Also, his tribe will say: 'The rule is ours now.' Gradually, they may carry out some kind of coup.

"The existing political situation in Kuwait (or in the Gulf states) is much better than destabilizing it with these dangerous ideas. We have seen from the lessons of history that change in the existing regime brought crises and disasters to countries, such as the overthrow of the king in Egypt, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Iran and Nepal, or regime change in Syria, Tunisia and others.

"The Kuwaiti society will be severely torn apart if an ordinary citizen takes over the position who favors his comrades or his tribe, so leave this position to a distinguished sheikh from the ruling family, so that those who demand a popular Prime Minister do not say: 'Soon... the rule is ours.'

"Changing the stable political system brought disasters to nations, and we have given examples."

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"Integrity' is on the lookout... Nazaha or Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority has opened its eyes, so the statement of our colleague, former MP Nasser Al-Sanea, did not go unnoticed. He stirred stagnant waters when he said that he was offered KD 20 million (one Kuwaiti Dinar is equal to three US Dollars) in exchange for passing a certain bill, but he refused!" columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Definitely, this is evidence of his integrity, but 'Integrity' itself moved after the interview and asked him to prove the case and provide all the information he has on this subject. If he does not provide what he has, he will be considered to have abstained from testifying in the eyes of the law!

"It is enough for 'Nazaha' to not let the matter pass without scrutiny, which means the people will treat it as a reality, accusing the entire society of corruption from that time, not from now!

"This means that corruption is rampant. 'Nazaha', which works for Kuwait, follows up, monitors and takes action! This is the core of its work! How we wish they were present during the days of talking about the black 'Yukon' and the 'blade' that distributed bags of money, and those accusations that are thrown around in election seminars without legal support or evidence, until those transmitted statements have become quasi-facts that people circulated. They applauded the one who launched it in seminars, and even voted for him on the basis that he protects public money.

"Some exploited the issue to attack opponents in their election seminars and office tours, to the point that they doubted the accusation. The problem and the greatest calamity is that no one asks about the evidence or proof of these words, until it has broken the barrier of 'integrity', which has become a lookout for who hurl accusations unjustly. I wish 'Nazaha' was there that time to ask them to testify. Then, we would have known the truth about the black 'Yukon' and the bags full of dinars that were distributed at night!

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes

# Factory selling 'tainted' meat shut

Frozen sold as fresh for higher prices

**KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (Agencies):** The Commercial Control Department at the Ministry of Trade and Industry recently shut down a factory engaged in the deceptive practice of thawing frozen meat and marketing it to customers as refrigerated meat, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

According to reliable sources, it was discovered that the factory's management circumvented traditional channels for the disposal of their illicit products. Regulatory monitoring operations revealed that the factory primarily distributed its products to restaurants or individual customers through social media, eschewing direct sales from its official headquarters. Inspectors, posing as customers, engaged with the violators to ascertain the extent of their commercial fraud.

Following confirmation of the violation, the inspectors conducted thorough inspections of the factory site and its affiliated warehouse where the illicit activities occurred. Refrigerators were found containing quantities of sheep meat, which had been thawed, cut, and arranged in plastic plates. The products were then labeled with commercial information about the meat's origin, providing misleading details. Furthermore, the expiration dates were tampered with to create the illusion of fresh meat, allowing the factory to command higher prices.

The necessary documentation is currently being prepared to refer the holders of the violating factory license to the prosecution. Subsequent legal measures will be taken against them to address the fraudulent practices and ensure accountability for their actions.

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**Trio beats man in desert:** Investigations have been launched to find three unknown individuals who assaulted an Egyptian expatriate in Salmi desert area, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

According to security sources, the Egyptian filed a report with the police, and provided a medical report that explained the injuries he sustained in the attack.

He told securitymen that three people who were in a vehicle bearing a GCC number plate had physically assaulted him near his workplace.

A case has been filed and referred for investigations to find and arrest the suspects.

21,471 citations in week

## 296 dead in traffic accidents in 2023

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14:** The General Traffic Department issued 21,471 traffic citations during the past week, impounded 305 vehicles, and referred 49 reckless drivers to traffic custody and seven juveniles to the juvenile prosecution.

According to statistics issued by the General Traffic Department, 19 people without residency and five people without any identification documents were arrested, 57 motorcycles were seized, and 2,957 reports were dealt with including 256 serious accidents and 1,185 minor accidents.

Meanwhile, the Traffic Planning and Research Sector in the General Traffic Department (GTD) at the Ministry of Interior announced that the number of deaths resulting from traffic accidents last year totaled 296 -- lower by 26 cases compared to the number of such death recorded in 2022, when the total was 322, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

The sector attributed the decrease in the number of deaths due to traffic accidents to the successful implementation of GTD's traffic plan. It disclosed that the plan has two aspects -- one is to regulate traffic and immediately deal with all manifestations of recklessness, speeding and racing on the road; while the other is to raise public awareness on the need to strictly comply with traffic regulations.

On the other hand, Assistant Director General for Technical Affairs at GTD Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Adwani confirmed that the Technical Affairs Sector will open the new Technical Inspection Department building in Subhan Industrial Area in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate on Sunday.

He added first Technical Inspection Department in the Capital Governorate will open in April; indicating this will be equipped with modern devices for inspecting vehicles mechanically and structurally, as well as linking the inspection result to the system for issuing vehicle licenses electronically through the Sahl application. He affirmed the technical inspection departments for vehicles in Farwaniya and Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorates will be provided with modern devices that will be linked to the same program in the near future.

Meanwhile, officer in the Public Relations and Traffic Awareness Section at GTD Major Abdullah Bu Hassan confirmed that the Technical Affairs Sector recently carried out a traffic security campaign in compliance with the directive of Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Adwani; targeting garages and technical and craft workshops in Shuwaikh Industrial Area and this resulted in the issuance of citations for 120 traffic violations.

Bu Hassan added that during the campaign, six vehicles were impounded for the annoying noise, while four warnings were issued for violating workshops and garages, and 15 violations were uncovered in garages that were found to be repairing vehicles without obtaining a permit from the concerned authorities.

## Joint fire drill conducted at MEW's S.Surra center

**KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14:** The Second Facilities Protection Battalion of the National Guard -- in cooperation with the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy; Kuwait Firefighting Force (KFF); Emergency Medical Department, Civil Defense General Department in the Defense Ministry and Central Operations General Department at the Ministry of Interior -- carried out a mock evacuation drill at the National Control Center of the Ministry of Electricity in South Surra, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

The drill scenario is a fire outbreak at the National Control Center. Preventive measures were taken immediately to protect the employees and evacuate them. The drill included ensuring that the roads are open for fire trucks and ambulances to reach the center immediately.

In a meeting after the drill, the participants evaluated the entire exercise to determine the negative and positive aspects, look into the time spent on evacuation and fire control procedures, and discuss the coordination mechanism among all the concerned entities.



Frozen meat cut into pieces, repacked and sold as fresh.

Al-Rai photo

### Other Voices

## Going back to the 'illness'

By Ahmad alsarraf

My friend Pierre Akl, editor-in-chief of **Transparent**, wrote in a comment on my article about the death of the Arabic language, that we are not the only party that linked the language to religion. The Greeks, for example, linked the Bible to Greek because it was originally written in it. In 1910, massive riots occurred in Athens, in which 8 people were killed, in protest against the publication by the **Acropolis** newspaper of a translation of texts from the Gospel of Matthew into modern Greek!

He added: I do not know if there is an organic reason that prevents Arabic from developing to accept the vocabulary of modern life, by borrowing words from other languages, such as television and radio, and most likely this will enrich it and bridge the gap with colloquial language.

But the problem lies in what the scientist Ferguson called **Diglossia**, that is, the disconnect between a higher, written, language and a lower, spoken language. The student must learn upper-class Arabic in order to use it to study, while a Turkish or Frenchman, for example, does not face this problem, and he and others like him who are children of Arab immigrants speak Arabic, but they are unable to read its texts or understand a news bulletin, for example, in a proper way.

There is almost agreement among the majority of specialists in matters of the Arabic language that it needs treatment, and has even become a factor hindering progress, especially in scientific fields, and what hinders its development, among other things:

First: The fear that linguistic, spelling, grammatical, or writing modifications to the language may make it difficult for some to easily return to religious texts. This is not true, and there are many examples that contra-

dict this. For more than 1,400 years, more than 90% of the nation "completely illiterate," yet the religion continued to expand, and the language of the Qur'an remained the same.

Second: The absence of any concept or ceiling on what development or change means, and this prevents us from moving on this path.

Third: The most important ... there is no specific body that can be agreed upon to carry out the task of modification and development, and it is also not possible to guarantee that all Arab countries will say so, and therefore the linguistic situation, and the rest of our situations, will remain backward, as long as disagreements plague most Arab countries, east and west. The harshest of these differences are among the countries closest to each other, geographically, religiously, and culturally.

Some believe that Arabic causes a headache for anyone who wants to learn it, let alone master it. There is a problem with the issue of differentiating between some letters, and a bigger problem related to the position of the cursed "hamza" in the word!

Likewise, diacritics and the use of stress cause and cause headaches for almost everyone, not to mention that Arabic suffers from a deficiency in some colloquial letters in other living languages, such as English and French, and introducing them into Arabic will enrich it and improve the pronunciation of the names of individuals, places, machines, equipment, etc., in a more accurate manner.

For your information, I learned to read more than 70 years ago, wrote ten thousand articles, and only today I discovered that there is something in grammar called "relative prepositional pronouns"! My ignorance of this rule and dozens of others did not prevent me from reading all religious texts, such as the Qur'an, with great ease. Nor did my ignorance of grammar and my lack of knowledge of the difference between them, prevent me from writing, in an understandable manner, on almost any topic!

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e-mail: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

'Raids to continue; target over 40,000'

## 1,470 expats deported in 11 days

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14:** The deportation department of correctional institutions completed the deportation procedures for 1,470 violators in 11 days. According to a security source, the department will continue to deport people referred to it from various sectors of the ministry to their countries. All sectors of the Ministry of Interior are continuing to work to arrest violators of the residency and labor laws. Security campaigns will continue in all areas to nab a higher number of violators of the residency and labor laws.

In the last ten days, the Residency Affairs Investigation Department was able to arrest about 700 violators of the residency and labor laws through security campaigns that were held in most areas.

The Ministry of Interior directed to arrest a number exceeding 40,000 during this new year, similar to last year, when the number reached 42,850 violators, which is considered a record in apprehending violators and deporting them from the country.

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**65 tents removed:** Kuwait Municipality has announced the removal of 65 illegal camps in Ahmadi and Jahra Governorates, confirming the continuation of its inspection campaigns to monitor camping sites in order to ensure strict compliance with the rules and regulations, reports **Al-Jarida** daily. In a press statement, the Municipality urged camp owners to obtain a license for their camps to avoid removal and to use only the sites where camping is permitted.

On the other hand, Director of the Audit and Monitoring Department at the Municipal Services Unit in the Municipality branch in Ahmadi Governorate Saad Al-Shaiba revealed that the supervisory team in the Audit and Monitoring Department in the Municipal Services Sector carried out a field tour, which resulted in the issuance of citations for 63 violations. He disclosed the violations include the publication of an advertisement not in line with the activity of the company that published it, employees without a health certificate, and expired health license. He added the goal of the intensive field tours is to monitor violators and take legal measures against them.

Ministry outlines project's scope of works

# New tender floated for maintenance of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Bridge

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Ministry of Public Works has announced the release of a new tender for the maintenance of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Bridge, as part of the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport's annual project plan for the fiscal 2023/2024, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The tender, titled "Management, Operation, and Maintenance of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Bridge," encompasses the comprehensive management, operation, and maintenance of the bridge. This includes the supply of materials, equipment, personnel, specialists, and all necessary resources to carry out the specified contractual works, as well as any temporary, additional, supplementary works, and amendments requested by the Ministry.

In the official announcement

through the Official Gazette, the Ministry outlined the project's scope of works.

This includes the operation and maintenance of various buildings such as truck weighing stations, the visitor center building in Shuwaikh, and the Roads Authority building in Doha.

**Maintenance**

The maintenance tasks cover cleaning work, fire-fighting system maintenance, and the management of drainage networks, rainwater systems, sewage networks, security, waste management in coordination with relevant authorities, and the provision of safe water.

The project involves the operation and maintenance of the bridge itself, encompassing manual cleaning of the road surface and bridge components, monitoring and maintenance of the bridges through

moisture removal and crane operations. Comprehensive and periodic inspections of the bridge components are carried out to ensure structural integrity, functional performance, and public safety.

Road operation and maintenance work in the project include cleaning road components, treating wastewater for floating marine facilities, operating marine facilities, maintaining the navigation channel, monitoring and preparing environmental monitoring reports, removing sand accumulation, preparing environmental monitoring reports in the operation phase, and monitoring the settlement for the areas of Subbiya, Shuwaikh, and the northern and southern Gulf Islands. The project also involves operating all electrical systems and supplying the necessary spare parts.



View of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Bridge.

## Ministry accelerates water infrastructure devt with KD29 mln contract in Al-Mutlaa

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has signed a contract for the construction of three ground concrete tanks for fresh water, with a capacity of 115 million gallons each, in the residential city of Al-Mutlaa (Site One), reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources revealed the value of the contract is KD29.294 million and the duration is 36 months, indicating the contract is part of 20 projects that the ministry intends to implement to support the country's water network and increase the strategic reserve, including six projects to be implemented in Al-Mutlaa.

Sources said these projects include four main fresh water lines with a diameter of 1,200 mm from Mutlaa Water Distribution Complex to the proposed water complex

in South Al-Metlaa; a pumping station and its accessories in Site One in Mutlaa; nine fresh water towers and ancillary works in Site Two; nine fresh water towers and ancillary works in Site Three; and a fresh water filling station in South Mutlaa (Site Three).

Sources affirmed the ministry is keen on shortening the documentary cycle for these projects to speed up the signing of the contracts in order to immediately complete the projects in the interest of citizens.

Sources pointed out that the water network implementation projects in Mutlaa are ahead of the timetables set for them and within the general framework of the ministry in providing better services to the public, in coordination with other concerned government agencies.

# Union urges PM for enhanced support to farmers in Kuwait

'Government backing ensures year-round food supply'

By Abdul Nasser Al-Aslami  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Chairman of the Fresh Dairy Producers Union Abdul Hakim Al-Ahmad congratulated His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed Al-Sabah on obtaining the royal Amiri trust.

He urged him to increase support for farmers from Sulaibiya farms within the plans of the next government in order to ensure food security in the country.

In a press statement issued yesterday, Al-Ahmad said, "Most countries in the world care about farmers and their demands".

He cited the strike that happened in Germany a few days ago during which banners were raised to

send the message that there is no food in light of the failure to meet their demands and ease the obstacles facing them.

Al-Ahmad stressed that paying attention to farmers' demands ensures the availability of most agricultural and food items, and crops to consumers throughout the year.

He highlighted the importance of protecting the national product and giving it priority in marketing operations through dairy companies in the country, in addition to increasing government support for the local product, especially with the high cost of production on farms, with the aim of providing milk products and its derivatives to citizens without any significant obstacles, and without any increase in prices in the future.

Al-Ahmad stated that the future of any country depends on the existence of food security in it, and the availability of success factors among productive farmers in various agricultural areas.

## Power substations repair on schedule

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Maintenance works in power substations included in the annual maintenance program are proceeding as scheduled, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources from the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy.

Sources confirmed that the maintenance works are being carried out according to the relevant contracts, which are valid for five years from the date of signing.

Sources said about 650 power substations whose capacities range from 11 to 400 kilovolts are subject to maintenance as per the schedule set with the manufacturers and importers of these stations throughout the five contractual years, pointing out that the current contracts were signed in 2020.

## Over 84,000 transactions in Q4

### PAHW reports surge in Sahel app activities

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The quarterly statistics issued by the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) showed that the number of transactions and services processed through the Sahel application from Sept 1 to Dec 31, 2023 reached 84,125, reports Al-Anba daily.

The number of requests to cancel the allocation decision reached 137; in addition to 887 repay the rent allowance transactions; 2,272 open a residential care file with rent allowance transactions; 1,020 housing unit allocation transactions, 6,350 transactions for updating telephone numbers; 68,343 'To Whom It May Concern' certificates; 801 updating family data requests; 303 disability priority requests; 156 requests to authenti-

cate government house mortgages; three requests to change the allocated area; 92 requests to renew house and apartment documentation books; 169 requests to open a residential care file; 294 requests to renew voucher documentation books; 799 requests to issue document vouchers with mortgage; 375 requests for differences in the allowance provided by citizen service centers; and 1,352 electricity receipt requests; 467 requests for delivery of building permits; 17 requests to reactivate a file without rent allowance; 25 requests to document a government home; 33 to cancel a residential care request; 10 to re-register a residential care request; 73 todocument payment vouchers and 147 requests to reactivate a file with rent allowance.

## New guidelines unveiled

PAHW extends deadline for affordable housing tenders

By Abdul Nasser Al-Aslami  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Public Welfare for Housing Welfare (PAHW) has postponed from January 18, 2024 to January 25, 2024 the closing date for the tenders for building affordable housing (Naayem) with a total of 4,913 homes and public buildings in block 1, and 1,777 homes and public buildings in block 3.

In this regard, PAHW announced tender No. M.A.S./M/1275-2024/2023 concerning the construction and maintenance of 1,568 houses, public buildings, asphalt surface layer works, supply and installation works of low and medium pressure cables, and works concerned with road lighting in block 1 and block 3 of the affordable housing project. The deadline for submitting bids (closing) in the two aforementioned tenders announced in issue No. 1667 and in issue No. 1777 was changed.

The companies participating in the above mentioned tender were invited to visit the headquarters of PAHW in South Surra on the third floor in Documents and Contracts Department to receive tender No. 3 as of 01/14/2024, and bring with them a receipt of the purchase of tender documents. The recipient must submit the authorization on behalf of the company, which is proven by receipt.

In addition, PAHW announced the nature of the documents for requesting rented housing by a Kuwaiti woman married to a non-Kuwaiti. Those concerned must bring the following to obtain the rented housing:

1. The civil ID of the person concerned.
2. Copies of the children's birth certificates.
3. Detailed salary certificate of the employees who work in entities not affiliated with the Civil Service Commission.

The Residential Office stated that if the applicant works in the private sector, he must bring the latest detailed salary certificate from the employer stating that he did not receive rent allowance. If it is not possible to bring a detailed salary certificate, he must bring a certificate showing that he does not receive housing, rent allowance, housing allowance, or such allowance under any other name from his workplace.

He must also bring authorization of company signature from the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

As for those who do not work, or who work in the private sector, or are retired, they must bring a certificate of entry and exit movement from the Ministry of Interior for the husband, wife, and unmarried children for a period of two years.

**albander**  
hotel & resort

# January

## Room Promotion





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

Promo period from 1<sup>st</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024

Terms & conditions apply\*

## Bridging gaps in Kuwait's industrial and commercial landscape

# Arzaq Craftsman Project emerges as a compelling investment opportunity

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Arzaq Craftsman Project stands out as a prime incubator for launching commercial, craft, and light industry ventures. Positioned at the forefront of a promising era, the project offers lucrative investment prospects under the guidance of visionary leadership dedicated to realizing Kuwait's future vision, according to a report by Al-Anba daily.

This commitment involves enhancing the role of the private sector, fostering projects aligned with national objectives, and promoting further development. The positive outcomes are expected to diversify income sources, stimulate economic growth, and drive progress in alignment with the New Kuwait Vision 2035.

Dr. Tahani Al-Adwani, the General Manager of Al-An-

sar United Real Estate Company, highlights that the Arzaq Al-Herfi project complements vital projects in southern Kuwait, including an expansive railway project and various entertainment, commercial, and residential ventures.

Located strategically in the Fahheel area, the project serves as a convergence point, meeting the needs of investors and consumers amidst the surrounding industrial and commercial hubs.

Market studies have identified a demand for craft and commercial industrial activities, particularly for light industrial lands, due to a shortage in the local market. With state support for entrepreneurs and rising demand for craft real estate, the Arzaq project addresses these needs.

It aims to nurture entrepreneurship by providing an

environment with top-notch infrastructure, a prime location, and diverse plot sizes ranging from 250 to over 5,000 square meters. With 190 craft plots featuring attractive construction rates, the project stands out in terms of diversity and encouragement for investment sustainability.

The unique offerings of the Arzaq project, including varied plot areas and favorable construction rates, are expected to attract a wide array of commercial and industrial craft activities accredited by Kuwait Municipality and the Public Authority for Industry.

With 27 commercial service activities, the project envisions itself as an ideal setting for launching ventures that strengthen the national economy. This is anticipated to create job opportunities and open avenues for work and in-

come, spanning basic craftsmanship, industrial activities, and innovative service ideas.

Al-Ansar United Real Estate Company has diligently examined the project's infrastructure in collaboration with relevant government agencies, ensuring adherence to the highest standards. Supported by a regional development office and a global consulting office, the study encompassed the project's geographical location, connectivity to main and secondary roads, and a comprehensive services network.

