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CALL FOR PROFESSIONALISM IN ELECTION MEDIA COVERAGE Reject election hopefuls' appeals: Prosecution

AMIR VISITS DISABLED SPORTS CLUB, K.B.A.



KRCS mobilizes 400 volunteers

By Saaed Mahmoud Saleh and Muhammad Al-Musleh Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: While the Ministry of Information announced the withdrawal of a number of licenses and preventing their owners from covering the election at candidates' headquarters or polling stations due to violating the regulations in this regard, a reliable source has confirmed the issuance of strict instructions to moni-

tor and audit all electoral

Day by Day

ANY leadership in the world, especially a monarchy or prince, surrounds itself with three entities. First is an open platform for people to submit their complaints. These complaints are followed up by people who fear Allah and are keen on solving them, while the ruler follows up from time to time; such that nothing is hidden from

Second is the Council of Grievances that people can turn to, since the judiciary is infallible and it could issue a verdict based on flawed laws.

Third, there must be pure advisors that no one knows about; focusing on finding solutions to problems that could harm the

..Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Experts call on Assembly

Kuwait urged to embrace economic transformation

KUWAIT CITY, March 27, (KUNA): The upcoming National Assembly should adopt several prominent economic issues namely laws that would boost the diversification of the Kuwaiti economy and finding new income sources that would secure sustainability, economic experts stressed.

In interviews with KUNA, they said that the local economy depends on the global energy markets and their rapid fluctuations, pointing out to the necessity on working on the sustainability of the national economy to transform it from a rentier economy to a productive one.

They also stressed on creating an investment climate that would attract foreign capital, boost the business competition and remove the obstacles for foreign investors, as well as encourage national cadres to pave their way into a free economy and encourage innovation and creativity.

Imbalances

Financial markets expert Hassan bu Mejdad said that resolving the structural imbalances in the national economy would be through the privatization of some government sectors, such a energy and commu-

He called for boosting privatepublic partnership, citing Az-Zour North power plant, Sheqaya solar plant and privatization of the stock market, as well as restructuring the government apparatus, canceling the non-productive sectors and

merging sectors of similar nature. For his part, Business Management professor at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Dr. Abdulamir Al-Hendal called for optimal utilization of funds in The National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Development to progress youth projects, reduce the burden on the government and encourage skillful employees and those working in the private sector.

He stressed the importance of

the public and private sector and encourage the foreign investment environment in Kuwait, as well as facilitating all obstacles. He called for focusing on a spe-

activating the partnership between

cific vision between the legislative and executive authorities, and prioritizing it through activating straset in the New Kuwait 2035 vision.

Expert in economic and investment affairs Nader Al-Obeid said that the government and National Assembly have to "agree on a clear economic vision with specific goals" that could be achieved through intensifying all efforts and harnessing all possibilities.

He called for taking advantage of Kuwait's special strategic location that would achieve a sustainable economic boom (renaissance). stressing in this regard the importance of creating specialized zones with diverse activities.

He warned against continuing to depend on a single source income. which is oil, and to expand investment in oil industries and producing environmentally friendly oil derivatives that would meet the needs of the global markets.

Dr. Issam Al-Tawari, the Managing Partner for Newbury Economic Consultancy, said that the next National Assembly would be facing an important entitlement which is preserve the state's sustainability through stopping over-spending, boosting the non-oil revenues and collect arrears on companies and

He affirmed that diversifying income sources has become an urgent necessity in light of the developments in the world oil markets, recalling the record drop in oil prices during the Covid-19 pandemic.

He stressed the he importance of sustaining the national economy and transforming it from a rentier economy to a productive economy, saying that investing in people is the pillar to build a productive and sustainable economy.



Top: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, accompanied by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, visited Kuwait Blind Association. Above: His Highness the Amir, accompanied by His Highness the PM, visited the Kuwait Disabled Sports Club on Tuesday evening.

China-Arab states meeting due May 30: Amb Al-Najem

TOKYO, March 27, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Ambassador to China Jasem Al-Najem confirmed on Wednesday that China was preparing to host the 10th session of the ministerial meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum in Beijing on May 30.

Al-Najem indicated that Arab foreign ministers plus the Secretary-General of the Arab League would participate in the meeting, according to a statement by Kuwait Embassy in Beijing, received

On his part, Director of the Chinese Ministry's China-Arab States Cooperation Forum Affairs Ambassador Li Chen explained the importance of the upcoming ministerial meeting of the forum. He expressed his hope that Kuwait would participate with a high-level delegation headed by Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, with widespread participation of Arab foreign ministers in the meeting, which will discuss many important issues for both the Chinese and Arab sides, both at the regional and international levels, most notably the Palestinian issue.

The forum will adopt three documents after discussion, which are namely "the Beijing Declaration," "the Joint Statement on the Palestinian Issue," and "the Executive Program of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum between 2024-2026.

'Generations foster love, loyalty'

KUWAIT CITY, March 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, accompanied by His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, visited the Kuwait Disabled Sports Club on Tuesday evening on the occasion

of the holy month of Ramadan. His Highness the Amir was welcomed by Minister of State for National Affairs and Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Minister of State for Communication Affairs Dawood Marafie. Director-General of the Public Sports Authority Yousef Abdullah Al-Baidan and the Club's Board Chairman Shafi Mohammad Al-Hajri.

His Highness the Amir addressed the gathering by saying that he was pleased to visit the club to congratulate its disabled members, their families, and officials on the holy month of Ramadan.

He said that the State of Kuwait, with all sectors concerned, has been paying much attention to the disabled as being a main component of the Kuwaiti social fabric, providing them will much care and support.

He thanked the club's administration and everyone concerned for their care to the members, citing championships in several international events, particularly the win of 24 medals in the Sharjah International Para Athletics Forum and the 15th Fazza International Athletics Championship in the UAE.

His Highness the Amir also thanked the families of the champions and disabled champions, who had proved strong resolve and will to address challenges, urging them to keep on attaining goals and maintaining their

However, His Highness the Amir called on those in charge

of the affairs of the disabled to adopt all-out policies to support them, empower them, and incorporate them in society by means of providing them with health, housing, and educational care, and enacting appropriate legisla-

Board Chairman of Kuwait Disabled Sports Club Shafi Al-Hajri pledged Tuesday to maintain and continue serve the dear homeland.

tion to protect them.

Addressing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah while visiting the club, Al-Hajri conveyed congratulations and greetings of all disabled to His Highness the Amir on the holy month of Ramadan.

Al-Hajri said "Kuwait, upon the wise leadership of Your Highness, implements all laws in all governmental agencies in the country", affirming obedience and loyalty to His Highness the Amir for the public interest of Kuwait's present and future.

He lauded the good of Al-Sabah Family, indicating that generations are taught to love and be loyal to this country to raise its flag in international arenas.

Continued on Page 5

polls. The source stated that teams

from the ministry are monitoring all electoral polls and making surprise field visits to licensed media centers and outlets to verify the samples, slides and electronic systems included in opinion polls related to electoral matters.

The source stated that the ministry is keen on auditing opinion poll programs by taking records and random samples to ensure compliance with the established regulations. He explained this will contribute to enhancing the credibility, transparency and durability of these polls among the public.

On the other hand, Assistant Undersecretary for Press, Publishing and Publications at the ministry Lafi Al-Subaie stressed that the ministry is keen on providing all services and facilities to media professionals to cover the 2024 National Assembly Election since the start of the candidate registration process.

Al-Subaie said the ministry allowed registration for media professionals who wish to cover the election through the website to provide them with the necessary licenses in accordance with the rules and regulations.

Commitment

He clarified that most of those who were granted licenses proved their commitment to the instructions and guidelines; which reflects the extent of their professionalism and responsibility. He added a small number of media license holders violated the licensing conditions during the candidate registration period despite their clarity and simplicity, which led to the withdrawal of their licenses and preventing them from covering the election - whether at candidates' headquarters or polling stations.

He called on all media outlets to adhere to professionalism in covering the election, so that this democratic entitlement is conveved in the best possible way in a way that reflects the true image of the ancient Kuwaiti media.

Meanwhile, the Public Prosecution has requested for rejection of the appeals filed by former MPs and candidates for the upcoming parliamentary election at the Court of Cassation.

Former MPs and candidates for the 2024 parliamentary election Ahmed Mutei Al-Azmi, Marzouq Al-Hebeini, Marzouq Al- Khalifa and Jaber Al-Mehailbi appealed the ruling of the Court of Appeals; which upheld the decision of the Ministry of Interior to disqualify them.