This network includes electricity, communications, street lighting, rainwater and sewage drainage, fire prevention, and green spaces fed by internal tanks and surface parking lots.



Architectural view of the project.

## Amir receives

Continued from Page 1

Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir received, at the same venue, First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

## Kuwait banks

Continued from Page 1

Market studies indicate that the default rate among expatriates is not alarming, and these banks accept a broader risk, including considering individuals with salaries exceeding 300 dinars for borrowing, even if they have been employed for a shorter period.

Overall, the lending landscape for expatriates in Kuwait is evolving, with stricter criteria adopted by many banks, while others explore opportunities to grow their portfolios by catering to this segment.

## Sheikh Mohammad,

Continued from Page 1

There are many files before the new Council of Ministers, due to which there must be ministers with a great degree of awareness of these crises to work on resolving them, especially the Bedoun file, which the neighboring countries managed to solve by allowing this neglected workforce to create added value to their national economy.

They also solved the problem of the leakage of money from residents who do not find any outlet for themselves. Instead of spending what they earn in the country, the rate of their money being sent to their country increases annually, while all you hear are suggestions that indicate backwardness and extremism.

Therefore, the Kuwaitis today, with the leaking of names of ministers who are not ambitious, have begun to fade the flame of joy with which they welcomed the appointment of Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Al-Sabah Al-Salem.

Will the next few days belie those expectations? Will the Prime Minister hire a strong and trustworthy team?

Tomorrow is near, and as the Egyptian popular proverb goes - "News that cost money today will be for free tomorrow."

## Kuwait unveils

Continued from Page 1

strategy to combat electronic fraud via phones, particularly those employing phone numbers resembling local ones, reports Al-Anba daily.

She said the objective is to integrate all operating companies in Kuwait into caller ID services to address the global threat of electronic impersonation, commonly known as "Caller ID spoofing."

Having successfully completed the testing phase, the regulations for this project are set to be officially launched this month, representing a crucial measure against the rising attempts to defraud citizens and residents through deceptive phone calls.

Al Mansouri emphasized that the Authority has finalized procedures to identify local telecommunications companies on the network, as well as CITRA. Calls originating from these companies will display the company name above the number, even if not registered on the customer's phone, enhancing the trustworthiness of these numbers and thwarting impersonation attempts.

In collaboration with the Central Bank of Kuwait, the Authority is actively taking steps to authenticate the iden-

tities of local and foreign banks, along with exchange companies operating in Kuwait. This initiative aims to block avenues for those attempting to impersonate financial institutions.

Additionally, the Authority is actively engaged in defining the identities of companies providing Internet services, a crucial segment serving a wide customer base. Al Mansouri outlined plans for the upcoming phase, involving the direct integration of all companies operating in the Kuwaiti market into the caller ID system, ensuring automatic identification of company numbers on the network.

Priority in this integration will be given to companies involved in activities directly serving individual customers, particularly those providing financial services or services closely tied to financial transactions. Al Mansouri underscored that this comprehensive integration of companies will serve as a safeguard against phone-based electronic impersonation, effectively closing the door to fraud in this context.

As part of future initiatives, Al Mansouri revealed plans to launch a specialized caller identification service on the Authority's website. This service will act as a gateway for companies and government agencies to undertake necessary measures for identifying their identity on the network, reinforcing the overall security and trustworthiness of communication channels.

## ICJ decision

Continued from Page 1

But what does South Africa have to do with what is happening in Gaza? South Africa's ruling African National Congress has long shown its support for Palestinians and backed their right to self-determination, considering them to be subject to a long-standing regime of apartheid, like South Africa was.

The Genocide Convention also allows any state party to bring a case against another state party to the ICJ on issues including responsibility for genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, or attempt to commit genocide.

The ICJ in the past confirmed this in a case brought by The Gambia, which accused Myanmar of committing genocide against the Rohingya population.

I recall during my tenure at The Hague a case was instituted by The Gambia in November 2019, with provisional measures hearings in December of that year. On 16 October 2023, the ICJ issued another order for The Gambia to submit its Reply to arguments made by Myanmar by 16 May 2024 and for Myanmar to submit a Rejoinder - its response to The Gambia's Reply - by 16 December 2024.

This is one example of the timeline that is expected to take for the South Africa vs Israel case. Similarly the question remains: what will be the content of the decision? Will something similar to that issued for Russia and Ukraine to stop the fighting? Or will it relate to the entry of humanitarian aid?

The ICJ by Order of March 16, 2022, had already indicated among its provisional measures that "the Russian Federation shall immediately suspend the military operations it began on February 24, 2022 in the territory of Ukraine". Russia did not accept this order, and raised "preliminary objections" to the Court's jurisdiction and the inadmissibility of the application. The hearings are ongoing and expected to take a long time to get a conclusive judgement.

Unsurprisingly, the response from many states to this case has been divided. On the same day South Africa filed its application, the Palestinian Authority's foreign ministry welcomed the case and called for the international community to support the proceedings.

Besides the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation was similarly supportive, calling on the court to "take urgent measures to stop this mass genocide." UN human rights experts also welcomed the case and praised South Af-

rica "for bringing this case to the ICJ at a time when the rights of Palestinians in Gaza are being violated with impunity."

Formal declaration to intervene on the side of South Africa have so far been filed by Malaysia, Turkey, Jordan, Bolivia while countries such as Maldives, Pakistan, Namibia have expressed interest. Kuwait along with many more countries are expected to join the side of South Africa in the coming weeks.

Israel, of course, also has its strong supporters. Germany, one of Israel's closest European allies, has called the claim that Israel is committing genocide false and said it is not covered by the Genocide Convention. Hungary has also expressed its opposition to the case. The United States, for its part, has said the allegations against Israel "are unfounded" and called the submission at the ICJ "meritless, counterproductive, and completely without any basis in fact whatsoever." It has been reported that UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron said that he did not think the case at the ICJ was helpful and that the United Kingdom's view is that "Israel has a right to defend itself."

Whatever the outcome this will be the first time the ICJ will play out as a case where Israel, stands as a defendant before the world's most important court. The outcome of this case could set a precedent, opening the way for multiple cases in the future, both individually and collectively, for Israel's victims. More importantly, a ruling in favor of South Africa will force the ICC to step in and look into what Israeli soldiers, officers, and politicians have done, or even said, to instigate what much of the rest of the world already defines as genocide.

Tareq Yousef AlShumaimry, served as Chairman of the Finance Committee and Chairman of the General Budget Committee of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague (PCA) and an observer in the 124th Administrative Council of the Court and the Consular at the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in the Netherlands during this period from 2013 to 2020.

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## Committees

Continued from Page 1

The Economic and Financial Affairs Committee unanimously approved the proposal to amend Companies Law No. 1/2016, and postponed voting on MP Shuaib Al-Muwaijiri's amendment of its sixth report on exceptional pensions.

The Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee agreed to lift the immunity of MP Badr Sayyar who requested it himself, affirming his readiness to face the lawsuit and his refusal to take refuge behind immunity. He stressed that "no one is above the law and the Constitution. We fully trust the judiciary and the soundness of our position."

The Budgets and Final Accounts Committee discussed the final account of SAB for fiscal 2022/2023 and had no comments about it.

The Education, Culture and Guidance Affairs Committee is continuing its meetings with various educational institutions in order to complete its report on the causes of the deterioration of education in the country. It will then submit its report to the Assembly before April -- before discussing the Education Development Bill included in the legislative map.

The committee also deliberated on the proposal to organize scholarships for masteral and doctoral students, as well as the proposal for the Ministry of Higher Education to allow masteral students sent abroad to complete their doctoral degree according to the rules and regulations set by the ministry; instead of limiting this to Kuwaiti graduates of foreign missions. The proposal is to include graduates of Kuwait University and students on local scholarship as per the ministry's rules and regulations.

# 5,190 candidates in MoE await promotion to supervisory roles

Primary stage tops waiting lists

By Abdul Rahman Al-Shammari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: According to the latest statistics issued by the Department of Technical Coordination and Follow-up in the Public Education Sector of the Ministry of Education, the total number of candidates registered on waiting lists for promotion to educational supervisory positions of school principal, assistant director, department heads, and technical supervisor is 5,190 from the three educational stages.

The primary stage tops the waiting lists with 2,394 candidates, including 87 school principals, 327 assistant principals, and department heads for Islamic 444, Arabic 355, English 105, Mathematics 241, Science 308, social studies 301, Arts 191, Girls' Physical Education 5 and Boys' Physical Education 30.

### Promotion

In the intermediate stage, girls schools ranked second highest in waiting lists for promotion, with the total number reaching 1,567 male and female candidates. They include the following - School principal 64, assistant principal 74, department heads: Islamic 76, Arabic 177, English 41, mathematics 60, science 89, social studies

## MoH considers recognizing palliative care as a rare medical specialization

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The Ministry of Health is planning to include some medical specializations in the rare specializations category, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources from the health sector.

Sources disclosed these specializations include palliative care medicine for doctors working in the Palliative Care Center. Sources explained that palliative care is a rare specialization which requires experienced people; as palliative care doctors provide a

therapeutic medical atmosphere and palliative treatment, as well as psychological, social and counseling services to patients in a way that guarantees them a good life and helps them move forward with their lives as normally as possible.

Sources stated that a study will be conducted to include palliative care in the rare specializations category and then respond to the request of Kuwaiti palliative doctors to receive the rare specialization allowance.

166, arts 41, physical 25, computer to 28 and physical education 60. The total number of female candidates is 931.

In the boys' schools, the total number in the waiting list is 636 - school principal 53, assistant principal 81, and department heads: Islamic 51, Arabic 27, English 17, mathematics 3, science 3, social studies 28, arts 174, physical 40, computer science 117, physical education 112.

Meanwhile, for the secondary school, the list of superintendents for various academic subjects on the waiting list was 243. The total number of secondary school female and male instructors on the waiting lists for promotion is 986 candidates, as follows: Males - 80 school principals, 33 assistant principals, and the department

heads are Islamic 48, Arabic 14, English 11, Mathematics 1, Biology and Geology 5, Physics and Chemistry 4, Art 11, Physical Education 114, Music 14, History and Geography 67, Psychology, Sociology, and Philosophy 66 and Computer Science 20.

As for the waiting lists for female candidates, the total is 548 candidates, including 35 school principals and 27 assistant principals.

As for department heads, it is Islamic 24, Arabic language 40, English language 31, mathematics 10, biology and geology 56, physics and chemistry 25, art 44, physical 25, Music 14, History and Geography 44, Psychology, Sociology and Philosophy 93 and Computer Science 30.



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## World News Roundup

## Europe

**More nations join talks on leader's peace formula:** Leaders of talks on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's peace formula on Sunday said a growing number of countries are working to help set the groundwork for Russia to join one day, an admittedly distant goal as the nearly two-year war grinds on and neither side willing to cede ground.

The fourth such meeting of national security advisers takes place in the Swiss town of Davos, where Zelenskyy is set to attend the World Economic Forum's annual meeting starting Tuesday. He will endeavor to keep up international focus on Ukraine's defense amid eroding support for Kyiv in the West and swelling distractions like conflict in the Middle East.

Andriy Yermak, the Ukrainian president's chief of staff, posted photos of the meeting's opening and hailed a "good sign" that the number of participants in a string of conferences on Zelenskyy's peace formula was growing - nearly half from Europe, as well as 18 from Asia and 12 from Africa.

"Countries from the Global South are increasingly getting involved in our work. It shows understanding that this European conflict is in fact a challenge for all humanity," he wrote.

Zelenskyy has presented a 10-point peace formula that, among other things, seeks the expulsion of all Russian forces from Ukraine and accountability for war crimes - at a time when the two sides are fighting from largely static positions along a roughly 1,500-kilometer (930-mile) front line. Such ideas are rejected out of hand by Moscow.

Yermak said if Ukraine's territorial integrity - now violated by Russia including through illegal annexations - is not restored, "soon other aggressors elsewhere in the world will be able to seize parts of other countries and start staging fake elections there." (AP)

**Huge fire engulfs a warehouse in Russia:** A huge fire tore through a large warehouse used by Russia's largest online retailer south of St. Petersburg on Saturday morning.

The blaze covered an area of 70,000 square meters (more than 750,000 square feet), with 50,000 square meters (around 540,000 square feet) of the Wildberries warehouse collapsing, according to Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry. No casualties were reported.

Videos posted to social media appeared to show employees running down fire escapes and fleeing the scene. A video shot from a passenger jet flying nearby showed flames totally engulfing the warehouse, sending huge plumes of smoke into the sky. The Associated Press couldn't immediately verify the authenticity of the videos.

Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry said that firefighters had been able to prevent the fire from spreading across the entire area of the warehouse complex and to an electrical substation. It said that, according to preliminary data, the cause of the fire was faulty electrical wiring. (AP)

**Scholz warns of extremists stoking rage:** German Chancellor Olaf Scholz called for calm and a readiness to accept compromises on Saturday as the country faces protests by farmers angry about a plan to cut their fuel subsidies. He warned of extremists stoking rage against a backdrop of wider discontent.

Farmers have blocked major roads and snarled traffic across the country with their tractors as part of a week of protests against the plan to scrap tax breaks on diesel used in agriculture. They went ahead with the demonstrations although the government watered down its original plan, saying that a car tax exemption for farming vehicles would be retained and the cuts in the diesel tax breaks would be staggered over three years.

The German chancellor said in a video message that "we took the farmers' arguments to heart" and insisted the government came up with "a good compromise," though farmers continue to insist on fully reversing the subsidy cuts. He also said officials will discuss "what else we can do so that agriculture has a good future." (AP)

**Volcano erupts in southwestern Iceland:** A volcano has erupted in southwestern Iceland for the second time in less than a month, sending semi-molten rock spewing toward a nearby settlement.

The eruption just before 8 a.m. Sunday came after a swarm of earthquakes near the town of Grindavik, the Icelandic Meteorological Office said. The community was evacuated overnight, Iceland's RUV television reported.

"Lava is flowing a few hundred meters north of the town, this is 400 to 500 meters," Kristín Jónsdóttir from the Icelandic Meteorological Office told Iceland's RUV television. "Lava flows towards Grindavik."

Residents of Grindavik were previously evacuated from their homes in November and had to stay away from the town for six weeks following a series of earthquakes and an eventual volcanic eruption. They were allowed to return on Dec. 22.

The town of 3,800 near Iceland's main airport was evacuated Nov. 10 when an earthquake swarm led to cracks and openings in the earth between the town and Sýlingarfell, a small mountain to the north. The nearby Blue Lagoon geothermal spa - one of Iceland's biggest tourist attractions - also closed temporarily. (AP)

**4 dead in another suspected drowning of migrants:** Four people were found dead overnight in another suspected drowning of migrants trying to cross the dangerous English Channel from northern France, authorities said Sunday.

Another person rescued in critical condition is being treated in a hospital in the French coastal town of Boulogne-sur-Mer, according to the French maritime authorities for the English Channel and the North Sea.

The maritime prefecture said the drama happened in the early hours of Sunday near Wimereux, a coastal village north of Boulogne, and that people appeared to have been trying to reach a boat off the beach there.

It said it had no immediate details about those who died. Drownings, sinkings and other sometimes deadly incidents, often aboard crowded and flimsy boats, are frequent on migrant routes across the busy waterway that separates northern France and Britain. (AP)

**Ceiling collapses, 30 hurt:** Thirty people were injured when a ceiling collapsed during a wedding reception Saturday evening in a former, centuries-old convent in the countryside near Pistoia, a city in Italy's Tuscany region, authorities said.

Gov. Eugenio Giani said in a post on the Telegram messaging channel that five of the injured were in critical condition. The reception was being held in a restaurant at an events venue on a hilltop that once was a convent dating back to the 15th century.

The injured were taken to several hospitals in the area, including in Florence, the governor said. Firefighters pulled people out from under the rubble, the Italian news agency ANSA said.

No one was reported missing. Cause of the collapse had not yet been determined, officials said. (AP)

**British D-Day vet celebrates turning 100:** British D-Day veteran Bill Gladden turned 100 on Saturday, a day after his niece threw a surprise birthday party for him. It was a big fuss he didn't really expect, though the old soldier had tears in his eyes long before he caught sight of a cake decorated with a replica of his uniform and the medals he earned.

But Gladden isn't focused on his birthday this year, big as it is. He's looking six months down the road.

That's because the event he really wants to attend is the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings on June 6. It may be the last of the big events marking the beginning of the end of World War II in Europe because so few of the 850,000 troops who took part remain. Gladden wants to be there to honor those who are gone - to remind people that victory did not come cheap. (AP)



Denmark's King Frederik X and Queen Mary II wave to the crowd on the balcony, after the proclamation, at Christiansborg Palace Square, in Copenhagen on Jan. 14. Denmark's prime minister proclaimed Frederik X as king after his mother Queen Margrethe II formally signed her abdication. Massive crowds turned out to rejoice in the throne passing from a beloved monarch to her popular son. (AP)

## Frederik X proclaimed the new king of Denmark after Queen Margrethe II abdicates

Denmark's prime minister proclaimed Frederik X as king on Sunday after his mother Queen Margrethe II formally signed her abdication, with massive crowds turning out to rejoice in the throne passing from a beloved monarch to her popular son.

Margrethe, 83, is the first Danish monarch to voluntarily relinquish the throne in nearly 900 years. Many thousands of people gathered outside the palace where the royal succession was taking place, the mood jubilant as the Nordic nation experienced

in first royal succession in more than a half-century, and one not caused by the death of a monarch.

Wearing a magenta outfit, Margrethe signed her abdication during a meeting with the Danish Cabinet at the Christiansborg Palace, a vast complex in Copenhagen that houses the Royal Reception Rooms and Royal Stables as well as the Danish Parliament, the prime minister's office and the Supreme Court.

Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen next proclaimed Frederik king from the balcony of the palace before

thousands of people.

The abdication document was presented to Margrethe as she sat at a massive table covered in red cloth around which royals and members of the Danish government were seated. Frederik, who was in a ceremonial military uniform adorned with medals, said beside her.

After signing it, Margrethe rose and gestured to Frederik to take her place. "God save the king," she said as she left the room. (AP)

## Politics

## Kerry, climate envoy, to leave Biden administration

## Trump, Haley, DeSantis campaign in frigid Iowa

DES MOINES, Iowa, Jan. 14, (AP): Ron DeSantis and Nikki Haley pushed across ice-cold Iowa Saturday to find voters open to an alternative to former president Donald Trump with just two days before the state's caucuses open the Republican primary calendar.

Trump, the heavy front-runner in Monday's caucuses, opted for "teleshows" after canceling larger in-person events due to a blizzard blanketing much of the state, but he remained confident as he looks for a big victory to blunt the potential rise of any rival.

Shortly after arriving in Des Moines, Trump held a livestreamed town hall-style event hosted by Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird, one of his top Iowa backers. "It's nasty out there," he said of Iowa's icy conditions. He confessed to some worry that weather could dampen turnout Monday but said his supporters will "walk over glass" to support him.

Perhaps more important than the margin of Trump's expected victory is whether either of his remaining top rivals can claim a clear second-place finish and gain momentum as the race moves forward to New Hampshire and other states.

The final Des Moines Register/NBC News poll before the caucuses found Trump maintaining a formidable lead, supported by nearly half of likely caucusgoers compared with 20% for Haley and 16% for DeSantis. Haley, the former UN ambassador and South Carolina governor, and DeSantis, the Florida governor, remain locked in a close battle for second. Trump is also viewed more favorably than the other top contenders by likely caucusgoers, at 69% compared with 58% for DeSantis and just 48% for Haley.

Trump's modified schedule gave

WASHINGTON, Jan. 14, (AP): Congressional leaders are preparing a stopgap bill to keep the federal government running into March and avoid a partial shutdown next week.

The temporary measure will run to March 1 for some federal agencies whose approved funds are set to run out Friday and extend the remainder of government operations to March 8. That's according to a person familiar with the situation and granted anonymity to discuss it.

The stopgap bill, expected to be released Sunday, would come as House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., has been under pressure from his hard-right flank in recent days to jettison a recent bipartisan spending deal with Senate Democrats. The bill would need Democratic support to pass the narrowly divided House.

Johnson insisted Friday that he is sticking with the deal he struck with Senate Majority Leader Chuck

Schumer, D-N.Y., despite pressure from some conservatives to renegotiate. Moderates in the party had urged him to stay the course.

Still, in his first big test as the new leader, he has yet to show how he will quell the revolt from his right flank that ousted his predecessor.

"Our top-line agreement remains," Johnson said Friday, referring to the budget accord reached Jan. 7.

That accord sets \$1.66 trillion in spending for the next fiscal year, with \$886 billion of the tally going to defense.

Hard-right members have criticized the deal, including several of those who helped oust former Speaker Kevin McCarthy from the speaker's office last year after he struck a spending deal with Democrats and President Joe Biden. Some have already raised the threat of a motion to oust Johnson over the deal, not even three months after he was elected.

edge of the state.

DeSantis is hoping for more voters like Michael Durham, a former Trump supporter who plans to caucus for him Monday night.

"He's just kind of no nonsense," said Durham, a 47-year-old from Council Bluffs. Durham praised DeSantis for opening Florida schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and challenging federal power. "He doesn't make any apologies for the way he thinks."

people were killed during a racially motivated shooting last summer reopened Friday morning in a northeast Florida community where it is among only a few stores selling fresh food to nearby residents.

Nearly five months after the Aug. 26 shooting, memorials dedicated to victims Jerrald Gallion, Anolt "A.J." Laguerre Jr and Angela Carr remained outside the New Town Dollar General store in Jacksonville, still decorated with photos, flowers and stuffed animals.

At the store's entrance, the company installed a permanent plaque that says "#JacksonvilleStrong," the Florida Times-Union reported. (AP)

**3 officers cleared in shooting:** A grand jury has cleared three Texas police officers who fatally shot a man who shot and killed another officer and is believed to have killed his mother and brother. The man also wounded an additional officer during the standoff.

The Travis County grand jury declined to indict SWAT officers Jared Carruth, Kevin Olejar and Sgt Kevin De La Rue in the November shooting death of Ahmed Mohamed Nassar, District Attorney José Garza said in a news release Thursday.

"They (the officers) put their own safety and lives at risk, and our office is truly grateful for their service," Garza said. (AP)



Former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley speaks to a crowd of supporters during a campaign stop on Jan. 13, at the James Theater in Iowa City, Iowa. (AP)



Garza



Cuellar

## America

**'Texas barred border agents':** The US Homeland Security Department said Saturday that Texas denied federal agents access to a stretch of border when they were trying to rescue three migrants who drowned.

The federal government's account came hours after US Rep Henry Cuellar said the Texas Military Department and Texas National Guard "did not grant access to Border Patrol agents to save the migrants" Friday night. Mexican authorities recovered the bodies of a woman and two children Saturday across the border from Eagle Pass, Texas.

"This is a tragedy, and the State bears responsibility," said Cuellar, the top Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee's subcommittee for homeland security, in a statement.

The drownings come amid escalating tensions between Texas and the US government over immigration enforcement. On Friday, the Justice Department told the US Supreme Court that Texas had taken control of an area in Eagle Pass known as Shelby Park and were not letting Border Patrol agents enter. (AP)

**Man charged in slaying:** A man has been charged in a home-invasion slaying and sexual assault in suburban Philadelphia a decade ago, authorities said.

Thomas Delgado, 50, of Philadelphia was arraigned last week in Bucks County on charges of criminal homicide, rape, robbery, burglary, kidnapping and criminal conspiracy as well as other counts. He was ordered held in the county prison without bail; court documents don't list a defense attorney and numbers listed for that name were not in service. A family member told The Philadelphia Inquirer that he and the family would have no comment.

Authorities alleged that Delgado was one of two men who broke into the home

of 48-year-old Joseph Canazaro in January 2013 and tied him up along with a woman and his 12-year-old son. They then ransacked the home, taking guns, money, jewelry and other items. The woman was also

assaulted. (AP)

**Florida Dollar General reopens:** A Dollar General store where three Black



In this photo released by Russian Emergency Ministry Press Service on on Jan. 13, 2024, Russian Emergency Situations Ministry firefighters work at the side of the warehouse in St. Petersburg, Russia. Russian authorities say that a huge fire tore through a large warehouse used by Russia's largest online retailer south of St. Petersburg. Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry said the fire covered an area of 70,000 square meters with 50,000 square meters of the warehouse collapsing. (AP)

## Subcontinent

## 5 Pak soldiers killed

## Congress party begins a cross-country march

NEW DELHI, Jan 14, (Agencies): Thousands of members of India's main opposition Congress party and its supporters began a 2-month cross-country march Sunday in a bid to regain some of the popularity it has lost to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Hindu nationalist party ahead of a crucial national vote this year.

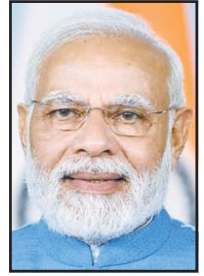
The march led by Rahul Gandhi, scion of the influential Gandhi family, began from the northeastern Manipur state's Thoubal district. The "Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra," or "Unite India Justice March," is scheduled to cover 6,713 kilometers (4,171 miles) in 67 days, mostly in buses but also on foot, while passing through 110 districts in 15 states, the party said in a statement.

This is the second time the Congress party has hit the road in the last two years to rally support for elections.

In late 2022, Gandhi led the "Bharat Jodo Yatra," or "Unite India March," from Kanyakumari, a coastal town on the southernmost tip of India, to Indian-controlled Kashmir. The march traversed 3,570 kilometers (2,218 miles) across 12 states in five months, and challenged the Modi government over growing economic inequality and the rising religious polarization.

India is expected to vote in a national election in April or May, and the opposition is scrambling to put up a fight against the electoral juggernaut of Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party. It remains popular after nearly a decade in power and many surveys suggest Modi will win a third consecutive term this year.

India's previously fractured opposition parties have joined hands and formed the INDIA alliance, which stands for Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance. However, it faced a setback in December when Modi's party won in three of four crucial state elections.



Modi

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**India protests visit of British envoy to POK:** India registered Saturday a strong protest against a recent visit of British High Commissioner in Islamabad Jane Marriott to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (POK).

"India has taken a serious note of the highly objectionable visit of the British High Commissioner in Islamabad, along with a UK Foreign Office official, to Pakistan occupied Kashmir on 10 January 2024," a statement, from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, said.

It also termed it unacceptable saying it is an infringement on India's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"Foreign Secretary has lodged a strong protest with the British High Commissioner in India on this infringement," the ministry added.

New Delhi also asserted that Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have been and shall always remain an integral part of India.

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**Explosive device kills 5 Pakistani soldiers:** An explosive device has killed five Pakistani soldiers in the country's southwest, the army said. It's the fifth deadly attack on police and troops this year already, and comes weeks before the country holds parliamentary elections.

The troops died during an operation on Saturday in Kech District, Baluchistan province, when suspected militants detonated the improvised device on the security forces' vehicle.

The ensuing gunfight killed three "terrorists," the army said. A clean-up operation was carried out to eliminate any other militants found in the area, it added.

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**Pakistani army kills 4 militants:** At least four militants were killed in two separate military operations in Pakistan's northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province bordering Afghanistan, said military on Saturday.

According to a statement issued by Pakistan military's media wing Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), an intelligence-based operation was carried out in the Mir Ali area of North Waziristan tribal district, while another operation took place in the Kulachi area of Dera Ismail Khan District in KPK.

It confirmed that two high value target militants were among four killed during the operations.

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**Court revokes PTI's electoral symbol:** The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Saturday upheld the decision of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to deprive the former ruling party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of "the cricket bat" as electoral symbol.

A three-member bench, including Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faiz Isa, heard the ECP petition challenging a lower court order to allow PTI to retain its iconic symbol for the upcoming general elections, due on February 8.

Earlier, ECP ruled to revoke the PTI's long possessed symbol, citing failure to hold intra-party polls as per its prevailing constitution and election laws.

□ □ □

**Pak politician meets Taliban supreme leader:** A senior Pakistani politician met the Taliban supreme leader in Afghanistan, the politician's office said Saturday. It's the second publicly known meeting between a foreign official and the reclusive Hibatullah Akhundzada, who rarely appears in public and seldom leaves the southern Afghan province of Kandahar.

It's also the first known meeting between Akhundzada and a Pakistani delegation.

Fazlur Rehman is the first senior Pakistani politician to visit Afghanistan since the Taliban seized power in 2021. His Jamiat Ulema Islam party is known for backing them.

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**Pak shuts key crossing into Afghanistan:** Pakistan effectively closed a key northwestern border crossing with Afghanistan to truck drivers on Saturday, Afghanistan's ruling Taliban said.

Noor Mohammad Hanif, director of Information and Culture department in Afghanistan's eastern Nangarhar province said that officials at the Torkham began asking for passports and visas from Afghan drivers.

Truckers have for years been able to pass the border without documents so they generally do not have them.

Hanif said that, in response, Afghanistan is now asking Pakistani drivers for passports and visas.



Taiwanese Vice President Lai Ching-te, also known as William Lai, (center), celebrates his victory with running mate Bi-khim Hsiao (right), and supporters in Taipei, Taiwan on Jan 13. (AP)

## Asia

## North Korea launches ballistic missile

## Taiwan condemns China comments on poll

TAIPEI, Taiwan, Jan 14, (AP): Taiwan on Sunday condemned what it said were "fallacious comments" by China following the self-governing island's presidential and parliamentary election the previous day.

The verbal sparring did not bode well for the future of Taiwan's relations with China under the winner, President-elect Lai Ching-te, or for China's relations with the United States.

The US said it has asked two former officials to go to Taiwan this week for post-election meetings with political leaders, a move that will likely displease China.

Former National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley and former Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg will arrive in Taipei on Monday and have meetings on Tuesday, the American Institute in Taiwan said in a news release. The institute is the de-facto US Embassy, since the United States does not have formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

## Continue

Lai's victory means the Democratic Progressive Party will continue to hold the presidency for a third four-year term, following eight years under President Tsai Ing-wen. China portrays the party as its nemesis and a major obstacle to its goal of bringing the island of 23 million people under its control.

A statement from Taiwan's Foreign Ministry accused China's Foreign Ministry and its Taiwan Affairs Office of falsehoods in the respective statements they issued Saturday night after the results of the election were announced.

It took issue specifically with China's often-repeated line that Taiwan is a domestic Chinese issue. China regards Taiwan as a renegade province and says that it should not even have a foreign ministry or any official relations with foreign governments.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said in its statement that "the Taiwan question is China's internal affair. Whatever changes take place in Taiwan, the basic fact that there is only one China in the world and Taiwan is part of China will not change."

That statement "is completely inconsistent with international understanding and the current cross-strait situation. It goes against the expectation of global democratic communities and goes against the will of the

## Japanese prime minister 'pledges' more funds to earthquake-hit zone

TOKYO, Jan 14, (AP): Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said he was "speechless" by the severity and immense destruction of the disaster zone he saw during the helicopter ride on his first visit to the country's north-central region of Noto since the deadly Jan. 1 earthquakes, amid worries about spreading diseases in evacuation centers.

Kishida pledged to do his utmost to improve the living conditions of the evacuees and to rebuild their homes and restore their livelihoods as soon as possible.

The magnitude 7.6 earthquake left 221 dead and more than 20 others still missing while injuring hundreds. More than 20,000 people, many of whom had their homes damaged or destroyed, are taking refuge at about 400 school gymnasiums, community centers and other makeshift facilities, according to the Fire and Disaster Management Agency report.

Road damage has hampered rescue efforts, and though relief supplies have reached most regions affected by the quake, hundreds of people in isolated areas are getting little support. Additionally, in the hard-hit towns of Noto, Wajima and Suzu, elderly residents account for half their population, and many are facing growing risks of deteriorating health, officials and experts say.

"When I saw the severity of the disaster I was speechless," Kishida told reporters, saying the aerial view showed gaping grounds, landslides crushing roads, and an elevation of the seafloor, changing the beautiful landscape on the eastern coast of the peninsula.

## Also:

**TOKYO:** An All Nippon Airways domestic flight turned back to Japan's northern airport of Sapporo after a crack was found on the cockpit window, according to the airline and media reports.

ANA Flight 1182 was en route to Toyama airport in central Japan on Saturday but had to return to the New Chitose airport for repairs, the airline said. There were no reports of injuries among the 65 people on board.

□ □ □

**AGAM, Indonesia:** Indonesia's Mount Marapi erupted again on Sunday, spewing smoke and ash high into the air, but no casualties were reported.

The Marapi Volcano Observation Post in West Sumatra province recorded an eruption with an ash column about 1,300 meters (4,265 feet) high from its peak, followed by ash rain. Sprays of ash from the eruption were seen blanketing roads and vehicles in nearby villages.

people of Taiwan to uphold democratic values," the Taiwanese statement said. "Such clichés are not worth refuting."

Lai, who will take office in May, won a three-way race for president with 40% of the vote, less than the clear majority Tsai won in 2020. Their Democratic Progressive Party lost its majority in the legislature, finishing with one seat fewer than the Kuomintang, or Nationalist Party. Neither holds a majority, giving the Taiwan People's Party - a relatively new force that won eight of the 113 seats - a possible swing vote on legislation.

## Also:

**SEOUL, South Korea:** North Korea fired a suspected intermediate-range ballistic missile into the sea on Sun-

day, South Korea's military said, two months after the North claimed to have tested engines for a new harder-to-detect missile capable of striking distant US targets in the region.

The launch was the North's first this year. Experts say North Korea could ramp up its provocative missile tests as a way to influence the results of South Korea's parliamentary elections in April and the U.S. presidential election in November.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement that it detected the launch of a ballistic missile of an intermediate-range class from the North's capital region on Sunday afternoon. It said the missile flew about 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) before landing in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

burned, a practice that gangs often use to enforce extortion demands for daily protection payments from van drivers.

The Category 5 hurricane killed 52 people and left 32 missing, and severely damaged almost all of the resort's hotels.



In this handout photo released by the Colombian Army Press Office, a rescue team recovers the body of a mudslide victim, that killed several people and left dozens injured, in western Colombia on Jan 13. (AP)



Merino



Marquez

## Lat/Am

**Mexico finds Colombian women:** Mexican officials said Saturday they found at least eight Colombian women who had been reported missing in the Gulf coast state of Tabasco.

Tabasco Gov Carlos Manuel Merino wrote on his social media accounts that the women had been found, were in good health and had been taken to the state prosecutors' offices. It was unclear whether they would be considered crime victims, and as such would be allowed to stay in Mexico.

The women were apparently working as escorts for a gang that retained their passports, and were sent to an event in the Tabasco city of Cardenas but did not return.

Colombia's Foreign Ministry issued a statement Saturday saying its consulate in Cancun had filed a missing persons report on Friday, asking Tabasco officials to help find the eight women.

The ministry said the eight were possible victims of human trafficking. However, Colombian Interior Minister Luis Fernando Velasco and Mexican sources said there were nine women missing. Gov Merino did not specify how many had been found.

Juan Carlos Castillejo, the spokesman for Tabasco state, confirmed that a missing persons report had been filed Friday, a week after the reported disappearances. (AP)

□ □ □

**Mexico sent 25K troops to Acapulco:** The Mexican government sent 25,000 troops to Acapulco after the resort was hit by Hurricane Otis on Oct 25, but apparently that hasn't stopped the violence this week.

The main Acapulco business chamber reported that gang threats and attacks have caused about 90% of the city's passenger vans to stop running, affecting the resort's main form of transport. The chamber said the violence was forcing businesses to close early on Thursday and Friday.

"Organized groups of people who have no conscience or commitment to Acapulco have committed criminal acts in broad daylight, threatening civilians with direct armed attacks, and this caused 90% of public transportation to shut down," wrote Alejandro Martínez Sidney, president of the National Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Services in Acapulco.

"If this situation continues, we will be forced to close businesses," he wrote in a statement Thursday. The problem continued into Friday, with few vans or buses seen in the streets.

Martínez Sidney was apparently referring to attacks on the privately-owned and operate passenger vans in recent days. Local media reported that at least three vans had been



Congress party leader Rahul Gandhi speaks during a protest rally against the suspension of more than 140 lawmakers from the parliament, in New Delhi, India on Dec 22, 2023. Dozens of suspended opposition lawmakers and hundreds of their supporters held a protest on Friday accusing the government of throttling democracy in the country. (AP)

The government has pledged to build about three dozen barracks for the quasi-military National Guard in Acapulco. But even with throngs of troops now on the streets, the drug gang violence that has beset Acapulco for almost two decades appears to have continued. (AP)

□ □ □

**Mudslide death toll rises to 33:** The death toll of a mudslide in western Colombia rose to 33, the government said Saturday.

The mudslide struck a busy municipal road on Friday in a mountainous area connecting the cities of Quibdo and Medellín.

The National Disaster Risk Management Unit said initially in a statement that at least 18 people had died. The agency also has said that at least 35 injured people were taken to different hospitals.

The new death toll was reported by Colombian Vice President Francia Márquez on the social platform X, formerly known as Twitter. She also tweeted that some of the victims are minors, and that other people remain trapped under the mud. A search operation was ongoing for missing people.

The risk management unit didn't specify what could have caused the mudslide, but the Defense Department reported Friday night that it has been raining in the area, making it difficult for rescue operations. (AP)

## USD stable

The exchange rate of the US Dollar on Sunday stood at KD 0.307, whereas the Euro dropped by 0.26 percent to KD 0.336 compared to Thursday's rates, said the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK).

The CBK added in its daily online bulletin that the Pound Sterling dropped by 0.09 percent to KD 0.391, the Swiss Franc dropped by 0.33 percent to reach KD 0.360, while the Japanese Yen firmed at KD 0.002.

Currency rates declared by the CBK reflect average rates, rather than actual trades. (KUNA)

## gold prices closed at USD 2049 per oz

Gold prices closed high at USD 2049 per ounce at the end of last week's trading following the surge of geopolitical risks in the Red Sea region.

A report by Dar-Alsbaek said on Sunday that gold prices rose to USD 2062 per ounce before closing at USD 2049 in a clear indication of the concerns regarding the suspension of international navigation in the Red Sea and the Strait of Bab Al-Mandab.

It added that investors were currently looking to secure their financial posi-

tions by taking fewer risks in the stock and investments markets and investing more in the precious metals, stressing that the demand on gold increased after US and British warplanes and ships launched dozens of air strikes in Yemen last Friday.

It explained that the impact on the gold market also benefited from a possible decision to decrease the interest rates by the US Federal Reserve as early as March as well as expectations of three more cuts this year. (KUNA)

## two new companies established

As part of its strategy to attract international companies to work directly in Kuwait, bypassing the need for intermediaries, the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) has announced the establishment of two new companies in the country -- Amazon for data processing and website hosting with a capital of one million dinars, and Johnson & Johnson Healthcare with a capital of 20 thousand dinars for the purpose of promoting its products. By establishing their own entities in

Kuwait, these two companies contribute to the growing share of American foreign investments facilitated by KDIPA. The authority recorded total investments of approximately 29.5 million dinars by the conclusion of the last fiscal year in 2022/2023.

Established under Law No. 116 of 2013, KDIPA operates as a specialized public authority with financial and administrative independence. Its board of directors is chaired by the Minister of Finance. (KUNA)

## Market Movements

14-02-2024

		Change	Closing pts			Change	Closing pts
▲ JAPAN	- Nikkei	+1.50	35,577.11	▼ UAE	- DFM	-0.34	4,104.11
▲ PHILIPPINES	- PSEI	+0.45	6,643.18	▼ PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	-0.05	64,638.55
▲ EGYPT	- EGX 30	+0.21	25,519.25	▼ SAUDI	- Tadawul	-0.17	12,116.09

# Business

## Emerging market countries issued record amount of bonds since start of year

# 2024 started with record EM bond issuance as yields dip

### By Kamco Invest

2024 started with record EM bond issuances as yields decline...

Emerging market countries issued record amount of bonds since the start of 2024 in order to tap the growing appetite for new bonds as well as to lock in lower rates as yields have witnessed a steep decline since Q4-2023. Moreover, bulk of the expected rate cuts by the US Fed and other central banks are already priced into current yields that could result in yields remaining low in the near-term. In addition, economists also foresee growing risk this year especially related to geopolitical issues in the Middle East, economic woes in China as well as big elections this year. The uncertainty over rate cuts also helped in keeping yields attractive for both issuers and buyers that placed record orders for bonds issued by some sovereigns. The yield on 10-year US treasury bonds fell to 3.8% during the last week of December-2023 and closed last week at 4.0%.

Aggregate bonds issued since the start of the year came in at around USD 37.0 Bn. Saudi Arabia accounted for the bulk of the total issuances of USD 12.0 Bn with USD 30 Bn in orders as the Kingdom seeks to plug in fiscal deficits forecasted at around USD 25 Bn in 2024. Mexico was next raising USD 7.5 Bn with USD 20 Bn in orders while Spain's EUR 15 Bn 10-year bond got record orders of EUR 137 Bn (USD 150 Bn). The high demand is also helping the issuers narrow the spread on these new bonds. Estimates from Bloomberg shows that sovereigns may issue around USD 2.1 Trillion in new bonds during 2024 to finance their 2024 spending plans, resulting in an increase of 7% from last year.