The Court of Cassation will rule on these appeals on Sunday.

On the other hand, Fourth Constituency candidate Anwar Al-Fikr said in his electoral campaign that although the appointment of the Crown Prince is the absolute right of HH the Amir; the Parliament has the right to approve such an appointment.

Former MP and Second Constituency candidate Khalid Ayed Al-Anzi has vowed to submit a bill on amending the Nationality Law. He said the amendment shall stipulate that whoever is born to a Kuwaiti father is

Continued on Page 5

Ramadan Timings

Iftar Thursday 18:05 Imsak Friday



Amiri Diwan photo Photo shows HH the Amir during his visit to the Kuwait Disabled

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The security authorities in Kuwait have seized an Iranian commercial ship and its crew following an incident where the ship's captain was compelled to enter Kuwaiti territorial waters to report the death of an Iranian sailor, resulting in a case of accidental manslaughter being registered, reports Al-Rai daily.

BEIRUT: Seven people were killed and four others were wounded in an airstrike by Israeli aggression's warplanes launched on Wednesday, on the town of Al-Habbaniyah in southern Lebanon, said a media source.

The warplanes targeted the "Lebanese Emergency Services Association center affiliated with the Islamic Group" in the town of Al-Habbaniyah, destroying it and killing seven medical staff members who were inside, said The Lebanese National News Agency. (KUNA)



KUNA photo Kuwaiti Ambassador to China Jasem Al-Najem with Chinese Director for China-Arab Cooperation Forum Li Chen and Arab envoys.

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Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Warm and partly
cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times northwest-erly wind, with speeds of 12-40

By Night: Rather cold and part-

Weather ly cloudy with light to moderate

northwesterly wind, with speeds of 10-35 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear. Station Max Exp

Kuwait City

Min Rec Wafra

Kuwait Airport Abdaly 14 Jahra 30 15 Salmivah 19 Nuwaisib 14

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

Egyptian consulate announces new fees for MRPs

'Italy to deliver 13 more Eurofighter jets to Kuwait in 18 months'

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Military Attachè at the Italian Embassy Colonel Salvatore Ferrara has confirmed the depth of relations between the air forces of Kuwait and Italy; confirming that his country will deliver 13 additional Eurofighter aircraft to Kuwait within the next 18 months as per the announcement of Italian Minister of Defense Guido Crosetto during his recent visit to the country, reports Al-Qabas

daily.
Ferrara told the daily that 15 out of 28 Eurofighters have already been delivered as part of the 'Eurofighter Ku-

wait' program. He also praised the results of the visit of the Italian Defense Minister to

Kuwait on March 5, which he described as successful and positive.

Crosetto met with his counterpart Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah at the headquarters of the Ministry of Defense, accompanied by Undersecretary of the ministry Sheikh Dr Abdullah Meshaal Al-Sabah and Chief of the General Staff of the Army Major General P.S.C. Pilot Bandar Al-Muzain.

According to Ferrara, the two sides praised bilateral cooperation in the field of defense as a fundamental pillar for ensuring peace and stability in the region; while providing opportunities for mutual investment and strengthening the economies of the two countries. He pointed out that a wide range of common topics were discussed during the visit, as well as the growing bilateral defense partnership between Kuwait and Italy, such as renewing many agreements and intensified cooperation between the armed forces of the two friendly countries.

New fees for MRPs: The Consulate of the Arab Republic of Egypt has announced that in light of the Egyptian Minister of Interior's decision No. 470/2024 on amending the fees for issuing a new machine-readable passport and replacement for a damaged or lost passport; it has been decided that the fees will be collected for the benefit of the Ministry of Interior-General Administration of Passports, Immigration and Nationality as of April 1, reports Al-Anba daily

Following are the new fees:

1. Obtaining a passport for the first time 2. Passport renewal - KD97

3. Obtaining replacement for damaged/ lost passport - KD145

Water use decreases: The Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) has confirmed a decrease in the percentage of water consumption compared to production; indicating that consumption exceeded production in the past, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources

Sources attributed the increase in production to the completion of maintenance works in a number of stations. Sources affirmed that

the maintenance of stations is carried out as per schedule

Sources said the ministry is working hard to complete maintenance works in various stations, units and electrical network before the peak season at the end of May in order to be prepared for the expected increase in water and power consumption during summer.

Sources stressed that the ministry takes into account any shortfall in production during the next stage; as it will be compensated water wise from the strategic reserve and electrically from the Gulf interconnection network, in addition to its endeavor to secure electricity by purchasing from others through several initiatives with the independent supplier system that are currently being studied.



PM Diwan photo

HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah with the guests.

PM receives chairman, members of education panel

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah re-

ceived Wednesday the Chairman and members of the Board of Trustees of the National Committee for Supporting Education and the



Ministry of Defense photo

Amir orders 'roadmap': Army chief

KUWAIT CITY, March 27, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Army Chief Gen. Bandar Al-Muzain has called on army commanders to act according to the instructions of His Highness the Amir and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as being a "roadmap and

The top general made the remark while addressing a meeting of the Military Defense Council, the Ministry of Defense said in a press release.

He pointed out Deputy Prime Minister, Defense Minister and Acting Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah's keenness to see all army commanders act in

"These directives act as a roadmap and approach aiming at encouraging army personnel and upgrading their preparedness, efficiency, and capabilities to cope with advancement in qualification, training, and armament, and to enable them to serve and protect their nation," he added.

Kuwaiti Army Chief Gen. Bandar Al-Muzain

approach".

line with the political leadership's directives.

Other Voices

PM bicycle, morals of nation

By Ahmad alsarraf

The sight of the Prime Minister of Kuwait, pedaling alongside his fellow citizens, including those of his grandchildren's age, during the "Kuwait Sports Day" event on Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad

heartwarming. With over 13,000 participants, both men women, ministers, officials, and prominent figures taking part in the sports which was

patronage, was a

Bridge, was truly



alsarraf

resounding success Here are some reflections on this remarkable occasion:

His Highness the Prime Minister's active participation and his extended presence among the people are rare occurrences indeed. We hope that similar events will continue to take place periodically, fostering a closer bond between the leadership and the com-

While some view this event as a testament to the nation's sports and health awareness. it's important to recognize that many Kuwaitis struggle with health issues such as obesity and diabetes. Dr. Abeer Al-Bahwa's recent statement regarding the alarming rates of physical inactivity and chronic diseases underscores the urgent need for health and moral awareness among the populace.

The presence of senior officials at the event undoubtedly encouraged participation and served to silence critics, highlighting the importance of such gatherings in promoting a healthier life-

However, despite our enthusiasm for such initiatives, it's disheartening to witness the aftermath of the event marred by litter and waste. While most participants were provided with refreshments, some displayed a lack of respon-

sibility by discarding waste improperly. The absence of adequate waste management infrastructure, such as garbage bins along the route, reflects a broader issue of environmental neglect. It is imperative that we instill a sense of environmental stewardship and respect for cleanliness alongside our participation

in such events. Indeed, while events like the "Kuwait Sports Day" are crucial for promoting physical activity and community engagement, they must be accompanied by efforts to foster moral responsibility and respect for others. This extends beyond our participation in sports to encompass our everyday actions, including our conduct during religious

observances like fasting and prayer. It is unacceptable for worshippers to disturb others by obstructing traffic or parking inappropriately, and law enforcement must uphold regulations to

ensure public order and safety.

In conclusion, while celebrating the success of events like the "Kuwait Sports Day," we must also acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead in promoting health, environmental awareness, and moral responsibility among our society. Only through collective efforts can we build a healthier, more harmonious community for future generations.

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

Kuwaitis can enter Antigua, Barbuda without visa for month's stay: envoy

'365 beaches in Caribbean, moderate all-year weather'

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: The Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to Kuwait Mohammad Al-Zoubi announced that his country's government has issued a decision to exempt Kuwaiti citizens from obtaining a visa to enter its territories.

In a press statement issued yesterday, he said Kuwait is the first Gulf country whose citizens can enter this Caribbean country without a visa and can

stay for a month. Åmbassador Al-Zoubi revealed that his country's government sent an official memorandum regarding the decision to the Kuwaiti government, stressing that this decision was taken in appreciation of the State of Kuwait and with the aim of strengthening relations between the two

He welcomed Kuwaitis who wish to visit his country to enjoy its moderate weather throughout the year, explaining that what distinguishes it and makes it unique is that it has 365 beaches, and the waters of the Caribbean Sea are warm and calm. There are luxurious and modern hotels and resorts on the islands, which means that a tourist can visit a new beach every day for an entire year without visiting a beach twice.

Ambassador Al-Zoubi stated that about one and a half million tourists visit Antigua and Barbuda annually, most of them from the United States, Canada, Britain, and many European countries.

MoH orders 'probe' into admin absent at facility

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: The Ministry of Health (MoH) has opened investigation and taken the necessary legal measures against the administrators in a health facility, following their absence and leaving the workplace without asking permission or providing an alternative, reports Al-Anba daily.

The ministry confirmed that the Minister of Health Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi immediately issued a directive to open an investigation into the incident; stressing that anyone proven to be negligent in performing his job duties will be held accountable, and that administrative and legal procedures regulating the workflow will be applied.

Online classes planned: The idea of implementing the remote education system has expanded; as the Education Ministry is now gearing towards holding online classes in the last 10 days of the holy month of Ramadan, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources pointed out that the initial agreement was to conduct online classes in the last two days of the holy month, indicating the Public Education Sector and Coordination Department have prepared a memorandum that will be presented soon to Minister Of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr Adel Al-Adwani.

Sources said the teachers will hold classes in the school building according to the academic schedule.

Sources explained that due to the success of the online education experience in the past, and the familiarity of teachers and students with the application mechanism; the ministry decided to use it whenever necessary.



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

Pakistani Ambassador to Kuwait Malik Muhammad Farouk and other dignitaries at the cake-cutting ceremnony.

Embassy marks National Day

'Kuwait & Pakistan have stood with each other in time of need'

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: The Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait Malik Farouk says his country had last year celebrated with Kuwait the 60th anniversary of their distinguished diplomatic relations and excellent fraternal relations, during which a common slogan was launched, and various activities, including the exchange of cultural groups, trade delegations, and joint sports competitions, were held.

He highlighted this in a speech he delivered during the celebration of the National Day of Pakistan, which corresponds to March 23, held the day before yesterday in the presence of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Oil Dr. Imad Al-Ateeqi, and the Commander of the Land Force in the Ministry of Defense Khalid Zaved

Ambassador Farouk said, "That year culminated in the visit of our Prime Minister to Kuwait, and the signing of several memorandums of understanding related to investments."

He said, "The two countries enjoy deep and fraternal relations that extend for centuries, as our contacts between our people and our trade ties are ancient. We have stood by each other in moments of victory, and in the hours of need.

"The two countries have a convergence of views on regional and international issues, and cooperate with each other in various international forums, including the United Nations and the Organization of Is-

lamic Cooperation. "The Defense Cooperation Agreement and the Health Cooperation Agreement Protocol between the two countries are excellent landmarks. Our bilateral trade is on the rise, and we look forward to further expanding trade ties. We are also keen to contribute to the food security requirements in Kuwait.

We have strong Kuwaiti investments in Pakistan, through the Kuwait Investment Authority and the Kuwait Oil Company. Our investment potential is huge, and Kuwait is welcome to benefit from this tremendous growth boom.

"The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was established to facilitate foreign investors, especially from the Gulf countries. The council is chaired by our Prime Minister and is dedicated to resolving investor issues and complaints in a prompt and transparent manner.

"Pakistan attracts thousands of tourists from Kuwait who not only enjoy the country's natural beauty, but also its unique culture, cuisine, hospitality and archaeological sites.

Ambassador Farouk expressed his gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishaal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Al-Sabah, as well as the government and people of Kuwait, for being excellent hosts to the Pakistani diplomatic mission

and the Pakistani community alike. He added, "We join Kuwait, the Gulf states and the broader international community in calling for an urgent end to the continued suffering of defenseless civilians

Meanwhile, the Commander of the Land Forces at the Ministry of Defense Khaled Zayed, in a speech during his participation in the Pakistani Embassy's celebration of its National Day, revealed the conclusion of a number of agreements between the two countries in the future, and highlighted the

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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Time has come to truly pursue reinstatement of Kuwait glory'

"Despite Ministerial Resolution No. 17 of 2023 mandating media platforms to differentiate between press releases and promotional advertisements, as the 2024 elections draw near, certain electronic news outlets and visual channels appear to be disregarding this directive," columnist Iqbal Al-Ahmad wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"It appears that the administration overseeing electronic publishing has struggled to effectively enforce this regulation and maintain control over the matter.

"The gravity of this situation lies in the fact that the misrepresentation resulting from this issue can adversely impact election outcomes, albeit indi-

"The issuance of licenses to these

electronic media and visual channels to conimpartial opinion polls raises concerns. "Foremost

among these concerns is the possibility that these media entities offer paid services

candidates, thereby creating

Iqbal Al-Ahmad a conflict of interest that undermines their ability to conduct neutral polls. Such a conflict, particularly of a financial nature, renders it challenging, if not impossible, for these media outlets to

maintain impartiality.
"Moreover, the publication of polls and the categorization of candidates based on their perceived chances can unduly influence elections, potentially steering voters towards a particular party's favor. This practice also detri-mentally affects candidates deemed to have minimal chances of success when they are omitted from the list of viable contenders.

"In many cases, candidates find themselves compelled to engage with these electronic and visual platforms, often resorting to financial transactions to bolster their electoral prospects when polls are released.

"The decision by the Electronic Publishing Department of the Ministry of Information to grant licenses to these media channels for conducting opinion polls lends unwarranted credibility and impartiality to outlets driven primarily by financial motives, thus skewing their influence in favor of contracted candi-

"In contrast, only consulting centers licensed by the Ministry of Commerce can offer impartial polls, as they are not authorized to engage in candidate propaganda like their electronic and visual counterparts.

"The licensing process for these channels has been marred by numerous legal infractions, as highlighted in the National Integrity Association's report.

"It is imperative that opinion polls remain objective and impartial, devoid of any illegal attempts to manipulate public opinion. Manipulation and biased influence distort the accuracy of results, often resulting in harm to the nation and failing to reflect the genuine sentiments of the populace based on accurate and factual information.

"I was taken aback by the significant turnout of Kuwaiti citizens at the office of Mr. Adel Al-Zawawi, where he and a commendable group of Kuwaitis passionately advocated for the preservation of Kuwaiti identity and the safeguarding of Kuwaiti nationality against any form of distortion.

"The sheer number of attendees reflected their deep appreciation for Mr. Al-Zawawi's dedication to Kuwait's national interests, as well as for everyone associated with his cause.

"This is especially notable in the current period, characterized by remarkable governmental and grassroots efforts aimed at restoring Kuwait's national identity to its authentic roots, while purging it of any impurities accumulated during tumultuous times that affected significant aspects of the country for various reasons, yet none of which justified compromising the nation's in-

tegrity.
"The unified sentiment among the gathered crowds was clear: the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, and the time has come to earnestly pursue the noble aspiration of reinstating Kuwait's glory and essence.'

"Finance House... A piece of good news was published by the local press during the month of goodness. Unfortunately, this goodness angered some of us and even made some people lose their minds, up to the point that it made them forget to say the truth, Blessed and Most High, find out!" columnist Talal Al-Saeed wrote for Al-Seyassah

"Without anyone realizing it, they unleashed their anger on Kuwait Finance House without justification. The news that angered them was: 'Kuwait Finance House donated \$10 million to finance some charitable projects in the Arab Republic of Egypt. The amount is approximately KD3 million.

"The reason for the anger in which some are trying to incite the Kuwaiti street against the 'Finance House' is on the basis that citizens are more deserving of this donation, and there are a thousand deserving people inside Kuwait, waiting for such a donation.

"This speech certainly pleases whoever hears it, sympathizes with it, and also becomes angry with 'Kuwait Finance House.' But for the sake of the truth and history, we confirm that 'Finance House' donated more than KD50 million yesterday, not a dollar as far as I know, to the citizens in debt in the State of Kuwait. We confirm that the donation was allocated to citizens only. It was distributed with honesty, justice and equality to pay the debts of citizens at the Enforcement Department in the Kuwaiti Ministry of Justice, which classified debtors, those who have travel ban and imprisonment sentence according to age or date of birth. Thus, they started with the elderly, women and men, until they reached those born in the 1970s.

"According to my personal knowledge, the donation is still continuing and work is underway to complete procedures for the rest of the debtors. Whenever the births in one year end, they move on to those born the following year. The whole matter is entrusted to judges and advisors who are known for their competence and integrity, work sincerely and treat people equally. What is the justification for anger?