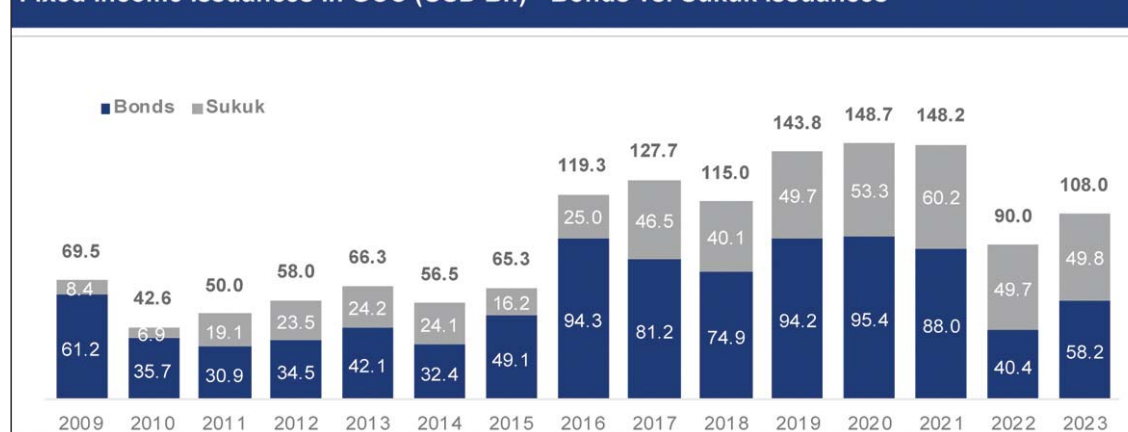
Aggregate bond issuances in the MENA reached USD 95.9 Bn in 2023 as compared to USD 80.6 Bn in 2022. The growth was led by higher issuances by corporates in the region that more than offset a decline in issuances by MENA sovereigns. At the country level, the growth was led by higher issuances by GCC corporates and sovereigns in 2023 that helped to offset an overall decline in issuances non-GCC MENA countries during the year. UAE was the biggest bond issuer in the MENA region during 2023 followed by Saudi Arabia and Morocco.

### MENA bond issuances

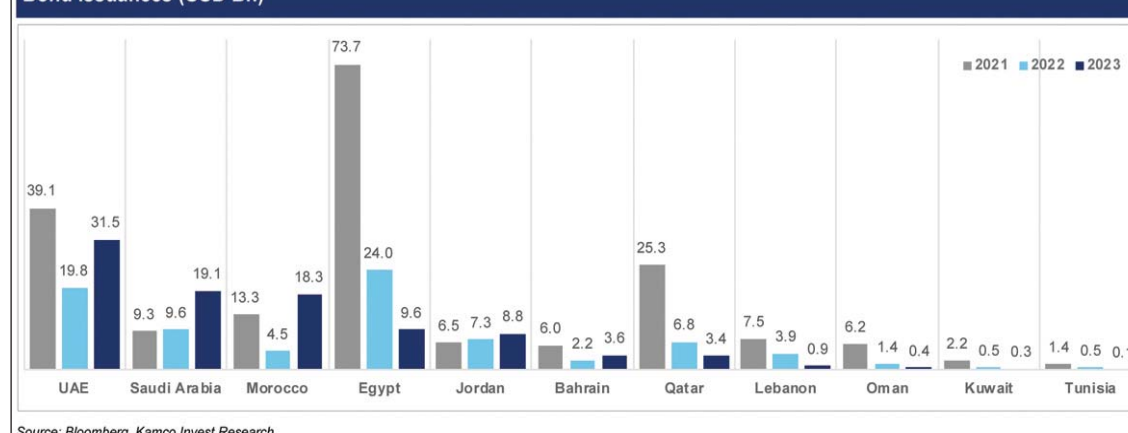
After seeing more than 50% y-o-y decline in issuances in 2022, MENA bond issuances witnessed a recovery in 2023 to reach USD 95.9 Bn, registering a y-o-y growth of 19% or USD 15.3 Bn. Nevertheless, total issuances remained well below average bond issuances during the last five years. The increase in issuances in 2023 was mainly driven by higher issuances by corporates in the region that more than offset a decline in bond issuances by sovereigns. Aggregate bond issuances by corporates in the MENA region reached USD 40.0 Bn in 2023 as compared to USD 23.1 Bn during 2022. On the other hand, government issuances witnessed a marginal decline from USD 56.5 Bn in 2022 to USD 55.5 Bn in 2023. In terms of sector at the MENA level, there was a broad-based growth during the year with only Utilities and Property & Casualty Insurance sectors seeing declines this year while the rest of the sectors witnessed growth. Banks remained the biggest issuers in the region with aggregate bond issuances at USD 25.2 Bn in 2023 vs. USD 15.7 Bn in 2022. Financial Services and Pipeline companies were next with issuances reaching USD 8.1 Bn (USD 7.4 Bn in 2022) and USD 3.0 Bn (USD 2.5 Bn in 2022), respectively.

Within the MENA region, GCC countries were the key drivers of higher bond issuances during the year. Total bond issuances by GCC countries stood at USD 58.2 Bn during 2023 as compared to USD 40.4 Bn during 2022, registering an increase of 44.2% or USD 17.8 Bn. On the other hand, bond issuances by non-GCC MENA countries (Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia and Lebanon) declined during 2023 to reach USD 37.7 Bn as compared to USD 40.2 Bn in 2022. The biggest decline was seen in issuances by Egypt that reached USD 9.6 Bn in 2023 as compared to USD 24.0 Bn in 2022, a decline of USD 14.4 Bn. On the other hand,

### Fixed Income Issuances in GCC (USD Bn) - Bonds vs. Sukuk Issuances



### Bond Issuances (USD Bn)



Source: Bloomberg, Kamco Invest Research

UAE witnessed the biggest growth in issuances during the year reaching USD 31.5 Bn during 2023 as compared to USD 19.8 Bn in 2022. UAE was also the biggest bond issuer in the region followed by Saudi Arabia and Morocco with aggregate issuances of USD 19.1 Bn and USD 18.3 Bn, respectively, after registering strong y-o-y growth in issuances in both the countries. In terms of type of issuers in the GCC, both government and corporates in the region registered higher y-o-y bond issuances in 2023. Total sovereign bond issuances in the GCC stood at USD 18.2 Bn in 2023 as compared to USD 17.2 Bn in 2022. On the other hand, GCC corporates showed a healthy growth during the year with total bond issuances reaching USD 40.0 Bn as compared to USD 23.1 Bn during 2022. The monthly trend in GCC issuances showed big-ticket issuances during the first two months of the year aggregating USD 22.5 Bn followed by much smaller but consistent issuances during the rest of the year.

### Global Sukuk Issuances

Global sukuk issuances declined for the second consecutive year during 2023 after showing a partial recovery in 2022. Total sukuk issuances during the year stood at USD 108.0 Bn, the lowest in five years as compared to USD 127.4 Bn in 2022. Saudi Arabia was the top global sukuk issuer during the year for the fourth straight year with aggregate issuances reaching USD 38.4 Bn (including Supranational sukuk issuers headquartered in Saudi Arabia), although total issuances in the Kingdom declined y-o-y from USD 44.5 Bn in 2022. Sukuk issuance in 2023 in Saudi Arabia was also the lowest in three years. Malaysia was next with aggregate sukuk issuances at USD 26.2 Bn in 2023 as compared to USD 38.8 Bn in 2022. Issuances in

Malaysia was the lowest in nine years during 2023. UAE ranked third globally with total sukuk issuances reaching USD 10.8 Bn during 2023 as compared to USD 4.0 Bn in issuances during the previous two years. UAE's ranking improved against Indonesia, Turkey and Pakistan in 2023. Green sukuk issuance declined for the fourth straight year to reach USD 1.25 Bn in 2023.

Sovereign sukuk issuers continued to lead during 2023 with higher issuances as compared to corporates. However, the share of government issuances declined significantly as compared to 2022 as well as vs. historical levels. Total government sukuk issuances stood at USD 57.9 Bn in 2023, the lowest in seven years, as compared to USD 83.3 Bn in 2022. On the other hand, corporate sukuk issuances was the highest on record during 2023, reaching USD 50.0 Bn during the year as compared to USD 44.1 Bn during 2022. This was also reflected in the record share of corporate sukuk issuers that reached 46.3% during 2023 as compared to 34.6% during 2022.

Higher sukuk issuances by Saudi Arabia and UAE also supported aggregate issuances in the GCC as compared to the rest of the world. Total sukuk issuances in the GCC stood at USD 49.8 Bn in 2023 as compared to USD 49.7 Bn in 2022 whereas non-GCC global sukuk issuances stood at USD 58.1 Bn in 2023 as compared to USD 77.7 Bn in 2022. Sukuk issuances by GCC governments declined during the year to reach USD 23.4 Bn as compared to USD 32.2 Bn in 2022. On the other hand, a solid increase in corporate issuances that reached USD 26.4 Bn in 2023 as compared to USD 17.4 Bn in 2022 more than offset the decline in sukuk issuances by GCC governments. Within the GCC, sukuk issuances from the Saudi government declined during 2023 to reach USD 17.9 Bn vs. USD 29.2 Bn in 2022. This decline

was partially offset by higher issuances by UAE and Bahraini sovereigns.

### Expectations

The outlook for 2024 shows central banks across key countries looking at cutting interest rates for the first time in two years. The point of divergence between central banks is the size of cuts expected during the year. The most recent consensus forecast from Bloomberg shows that the US Fed is expected to slash rates by around 150 bps in 2024 to 3.9% (mid-point) while the Eurozone is forecasted to undertake a steeper rate cut of around 200 bps. The fed dot plot projections show 75 bps rate cuts in 2024. The rate cuts by other central banks are expected to be relatively lower depending on the existing rates, the pressure on foreign exchange rates, economic trends in the market and last but not the least, inflation.

We expect rate cuts by GCC central banks to be broadly in line with the US fed due to the pegged currencies vs. the USD. Kuwait is expected to be an exception in the GCC as its currency pegged to a basket of currencies. We expect Kuwait's central banks to cut rate at a relatively smaller pace vs. the US Fed. This is mainly because Kuwait central bank implemented the smallest rate hike over the last two years and is therefore expected to cut rates at the smallest pace.

In terms of treasury yields, after peaking in October-2023, the US 10-year treasury yield has shown a declining trend until the last week of December-2023. The consensus forecast for 2024 shows that treasury yields will trade around current levels over the next six months followed by a decline during the 2H-2024, according to a Reuters poll, indicating that the market has fully priced in rate cuts for 2024. According to Reuters, interest rate futures are now pricing in around two thirds chance of the first rate cut in March-2024, a decline from 90% chance two weeks back.

Expectations in terms of fixed income issuances globally remain positive for 2024 with both sovereigns and corporates encouraged to tap the market. The year started on a positive note with record issuances of EM bonds. Forecasts from Bloomberg suggests government bond issuances of close to USD 2.1 Trillion globally, an increase of 7% from 2023. The sizable maturities expected in 2024 are mostly related to issuances during the pandemic. There is also a risk of sustained inflation, although recent data suggests otherwise, and as a result, a number of corporates and governments are seen rushing to issue bonds by locking in lower prevailing rates.

Issuances of sukuk is expected to increase in 2024 after seeing two straight years of declines until last year. Key motivations for growth in sukuk issuance includes lower prevailing rates, crude oil prices remaining subdued around the USD 70/b levels as well as diversification as a number of countries and corporates are embracing Islamic sukuk in their funding mix. Sovereigns in the GCC would be particularly looking at raising debt using the sukuk route due to the subdued expectations for oil prices. Moreover, maturity of sukuk is probably the highest on record in the case of GCC issuers at USD 37.9 Bn in 2024. Refinancing of these securities should keep GCC issuances elevated in 2024.

In terms of GCC bond issuances, maturities are also elevated in 2024 at USD 45.3 Bn and the refinancing of these instruments are expected to account for the bulk of the issuances by corporates and governments in the region this year. This would be further supported by a strong pipeline of projects across the GCC related to the respective diversification goals. We expect fresh issuances to be front-end loaded as seen recently and earlier-than-expected rate cuts to more evenly spread the issuances during the year. Fiscal deficits by some sovereigns in the region (Saudi Arabia projected a deficit of around USD 25 Bn in 2024) is another factor supporting issuances by GCC sovereigns.

# Settlement ops among consolidated local banks dip in 1st 11 mths of '23

Decrease amounted to approximately KD31.1 bln

### By Ahmad Fathi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14:** Settlement operations among local consolidated banks saw an 11.6% decrease over the first 11 months of 2023, amounting to approximately 31.1 billion dinars. This decline, from 267.8 billion dinars in the same period of 2022 to 236.7 billion dinars, occurred despite a 5.9% monthly increase in November, reaching 27.789 billion dinars from 26.23 billion dinars in October.

Data from the Central Bank of Kuwait for November reveals a 59.1% annual increase in settlement operations between local banks, totaling 10.32 billion dinars, compared to 17.46 billion dinars at the end of November 2022.

The decline in settlement operations coincided with various factors affecting banks in 2022, notably a 2.6% reduction in new credit facilities, consolidating at 20.72 billion dinars in the first 11 months of 2023 from 21.27 bil-

lion dinars in the same period of 2022.

Personal facilities showed a 29.8% decrease, totaling 3.38 billion dinars, down from 4.822 billion dinars in the 11 months of 2022. Consumer loans decreased by 6.6% to 852.2 million dinars, and housing loans dropped by 37% to 1.759 billion dinars.

On a positive note, total deposits with local banks increased by 2.9%, reaching 48.269 billion dinars at the

## Dedication to high standards

# CMA obtains ISO 22301 certificate

**KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14:** In its continuous commitment to business continuity and adherence to international best practices, the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) has successfully obtained the ISO 22301 certificate, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This international certification attests to the Authority's dedication to implementing the highest standards of business continuity management, encompassing all its operations, as well as its main and backup data centers.

Prof. Dr. Ahmed Abdul Rahman Al-Mulhim, the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Capital Markets Authority, emphasized

the structured and effective approach taken by the Authority to achieve this milestone.

The ISO 22301 certificate reflects the Authority's capability to manage disruptions, restore crucial operations, and sustain essential functions during emergency events. Regular testing has been conducted to ensure preparedness and continual enhancement of the business continuity program system.

International auditors from Bureau Veritas conducted a thorough review, confirming the Authority's compliance with ISO 22301 standards. The review occurred in two stages: the in-

ital stage, from July 30 to 31, 2023, involved scrutinizing documents and verifying their alignment with technical requirements.

The second phase, conducted between November 19 and 23, 2023, focused on ensuring the implementation of these technical requirements within the authority's work environment.

Al-Mulhim highlighted that the acquisition of this certificate instills confidence among investors and partners in the Kuwaiti financial market. It underscores the Authority's commitment to delivering services with the utmost efficiency and safety, even during times of crisis.

end of November 2023 from 46.91 billion dinars in December 2022.

The value of checks issued between banks, including the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwait Credit Bank, decreased by 6.4% in November, amounting to 1.503 billion dinars. On an annual basis, there was a 2.8% decline, reducing the total value of checks issued between banks during the first 11 months of 2023 by 5.7% to 15.676 billion dinars.

Check settlements dropped by 7.97% in November to 208.8 thousand transactions, but on an annual basis, it decreased by 0.6%.

In contrast, the total number of settlement operations increased by 3.4% over the first 11 months of 2023, reaching 2.254 million transactions from 2.18 million transactions in the same period of 2022.

## Government ownership of KSE listed companies is worth 28.1 billion dinars

**KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14:** The Government of Kuwait's ownership in 33 companies listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange is believed to be in the range of 6.01 billion dinars.

According to the data compiled by Al-Anba as of the close of 2023, this figure represents 14.8% of the total market capitalization value of all companies on the KSE list which has reached 40.63 billion dinars.

The government ownership in these companies is 28.1 billion dinars equivalent to 21.4% of their collective market capitalization.

Analyzing the trend, it is evident that the government's declared ownership in listed companies saw an increase of about 1.4 billion dinars in 2021, reflecting a 28% annual growth rate. This brought the total to 4.9 billion dinars at the end of 2020.

Subsequently, in 2022, the ownership value rose by approximately 625 million dinars, marking a 10% increase and reaching 6.92 billion dinars by the end of 2022. However, in 2023, there was a decrease of about 900 million dinars, equivalent to a 13% decline. Over the past five years, the value of government agencies' ownership has doubled twice, starting from 3.43 billion dinars at the end of 2017 to 6 billion dinars at the close of 2023.

With the Kuwait Stock Exchange reaching record highs in 2024, the value of government agencies' ownership in these 33 companies increased to about 308 million dinars, totaling around 6.32 billion dinars as of January 10, 2024.

Breaking down the ownership, the General Investment Authority holds the lead among government agencies, declaring ownership in 8 companies on the Kuwait Stock Exchange.

The market value of its ownership, which exceeds 5% of the companies'

capital, stands at about 2.32 billion dinars, representing 38.6% of the government's total contributions.

This reflects a decrease of about 379 million dinars from the end of 2022, with a slight increase of 52 million dinars in 2022. Over the past five years, the General Investment Authority's contributions increased by approximately 658 million dinars.

The largest ownership of the General Investment Authority is in Kuwait Finance House (KFH), with an ownership percentage of 16.8%, valued at 1.8 billion dinars. This constitutes 77.5% of its declared ownership on the Kuwait Stock Exchange. The General Investment Authority also holds less than 5% ownership in undisclosed leading listed shares.

Additionally, its investments in the Zain Company, the Warba Bank, and the Kuwait Investment Company are 349 million dinars, 61 million dinars, and 43.4 million dinars, respectively.

Historically, the value of the Kuwait Investment Authority's contributions fluctuated, reaching its peak at about 2.7 billion dinars in 2022 before decreasing to 2.3 billion dinars by the end of 2023.

The Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) secured the second position in terms of declared ownership in companies on the Kuwait Stock Exchange, with investments and contributions in about 28 companies valued at 2.26 billion dinars.

This constitutes 37.6% of the total government contributions, with a decrease of about 201 million dinars in 2023, following an increase of 278 million dinars in 2022. The largest contribution of the General Organization for Social Insurance to the Kuwait Stock Exchange is in Kuwait Finance House (KFH), amounting to 985 million dinars.



### Argentina's annual inflation soars to 211.4%, highest in 32 years

Argentina's annual inflation soared to 211.4% in 2023, the highest rate in 32 years, according to figures released Thursday by the government's INDEC statistics agency.

The data reflects the strong impact of a series of shock measures, including a 50% devaluation of the nation's currency, implemented by right-wing President Javier Milei in hopes of eventually bringing the country's roaring inflation under control.

The annual inflation compared with about 95% in 2022. The country's monthly inflation stood at

25.5% in December, up from 12.8% in November, but slightly below the 30% the government had forecast.

Milei had said in an interview with a Buenos Aires radio station before the figures were released that if the monthly inflation rate came in below the forecast, that would be an accomplishment.

"If the number is closer to 25%, it means that the success was tremendous," Milei said.

In his inauguration speech, Milei announced a painful adjustment plan aimed at staving off hy-

perinflation and warned that the measures would initially have a "negative impact on the level of activity, employment, real wages, and the number of poor and indigent people."

It is estimated that around 40% of the population live in poverty.

Milei said in the interview that once the macro-economic variables stabilize, he will then dollarize the economy.

Food and non-alcoholic beverages, the biggest contributors to the annual inflation rate, saw an average increase of 29.7% in December, accord-

ing to INDEC. Other products for mass consumption rose around 30%, while medications had average increases of 40%.

Consultancy Eco Go warns of a slight slowdown in food prices in the first days of January and is projecting a monthly increase in the cost of living of less than the 23% in December.

"There is still a process of rearrangement of relative prices," Milei said on Thursday. "We are going to continue to see a period of inflation with horrible numbers, but then we'll see that the next step will be the fall of inflation." (AP)

### Conflicts hindered aggressive timelines for transitioning to cleaner energy

## States override locals to block green projects despite climate goals

LANSING, Michigan, Jan 14, (AP) - Clean energy developers had planned a 75-turbine wind farm in mid-Michigan's Montcalm County before local voters shot down the idea in 2022 and recalled seven local officials who had supported it.

About 150 miles (240 kilometers) southeast, Clara Ostrander in Monroe County found herself at the center of a similar conflict as rising medical costs forced her and her husband to consider selling land her family has owned for 150 years.

Leasing a parcel to an incoming solar farm could save the property, but neighboring residents complained so vehemently that Ostrander said the township changed its zoning to block the project.

"There are people in this township I will never, ever speak to again," she said.

#### Local restrictions

Local restrictions in Michigan derailed more than two dozen utility-scale renewable energy projects as of last May, according to a study by the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law at Columbia University. Nationwide, and at least 228 restrictions in 35 states have been imposed to stop green energy projects.

The conflicts have hindered many states' aggressive timelines for transitioning to cleaner energy production, with the ultimate goal of eliminating carbon pollution within the next two decades.

Michigan and more than a dozen other states are seeking to upend the decision-making process by grabbing the power to supersede local restrictions and allow state authorities to approve or disapprove locations for utility-scale projects.

The shift has sparked a political backlash that may escalate as more states seek to simplify getting green energy projects approved and built.

"We can't allow projects of statewide importance that are critical to our state energy security to be vetoed on purely local concerns," said Dan Scripps, chair of Michigan's Public Service Commission.

Scripps and two other commission members now have the power to site large-scale renewable energy projects in the



Solar panels are seen at the DTE O'Shea Solar Park work in Detroit, Nov. 16, 2022. More than a dozen states have given themselves the power to override local zoning restrictions blocking large-scale renewable energy projects. (AP)

state under legislation passed by Michigan lawmakers and signed by Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer in November.