"Some philanthropists among the people of Kuwait, may Allah reward them, build mosques and schools in Egypt, yet no one blames them, so why

do we blame the 'Finance House'? "For your information, I am not a lawyer for 'Finance House'. I do not have an account in it. I do not know anyone on its board of directors, but the truth must be spoken, and everyone knows it..."

"The wisdom of the Creator in creating birds, animals and insects ... In Kuwait, we call it 'Zarzoor-starling' -a bird known in throughout the world. The name is an eloquent Arabic word," columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for Al Seyassah daily.

"In 1958, the leader of China ordered his people to kill starlings because they ate crops. Indeed, peasants began killing tens of thousands of these birds. They received awards and rewards, and were treated like national heroes.

"This bird ate locusts that were harmful to agriculture, but when the starlings died, the numbers of locusts increased, and later spread, eliminating the country's crops. This was one of the main causes of the Great China Famine in 1961, which caused the death of 15 people from hunger.

The source of the news says: 'Do not think that by cutting off a creature's livelihood or restricting it, your livelihood will expand and your life will be pleasant as you wish. Allah divided the livelihood wisely and is sufficient for everyone. Perhaps, whoever's livelihood and strength was cut off would protect you from many great evils and you do not know it. Glory be to Him who created this universe with balance. Mind blow-

ing!' (End of quote).
"It was stated in an article published by the British magazine, 'The Economist' on July 28, 2021: 'Dogs can smell things at concentrations of one part in a trillion, which is equivalent to one drop from a pond the size of Olympic swimming pools.

"Another source stated: 'Many western studies have proven that animals have feelings, and that they talk to each other. A horse talks to another horse by moving its ear, a horse understands human feelings, and animals have compassion among themselves. A kangaroo offers a dove some grains. Some experts use a certain kind of rat loaded with a device to detect mines with the utmost accuracy, which saves people's

"A pigeon spied for the Pakistani intelligence unit. The Indian authorities arrested and imprisoned it on May 28, 2015. The birds take bits of cigarette tobacco thrown on the ground to fumigate their nest. There is a bird that issues a warning to humans to inform them of the danger of mercury emission. Birds warn us of bad weather, so they hear storms shortly before they ap-

proach.
"An article published by the British newspaper, 'The Guardian, stated that 'about two billion people eat insects as part of their regular diet, because they contain proteins, vitamins and miner-

als.'
"The American magazine, 'Jestor' published an article on August 1, 2021, by writer Sera Garcia about a fly that eats the leaves of drug plants in farms'. Without a doubt, this is good.

"Bees are beneficial for humans. birds and the environment, as they pollinate plants and trees that later produce fruits and vegetables. Human crops need bees and other insects in order to pollinate and produce fruits, vegetables and grains. Some of these grains turn into fodder for cows that produce milk in addition to their meat.

"In a study by the University of London published in March 2010, it was found that bees see in color, which makes them fly between plants easily in search of food. They see at a speed five times faster than human sight, which makes them flee. A person cannot catch a flying bee, but every bee can catch another bee, because of the bees have very fast eyesight. The speed of your vision depends on how quickly the light cells in our eyes enter the brain. Most bees see faster than human eyesight and avoid their strike.

"Man destroyed the environment with the abundance of factories and airplanes that spew gases into the atmosphere. The world's temperature rose, part of the ice at the poles melted, sea levels increased, and hurricanes and floods struck countries around the world, so they are affected by disasters of their own making."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



Al-Jarida photo

A municipality worker removes an illegal 'Poll 24' advertisement put up by a potential candidate.

KD 5,000 fine for illegal poll adverts: Municipality

Kuwait Municipality has issued a stern warning regarding electoral advertising regulations, emphasizing that any breach, such as the placement of unlicensed electoral advertisements or the utilization of private residential properties for electoral campaigning, will result in hefty penalties of up to 5,000 dinars, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In a recent statement, the municipality underscored its commitment to enforcement, declaring that its field teams will be actively monitoring election headquarters and advertisements across the region. Collaborating closely with the Public Authority for Civil Information, these teams will gather pertinent data on violators to ensure strict adherence

to electoral advertising guidelines.
Furthermore, the municipality will utilize the government "Sahl" application to issue warnings directly to offenders, thereby emphasizing the importance of compliance with electoral advertising regulations.

Two doctors fined hefty amounts for causing death of Kuwaiti man

Kuwaiti duo's 10 years jail upheld in 'fashionista' assault

By Jaber Al-Hamoud Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: The Court of Appeals ruled to oblige the Ministry of Health and two doctors to pay compensation worth KD 111,000 to the family members of Falah Al-Sawagh for the serious medical errors that led to his death. This ruling was based on a final ruling issued by the Court of Cassation that convicted the two doctors.

Earlier, the Court of Cassation had sentenced the two doctors to one-year imprisonment each, bailable by KD 5,000, after convicting them of unintentionally killing former MP Falah Al-Sawagh during an operation in the hospital, according to the complaint lodged by Lawyer Dr. Yousef Al-

Issued

It is noteworthy that the report issued by the joint committee of the Ministry of of Medicine at Kuwait University assigned by the court in the manslaughter case of Al-Sawagh confirmed that he had died as a result of medical errors. It was proven that there was bacterial blood poisoning resulting from the operation that was performed

Al-Sawagh's family members had filed the lawsuit, accusing three doctors working at the Saud Al-Babtain Center for Burns and Plastic Surgery, one of whom was responsible for causing Al-Sawagh's death as a result of a medical error. They demanded that the doctors and the Ministry of Health be obligated in solidarity to pay temporary compensation worth KD 5,001 to them after they submitted papers proving that the doctors had committed a medical error that led to Al-Sawagh's death.

10 years jail upheld: The Court of Appeals upheld the verdict issued by the Court of First Instance, which sentenced two Kuwaiti citizens to ten-year imprisonment each with hard labor for kidnapping a "fashionista", taking her to an isolated place, and assaulting her.

The Public Prosecution charged the two citizens with kidnapping, assaulting, and photographing the "fashionista" after enticing her under the pretext of creating an advertisement for them through her account.

During the court session, her defense team stressed that the two had committed the crimes of kidnapping by force and premeditation. They demanded that the maximum penalties be imposed on them, and that they be obligated to pay temporary civil compensation worth KD 5,001, while preserving all her other rights.

The investigation report proved that the two defendants had stalked the victim and kidnapped her by force and coercion. The mobile phone tower movement also pinned the two to be at the location of the incident and at the exact time when the incident occurred as reported by the victim.

Probe into by-elections: The Public Prosecution has launched investigations into the crime of organizing by-elections for one of the segments of Kuwaiti society prior to the date set for the 2024 parliamentary elections.

It ordered the detention of two individuals who were caught supervising the byelections, and ordered the arrest of the rest.

The security services arrested the defendants, in accordance with law No. 35/1962 regarding elections for members of the National Assembly and its amendments.

The fifth paragraph of article 45 stipulates that the penalty for those who are proven to have organized, participated in organizing or called for by-elections, which are held unofficially before the date set for the elections to choose one or more from among those belonging to a specific group or sect, will be imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years, and/or a fine ranging between KD 2,000 and KD 5,000.



Municipality inspectors at a barber's shop.

5 citations issued and 16 warnings to Jahra shops

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: The supervisory team overseeing municipal services in Jahra Governorate recently conducted a rigorous inspection campaign targeting shop licenses and advertisements. This initiative aimed to enforce compliance with regulations and address any violations effectively, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the campaign, thorough inspections were carried out, resulting in the identification of numerous infractions. Specifically, five violations were issued, accompanied by sixteen warnings. These infractions ranged from failure to renew advertisements to the unauthorized creation or addition of advertisements identifying activities without proper licensing. Additionally, instances of unauthorized exploitation of spaces and squares without municipal approval were addressed.

The primary objective of these intensive inspection tours conducted by the audit and follow-up teams across the governorate's municipalities is to closely monitor violations and implement appropriate legal measures against offenders. This proactive approach underscores the commitment to upholding regulatory standards and ensuring the orderly functioning of municipal services within Jahra Governorate.

KD 2,750 vanish in jiffy

Egyptian loses savings in fraudulent website scam

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: In a sudden turn of events, an Egyptian national lost a staggering 2,750 dinars due to a fraudulent online transaction while attempting to pay his phone bill, reports Al-Rai daily.