Michigan joined Connecticut, New York, Oregon and Minnesota in requiring utility providers to transition to 100% carbon-free electricity generation by 2040. A sixth state, Rhode Island, is shooting for 100% renewable energy by 2033. The goals are consistent with the Biden administration's target of carbon pollution-free electricity by 2035 and a net-zero emissions economy by 2050. Other states have long-standing goals lower than 100%.

But many local officials say giving states the power to

site large-scale energy projects clashes with cherished U.S. political principles. Local officials, they say, are the public servants closest to and most directly accountable to voters. They argue that's especially important when it comes to land use and what gets built near homes.

In Kansas, Osage County's moratorium on commercial solar and wind projects came in 2022 after multiple hearings. County Commissioner Jay Bailey said the decision reflected most residents' concerns. Even after all the hearings and discussions, he said he just didn't feel he had enough information about the effects of large turbines or solar farms.

"Here's the difference," he said. "If you allow them, you

can't go back and change it, but if you don't allow them, you can always change it."

In other places, such as the Flint Hills of Kansas - home to most of the nation's remaining tall grass prairie - moratoriums on energy projects stem from environmental concerns.

But even with the restrictions in place in parts of Kansas, renewable energy has boomed there. Wind farms now provide 47% of the state's electricity, up from 7% in 2010. The gains came as the clean energy lobby worked steadily to counter opposition from the state's Republican-controlled Legislature.

Elise Caplan, vice president for regulatory affairs at the nonprofit American Council on Renewable Energy, said local rules restricting green energy facilities are "not really based on science." Projects can benefit local environments by retiring generating plants powered by fossil fuels, she said.

#### Clean-energy goals

Michigan has pursued its clean-energy goals by rapidly developing facilities where there's ample farmland. It's a choice that can divide rural communities, as it did in the Monroe County case in which Ostrander sought to lease property for a solar farm.

Michigan's new siting law could revive the project. "No one's forcing this on us," Ostrander said. "This was something we decided and felt it would be good for us to build to keep our property in the family."

Michigan is unusual in that its more than 1,200 townships have the power to enact and enforce zoning ordinances. Twenty of the state's 83 counties have passed ordinances blocking or delaying wind or solar developments.

Scripps, the chair of Michigan's Public Service Commission that can now override those restrictions, has said an additional 209,000 acres (84,579 hectares) will be needed for projects to hit the state's 60% renewable energy goal by 2035. It's a massive increase from the 17,000 acres (6,880 hectares) currently being used.



In this photo released by VinFast, Indonesian President Joko Widodo sits behind the wheel of a VinFast electric car as Vingroup Chairman and VinFast Global CEO Pham Nhat Vuong (right), look on in Hai Phong, Vietnam on Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024. (AP)

### 'Conditions ready for a car plant'

## Indonesia's president visits Vietnam's EV maker VinFast

HANOI, Vietnam, Jan 14, (AP) - Indonesian President Joko Widodo visited Vietnamese automaker VinFast's factory on Saturday and said that he would create the necessary conditions for the multinational to be able to build a plant and invest in Indonesia quickly. On a trip to the sprawling factory in the port city of Haiphong in northern Vietnam, Widodo also sat behind the wheel of a VinFast electric car before wrapping up his three-day visit to Vietnam.

The Vietnamese EV maker has said it will invest \$1.2 billion in Indonesia and build a factory with the potential to make up to 50,000 vehicles every year. Green SM, an EV taxi operator that is mostly owned by VinFast's founder, also announced an investment plan of \$900 million in Indonesia. It had earlier signed an agreement with Indonesian technology company PT GoTo Gojek Tokopedia Tbk, the owner of Gojek transportation services, to help their taxi service switch to electric ve-

hicles.

VinFast's plans to expand in Indonesia are part of their global goal of selling EVs in 50 markets worldwide. It is exporting EVs to the U.S. and also building a \$4 billion EV factory in North Carolina, where production is slated to begin this year.

Earlier this month it said it planned to spend up to \$2 billion to build an electric vehicle factory in India, the world's third-largest auto market by sales.

VinFast is part of Vingroup, a sprawling conglomerate that began as an instant noodle company in Ukraine in the 1990s. It was founded and is run by Vietnam's richest man, Pham Nhat Vuong.

Both Vietnam and Indonesia have been pledged billions of dollars by the Group of Seven advanced economies to help transition away from dirty fossil fuel as a part of a Just Energy Transition Partnership.

# Lower mortgage rates prompt home owners to list properties

### Housing supply remains constrained

LOS ANGELES, Jan 14, (AP) - The recent pullback in mortgage rates is spurring more homeowners to put their homes up for sale, though the increases so far have been too modest to return the housing market's inventory of available properties back to pre-pandemic levels.

The number of active listings, a tally of U.S. homes on the market that excludes those pending a finalized sale, climbed 4.9% to 714,176 in December from a year earlier, the biggest annual increase since June, according to data released this week by Realtor.com.

#### New listings

A big part of the increase was due to a 9.1% jump in new listings, or properties that made their market debut in December, which posted an annual increase for the second time after 17 months of declines.

As is typically the case, active listings declined in December from the previous month, falling 5.5%. But the drop was less than the typical decline of 6.8% to 13.2%, Realtor.com said.

While the pickup in home listings is a welcome development for prospective homebuyers, the housing market remains constrained with for-sale inventory still well below



Solar panels are seen at the DTE O'Shea Solar Park work in Detroit, Nov. 16, 2022. More than a dozen states have given themselves the power to override local zoning restrictions blocking large-scale renewable energy projects. (AP)

pre-pandemic levels.

Consider that active listings were down 30.9% compared in December compared to the same month in 2019, while new listings were down nearly 12%.

"It's definitely a step in the right

direction for the housing market," said Danielle Hale, Realtor.com's chief economist. "But we'll need to see this repeated not just in November and December, but into January and February in order to really turn around the inventory situation in the

housing market."

Many factors have contributed to the housing market's chronic shortage of homes for sale, including more than a decade of below-average new home construction and demographic trends that have led to homeowners hanging on to their properties longer.

While homebuilders have stepped up construction, the biggest source of for-sale inventory is homeowners who put their home on the market. But years of soaring home prices and the large gap that exists between where mortgage rates are now and where they were just a couple of years ago has discouraged many who locked in rock-bottom rates from selling.

The average rate on a 30-year mortgage has declined in recent weeks since reaching 7.79% in late October, and was at 6.66% as of this week, according to Freddie Mac.

And housing economists expect that the average rate will continue to decline this year, though forecasts generally see it moving no lower than 6%.

That may not be enough to motivate many homeowners to sell, given that some two-thirds of U.S. homes have a mortgage with a rate under 4% and more than 90% have a rate below 6%.

That means the upcoming spring homebuying season is likely to favor sellers as homebuyers compete for a relatively limited number of homes for sale.

### Funding threatened yet again

# IRS collected \$360 million more from rich tax cheats

WASHINGTON, Jan 14, (AP) - The IRS says it has collected an additional \$360 million in overdue taxes from delinquent millionaires as the agency's leadership tries to promote the latest work it has done to modernize the agency with Inflation Reduction Act funding that Republicans are threatening to chip away.

Leadership from the federal tax collector held a call with reporters Thursday to give updates on how the agency has used a portion of the tens of billions of dollars allocated to the agency through Democrats' Inflation Reduction Act, signed into law in August 2022.

Along with the \$122 million collected from delinquent millionaires last October, now nearly half a billion dollars in back taxes from rich tax cheats has been recouped, IRS leaders say.

The announcement comes as the IRS braces for a more severe round of

funding cuts.

The agency cuts previously agreed upon by the White House and congressional Republicans in the debt ceiling and budget cuts package passed by Congress last year - which included \$20 billion rescinded from the IRS over two years - would be frontloaded as part of the overall spending package for the current fiscal year that could help avoid a partial government shutdown later this month.

#### Rescission

IRS Commissioner Daniel Werfel said that "the impact of the rescission that's being discussed as part of the current budget will not impact our efforts until the later years."

He said the agency would still spend its now-\$60 billion allocation over the next 10 years and spread the need for more funding into later years.

"Our intent is to spend the money



The exterior of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) building in Washington on March 22, 2013. The IRS says it has collected an additional \$360 million in overdue taxes from delinquent millionaires, as the agency leadership tries to promote the latest work it has done to modernize the agency with Inflation Reduction Act funding. (AP)

to have maximum impact in helping taxpayers," he said, "to have maximum impact now and in the immediate future."

"My hope is that as we demonstrate the positive impact that IRA funding is having for all taxpayers, that there will be a need and a desire amongst policymakers at that time to restore IRS funding so that we can continue the momentum that's having a very positive impact," Werfel said.

As of December, the IRS says it opened 76 examinations into the largest partnerships in the U.S. that include hedge funds, real estate investment partnerships and large law firms.

"It's clear the Inflation Reduction Act funding is making a difference for taxpayers," Werfel said. "For progress to continue we must maintain a reliable, consistent annual appropriations for our agency."

The 2024 tax season begins on Jan. 29, the IRS says.

## Emerging trends in sustainability and climate action

# BDO Kuwait and ABCK AmCham unveil key strategies in ESG seminar

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: ABCK AmCham Kuwait supported the event hosted by BDO Kuwait, featuring a seminar on "Navigating ESG in Business". The seminar was kick started by Mr. Rami Alhadhrami, Partner – Tax & Regulatory Services. Mr. Dipankar Ghosh, Partner – ESG & Sustainability Services at BDO, then took place to address the dynamic landscape of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices.

The seminar navigated through the ESG context, delving into the intricacies of ESG disclosure and the regulatory landscape, exploring sectoral trends and their impacts, along with implications and directions stemming from COP28. Mr. Dipankar Ghosh provided key takeaways, offering actionable insights for businesses in the ever-evolving world of ESG and sustainability.

In a world grappling with energy scarcity, water scarcity, material depletion, land shortage, and waste management issues, the seminar illuminated global opportunities arising from top sustainability risks. It articulated the reasons for embracing sustainability beyond regulatory compulsion, emphasizing its role as a business imperative. The focus was on enhancing shareholder value through good governance, and ethical practices, meeting environmental and social regulations, and navigating emerging regulations worldwide.

The seminar also explored the typical ESG maturity journey of businesses, emphasizing the importance of ESG disclosures. The regulatory landscape was scrutinized, highlighting global trends and the impact of regulatory bodies on disclosure practices. Attention was drawn to the increasing demands from investors on ESG considerations.

For the GCC nations, the seminar underscored the voluntary adoption of corporate sustainability reporting standards and the encouragement for businesses to disclose their ESG practices. The importance of assurance in solidifying ESG disclosure efforts was discussed.

The event delved into Kuwait's ambitions for achieving net zero and the implications on businesses. Specific case studies from Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (Oil & Gas), National Bank of Kuwait (Financial Services), and Mabaneq (Real Estate) showcased sustainability in action.

With a focus on COP28, the seminar unveiled key takeaways, including emerging leading practices, ESG transformation levers for organizations, the extension of corporate reporting to climate change, and the inevitable transition of ESG.

Mrs. Asmaa Al-Zimami, an engineer at the Environment Public Authority (EPA), participated in the seminar by providing an overview of EPA waste management objectives and the Asbestos Waste Removal Program in Kuwait.

The seminar included an effective panel discussion session led by Mr. Ketan Puri, Manager of Regulatory Services

at BDO, were insightful thoughts were exchanged with panelists which included participation of leaders from BDO Kuwait, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, the private sector, and researchers in economic sustainability field.

The next presentation featured Abdallah Farhat, Partner- Audit and Assurance Department, who explored the landscape of Sustainability Reporting, focusing on the groundbreaking IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standards. Mr. Farhat discussed the two sustainability-related disclosure Standards: IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standard S1 – General Requirements for Disclosure of Sustainability-Related Financial Information and IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standard S2 – Climate-Related Disclosures. These standards, prepared by the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB), provided additional information regarding an organization's sustainability-related risks and opportunities.

IFRS S1 and IFRS S2 became effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024, subject to adoption by in each country.

The seminar's third presentation, delivered by Tahseen Abuzaineh, Assistant Manager Sustainability & ESG Services, explored the realm of ESG Technology and the Power of ESG Data Management Systems. Abuzaineh shared insights into the growing global market of ESG reporting software, estimating it at \$0.7 billion in 2022, with anticipated growth to \$2.7 billion by 2028. The presentation delved into ESG data collection and reporting challenges, emphasizing the benefits of ESG Data Management Systems.

The BDO ESG Data & Digital Service Offering was presented, covering ESG Data Management Software Evaluation & Selection, Managing Large Volumes of Data, Ensuring Audit-readiness, Cleansing ESG data for accurate reporting, Data Protection & Compliance, and Data Collection & Integration.

The final presentation by Rami Alhadhrami and Ketan Puri, explored the crucial role of Tax in ESG. They highlighted the need for taxes to fund and maintain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They emphasized that tax is a fiscal tool that can drive sustainability activities, tackle climate change, and meet societal expectations for corporations to pay their fair share of taxes.

The presentation underscored the importance of tax governance & transparency, especially in the M&A space, where investors evaluate investee entities' tax frameworks. Aligning tax with ESG approaches, Alhadhrami presented guidelines for developing Tax ESG principles, including responsible tax policies and impact testing.

Alhadhrami concluded with key takeaways on transparent tax reporting, sustainable tax policies, and tax risk & governance framework, aligning with ESG guidelines such as those from PRI.



ABCK-AmCham Kuwait is a non-profit organization operating since 1985 and is composed of Fortune 500 corporations, small and medium-sized companies, and prominent business leaders and entrepreneurs, both American and Kuwaiti. ABCK-AmCham Kuwait has acted as an advocate for American interest in the state of Kuwait. For More Information, please visit our website at [www.amchamkuwait.org](http://www.amchamkuwait.org) or follow us on the social media channel @abck1985



Photos during the golden jubilee of the Mar Baselios Movement Golden Jubilee Celebration: Mar Baselios Movement recognizes Rev. Emmanuel Ghareeb's contributions.

## 25 years of spiritual leadership in Kuwait

# Rev. Emmanuel Ghareeb receives prestigious Baselio Golden award

## AUK hosts enlightening book talk with Professor Hesham Al-Awadi

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: The American University of Kuwait (AUK) Library and the College of Business and Economics (CBE) Faculty Speaker Series (FSS) collaboratively hosted a lecture by Dr. Hesham Al-Awadi, professor of history and international relations, on his latest book, *The History of Slaves in the Arabian Gulf*, published by Dar Al-Tanweer in 2021.



Dr. Hesham Al-Awadi

Dr. Al-Awadi shared true stories on the period of slavery in the region that forms an essential part of the region's past. Drawing from extensive research, including archived personal testimonies of slaves, the book outlines the difficult journeys of en-

slaved men, women, and children taken to the Gulf. It describes their tough experiences, roles in society, economic contributions, and how their legacies continue today.

The event concluded with a lively Q&A session.

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: On the occasion of the golden jubilee of the Mar Baselios Movement, a spiritual and charitable organization of St. Gregorios Indian Orthodox Maha Edavaka, the 'BaselioSuvarnaPuraskaram' was instituted to Rev. Emmanuel Benjamin Ghareeb in recognition of his comprehensive contributions to the Christian community in Kuwait.

Rev. Emmanuel Ghareeb is the only native Christian priest in the GCC countries includes Kuwait. Rev. Ghareeb was ordained to the priesthood in January 1999. He left the position as the Under Secretary in the Ministry of Oil State of Kuwait and chosen to become a Christian Minister. There are almost 100 different Christian denominations in Kuwait are worshipping in the premises of the National Evangelical Church, which is chaired by Rev. Emmanuel Ghareeb, the honourable Citizen of the Country.

Former Headmaster of St. Gregorios Sunday School and I.T. Consultant Mr. Kurien Varghese, Chief Executive Officer of Bahrain Exchange Company Mr. Mathews Varghese, General Manager & Partner of Gulf Advanced Trading Company Mr. K.S. Varughese were the jury members of the Baselio Golden Award.

Mar Baselios Movement is a spiritual movement that has been working in Kuwait for the past 50 years under the patronage of Moran Mar BaselioGhevarghese II Bava of blessed memory, who was the Third Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan of the Malankara Orthodox Church.

## The Conversation

### Playful approach to education

## Breaking boundaries: Professor's journey to integrate arts in STEM

By Rob Roznowski

Michigan State University

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

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Often, science and art are described as starkly different things. That narrative can start early on, with kids encouraged to pursue a STEM - short for science, technology, engineering and math - education that may or may not include an arts education.

As a professor of acting, I'd never thought much about the STEM fields until I received a fellowship to integrate the arts into STEM educational models. I used the opportunity to write and direct a play for elementary schoolers that showed how the arts can improve upon and extend work in STEM fields when properly integrated - but it wasn't an easy process. Whether STEM should be augmented to STEAM - science, technology, engineering, arts and math - with the addition of the arts remains something of a debate.

The origins of STEM education can be traced to as early as the Morrill Act of 1862, which promoted agricultural science and later engineering at land grant universities. In 2001, the National Science Foundation pushed a focus on STEM education in order to make the U.S. more competitive globally.

A Biden-Harris initiative launched in December 2022 called You Belong in STEM offers support of more than US\$120 billion for K-12 STEM education until the year 2025. But, starting in 2012, the United States Research Council has explored the idea of a STEAM education.

Researchers have found that when integrated into a STEM education, the arts make space for curiosity and innovation. So why the lack of agreement and consistency around whether it should be STEM or STEAM?

The bias toward emphasizing a STEM education could be driven by the higher future salaries of STEM majors or the significant funding that is connected more to STEM-based research and grants than to the arts. A STEAM education takes more time and is more complex than a traditional STEM educational model.

Or it could simply be that many academics in STEM fields lack the incentive for interdisciplinary work that brings in the arts, and vice versa. In fact, that was exactly the position I was in as an arts-based researcher asked to create something about STEM disciplines that I knew very little about.

It took me several tries and lots of research to get the script of my STEAM-centered play to its current form.

At first, I made basic discoveries. I learned that there is a debate about whether the arts should be included in a STEM education. I learned that "soft sciences" like psychology are not included in

many STEM educational models. I lacked a background in most of the disciplines included in STEM. And I struggled to find a project that inspired me.

But eventually I began work on five one-act plays, called "The STEAM Plays: Using the Arts to Talk about STEM." Each focused on a category of STEAM education. I wrote the first draft of the show with a chip on my shoulder, trying to prove that the arts did indeed belong in STEM education.

The tone was defensive and provocative - and not entirely appropriate for the elementary age range I was focused on.

The new, revised version that toured Michigan elementary schools in the Fall of 2023 contains 20 bite-sized comedic scenes and songs that dramatize how the arts are integral to many STEM fields. These include how engineering skills go into designing a celebrity's evening gown, how bakers need to know some basic chemistry, and how the mathematical algorithms of TikTok find new videos for each user.

In each of the scenes, students can see how artistic imagination and creative thinking expand STEM education.

These themes emerge from a wider scholarly understanding that STEM isn't done in a creativity vacuum, and stimulating students' artistic thinking will help them both in the science classroom and the art studio.

One plot point of the show is about an evil genius who views the arts as less important trying to keep the arts out of STEM. He swaps the bodies of a scientist and an actor, as well as an engineer and a creative writer. In each body swap, the STEM professional and the artist recognize how similar their work is. In the final scene, the evil genius tries to switch the bodies of Pythagoras and Taylor Swift, only to realize that music is all about math.

Many teachers have provided rave reviews. "The plays did an excellent job of highlighting the importance and value of arts in our educational system," one noted. "Students walked away enjoying and having a deeper understanding of how all of the different aspects of STEAM were able to work together collaboratively."

A STEAM education in which students learn soft skills like empathy, collaboration, emotional intelligence and creativity through the arts helps prepare students for the job market. And these discussions aren't confined only to K-12 education - many research grants encourage interdisciplinary work.

My understanding of the STEAM and STEAM debate and my experience writing, producing and watching how people respond to my show have helped me understand how the arts are necessary to every student's education. I learned that without artistic imagination, STEM students' big-picture thinking skills can get stifled.

It only took writing a play for children for me to get it myself. (AP)

# Emmys to showcase epic TV reunions, show recreations

LOS ANGELES, Jan 14, (AP) — The 75th Emmy Awards will be studded with cast reunions and recreations of classic moments from a dozen beloved shows throughout television history.

“All in the Family,” “Grey’s Anatomy,” “Game of Thrones,” “Martin” and many more series will get the special treatment at Monday night’s ceremony at the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles, with many getting renditions of their sets, including the bar from “Cheers.”

“It was really about, how can we celebrate 75 years of television differently?” the show’s executive producer Jesse Collins told The Associated Press.

The first such scene will come within the 10 minutes of host Anthony Anderson’s Emmys opening, and the moments will be spread throughout the Fox telecast.

“The core of it,” said Dionne Harmon, another executive producer, “is really celebrating television and to honor the shows of yesterday while we honor the shows of today.”