Recounting the ordeal Sayed Abdel Hakim, aged 30, shared the harrowing experience, stating, "I was in the process of arranging my phone bill payment, amounting to 50 dinars, and turned to a search on the renowned search engine, Google. I stumbled upon a website resembling the official platform of my service provider. It bore the company's logo and colors, convincing me of its authenticity." Hakim proceeded to enter his debit card details along with the OTP (One-Time Password) sent to his phone. To his dismay, a notification swiftly followed, confirming the withdrawal of his entire balance, totaling 2,750 dinars. He expressed, "I had been nurturing dreams of accumulating savings for a summer trip with my wife and son, whom I haven't seen for two years. It's disheartening to realize that not only have my aspirations been shattered, but I'm also burdened with the impending phone bill.'

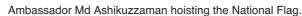
Upon realization of the grave situation, Hakim promptly contacted his bank to report the incident, leading to the immediate suspension of his account. He issued a cautionary note to others, advising against conducting electronic transactions on unverified websites. He stressed the importance of utilizing authorized platforms to prevent falling victim to regrettable circumstances similar to his own.

Acquitted in drugs case: The Court of Appeals has overturned the ruling of the First Instance Court that sentenced a citizen to four years in prison with hard labor for the possession of psychotropic substances with the intention of consuming them, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The

accused was acquitted. The incident officer stated that the Operations Unit at the Interior Ministry received a report about a collision on the Sixth Ring Road. Upon arriving at the location, he went to the vehicle to ensure the safety of the driver. He then noticed the abnormal condition of the driver -- a citizen. He searched the suspect and found a small packet containing white substances.









The ambassador placing floral wreath before the portrait of the Father of the Nation.

premises with the hoisting of the National

Flag ceremoniously by H.E. Ambassador

Major General (Retd.) Md Ashikuzza-

man in the presence of embassy officials,

members of Bangladesh diaspora and

representatives of the print and electronic

media. Later the ambassador along with

other officers and officials of the embassy

placed floral wreath before the portrait of

the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu

The discussion session of the program

started with the recitation from the Holy

Quran. The messages conveyed by the

Hon'ble President and the Hon'ble Prime

Minister and Hon'ble Foreign Minister of

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

PADA recovers around KD 275K from disability plaintiffs: official

9,000 disabled students benefit from educational support

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: The **Acting Deputy Director General** for Educational and Rehabilitation **Services at the Public Authority for Disabled Affairs (PADA) Mubarak** Al-Badah affirmed that approximately KD 275 thousand have been fully recovered from the disability

Al-Badah explained that 62 cases of disability claimants were discovered. They were granted disability certificates after they forged their medical reports. All of them were referred to the Public Prosecution, which in turn referred them to the Criminal Court.

One of them, which included 7 cases, was decided by a final ruling from the Court of Cassation. The other case is still pending before the Criminal Court and is reserved for judgment at the session of March 31, 2024. The cases were discovered in

Regarding the educational file, Al-Badah explained that the number of students benefiting from the PADA's educational support is about 9,000 disabled students.

PADA is progressing, according to article 11 of Law No. 8/2010, to accept scholarship applications for students with disabilities by providing seats for them in coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education.

PADA provides a wide range of services to people with disabilities and their families, and aims to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities and provide them with the necessary support in various aspects of life.

It classifies disabilities into motor, physical, visual, hearing, mental, psychological, developmental, and educational disabilities. Their degrees vary from simple, moderate, and severe.

PADA issues disability certificates of all kinds according to the condition of the person with disability. They could be motor, physical, visual, auditory, mental, psychological, developmental, or educational disability. The duration of the certificates is between three years to five years depending on the case. In some cases, PADA issues

life-time certificates. Regarding prosthetic devices, Al-Badah said the authority has issued a tender for the supply of prosthetic devices and to provide them to people with disabilities according to their condition.

He indicated that they are awaiting the completion of the tender procedures with the Central Agency for Public Tenders.

'Independence and National Day' KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Bangladesh Embassy in Kuwait observed the "Independence and National Day" at the Chancery on Tuesday, March 26, with due fervor and festivity. Presided over by H.E. Major General Md Ashikuzzaman, ndc, afwc, psc, G(Retd.), Ambassador of Bangladesh to Kuwait, embassy officials, members of the Bangladeshi community and representatives of the print and electronic media were present at the program. The program started at the embassy

Ambassador hoists National Flag

Bangladesh Embassy celebrates

The ambassador during his speech.

charismatic leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister H.E. Sheikh Hasina. Ambassador urged upon the expatriate community to follow the ideals of Bangabandhu and devote themselves to build 'Sonal Bangla' (Golden Bengal) dreamt by Bangabandhu and work together with utmost sincerity and integrity to improve the image of the country. He also thanked all the people who were present at the discussion session.

At the end, special prayers were offered for the salvation of the departed souls of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the members of his family, the valiant freedom fighters who laid down their valuable lives for the independence of the country, the wounded freedom fighters, and for continued peace and progress of the country.

velopment of Bangladesh under the Other Voices

Constitutional awareness

By Abdulaziz Abdullah Alhusainan Lawver

In the intricate tapestry of governance, the constitution stands as the foundational document, weaving to-

gether the principles, rights, and du-

ties that define a nation. Yet, despite paramount importance, constitutional awareness often remains elusive to many. In a world where political discourse dominates headlines and societal norms

evolve

idly, fostering

constitutional awareness becomes imperative for the sustenance of democracy and the protection of individual liberties.

Constitutional awareness entails more than a mere acquaintance with the document; it encompasses a deep understanding of its principles, the rights it enshrines, and the mechanisms it establishes for governance. It involves recognizing the delicate balance of power between different branches of government, understanding the significance of checks and balances, and appreciating the role of the judiciary in upholding constitutional

At its core, constitutional awareness empowers citizens. It equips them with the knowledge to hold their leaders accountable, to engage meaningfully in political discourse, and to safeguard their rights in the face of encroaching authoritarianism or populist rhetoric. Informed citizens are the bedrock of a robust democracy, capable of participating actively in the decision-making process and shaping the trajectory of their nation.

However, nurturing constitutional awareness is no simple task. It requires concerted efforts from multiple fronts, including educational institutions, civil society organizations, and the media. Incorporating civics education into school curricula is crucial for cultivating constitutional awareness from a young age. Students should be introduced to the principles of democracy, the rule of law, and the

fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution. Interactive and engaging teaching methods can make constitutional learning more accessible and

Organizing workshops, seminars, and public forums on constitutional topics can bridge the gap between legal jargon and everyday understanding. These events provide platforms for dialogue, where citizens can discuss pertinent constitutional issues and learn from experts in the field. In an era of misinformation and sensationalism, media literacy is essential for deciphering constitutional matters portrayed in the media accurately. Promoting critical thinking skills enables citizens to discern between credible sources and misinformation, fostering a more informed citizenry.

Encouraging community participation in local governance fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility towards constitutional principles. Platforms such as town hall meetings, citizen assemblies, and neighborhood associations provide avenues for citizens to voice their concerns and contribute to decision-making processes. Providing access to legal resources and services empowers individuals to assert their rights and seek redressal for grievances. Legal aid clinics, helplines, and pro bono services ensure that constitutional protections are accessible to all, irrespective of socioeconomic status.

Constitutional awareness is not static; it requires ongoing engagement and learning. Encouraging lifelong learning through online courses, reading groups, and discussion circles ensures that citizens stay abreast of constitutional developments and debates. In conclusion, constitutional awareness is indispensable for the preservation of democracy and the protection of individual liberties. By fostering an informed citizenry, we fortify the foundations of governance and ensure that the principles enshrined in the constitution endure for generations to come. It is through active engagement, education, and dialogue that we uphold the ideals of democracy and realize the promise of a more just and equitable society.

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Girgian

Colorful Ramadan tradition

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Girgian (Eid of the Children) is an annual celebration during Ramadan when groups of children wearing costumes and singing songs visit homes to request for Girgian goodies, reports Al-Rai daily.

Girgian is considered one of the ancient customs and traditions that everyone is keen to celebrate, but it has developed in recent years and taken a different form in terms of advance preparation of clothes and costumes and the variety of sweets offered to children. It now lacks simplicity and spontaneity, up to the point that it became the subject of criticism like the recent gathering in Yarmouk when crowds entered the area to celebrate the occasion, prompting the Ministry of Interior to regulate entry to the area and limit it to the residents

This Ramadan celebration began in the rest of the regions, after breaking the fast, with groups of young people moving between homes, singing songs and requesting various Girgian goodies from the neighbors, while wearing traditional costumes, amid festive appearances that adhere to the authentic heritage in order to preserve it from extinction despite the passage of years and modern development factors.

It is worth mentioning that developments have occurred in the traditional Ramadan character of Girgian as it is now held in commercial complexes and markets, instead of children moving between homes and praying for the families: "Save their son, O Allah, spare him for his mother." Some even composed new songs and melodies that keep pace with the age, while cooperative societies and public benefit societies organize such event for the residents where they are located



Al-Jarida photo

A group photo during the Girgian ceremony organized by KRCS.

KRCS celebrates Girgian ceremony at social care homes

The Kuwait Red Crescent Society, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs' Social Welfare Department, organized the Girgian ceremony at the social care homes, aiming to spread joy and happiness among orphans, the elderly, and individuals with special needs, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Dr. Musaed Al-Enezi, Director of the association's operations sector, highlighted that this annual humanitarian

initiative seeks to create a festive atmosphere for residents, fostering a sense of community and inclusivity.

The ceremony featured cultural and entertainment competitions, engaging children, individuals with special needs, and their families. Girgian distributions and prizes were awarded to competition winners, enhancing the celebratory spirit. Al-Enezi emphasized the association's commitment to maintaining regular communication with residents and organizing humanitarian visits throughout the year, particularly during Ramadan.

The Red Crescent's participation in the Girgian ceremony underscores its dedication to serving society and supporting individuals across all demographics. This collaborative effort aims to uplift spirits and create memorable experiences for those in social care

MoCI launches 7 new e-services

Hawalli Governorate on way to becoming a Model Healthy City

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Ali Al-Asfar, Governor of Hawalli, and Acting Governor of the Capital, reiterated the commitment to transforming Hawalli Governorate into a fully integrated, healthy city during the first coordination meeting with members of the Healthy Cities Office. The initiative aims to enhance the quality of life and combat chronic diseases within the community, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Governor Al-Asfar urged swift completion of the necessary tasks after registering Hawalli Governorate as a health governorate, emphasizing that the proliferation of healthy city concepts across Kuwait would promote health awareness and encourage lifestyles conducive to well-being, thereby positively impacting public health.

Acknowledging the voluntary efforts of Kuwait-loving groups, Al-Asfar credited their contributions to the registration of 12 health zones in Hawalli and the capital governorates. He expressed gratitude to the members of the Healthy Cities Committee for their distinguished role in facilitating the integration of these cities into the Healthy Cities Network

Dr. Amal Al-Yahya, head of the Healthy Cities Office at the Ministry of Health, highlighted the significance of expanding the number of healthy cities, affirming Kuwait's dedication to individual well-being and community development.

"Kuwait has participated in multiple in-

ternational arenas and won the presidency

of IWBF Asia Oceania for a four-year term,

thanks to the directives of Your Highness

that were implemented by Public Authority

for Sports," Al-Hajri said, addressing His

its support for sports of those disabled, he

said, noting that Kuwait's disabled players

had varied medals that enabled them to take

Al-Hajri stated that the club communi-

cates with all government bodies, and of-

fers proposals and views regarding those

disabled and the need of integrating them

as they are determined to continue their ef-

forts for the sake of the dear homeland, he

concluded, giving some examples of suc-

A documentary on the achievements of the

club was displayed. His Highness the Amir,

who was accompanied by senior State offi-

cials, was given a souvenir on this occasion.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal

Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, accom-

panied by His Highness Prime Minister

Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem

Al-Sabah, also visited Kuwait Blind Asso-

ciation on Tuesday marking the occasion of

was received by Minister of Social Affairs,

Family and Children Affairs Sheikh Feras

Saud Al-Sabah, Board Manager of the As-

sociation Fayiz Al-Azmi, and the Associa-

livered a speech on the occasion where he

expressed his best wishes on the holy month

of Ramadan and asked Allah Almighty for

his blessing to all Arab and Islamic nations.

he marks and praise the exerted efforts and

roles of "our visionary sons in the Kuwait

tournaments at the regional and interna-

tional levels, and their hosting last February

of the Asian Blind Union Conference, with

the participation of (24) countries, which

consolidated the State of Kuwait's interest

in people of determination, especially the

blind, at the legislative and executive lev-

els," His Highness the Amir added.

"Through their participation in sports

His Highness the Amir noted that today

Afterwards, His Highness the Amir de-

tion's Secretary Mansour Al-Enezi.

Upon arrival, His Highness the Amir

the holy month of Ramadan.

Blind Association.

cessful disabled dignitaries in the country.

Those disabled have served the country

This came in recognition of Kuwait for

Continued from Page 1

Amir visits

Highness the Amir.

part in 2024 Paris Olympics.

She underscored Kuwait's commitment to global health standards and the importance of participating in international forums to promote the Healthy Cities Initiative, advocated by the World Health Organization to improve quality of life and achieve health for all.

The meeting addressed various topics concerning the establishment of Hawalli Health Governorate, emphasizing collaboration with the Healthy Cities Office. Attendees included Adel Al-Aslawi, Director of the Hawalli Governor's Office, and Secretary Tariq Abdul Rahim.

7 new services: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry unveiled seven new electronic services for real estate management accessible through the "Sahel Business" application, catering to business owners, reports Al-Jarida daily.

These services were announced in a blog post shared by the ministry via its "Commerce" account on the "X" platform.

The newly introduced services encompass various aspects of real estate management, including requests for adding a real estate sale advertisement to an existing license within Kuwait, obtaining a license to publish real estate sale advertisements inside or outside Kuwait for different durations, replacing lost real estate resident certificates, renewing real estate resident licenses, and following up on real estate management requests.

Fatwa Department finalizes judicial arbitration draft law

Proposed legislation slated to annul Law No. 102 of 2013

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: The Fatwa and Legislation Department, under the auspices of the Council of Ministers, has finalized the preparation of the ultimate draft concerning a proposed law on judicial arbitration.

Informed sources told Al-Qabas daily that the objective of this new draft law is to enhance the arbitration sector in Kuwait, recognized as a crucial support mechanism for judicial operations. They elucidated that following the conclusion of the electoral process, the government will present the draft law to the upcoming National Assembly for consideration and approval.

These sources highlighted that the completed draft law on judicial arbitration, encompassing 35 articles, has been crafted to align with significant advancements in regional judicial arbitration, particularly in the adjudication of commercial and financial contracts between parties, be they individuals or diverse corporations, prior to resorting to judicial courts.

The draft law delves into the establishment of definitions and outlines the jurisdiction of arbitration bodies in civil and commercial matters stemming from contractual agreements, thereby forming distinct legal relationships, whether contractual or non-contractual, subject to arbitration.

Legislation

Furthermore, the proposed legislation is slated to annul Law No. 102 of 2013, which previously constrained the jurisdiction of arbitration bodies to disputes involving amounts exceeding 500,000 dinars.

The following are the most important provisions of the text of the draft law on judicial arbitration:

sible in matters that violate public

may only be concluded by a person who has the right to dispose of the right subject to arbitration.

by its parties, and includes an arbitration clause. ■ The court, before which a

subject of the dispute is contracts that include an arbitration clause, must rule that it lacks jurisdiction before discussing the matter. ■ The resort of one of the par-

ties to the arbitration, before the start of its proceedings, to the courts to take temporary or urgent measures regarding it, does not constitute a waiver of the arbitration procedures. The Arbitration Department may not receive the arbitration request until it has been decided by the courts.

quarters of the Court of Appeal, of advisor, and two arbitrators ter at the Judicial Arbitration Department at the Court of Appeal,



Kuwait's Deputy FM Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Sabah receives Ambassador Aguilar.

Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah

Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah re-

ceived Wednesday the Spanish Ambassador to the country, Miguel Jose Moro Aguilar.

Kuwait's Deputy FM receives Spanish ambassador

The bilateral ties between the two countries were touched on during the talks. (KUNA)



■ Arbitration is permissible in matters in which reconciliation is permissible, but it is not permis-

■ An arbitration agreement

Arbitration is not valid unless it is in writing, ratified and signed

case is presented, in which the

■ One or more arbitration panels shall be formed at the headconsisting of a judge with the rank chosen by the parties to the dispute. They shall be chosen from among the arbitrators registered in the arbitrators' registration regis-

process.

KU registers new patent on rock analysis KUWAIT CITY, March 27: The facilitating the patent registration involves passing electric current

Al-Harbi emphasized the universi-

ty's unwavering support for creative

individuals, emphasizing the impor-

tance of translating innovative ideas

He highlighted how the achieve-

ments of researchers and inventors

significantly enhance Kuwait Uni-

versity's academic standing both

Dr. Osama Al-Omair provided

insights into the invention, ex-

plaining that it offers an advanced

solution for heating rock samples

locally and internationally.

using microwaves.

into tangible benefits for society.