Collins, Harmon and Jeannae Rouzan-Clay from Jesse Collins Entertainment are producing the Emmys for the first time, after previously putting on the Oscars, American Music Awards and BET Awards.

With the tribute segments they’re seeking to show decades of television in its full variety of styles, formats and periods.

From the Emmys’ earliest days in the 1950s will come “I Love Lucy,” from the 1960s, “The Carol Burnett Show,” whose title star

recently won her seventh Emmy at age 90; from the 1970s, “All in the Family,” whose legendary creator, TV legend Norman Lear, died last month at 101.

“Cheers” will represent the ’80s. “Ally McBeal” and “Martin” will represent different sides of the ’90s. The television-game-changing “Sopranos” will show up from the early 2000s.

Shows still on the air — “Grey’s Anatomy” and “American Horror Story” — will also be represented.

Bits featuring “Saturday Night Live” and “The Arsenio Hall Show” will show up for variety and talk.

“We just tried to pick ones that we felt like we could successfully pay tribute to,” Collins said. “We have a pretty vast array of comedies and procedural dramas and talk shows, just trying to touch all the different areas.”

## Networks

And the shows come from all four networks and HBO, a perennial Emmys juggernaut that this year has all three of the top nominated shows — “Succession,” “The Last of Us” and “The White Lotus,” — and was home to the winningest drama of all time, which is also among the classic shows getting honored.

“We have a great ‘Game of Thrones’ moment,” Collins said. Producers didn’t give specifics on who will be appearing, and said not to expect everyone from every show.

Reunions aren’t possible for all of them, of course. “I Love Lucy,” whose key cast members have all been dead for decades, will get a recreation by actors playing Lucy and Ethel.

Other shows have few left to reunite. “All in the Family” only has two surviving major cast members, Rob Reiner and Sally Struthers. The same is true of “The Carol Burnett Show,” with only Burnett and Vicki Lawrence still alive.

They also said not to expect a reunion of the cast of “Friends,” though the show will include some tribute to Matthew Perry, who died in October.

Emmy producers said they tried to take a different approach to each of the segments to make sure it doesn’t start to feel like a repetitive trope.

“We want to make sure people remain entertained and engaged so you never really know what you’re going to see, even with the reunions,” Rouzan-Clay told the AP.

While wrangling multiple actors from different eras is never easy, and synching schedules was a tangled thicket as everyone became available again with the end of the writers and actors strikes that pushed the show from September to January, Emmy organizers didn’t have to twist many arms to get people to take part.

“People are happy to be back and happy to celebrate,” Harmon said. “It is a monumental year. Everybody was really excited to come be a part of this.”

Television

Variety

Features

ARABIC TIMES

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This image released by Netflix shows Kane Robinson in a scene from 'The Kitchen.' (AP)

Film

Kaluuya’s cinematic dive into a bleak urban future

## ‘Kitchen’ serves feast of emotion, action

By Lindsey Bahr

The near-future is bleak for the working class of London in “The Kitchen,” a well-executed film about a familiar kind of urban dystopian nightmare. It is, ironically, sunnier than the Los Angeles of “Blade Runner,” but the mood is as dire.

In this world, the have-nots are crammed together in hellish Brutalist high-rises, a slum-like development that its residents call “The Kitchen.” With frequent police raids and constant monitoring, there is the whiff of rebellion in the air. But at least for the purposes of this story, tensions have not yet boiled over into a proper revolution — the rage is manifested in smaller, petty crimes, like a smash-and-grab jewelry raid.

Our protagonist Izy (rapper Kane Robinson) has a stable job, selling “eco” and “humane” burial plans to the desperate, grieving poor. Everything is white-washed and slick and just a little sinister there — it’s called “life after life” after all. He and his colleagues wear clinical scrubs as they sell people on the idea of turning their deceased loved ones into plants.

He also has a plan: To get out. He’s saved enough money to escape The Kitchen and has finally broken through the logjam of a waitlist to get into one of the luxury apartment buildings in town. A single occupancy for a single guy. Naturally the film won’t let him go that easy, but the complication isn’t just financial: A kid enters the picture.

One day at work he notices that a woman he once dated is being given a funeral on the premises. Inside, he discovers her son Benji (Jedaiah Bannerman), a teen who doesn’t know who his father is. The two dance around the obvious question, and Benji ends up on Izy’s doorstep in need of something — help, lodging, care — but again, these things go largely unspoken. Benji is at a sliding doors kind of moment in which the fast cash from the dangerous smash-and-grabs seems almost worth the risk. What does he have to lose anyway?

“The Kitchen” was directed by “Get Out’s” Dan-

iel Kaluuya and Kibwe Tavares, who has turned his gaze before on the intersection of architecture, race and class in “Robots of Brixton.” Kaluuya co-wrote the script with Joe Murtagh, inspired out of a story he heard about “kids doing million-dollar heists in a minute for £200.” “The Kitchen” may lag at times, but it’s an astonishing and fully realized feat for two first-time feature directors with beautifully raw sequences of both emotion and action.

It is quite a pleasure to watch Izy and Benji navigate this awkward relationship, both wondering how much they should trust one another. But in this world of urban isolation it’s clear, at least to us, that they need each other — no matter how much you’re rooting for Izy to make it out. There are also moments of humor in this rather serious affair, including Izy’s frustrating conversation with an AI customer service representative.

Like so many futuristic dystopias, “The Kitchen” is really about the present — about class divides and wealth gaps and unaffordable housing and the ways in which it’s all getting worse so quickly. This is one of those films that would have been fun on the big screen with its urgent action sequences and propulsive nightclub scenes, but it’s a perfect small-screen watch, too. And, hopefully, the beginning of a big directing career for Kaluuya and Tavares, who have proved that they have something worthwhile to say and the vision to make it entertaining as well.

“The Kitchen,” a Netflix release streaming Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for “language.” Running time: 107 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

### Also:

**AUSTIN, Texas:** The SXSW Film & TV Festival will open with the premiere of “3 Body Problem,” the anticipated Netflix series from “Game of Thrones” creators David Benioff and D. B. Weiss, and “True Blood” writer Alexander Woo.

“3 Body Problem” will kick off the 31st edition of

the Austin, Texas, festival on March 8. The series, based on Liu Cixin’s novel, is a dystopian story in which scientists are being targeted by a mysterious force. A detective story unravels a larger threat to humanity. “3 Body Problem” debuts March 21 on Netflix.

SXSW also announced that its centerpiece will be “The Fall Guy,” David Leitch’s action thriller starring Ryan Gosling as a stunt man. The film, co-starring Emily Blunt, will be released May 3 by Universal Pictures.

The festival unveiled its lineup of features, documentaries and midnight selections. Among the highlights is Pamela Adlon’s directorial debut, “Babes,” starring Ilana Glazer as a single woman who gets pregnant on a one-night stand.

Also premiering at SXSW will be Sam Yates’ “Magpie,” starring Daisy Ridley; and documentaries on songwriter Diane Warren (“Diane Warren: Relentless”), the Black Keys (“This Is a Film About the Black Keys”) and the Scottish rock band Mogwai (“Mogwai: If the Stars Had a Sound”).

SXSW Conference and Festivals runs March 8-16.

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

**NEW YORK:** Daniel Day-Lewis took a break from retirement to present Martin Scorsese the award for best director at the National Board of Review Awards in midtown Manhattan on Thursday night.

Scorsese’s Osage epic, “Killers of the Flower Moon,” was the top honoree at the 95th NBR Awards. In awards announced earlier but handed out Thursday, “Killers of the Flower Moon” was the group’s pick for best film, along with best director for Scorsese and best actress for Lily Gladstone.

The night’s biggest surprise guest was Day-Lewis, who quit acting after Paul Thomas Anderson’s 2017 film “Phantom Thread” and has since largely avoided public life. Day-Lewis sat next to Scorsese throughout the gala at Cipriani’s 42nd Street before presenting the directing award.

“I was a teenager when I discovered Martin’s work,” Day-Lewis said. “With a light of his own making he illuminated unknown worlds that pulsed with a dangerous, irresistible energy — worlds that were mysterious to me and utterly enthralling. He illuminated the vast beautiful landscape of what is possible in film and he clarified for me what it is that one must ask of one self to work in faith.”

Day-Lewis, who starred in Scorsese’s “Gangs of New York” (2002) and “The Age of Innocence” (1993), called working with the director “one of the greatest joys and unexpected privileges of my life.”

When Scorsese took the stage and accepted the award, he returned the compliment, calling working with Day-Lewis “one of the greatest experiences of my life.” “Maybe there’s time for one more,” added Scorsese with a grin as the crowd gasped at the possibility. Day-Lewis, standing to the side of the stage, smiled and held out his hands.

Much of the appeal of the NBRs is the pairing of presenters and honorees. Laura Linney introduced best supporting actor Mark Ruffalo, a reunion of the “You Can Count on Me” stars. Patti Smith presented Lily Gladstone with the best-actress award.

“Of course this is not a dream to be sitting in between Patti Smith and Daniel Day-Lewis,” joked a staggered Gladstone.

The night’s most moving moment came earlier in the evening when Michael J. Fox took the stage with

Davis Guggenheim, the director of the documentary winner “Still: A Michael J. Fox Movie.” The crowd gave Fox a rousing standing ovation before the actor reflected on how Parkinson’s disease has changed his life for the better.

“Parkinson’s has been a gift. It’s been a gift that keeps on taking,” Fox said. “It’s been a gift



Day-Lewis



Scorsese

because it’s given me an audience to talk about what’s possible.”

Fox worked in jokes throughout his speech but returned to that theme, noting Parkinson’s has been more meaningful to him than his success in entertainment.

“It just opened my eyes in a way I didn’t expect,” Fox said. Bradley Cooper, recipient of

the Icon Award for “Maestro,” also paid tribute to Fox as he recalled watching “Secret of My Success” and “Family Ties” while growing up.

“I felt like he was my friend,” Cooper said.

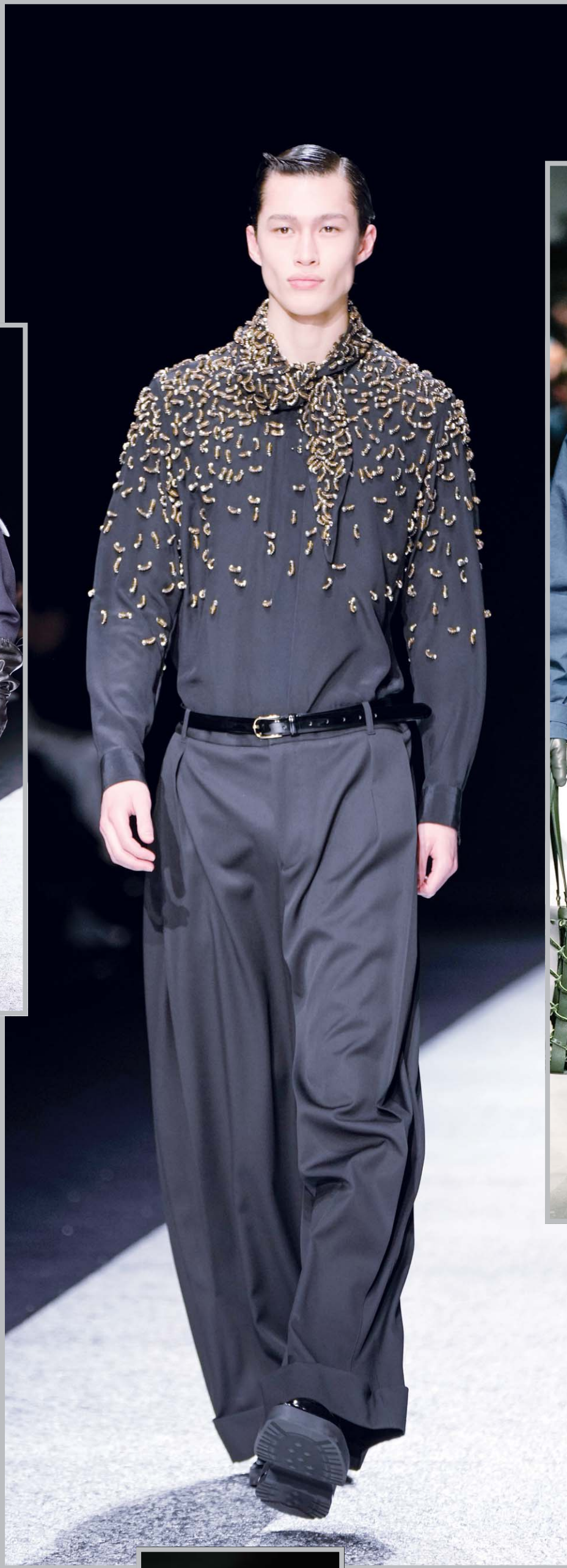
While there was little suspense to the ceremony, given that the awards had been announced ear-

lier, a clue was dropped to one of awards season’s biggest mysteries.

French director Justine Triet, whose “Anatomy of a Fall” was honored for best international film, provided a hint for moviegoers debating whether the film’s protagonist, played by Sandra Hüller, was guilty of the murder she is tried for in the film. (AP)

People & Places

MILAN  
a guy thing



MSGM

Fendi

Giorgio Armani

Giorgio Armani

Fendi

Giorgio Armani

Above and below: Models wear creations as part of the men's Giorgio Armani, Dolce&Gabbana, Fendi and MSGM Fall-Winter 2024-2025 collections, that were presented in Milan, Italy, Saturday, Jan. 13. (AP)

MSGM celebrates speed

D&G takes fashion to new romantic height

MILAN, Jan 14, (AP): Fast and slow, Milan designers experimented with pacing for next fall and winter, many falling on deliberate and somber collections with a focus on a tailored silhouette.

Some scenes from Saturday's shows on the second day of Milan Fashion Week of mostly menswear previews for Fall-Winter 2024-25:

Dolce&Gabbana

Dolce&Gabbana slowed to a romantic pace in a new collection featuring richly elegant looks fit for a period drama.

Designers Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana revamped the showroom since last season, opening up a double stairway in the middle of the runway allowing models a dramatic entrance from below.

The predominant deep night black color palette for the next fall and winter heightened the textures and emphasized the silhouettes: soft furry coats, silken shirts with high necks or deep plunging V's, poet blouses tied with a bow, shimmering sequin covered suits.

MSGM

The Milan fashion morning commute started in a metro station where MSGM creative director Massimo Giorgetti considered how the world has speeded up in a collection that celebrates Milan's oldest subway line but also the passage into adulthood.

"It is an ironic reflection on the importance of finding some time, because we are asked to go so fast," Giorgetti said before the show.

The collection's key motif was a curved red handrail designed for Milan's 60-year-old red line by the late architect Franco Albini. Symbolizing how the subway speeded life in the city, it traces a graceful track down the front of coats and was worn as a broach, carried as a bag.

Emporio Armani

Giorgio Armani pays homage to the sailors who have plied the fierce Atlantic in a mariner-inspired collection projecting hardiness for his Emporio Armani line.

A soundtrack of crashing waves, a lighthouse backdrop and runway carpet mimicking the sea set the scene.

The strong silhouette was anchored by structured pea coats and striped sailor collars, generous trousers that tuck into boots and big workman's gloves just right for fishing nets. Long fisherman's knitwear suggested the leisure of port.

Federico Cina

Models waited for the start of the Federico Cina show in the middle of the runway, behind white curtains emblematic of the fog of creation that the designer wanted to project.

"This season I asked myself how to present the passage and changes of life. I imagined as if traversing the fog. You catch a glimpse from outside," said Cina, who created his brand based in Emilia-Romagna five years ago.

Fendi

Silvia Venturini Fendi said she was inspired by Princess Anne, whom she called "the chicest woman in the world," capable of "maintaining her femininity while wearing a uniform," the epitome of masculinity.

Generous overcoats, leather wellies and rumpled cloche defined the outdoorsy Fall-Winter 2024-25 silhouette fit for Balmoral. The color palette recalled a rainy day on the highlands: moss, brown, slate gray and maroon, cornflower blue, mustard.

Style



Giorgio Armani



Dolce&Gabbana



Giorgio Armani



Dolce&Gabbana

Fashion

the unique opportunity to purchase antiques or try out the traditional cuisine, as it also offers a variety of international restaurants.

Al-Ula old town was recently awarded by the UN's World Tourism Organization for the great efforts exerted to safeguard its rich history. (KUNA)

**ABU DHABI:** Al-Maqtaa Fort in Abu Dhabi stands as a witness to the vast development and progress the region had went through since the establishment of the Emirate.

The tower-like structures of the fort dated back to the 18th century and has a unique Arabic style as well as thick walls.

The fort was used in the past was a



Presley



Blume

vantage point to monitor the entering of ships to the old Abu Dhabi port. (KUNA)

**NEW YORK:** Television viewers were more interested in watching a Donald Trump town hall than the first head-to-head debate between Republican challengers Nikki Haley and Ron DeSantis.

The live town hall, which aired on Fox News Channel in prime time on Wednesday, was watched by 4.3 million viewers, the Nielsen company said. The CNN debate, which aired live at the same time, was seen by just under 2.6 million, per Nielsen.

Fox said the Trump campaign demanded that the town hall go head-to-head on TV against CNN's debate at 9 p.m. Eastern, as a condition to the former president's appearance. Trump has not participated in any of the organized debates of GOP 2024 presidential candidates.

Both events took place in Des Moines, Iowa, in advance of Monday's Iowa presidential caucuses.

Fox said Trump's town hall got an additional 1.4 million viewers when reruns were aired at midnight Eastern time and in the middle of the night.

Since Fox News routinely has more viewers than CNN, Wednesday's ratings victory wasn't a surprise. The former president has also consistently beaten his GOP rivals by wide margins in public opinion polls. (AP)

**NEW YORK:** Judy Blume's latest honor is a new prize named for a former first lady.

The Eleanor Roosevelt Center and the Fisher Center at Bard College announced Thursday that Blume is the first-ever recipient of the Eleanor Roosevelt Lifetime Achievement Award for Bravery in Literature. Blume, 85, is known for such novels for young people as "Are You There ...? It's Me, Margaret" and "Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing." She is also a longtime opponent of censorship, and she has seen some of her own work challenged or removed from shelves because of her candid depictions of sex, puberty and other subjects.

The two centers also will be presenting inaugural Roosevelt awards for "authors and books that advance human rights in the face of an alarming rise in book banning and censorship." The winners include such frequent targets for banning as Maia Kobabe's "Gender Queer," George M. Johnson's "All Boys Aren't Blue" and Alex Gino's "Melissa." (AP)

Variety

**NEW YORK:** A memoir that Lisa Marie Presley had been working on at the time of her death will be published this fall. The book, currently untitled, was completed with the help of actor Riley Keough, the eldest of Presley's four children.

"Few people had the opportunity to know who my mom really was, other than being Elvis's daughter," Keough said in a statement released Thursday by publisher Random House. "I was lucky to have had that opportunity and working on preparing her autobiography for publication has been a privilege, albeit a bittersweet one. I'm so excited to share my mom now, at her most vulnerable and most honest, and in doing so, I do hope that readers come to love my mom

as much as I did."

Her book is scheduled for release on Oct. 15. Financial terms were not disclosed.

Lisa Marie Presley, the only child of Elvis and Priscilla Presley and a recording artist in her own right, died almost exactly a year ago at age 54. A coroner's investigation found that the singer-actor died of complications from bariatric surgery years earlier. Lisa Marie is now buried on the grounds of the

Graceland family estate in Memphis, Tennessee, where she had been the day her father died in 1977. (AP)

**AL-ULA:** Saudi Arabia's old town of Al-Ula with its mud walls and narrow alleyways offers visitors an enchanting voyage through time and introduces tourists to Saudi heritage.

The town's small shops, colloquially known as "Dikakeen", grant visitors

Dr. Rajan urges awareness and action for tackling 'silent killer'

WHF unveils 2024 roadmap for tackling hypertension

By Arab Times Staff

In a recent interview with Dr. Rajesh Rajan, we delved into the new treatment targets and goals for preventing high blood pressure. Dr. Rajan, an esteemed figure overseeing various clinical research registries focused on heart failure, has played a pivotal role in this field.

The 2024 World Heart Federation Roadmap for Hypertension, which builds on the previous 2015 edition, serves as a vital reference document for individuals involved in planning, organizing, managing patients, and implementing strategies to alleviate the burden of hypertension.

This comprehensive roadmap offers evidence-based guidance on priority interventions for hypertension that can be adapted to different contexts. It summarizes the latest research in epidemiology, treatment, emerging technologies, health system strategies, and policies, providing valuable insights to enhance the detection and management of hypertension worldwide.

Treatment

Bringing together the expertise of clinicians, researchers, allied health professionals, health systems experts, and patient representatives from around the globe, the roadmap presents an integrated approach to patient care.

Dr. Rajan emphasizes the urgent need for global awareness, treatment, and control of hypertension, which is the leading risk factor for death worldwide, affecting over 1 billion people. Often referred to as "the silent killer," hypertension often goes unnoticed until it leads to severe health complications such as heart disease and stroke.

Dr. Rajan highlights that while high blood pressure is a global concern, the most significant increases in its burden are currently observed in East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Alarmingly, only about a third of individuals with hypertension are receiving treatment, and merely one in ten have their blood pressure under control, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

The economic impact of uncontrolled hypertension is staggering, with direct healthcare costs and productivity losses due to disability and premature mortality. Approximately 10% of global healthcare spending is directly associated with hypertension and its complications.

Hypertension can be classified into primary and secondary. Primary hypertension accounts for over 90% of cases and is often caused by factors such as obesity, a high-salt diet, lack of exercise, and excessive alcohol consumption. On the other hand, secondary hypertension is caused by underlying conditions, most commonly kidney problems and endocrine disorders.

The insidious nature of hypertension is what makes it so dangerous. It does not exhibit any symptoms on its own, earning it the nickname "the silent killer." Regular blood pressure monitoring is therefore crucial. Hypertension increases the risk of heart, brain, and kidney diseases and affects more than 1 billion individuals worldwide.



Dr. Rajesh Rajan

Managing hypertension requires a comprehensive approach that combines lifestyle interventions and medication. Shockingly, it is estimated that less than 1 in 5 people with hypertension have it under control.

Dr. Rajan emphasizes the vital role of healthy eating in managing high blood pressure and reducing the risk of heart disease. A diet low in salt, with less than 5g of salt (2g of sodium) per day, is recommended. Increasing potassium intake can also help lower blood pressure.

Maintaining a healthy weight is another crucial step in reducing the risk of developing high blood pressure. Regular physical activity not only helps lower blood pressure but also provides numerous other health benefits.

Limiting alcohol consumption is essential, as excessive drinking can elevate blood pressure. Ideally, alcohol intake should be minimized or eliminated altogether.

Smoking is a major risk factor for hypertension and other cardiovascular diseases. Quitting smoking significantly reduces the risk of heart attack, stroke, and lung cancer.

In some cases, blood pressure-lowering medication may be necessary to effectively manage hypertension. These medications, known as anti-hypertensives, do not cure high blood pressure but aid in its control. It is important to note that once medication is initiated, it is typically a lifelong commitment.

Lifestyle

The advancements in hypertension medication over the past five decades have been remarkable. There is now a wide range of cost-effective and safe options available to treat hypertension. However, global awareness, treatment, and control of hypertension still remain low.

Let us raise awareness about this silent killer and encourage individuals to take control of their blood pressure. Regular monitoring, lifestyle modifications, and appropriate medical intervention can make a significant difference in preventing the devastating consequences of hypertension. Together, we can combat this global health challenge and ensure a healthier future for all.

Dr. Rajan is a renowned Indian cardiologist at Al Amiri Hospital Kuwait and Chairman of the Indian Association of Clinical Cardiologists. Dr. Rajan also holds prestigious positions as the current President of the Association of MD Physicians and the managing editor of the esteemed Annals of Clinical Cardiology Journal by Wolters Kluwer.

His contributions to the medical community are highly regarded, with notable achievements that include the invention of the RHF Risk Score calculator for heart failure patients and the development of Rajan's and Koteski's modified Lipton's classification. Beyond his groundbreaking research, Dr. Rajan has garnered recognition through various Fellowships from esteemed institutions such as the Royal College of London, Edinburgh, Ireland, and Glasgow. Moreover, he has been honored as a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, the European Society of Cardiology, and the American Heart Association, further highlighting his expertise and commitment to cardiovascular health.

Other Voices

Opt for plastic-free life

Nano plastics in bottled water linked to serious health concerns, warn experts

By Dr. Zeina Alkhalaf

Researchers in public health have known this for over a decade now – that bottled water contains tiny pieces of plastic and when you drink it – you are also consuming that plastic. But recently, a new study has confirmed these findings and researchers believe that these tiny pieces of plastic, called nano plastics, are causing many health issues such as gastrointestinal disorders, birth defects, infertility and increased mortality.

Let's first discuss how this happens. Over time plastic ends up breaking down, and these tiny pieces of plastic end up leaking into the water. Things like heat may also exacerbate the rate of the plastic breaking down. This is important to

note because importing plastic water bottles in Middle Eastern countries like the GCC which are notably very hot, may cause even more leakage of the plastic in the water bottles. These chemicals are called BPA, BPS, and PFAS- which can cause infertility, hormonal dis-



Dr. Alkhalaf

regulation, weight gain, mood disorders, and may stay in our bodies forever. These chemicals are also very dangerous to the environment and take a long time to be recycled.

Now what can you do about it? Buying an at home water filtration system is best. Purchasing a high grade stainless steel water bottle or glass and filling it everyday is the best way to protect your health and the environment. It ensures that you're bypassing the plastic leaking into your water, and keeps you hydrated safely. Let's protect our health and our earth.

Dr. Zeina Alkhalaf, PhD, MPH graduated with a doctoral degree in Maternal and Child Health from the University of Maryland, USA. Her research varies across chemical exposures, nutrition, and population health. She currently serves as Adjunct Professor at the University of Maryland. Twitter: @drzalkhalaf

A guide to sustainable washing

Laundry is major microplastic culprit

By Judith Weis

Rutgers University, Newark

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

Microplastics are turning up everywhere, from remote mountain tops to deep ocean trenches. They also are in many animals, including humans.

The most common microplastics in the environment are microfibrils - plastic fragments shaped like tiny threads or filaments. Microfibrils come from many sources, including cigarette butts, fishing nets and ropes, but the biggest source is synthetic fabrics, which constantly shed them.

Textiles shed microfibrils while they are manufactured, worn and disposed of, but especially when they are washed. A single wash load can release several million microfibrils. Many factors affect how many fibers are released, including fabric type, mechanical action, detergents, temperature and the duration of the wash cycle.

My research focuses on coastal ecology and water pollution, including work in New York and New Jersey marshes and estuaries that are heavily affected by human activities. Here are some things to know about reducing microplastic pollution from your washing machine.

Once garments release microfibrils in washing machines, the fibers enter the wastewater stream, which generally goes to a wastewater treatment plant. Advanced treatment plants can remove up to 99% of microfibrils from water. But since a single laundry load can produce millions of fibers, treated water discharged from the plant still contains a huge number of them.

Microfibrils that are removed during treatment end up in sewage sludge - a mix of solid materials that is processed to remove pathogens. In many cases, treated sewage sludge is applied to soil as a fertilizer. This allows microfibrils to enter air and soil, and to be trans-

ferred to soil organisms and up the terrestrial food web or taken up by crops.

Microplastics that wash into rivers, lakes and bays can have many harmful effects. They may be consumed by fish and other aquatic animals, affecting their biochemistry, physiology, reproduction, development or behavior. These microplastics contain chemical additives, including substances like phthalates and bisphenol A that can leach out and may have health effects in humans and animals, including effects on the endocrine system.

Textile microfibrils also contain additional chemicals that have been shown to be toxic, such as fabric dyes, anti-wrinkle agents and flame retardants. In addition, contaminants that are present in the water, such as metals and pesticides, can stick to microplastic particles, turning them into a veritable cocktail of contaminants that may be transferred into animals that eat them.

Solution

Not all fabrics shed microfibrils at the same rate. A loosely woven fabric that feels fluffy or fuzzy, such as fleece, sheds more than a tightly woven one. While garments made of natural fibers, such as cotton and wool, would appear to be a solution, unfortunately they also shed microfibrils that can pick up pollutants in the environment.

Some textile scientists and manufacturers are developing fabrics that shed less than existing ones, thanks to features such as longer fibers and coatings to reduce shedding. Meanwhile, here are some ways to reduce microfibril shedding from your laundry:

- Do laundry less often. Washing full loads instead of partial loads reduces release of microfibrils because garments are exposed to less friction during the wash cycle.
- Use cold water, which releases fewer microfibrils than hot water.
- Use less detergent, which increases microfibril release.
- Use a front-loading washing machine, whose tumbling action produces less microfibril release.
- Dry laundry on a clothesline. Running clothes in dryers releases additional microfibrils into the air from the

dryer vent.

Several types of products collect microfibrils in the washer before they are released with wastewater. Some are laundry bags made of woven monofilament, a single-polyamide filament that does not disintegrate into fibers. Laundry is washed while enclosed in the bag, which traps microfibrils that the garments release. A study of one such product, Guppyfriend, found that it collected about one-third of released microfibrils.

Another device, the Cora Ball, is a plastic ball with spines topped with soft plastic discs that capture microfibrils. It reduces microfibrils by about 25% to 30%, but may not be suitable for loose knits because it can snag on threads and damage clothing.

Several brands of external filters are available that can be retrofitted onto existing washing machines. External filters can remove up to 90% of microfibrils from rinse water. Their average cost is about US\$150. Owners need to clean the filters periodically and dispose of the collected microfibrils with other solid waste, not down the drain, which would put them back into the wastewater stream.

In a 2021 study, researchers installed washing machine filters in 97 homes in a town in Ontario, Canada, which represented about 10% of the households in the community. They found that this significantly reduced microfibrils in treated water from the local treatment plant.

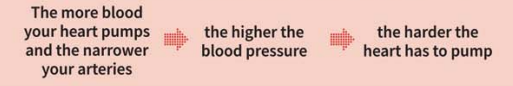
Some companies are now manufacturing washers with built-in microfibril filters. France has enacted a requirement for all new washing machines to be equipped with filters by 2025, and Australia has announced that filters will be required in commercial and residential washers by 2030.

In the US, a similar requirement was passed by the California legislature in 2023, but Gov. Gavin Newsom vetoed the bill, saying he was concerned about the cost to consumers. An economic study commissioned by Ocean Conservancy found that filters would increase the price of washing machines by only \$14 to \$20 per machine. Several states are considering regulations that would require filters in washers. (AP)

HYPERTENSION & NUTRITION

HYPERTENSION or HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE is a condition that occurs when your blood pressure increases to unhealthy levels.

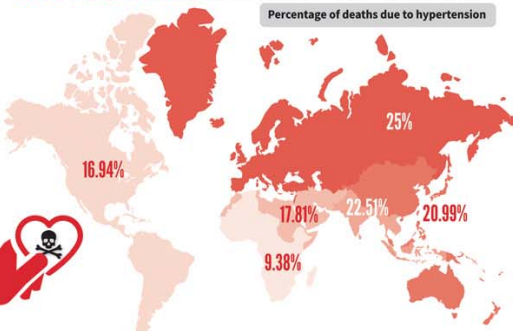
Blood pressure is determined by the amount of blood your heart pumps and the amount of resistance to blood flow in your arteries.



Hypertension can lead to severe health complications and increase your risk of several serious, potentially life-threatening conditions.

- Heart Failure
- Coronary Artery Disease
- Stroke
- Chronic Kidney Disease
- Peripheral Arterial Disease
- Vascular Dementia

HYPERTENSION IS A GLOBAL EPIDEMIC



Hypertension often has NO SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS, and therefore frequently goes undiagnosed

- Hypertension affects 1.3 billion people (1 in 4 adults)
- Fewer than 1 in 5 have their hypertension under control
- Hypertension is the #1 risk factor for death globally

How to control your blood pressure and reduce your risk of heart disease

- Manage your weight
- Exercise regularly
- Reduce your stress
- Eat a healthy diet
- Reduce your sodium intake
- Limit your alcohol consumption
- Quit smoking
- If needed, take your medications as prescribed

WE ARE WHAT WE EAT

What we consume can affect our body's ability to prevent, fight and recover from infection and disease. By making small changes to our diet we can greatly reduce our risk of serious health issues.

- Eat a variety of whole and fresh food every day
- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Moderate your consumption of fats and oils
- Reduce the amount of sugar and salt in your diet

Reducing the amount of sodium in your diet is one of the most effective ways to control your blood pressure

The main source of sodium in our diets is SALT



What can you do to reduce your daily salt intake?

- Avoid processed foods
- Replace salt and condiments that are high in sodium with other seasonings, such as garlic, lemon and pepper.
- Switch to a reduced sodium alternative.\*
- In many high-income countries, about 75% of salt comes from processed foods.
- In low- and middle-income countries, most sodium consumption comes from salt added during cooking and at the table.
- Potassium salts may even have a beneficial effect on your blood pressure.

\*People receiving medication for diabetes, heart or kidney disorders should consult their doctor before using a reduced sodium salt.

Sources: World Health Organization; IHME, Global Burden of Disease; Season with Sense

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# Celtics rout Rockets to improve to 19-0 at home



Orlando Magic guard Anthony Black (0) drives against Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, middle, as Magic forward Paolo Banchero, left, watches during the first half of an NBA basketball game Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024, in Oklahoma City. (AP)

## Kiwis lead 5-match series 2-0

## NZ beat Pakistan by 21 runs in 2nd T20

HAMILTON, New Zealand, Jan 14, (AP) — New Zealand overcame the loss of its captain in an innings that faltered late to beat Pakistan by 21 runs in the second Twenty20 international Sunday, taking a 2-0 lead in the five-match series.

The Black Caps failed to build on the foundation of the first half of its innings, making 194-8 batting first after being 111-1 at the end of 10 overs. The batting slump followed captain Kane Williamson retiring hurt after 10 overs with a tight hamstring.

Pakistan also stumbled in the second half of its innings and was bowled out for 173 in the 20th over.

Williamson is making a managed return from a serious knee injury and New Zealand would fear any setback to his rehabilitation. But while he didn't field, Williamson was still padded out and apparently prepared to bat at the end of the New Zealand innings.

Finn Allen's 74 from 41 balls set a cracking pace early on in the New Zealand innings. Allen put on 59 in 5.1 overs with Devon Conway (20) for the first wicket and 52 in 4.9 overs with Williamson before the Kiwi captain retired hurt on 26.

The innings began to falter at that

point and New Zealand lost 3-35 between the 11th and 16th overs. Allen was out at 137-2, then Daryl Mitchell fell at 147 and Mark Chapman followed at 157 as the innings began to trend sharply downwards.

Mitchell Santner made a bright 25 before being wastefully run out as New Zealand lost its last seven wickets for 55 runs.

### CRICKET

"It was a good surface which we've come to expect here at Sedden Park and the way Finn Allen and the boys at the top set it up was very pleasing," New Zealand's stand-in captain Tim Southee said. "But Pakistan pulled it back well and the two innings were quite similar in a way."

New Zealand was relieved Pakistan also produced an innings of two halves. It looked well on course to level the series when Babar Azam and Fakhar Zaman made half centuries in an 87-run partnership for the third wicket.

Fakhar reached his half century from 23 balls with three fours and five sixes and seemed likely to follow Allen in providing the impetus for a substantial

innings. But he was out at that score and the onus once again fell on Babar to guide Pakistan home.

He made 57 and was the anchor of Pakistan's innings in the first international at Auckland on Friday when the tourists fell 46 runs short in a demanding run chase.

Babar followed his 31st T20 international half century with his 32nd Sunday, again as the bulwark of the Pakistan batting.

But he fell for 66 to the first ball of the 18th over when Pakistan was 153-5, needing 42 from the last 18 balls.

He was out to the bowling of speedster Ben Sears as he was in the first match and his dismissal again heralded the beginning of the end for Pakistan.

Sears, Adam Milne and Southee helped New Zealand put the brakes on Pakistan at the end of its innings. Milne took 4-33, Sears 2-28, Southee 2-31 and Ish Sodhi took 2-33 after conceding 19 runs from his first over.

"Milne was outstanding with the ball and Sears is a young guy who shows a lot of character at this level," Southee said. "I think Ish Sodhi shouldn't be overlooked in his effort to come back and get two vital wickets for us."

## Thunder roar past Magic

BOSTON, JAN 14, (AP) — Jayson Tatum had 27 points and eight rebounds before being ejected on back-to-back technical fouls and the Boston Celtics remained unbeaten at home with a 145-113 victory over former coach Ime Udoka and the Houston Rockets on Saturday night.

Jaylen Brown scored 32 points and the Celtics improved to 19-0 in the TD Garden - the first time in the history of the much-decorated franchise that it has opened a season with more than 17 wins in a row.

Cam Whitmore scored 22 points and Alperen Sengun had 19 points and 10 rebounds for Houston. The Rockets have lost three of their last four to drop their record to 19-19. They won just 22 games all last season.

Tatum was tossed for the second time in six weeks, picking up his first technical for complaining about a non-call with 10:17 left in the fourth quarter and Boston leading 117-90. He continued to complain while Aaron Holiday took the foul shot and picked up a second T, then walked over to referee CJ Washington and leaned in to shout something before walking off the court.

### Thunder 112, Magic 100

In Oklahoma City, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 37 points and Oklahoma City beat short-handed Orlando to tie Minnesota for the Western Conference lead.

Gilgeous-Alexander had his high points total without making a 3-pointer. He missed all four of his 3-point tries, but was 13 of 16 inside the arc and made 11 of 12 free throws.

Jalen Williams scored 16 points and Chet Holmgren added 15 to help the Thunder improve to 27-11. Paolo Banchero had 20 points, nine rebounds and eight assists for the Magic. They have lost three straight.

### Jazz 133, Lakers 123

In Salt Lake City, Lauri Markkanen had 29 points, nine rebounds and five assists to lead Utah past Los Angeles for its fifth straight victory and eighth in a row at home.

Collin Sexton scored 27 points and Jordan Clarkson added 21.

### BASKETBALL

With LeBron James out with a left ankle injury, D'Angelo Russell led the Lakers with 39 points and eight assists. Anthony Davis had a triple-double with 15 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists, but shot 5 of 21 from the field.

### Bucks 129, Warriors 118

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 33 points and Milwaukee Used a big fourth quarter to pull away against short-handed Golden State.

The Warriors rested Stephen Curry in the second night of a road back-to-back and are still without Draymond Green. Coach Steve Kerr said he could return from his suspension Monday in Memphis or Wednesday at Utah.

Damian Lillard added 27 points for the Bucks. Jonathan Kuminga led the Warriors with 28.

### Knicks 106, Grizzlies 94

In Memphis, Tenn. Julius Randle had 24 points and 11 rebounds, OG Anunoby scored 18 points and New York beat makeshift Memphis.

Miles McBride, starting in place of the injured Jalen Brunson, added a career-high 19 points, along with six assists for the Knicks. They have won six of seven.

GG Jackson led the Grizzlies with 20 points and six



Chicago Bulls guard Coby White (0) scores past San Antonio Spurs forward Sandro Mamukelashvili, (rear), during the second half of an NBA basketball game in San Antonio, Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024. (AP)

rebounds. Over the last week, leading scorer Ja Morant had season-ending shoulder surgery, and Marcus Smart's injury to his right ring finger will keep him out at least six weeks. Then, Friday night in a loss to the Clippers, Desmond Bane, the team's second-leading scorer, sprained an ankle and was on crutches Saturday.

### Wizards 127, Hawks 99

In Atlanta, Kyle Kuzma scored 29 points and Washington took advantage of Atlanta's worst offensive night this season to rout the Hawks.

Jordan Poole added 20 points to help the Wizards snap a six-game losing streak and improve to 4-18 on the road. It was their largest victory of the season.

Atlanta shot a season-low 34%. Trae Young had 21 points on 6-of-19 shooting.

### Bulls 122, Spurs 116

In San Antonio, Nikola Vucevic had 24 points and 16 rebounds and Chicago overcame a career-high 30 points from Tre Jones to past San Antonio with Spurs rookie star Victor Wembanyama sitting out.

Wembanyama did not play the second game of a back-to-back. The Spurs continue to proceed cautiously with the No. 1 pick following a sprained ankle last month.

Keldon Johnson had 26 points for San Antonio.

### Pelicans 118, Mavericks 108

In Dallas, Rookie Jordan Hawkins scored a season-high 34 points and New Orleans beat Dallas in a game in which most of both teams' regular starters weren't in uniform.

Herb Jones scored 15 points and Jonas Valanciunas had 14 points and a 12 rebounds for the Pelicans, who split a back-to-back after losing at Denver 125-113 on Friday night. Kyrie Irving led the Mavericks with 33 points.

## Clark stars with 30 as Iowa defeats Indiana

IOWA CITY, Iowa, Jan 14, (AP) — Caitlin Clark and the Iowa Hawkeyes fed off a crowd of more than 13,000 who showed up Saturday night when travel wasn't recommended throughout most of the state because of blizzard-like conditions.

Clark had 30 points and 11 assists before a national audience on Fox, and Molly Davis added 18 points as No. 3 Iowa took sole possession of the Big Ten Conference lead with an 84-57 win over No. 14 Indiana.

Iowa (17-1, 6-0 Big Ten) extended its winning streak to 14 games while snapping the 13-game winning streak of the Hoosiers (14-2, 5-1).

Clark, the nation's leading scorer at 31 points per game, didn't need any last-second shots like the buzzer-beating 3-pointer that defeated the Hoosiers in last year's regular-season finale. Instead, she shook off a slow start to record her 52nd career double-double.

Clark finished 10 of 21 from the field, 6 of 16 on 3-pointers, on a night when the Hawkeyes took charge of the conference race.

"I do know, she is almost at her best in the big moments," Iowa coach Lisa Bluder said. "Really, she is."

It was just another game, Clark said.