The university director honoring the inventors.

University's acting rector extends his appreciation to inventors

Kuwait University, through its Office of Patents and Intellectual Property Rights in the Research Sector, proudly announced the registration of a new patent focusing on rock analysis and laboratory experiments, reports Al-Rai daily.

Dr. Mishari Al-Harbi, the university's acting rector, extended his appreciation to the inventors from the College of Engineering and Petroleum, namely Professor Dr. Osama Ali Al-Omair, along with engineers Nezo Christian Azubuike and Ahmed Essam Omar.

He commended their distinguished scientific and research efforts and acknowledged the pivotal role played by the Patent and Intellectual Property Rights Office in

By integrating microwave radiation as an energy source, the invention enhances the effectiveness of geological analyses. The process

thorium, a radioactive element, to generate microwave radiation. This radiation is then directed to a secure chamber containing hot

through a magnetron containing

liquid or a water bag, transferring heat to the sample. The invention's advanced design enables precise temperature and pressure control, ensuring accuracy and efficiency in laboratory experiments and opening new horizons for geological and geochemical research.

The patent represents a significant contribution to the field of rock analysis and laboratory experimentation, showcasing Kuwait University's commitment to fostering innovation and scientific advancement.

ciary, and on the defenses related

or from others chosen by the op-

■ In the event that neither party to the arbitration does so within the ten days following the Arbitration Administration assigning him to choose an arbitrator, the aforementioned Administration shall appoint the arbitrator who has the

role in the registers of arbitrators specialized in the subject matter of the dispute for membership in the Authority.

■ The arbitration panel decides on the preliminary issues that are presented to it in the dispute, which fall within the jurisdiction of the civil or commercial judito its lack of jurisdiction, including deciding on any objection related to the existence of the arbitration agreement, its validity, its lapse, or its failure to cover the subject of the dispute. Or requests made by opponents during the hearing of the dispute.

retary-General of the Asian Federation, and his selection as a member of the Executive Committee of the World Blind Union. His Highness the Amir also directed the

His Highness the Amir also congratulated the recommendation of the Secretary of the Association for the position of Sec-

relevant state institutions to follow up on the issues and needs of Blind Association members, support their activities, provide devices, machines and tools that help them in their lives, including providing them with job opportunities that suit their circumstances, and encourages their distinguished

Chairman of Kuwait Blind Association (KBA) Fayiz Al-Azmi expressed Tuesday great appreciations and thanks to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for his support to the association.

Addressing His Highness the Amir who was accompanied by His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah while visiting the KBA, Al-Azmi congratulated His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Prime Minister and Sheikhs on the holy month of Ramadan and prayed to Allah the Almighty to protect Kuwait from any evil.

Since the KBA's establishment, Kuwait's rulers have been supporting institution in a manner that helped it partake in all international arenas, Al-Azmi said.

Mansour Al-Enzi has been named as secretary general of the Asian Blind Union (ABU), which was the KBA most achievement since "Your Highness" came to office,

Al-Azmi stated. Kuwait won this post, which means that the country has a great humanitarian position across the world, he said, thanking His Highness the Amir for his efforts and back-

ing to the association. Al-Azmi also thanked Minister of Social Affairs and Childhood for backing to the blind and all undersecretaries as well as societies and officials. At the end, a documentary was displayed.

Reject election

Continued from Page 1

considered a Kuwaiti citizen. He added the citizens should not be classified according to different articles of the law.

Moreover, Second Constituency candidate Bader Ghareed Al-Bazzali has withdrawn his candidacy in favor of his colleague and former MP Hamed Mehri Al-Bazzali.

Badr Ghareed disclosed that his aim is to enhance the chances for Bani Ghanim Tribe to be represented in the National Assembly. In related news, the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) announced on Wednesday that 400 of its volunteers would partake in

organizing the 2024 National Assembly elections scheduled on April 4. KRCS's Deputy Chairman of the Board Anwar Al-Hasawi told KUNA that volunteers would be present in 26 schools throughout the country's five constituencies as part of their contribution to this tremen-

He revealed that volunteers would be tasked with aiding the elderly and individuals with special needs to reach ballot boxes to cast their vote.

dous national duty.

Volunteers were trained to carry out their duties prior to elections and would hopefully attend to their task adequately during

the day of elections, said Al-Hasawi. He affirmed that the KRCS would be coordinating with other state entities to make sure that the election process runs smoothly.

World News Roundup

Europe

Insider releases audio

Greek Pasok seeks to bring down govt

ATHENS, Greece, March 27, (AP): A Greek opposition party Tuesday submitted a motion of no-confidence against the government, saying that it tried to cover up its responsibility over a deadly rail disaster last year that shocked Greece.

The Socialist Pasok party challenged the government following a newspaper report suggesting that audio leaked to the news media of rail officials had been chosen selectively to misleadingly indicate human error in the crash.

The three-day debate in parliament is due to end with a vote late Thursday.

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis' center-right New Democracy party holds a comfortable majority of 158 seats in the 300-member



parliament, meaning that the motion is unlikely to pass. But it could increase pressure on the government, whose critics accuse it of trying to sidestep responsibility for the circumstances of the crash. The crash in the Tempi

area of central Greece occurred on the night of Feb. 28, 2023, when a passenger train smashed into an oncoming cargo train put onto the

same track and heading in opposite directions. It was Greece's deadliest railway disaster. Many of the 57 people killed were university students heading back to

class after a public holiday. Renewed public attention on the disaster has dented Mitsotakis' majority in recent opinion polls, a little over 10 weeks before the European Parliament election in June. The crash highlighted long-standing problems with Greece's rail safety monitoring systems, and relatives of the crash victims have been vocal in alleging a cover-up by the government of failures to implement safeguards that could have prevented the tragedy.

Charles to attend Easter Sunday service: King Charles III and Queen Camilla will attend an Easter service at the chapel at Windsor Castle on Sunday, Buckingham Palace officials said Tuesday, in the first major appearance for the 75-year-old king since he was diagnosed with cancer in February.

Officials said Charles and Camilla will be accompanied by members of the royal family at St. George's Chapel. The event is expected to be smaller than usual. Prince William and Kate, the Princess of Wales, who announced last week that she is also undergoing cancer treatment, are not expected to attend.

The king is undergoing treatment and has suspended almost all his public engagements since his diagnosis. Officials didn't disclose what form of cancer Charles has but said it's not related to his recent treatment for

a benign prostate condition. Officials have said the monarch is continuing with state business, including regular weekly meetings with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, and won't be handing over his constitutional role as head of state.

Russia persists in blaming Ukraine: Russian officials persisted Tuesday in saying Ukraine and the West had a role in last week's deadly Moscow concert hall attack despite vehement denials of involvement by Kyiv and a claim of responsibility by an affiliate of the Islamic State group.

Without offering any evidence, Alexander Bortnikov, head of the Federal Security Service, or FSB, followed similar allegations by President Vladimir Putin, who linked the attack to Ukraine even as he acknowledged that the suspects who were arrested were "radical Islamists."

The IS affiliate claimed it carried out the attack, and US intelligence said it had information confirming the group was responsible. French President Emmanuel Macron said France also has intelligence pointing to "an IS entity" as responsible for the attack

But despite the signs pointing to IS, Putin insisted on alleged Ukrainian involvement - something that President Volodymyr Zelenskyy rejected, accusing the Kremlin leader of trying to drum up fervor as his forces fight in Ukraine.

'Russian warships destroyed': Ukraine has sunk or disabled a third of all Russian warships in the Black Sea in just over two years of war, the navy spokesman said Tuesday, a heavy blow to Moscow's military

Ukraine's Navy spokesman Dmytro Pletenchuk told The Associated Press that the latest strike on Saturday night hit the Russian amphibious landing ship Kostiantyn Olshansky that was resting in dock in Sevastopol in Russia-occupied Crimea. The ship was part of the Ukrainian navy before Russia captured it while annexing the Black Sea peninsula in 2014.

Pletenchuk has previously announced that two other landing ships of the same type, Azov and Yamal, also were damaged in Saturday's strike along with the Ivan Khurs intelligence ship.

He told the AP that the weekend attack, which was launched with Ukraine-built Neptune missiles, also hit Sevastopol port facilities and an oil depot.

Russian authorities reported a massive Ukrainian attack on Sevastopol over the weekend but didn't acknowledge any damage to the fleet.