"You know, I think I've been through enough games in my career where there's all these wonderful highs but there's

also lows too, and that's just competitive sport," Clark said. "That's just basketball."

Clark missed her first six 3-point attempts, but opened the second quarter with back-to-back 3-pointers to give Iowa a 25-19 lead.

Clark picked up her second foul with 4:49 left in the second quarter with Iowa up 28-26, and sat for 2 1/2 minutes. But Davis stepped up with seven points and an assist while Clark was out as the Hawkeyes extended their lead as much as seven points. Clark returned to finish the half, and her 3-pointer with three seconds left gave Iowa a 43-37 halftime lead and ignited the crowd in Carver-Hawkeye Arena.

### BASKETBALL

Iowa then opened the third quarter with an 11-2 run, started by a Clark layup eight seconds into the quarter and capped by a two-possession sequence in which Clark had a 3-pointer and an assist on Gabbie Marshall's 3-pointer.

"We didn't make a lot of defensive adjustments, actually," Bluder said. "I know we talked about a couple of offensive things we wanted to do, including that play right out of the chute. (Clark) gets that layup and that really gave us momentum."

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## SPORTS

## Kuwaiti fencing star Al-Shamlan advances to round of 64 at Grand Prix Saber Champ'ship

TUNIS, Jan 14: Hamad Al-Awadhi, Secretary and Chairman of the National Teams Committee at the Kuwaiti Fencing Federation, announced

that Kuwait's fencing champion, Yousef Al-Shamlan, successfully secured a place in the round of 64 at the Grand Prix Saber Championship



A coach issues instruction to Yousef Al-Shamlan.

in Tunisia. Al-Shamlan achieved a crucial victory against a player from the Canadian national team during the ongoing competition.

Al-Awadhi emphasized the significance of the Grand Prix Saber Championship, highlighting its status as one of the most formidable tournaments where qualification points are doubled for teams. This directly impacts international rankings, and Al-Shamlan currently holds the 29th

## FENCING

position in the global fencing classification. Anticipating a positive shift in his ranking post-tournament, Al-Awadhi expressed confidence in Al-Shamlan's potential.

The Secretary noted that Al-Shamlan's path to the Paris Olympics 2024 is becoming clearer, especially with the elimination of his closest rivals from Uzbekistan and Hong Kong in the preliminary rounds.

New era begins  
Croatian coach Misha takes helm at Al-Salmiya

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: Salmiya's newest Croatian coach, Ante Misha, is set to arrive today to take charge of Al-Samawi's training sessions, succeeding coach Mohammed Al-Mishaan. Notably, Misha will be accompanied by an assistant technical staff comprising a fitness trainer and a goalkeeper trainer.

The coaching transition anticipates Misha's inaugural training session with the team scheduled for tomorrow, as they gear up for a crucial clash against Khaitan on January 28 in the preliminary round of the Amir Cup competition.

Salmiya's management is contemplating the inclusion of former assistant coach Ahmed Deeb, previously with Al-Mishaan, into Al-Samawi's new technical staff. Deeb would serve as a liaison between the coach and the team, providing insights into the squad's performance since the



Salmiya's new Croatian coach, Ante Misha.

season's inception.

During his initial period with the team, Misha plans to emphasize

friendly matches to assess player capabilities and integrate his tactical vision. Rapidly evaluating professional players becomes a priority, particularly as the current phase allows for acquiring talents that can

## SOCCER

complement Misha's strategic choices in the ongoing season's competitions.

In a strategic move, Al Salmiya commenced the winter transfer period by securing the services of Bahraini professional Mahdi Al-Humaidan to replace Senegalese player Ousseynou Cesar. Al-Humaidan is expected to join immediately after concluding his participation in the Asian Cup in Qatar. The club is actively reviewing CVs of other professionals, aiming to fortify its roster with an additional foreign player for the remainder of the current season's competitions.

## Djokovic 'fends off' first-timer Prizmic to advance in Australia

Rublev survives a tough 5-setter, Sinner wins opener

MELBOURNE, Jan 14, (AP): Until he took on defending champion Novak Djokovic at Rod Laver Arena on opening Sunday in Australia, Dino Prizmic had never played a Grand Slam match.

The 18-year-old Croatian qualifier, who was born seven months after Djokovic made his Grand Slam debut in 2005, made it last as long as he could. He unsettled the 24-time major winner before Djokovic finished off the match 6-2, 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-4.

Djokovic has developed a record at the Australian Open that no man can match, with 10 titles here among his unprecedented career haul. He later said he'd been feeling "under the weather" for four or five days but credited Prizmic's talent.

The first set played out just about as expected. From there, it became quite a ride.

Prizmic took the second set off Djokovic and went up a break in the third, stunning a capacity crowd, before the world's No. 1-ranked player broke back and took the set.

Prizmic didn't give up when he trailed 4-0 in the fourth, either, saving a break-point before getting a service break back. He saved three match points at 5-3 down and made Djokovic serve it out. He then saved a further two match points before it ended in 4 hours and 1 minute.

"He deserved every applause, every credit he got tonight," Djokovic said. "Amazing performance for someone that is 18 years old and never had the experience of playing on a big stage. Kudos to him."

The first of three Sundays - an extra day was introduced at Melbourne Park to try to reduce the number of post-midnight finishes - didn't have quite the desired outcome.

Fifth-seeded Andrey Rublev needed four hours to beat Thiago Seyboth Wild 7-5, 6-4, 3-6, 4-6, 7-6 (6). He later admitted fears his first-round match against Seyboth Wild would end like his friend Daniil Medvedev's did at last year's French Open: in an upset.

No. 12 Taylor Fritz needed a medical timeout to get his left ankle taped in the second set before he recovered to beat Facundo Diaz Acosta 4-6, 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 6-4 in a seesawing four-hour match.

Frances Tiafoe, the 17th seed, beat Borna Coric 6-3, 7-6 (7), 2-6, 6-3 in 3 1/2 hours and Daniel Elahi Galan needed almost five hours to beat Australia's Jason Kubler 2-6, 6-3, 7-6 (3), 4-6, 7-6 (8).

## TENNIS

Djokovic's late finish meant defending women's champion Aryna Sabalenka didn't start until 11:41 p.m. local time. The No. 2 seed didn't waste much time until right near the end, ousting 18-year-old Ella Seidel 6-0, 6-1 in 53 minutes on her seventh match point.

The first match on Rod Laver was also over quickly, with Italy's Davis Cup star Jannik Sinner advancing after a 6-4, 7-5, 6-3 first-round win over No. 59-ranked Botić van de Zandschulp in 2 1/2 hours. It was his first match since a memorable November when he twice beat Djokovic and won the Davis Cup.

"Means a lot to me to start off with a win," fourth-seeded Sinner said in a post-match TV interview as a half-dozen fans dressed in carrot costumes cheered from the stands. "Physically, I feel good. I'm here in good shape. I think I can be happy for today."

Women's eighth seed Maria Sakrari admitted her relief after she beat Nao Hibino of Japan 6-4, 6-1, her first Grand Slam win since last year's Australian Open.

"I lost three first rounds in my last three Grand Slams," she said. "For me, it was a very difficult match today emotionally. I'm happy I managed to do the job right and play a good second set."

Also advancing were 2021 U.S. Open finalist Leylah Fernandez, who beat 17-year-old Sara Bejlek 7-6 (5), 6-2 and No. 9 Barbora Krejčíková, who rallied from a set and a break down to beat Mai Hontama 2-6, 6-4, 6-3.



A file photo of players in action.

## Draw for Volleyball Championship held

## Kazma face tough competition

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MANAMA, Jan 14: The draw for the 42nd Men's Arab Club Championship took place at the Arab Volleyball Federation's headquarters in Bahrain. The championship is set to be hosted in the Jordanian capi-

## VOLLEYBALL

tal, Amman, from February 17 to 29, featuring the participation of 13 clubs.

During the draw, the Kazma team, representing Kuwait, was placed in the third group alongside Iraq's North Masafi clubs and Jordan's Shabab Al Hussein. The first group consists of Al-Seeb (Oman), Al-Shorta (Qatar), and Baniyas (the

Emirates), while the second group includes Dar Kulaib (Bahrain), Qatar (Qatar), and Al-Suwaihi (Libya). The fourth group comprises of Iraqi Southern Gas, Libyan People of Benghazi, Jordanian Youth of Ayra, and Bahraini Star.

The draw was overseen by Sheikh Ali bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, the President of the Arab and Bahraini Volleyball Federations. Present at the event were Jihad Qsheitah, the Vice President of the Arab and Jordanian Volleyball Federation, Ibrahim Al-Muqbali, the Vice President and President of the Arab Federation, Abdullah Al-Ghurair, the Secretary of the Kuwaiti Federation, and Firas Al-Halwaji, the Secretary-General of the Arab Federation. Notably, the Kuwaiti Burgan team opted to withdraw from the tournament before the draw ceremony.



Players having a good time at the training session on the eve of the friendly match against Uganda.

## Kuwait resume training for Uganda clash

CAIRO, Jan 14: The Kuwait returned to training in Cairo in preparation for their upcoming friendly match against the Uganda on Friday.

After their first friendly match against the Libyan national team, which concluded with a 3-1 victory for the latter, Kuwait is gearing up for the upcoming challenge.

Abdullah Al-Shaheen, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Football Association, hosted a luncheon for the Kuwaiti national team delegation at Dar Abdullah in Cairo on Saturday. The event was attended by notable figures, including the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Egypt,

Ghanem Saqr Al-Ghanem, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwaiti Federation for Technical Affairs, Hayef Al-Mutairi, Member of the Board of Directors

## SOCCER

of the Federation, Abdulaziz Al-Samhan, Minister Plenipotentiary Meshari Al-Nibari, Consular Affairs Officer in Egypt Muhammad Al-Hussan, Diplomatic Attaché Ahmed Al-Sabti, and Diplomatic Attaché Abdulaziz Al-Rashidi.



Serbia's Novak Djokovic plays a forehand return to Croatia's Dino Prizmic during their first round match at the Australian Open tennis championships at Melbourne Park, Melbourne, Australia. (AP)

## Rev up your engines

## Red Bull Car Park Drift Championship returns

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14: This year, the highly anticipated Red Bull Car Park Drift Championship is making its triumphant return to Kuwait, offering motorsport enthusiasts an electrifying experience. Over two action-packed days, participating drivers will have the chance to showcase their skills in a fiercely competitive environment, marking the highlight of this exceptional sporting event. The competition includes qualifying rounds leading to a national final.

mistakes may incur penalties in the form of point deductions. Drivers must steer clear of collisions with defining obstacles, avoid heading in the wrong direction, and maintain control of their vehicles. Accumulating three penalties in a single round results in automatic disqualification.

After a three-year hiatus, the region's largest drift champion-

ship returns to Kuwait, presented in collaboration with Red Bull Mobile from Zain, Abdul Mohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company (the exclusive agent for Nissan cars in Kuwait), Aqua Eva, and Kuwait Motor Sports City. The event promises the presence of notable figures in the realms of racing, drifting shows, and motorcycles.



Excitement and enthusiasm in car park drift.

## DRIFTING

Hosted at Kuwait Motor Sports City, the public event reaches its climax on Friday, February 2nd, commencing at 7:00 pm.

Drift drivers will navigate a challenging circuit, demonstrating their prowess in overcoming obstacles. Their performance will be meticulously evaluated based on nine criteria and obstacles, with a total of 400 points up for grabs.

Drift skills account for a maximum of 120 points, while flippers and pendulum obstacles offer potential scores of up to 60 and 50 points, respectively.

Precision is paramount, as any

## Best of the Rest

**In-form Lazio beat Lecce:** The ever-present Felipe Anderson scored to help Lazio beat Lecce 1-0 in Serie A on Sunday as the capital side continued its impressive recent run.

Felipe Anderson netted in the 58th minute of his 126th straight match in all competitions for Lazio.

It was Lazio's fourth straight victory in Serie A and Maurizio Sarri's side also eliminated city rival Roma from the Italian Cup midweek in a tense quarterfinal.

It was back to business as usual for Inter Milan after a draw at Genoa and a late winner against Hellas Verona a week ago.

This time, the Serie A leader won convincingly 5-1 at neighboring Monza on Saturday with braces from Hakan Calhanoglu and Lautaro Martinez. (AP)

**Lille rout Lorient:** Canada's Jonathan David scored his sixth goal of the season on his 24th birthday as Lille ended a three-match winless run with a 3-0 win against Lorient in

the French league on Sunday.

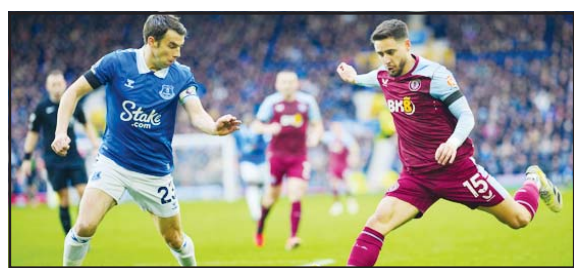
David broke the deadlock in the 37th minute from a set piece as he headed the ball home at the far post from Angel Gomes's cross.

The result moved Lille to fifth in the standings, just two points behind third-place Monaco. Lorient remained second to last, with only two wins from 18 matches. (AP)

**Feller denies Norway racers win:** World Cup slalom leader Manuel Feller denied the Norwegian men an emotional win Sunday, one day after their team leader Aleksander Aamodt Kilde crashed in downhill and was airlifted from the Wengen course.

Feller edged Atle Lie McGrath for victory for a second straight Sunday, by 0.10 seconds instead of the 0.02 margin one week earlier at nearby Adelboden.

McGrath said after setting the fastest first-run time in the morning he was "just skiing for Aleksander today." (AP)



Aston Villa's Alex Moreno (right), duels for the ball with Everton's Seamus Coleman during the English Premier League soccer match between Everton and Aston Villa, at Goodison Park stadium in Liverpool, England. (AP)

# Sports

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ISSF president attends opening ceremony

## Sheikh Salman inaugurates Asian Shotgun Championship

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 14, (KUNA): Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, President of the Asian Shooting Confederation (ASC), officially inaugurated the Asian Shotgun Championship. The prestigious nine-day event features the participation of 26 national teams from across the continent and is hosted at the Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex under the auspices of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The opening ceremony witnessed the presence of Luciano Rossi, President of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF), who arrived in Kuwait on Thursday, along with Eng. Duaij Al-Otaibi, President of the Kuwaiti and Arab shooting federations. In his welcoming address, Sheikh Salman, also the honorary president of Kuwait Shooting Sport Club, extended best wishes to the shooters aiming for success in the Asian qualifiers for the Paris Summer Olympic Games.

### SHOOTING

Expressing gratitude to His Highness the Amir for his paternal patronage, Al-Otaibi, who also leads the organizing committee, highlighted that the championship attracted nearly 500 participants, including shooters, coaches, and administrative staff from various Asian countries. He acknowl-



Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, President of the Asian Shooting Confederation and Luciano Rossi, President of the International Shooting Sport Federation with other dignitaries during the opening ceremony of the shotgun championship in Kuwait. (KUNA)

edged the cooperation of ISSF and ASC in conjunction with the Kuwait Shooting Federation (KSF) and the organizing committee for setting the

stage for the championship.

ISSF President Rossi conveyed confidence in KSF's ability to ensure the championship's complete success. He

appreciated the support provided by the Kuwait Public Authority for Sport and announced that the top eight shooters would qualify for the Paris Sum-

## Ivory Coast start Afcon party with win over Guinea-Bissau

ABIDJAN, Jan 14, (AP): Seko Fofana needed only four minutes to score the first goal of the Africa Cup of Nations as host country Ivory Coast started with a 2-0 win over Guinea-Bissau in the tournament opener.

Jean-Philippe Krasso wrapped up the win in the second half after going close in the first.

It was a nervy start from Guinea-Bissau, making just its fourth appearance at the biennial tournament, and Fofana capitalized on a poor clearance by eluding two defenders and shooting inside the right post.

Mama Baldé tried responding with an overhead kick at the other end but it was an isolated attack from Guinea-Bissau, which has never won a game at the tournament. The West African nation has finished bottom of its group in each of its previous three appearances.

Two-time champion Ivory Coast was able to maintain possession and calmly set about creating chances through patient buildup play.

Krasso went close with a header,

mer Olympic Games scheduled from July 26 to August 26. Rossi specified that four tickets each would be available for men and women in the trap and skeet competitions.

The initial competitions, including men and women's trap events, commenced on Sunday and Monday, leading up to the mixed doubles. The championship attracted shooters from countries such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Syria, Iran, Singapore, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, China, Japan, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, and the host nation, Kuwait.

then Fofana struck the crossbar after Ouparine Djoco got his fingertips to the ball. Krasso missed a good chance from Jonathan Bamba's cross after Bissau-Guinea defender Marcelo Djaló did enough to put him off.

Red Star Belgrade forward Krasso finally scored in the 58th to put the home fans at ease. They responded with "Olé, olé, olé" around the 60,000-capacity Alassane Ouattara Stadium.

### SOCCER

But the party had already started much earlier in Abidjan, the country's biggest city and commercial capital. People were driving around tooting their horns in cars displaying orange, white and green flags.

Many people were already wearing the distinctive orange jersey of the national team, which is affectionately known as "Les Elephants."

Victor Osimhen scored but couldn't lift Nigeria to a winning start in the Africa Cup of Nations as the "Super Eagles" were held 1-1 by Equatorial Guinea in their opening game.

Goalkeeper Jesús Owono produced a string of saves to frustrate three-time champion Nigeria in the second half after Osimhen had equalized in the first.

Nigeria dominated from the start only to be caught out in the 36th minute when José Machín set up Iban Salvador to fire Equatorial Guinea ahead.

Osimhen replied around a minute later when Ademola Lookman's deflected cross dropped kindly for him to head in at the far post.

Nigeria struck the post through Moses Simon but was unable to get any more goals despite intense pressure, with Owono in inspired form.

## Unbeaten Kuwait clinch 2nd round berth; Saudi Arabia dominate India

Iraq hold Japan

### Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MANAMA, Jan 14: Kuwait secured a spot in the second main round of the 21st edition of the Asian Handball Championship, the "2025 World Cup Qualifiers," with a 31-27 victory over the Chinese Taipei team.

With this triumph, the Kuwait accumulated 4 points from victories against Oman and Taipei. Even with one last preliminary round match against the Qatar,

### HANDBALL

Kuwait's qualification remains secure, regardless of the result.

The match between Kuwait and China-Taipei showcased the dominance and style of our team, with most players shining, particularly goalkeeper Abdulaziz Al-Dhafiri, who received the best player award. However, in the last five minutes, the team's performance slightly declined, resulting in a narrower margin after holding a 10-goal lead.

To strategically manage the outcome, Kuwait coach Saeed Hegazy opted to rest some experienced players in preparation for the upcoming face-off against Qatar.

Earlier, Saudi Arabia defeated India 48-17, the UAE overpowered Kazakhstan 39-15, and Bahrain emerged victorious against Hong Kong with a score of 47-20. The Iraq, causing an early upset, drew with Japan, a title contender and qualifier for the Paris Olympics, ending the match at 28-28. Today's competitions feature Japan



The Kuwait swimming team displays their medals on the podium as officials look on.

against India, Kazakhstan against Hong Kong, Iraq against Saudi Arabia and Bahrain against the UAE.

## Kuwait's Zubaid clinches gold in men's 100m backstroke

DOHA, Jan 14, (KUNA): Kuwaiti swimmer Muhammad Zubaid secured the gold medal in the men's 100-meter backstroke event for the 15-16 age group. This victory marked the fourth day of the Second Arab Aquatics Age Group Championships, elevating the team's overall medal count to 11.

Faisal Abu Al-Hassan, head of the team delegation and member

### SWIMMING

of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Aquatics Federation, commended the team's efforts as they concluded their participation in the Championship. In a statement to KUNA, he expressed praise for the players who showcased their skills throughout the tournament.

The Second Arab Water Sports Championship for Sunni Ages commenced on Wednesday and is scheduled to continue until January 15.

## Resilient Japan edge Vietnam at Asian Cup

AL-RAYYAN, Qatar, Jan 14, (AP): Takumi Minamino scored two goals as Japan came from behind to beat Vietnam 4-2 in the Asian Cup on Sunday.

The tournament favorite trailed 2-1 in the first half despite Minamino opening the scoring after 11 minutes of the Group D match.

Nguyen Dinh Bac evened the score at Al Thumama Stadium five minutes later and Vietnam, ranked 94th by FIFA, went ahead through Pham Tuan Hai's goal in the 33rd.

### SOCCER

Record four-time Asian Cup winner Japan is ranked 17th by world soccer's governing body and is tipped to regain the trophy it last won in 2011.

It recovered from the surprise of going behind when former Liverpool player Minamino, who is now at Monaco, equalized in the 45th.



Vietnam's Nguyen Dinh Bac (left) and Japan's Yukinari Sugawara fight for the ball during the Asian Cup Group D soccer match between Japan and Vietnam at Al Thumama Stadium in Doha, Qatar. (AP)



A Kuwaiti player is impeded as he makes a goal attempt against Chinese Taipei.