Ex-Hungarian insider releases audio: A former Hungarian government insider turned critic released an audio recording on Tuesday that he says proves that top officials conspired to cover up corruption, the latest development in a scandal that has shaken Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's domination of the country's politics.

The country's largest protests in years erupted in early February when it was revealed that the president had issued a pardon to a man imprisoned for covering up child sexual abuses by the director of a state-run orphanage. Close Orbán allies, including the president and Justice Minister Judit Varga, were forced to resign in the face of public outrage.

The latest allegations come from Varga's ex-husband, Peter Magyar, a former political insider who says he has turned whistleblower to reveal the extent of the scandal.

He posted a recording on Facebook and YouTube on Tuesday featuring what appeared to Varga's voice describing how other government officials caused evidence to be removed from court records to cover up

their roles in corrupt business dealings. "They suggested to the prosecutors what should be removed," Varga says in the recording, which Magyar says he made during a conversation in the former couple's apartment.



Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg arrives for a news conference near the scene where a container ship collided with a support on the Francis Scott Key Bridge, in Dundalk, Md on March 26. (AP)

'Heroes' scrambled to stop traffic before Baltimore bridge collapsed

It was the middle of the night when a dispatcher's 12-second warning crackled over the radio: A massive cargo ship had lost its steering capabilities and was heading toward the Francis Scott Key Bridge. Within about 90 seconds, police officers respond-

ed that they had managed to stop vehicle traffic over the Baltimore bridge in both directions. One said he was about to drive onto the bridge to alert a conBut it was too late. Powerless and laden with huge

containers, the vessel smashed into a support pillar. "The whole bridge just fell down," a frantic officer said. "Start, start whoever, everybody ... the whole bridge just collapsed."

When the shipping vessel Dali slammed into the pillar around 1:30 a.m. Tuesday, it caused a long

span of the bridge, a major link in the region's transport networks, to crumple into the Patapsco River. The loss of the bridge is expected to snarl commuter

traffic and disrupt a vital shipping port.
At least eight people went into the water. Two survived but the other six, part of a construction crew that had been filling potholes on the bridge, were missing and presumed dead. (AP)



In this handout photo taken from video released by Russian Defense Ministry Press Service on March 25, a Russian soldier carries a captured Ukrainian drone restored and modernized by the military at an undisclosed location in Ukraine. (AP)





America

'Overturn convictions': Attorneys are asking a US appeals court to throw out the hate crime convictions of three white men who used pickup trucks to chase Ahmaud Arbery through the streets of a Georgia subdivision before one of them killed the running Black man with a shotgun.

A panel of judges from the 11th US Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta was scheduled to hear oral arguments Wednesday in a case that followed a national outcry over Arbery's death. The white men's lawyers argue that evidence of past racist comments they made didn't prove a racist intent to

On Feb 23, 2020, father and son Greg and Travis McMichael armed themselves with guns and drove in pursuit of Arbery after spotting the 25-year-old man running in their neighborhood outside the port city of Brunswick. A neighbor, William "Roddie" Bryan, joined the chase in his own truck and recorded cellphone video of Travis McMichael shooting Arbery in the street. (AP)

FBI says Murdaugh lied: Convicted killer Alex Murdaugh didn't tell the truth when FBI agents repeatedly asked him where more than \$6 million he stole ended up and whether another attorney not yet identified helped him steal from clients and his law firm, federal prosecutors said in court documents Tuesday.

The prosecutors want a judge to revoke their end of a plea deal with Murdaugh on theft and other charges and order him to the maximum of well over 100 years in prison when he is sentenced in Charleston, South Carolina, on Monday.

Murdaugh, 55, is already serving life without parole in state prison after a jury found him guilty of murder in the shootings of his wife and younger son. He pleaded guilty to stealing money from clients and his law firm in state court and was sentenced to 27 years, which South Carolina prosecutors said is an insurance policy to keep him be-

Politics

Some in GOP fear 'skeleton' campaign

Trump evokes more anger from Dems

ATLANTA, March 27, (AP): Many Americans are unenthusiastic about a November rematch of the 2020 presidential election. But presumptive GOP nominee Donald Trump appears to stoke more anger and fear among Americans from his opposing party than President Joe Biden does from his.

A new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds that Democrats are more likely to report feeling "fearful" or "angry" about the prospects of another Trump term than Republicans are about the idea of Biden remaining in the White House.

The emotional reaction Trump inspires may work in his favor too, though, since the poll also found that Republicans are more excited about the prospect of a Trump win than

Democrats are about a Biden victory. Seven in 10 Democrats say the words "angry" or "fearful" would describe their emotions "extremely well" or "very well" upon a Trump victory. A smaller majority of Republicans 56% - say the same about a Biden triumph. About 6 in 10 Democrats cite both emotions when contemplating a Trump victory. Again, that exceeds the roughly 4 out of 10 Republicans who said they would feel both angry and scared about Biden prevailing.

Also:

NEW YORK: In his bid to retake the White House, few states hold as much promise for Donald Trump as Michi-

The former president has already won the state once and President Joe Biden, who reclaimed it for Democrats in 2020, is confronting vulnerabilities there as he seeks reelection. Trump's campaign promises an aggressive play for Michigan as part of a robust swingstate strategy.

Dems will preserve health care, GOP would take it away, say Biden, Harris opportunities to restrict abortion

RALEIGH, NC, March 27, (AP): US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris on Tuesday promoted their health care agenda in the battleground state of North Carolina, arguing that Democrats like themselves would preserve access to care while Republicans would reverse gains made over the past decade and a half.

Fourteen years after President Barack Obama signed the Affordable Care Act into law, the White House still sees health care as a winning issue during a campaign in which Biden has sometimes found himself on the defensive when it comes to immigration or the economy. Republicans have opposed Biden's signature initiatives to lower medical costs, and they've seized

But, at least for now, those promises appear to be mostly talk. The Trump campaign and its partners at the Republican National Committee haven't yet made significant general election investments in the state, according to Michigan Republican Party Chairman Pete Hoekstra. The national committee, he said, hasn't transferred any money to the state party to help bolster its operations heading into the general election. There are no specific programs in place to court voters of color. And there's no general election field staff in place.

WASHINGTON: The case against Donald Trump seemed relatively straightforward in August 2022 when FBI rights after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade. "It's sick. Now they want to quote,

his words, terminate the ACA, as my predecessor says," Biden said, referring to Republican former President Donald Trump. "If that were ever to happen, we'd also terminate a lot of lives as well. But we're not going to let that happen, are we? We're not going to let that happen.' North Carolina was Biden's fi-

nal stop on a tour of battleground states after his State of the Union address this month, which jumpstarted a frenzied travel schedule as the Democratic president makes his case for a second term in a likely rematch with Trump, the presumptive Republican nominee.

agents searched his Mar-a-Lago estate,

with authorities citing evidence that

the former president hoarded enough

classified documents to fill dozens of boxes and obstructed the government's efforts to retrieve them. But nine months after he was indictcase can reach trial this year.

ed, there are mounting doubts that the

The Trump-appointed judge in the case has yet to set a firm trial date despite holding two hours-long hearings with lawyers this month. Multiple motions to dismiss the case are still pending, disputes over classified evidence have spanned months and a bitterly contested defense request to disclose the names of government witnesses remains unresolved.

hind bars in case his murder conviction was ever overturned. (AP) Texas AG reaches deal: Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton on Tuesday agreed to

pay nearly \$300,000 in restitution under a deal to end criminal securities fraud charges that have shadowed the Republican for nearly a decade.

The announcement by special prosecu-



Britain's King Charles III, (centre), speaks during an audience in the Billiard Room at Buckingham Palace, London, on March 26 with community faith leaders from across the UK who have taken part in a Windsor Leadership Trust programme, encouraging and supporting dialogue, harmony and understanding at a time of heightened international tension. (AP)

tors in a Houston courtroom came less than three weeks before Paxton was set to stand trial on felony charges that could have led to a prison sentence. It was the closest Paxton who was indicted in 2015 - has ever come to trial over accusations that he duped investors in a tech startup near Dallas.

Under the 18-month agreement, the special prosecutors would drop three felony counts against Paxton as long as he pays full restitution to his victims, and completes 100 hours of community service and 15 hours of legal ethics education. A former special prosecutor said the chance of a conviction was going to be "50-50." (AP)

Ex-state senator drops bid: One of several Republican candidates jostling for North Dakota's only US House seat has ended his campaign.

Former state Sen. Tom Campbell, a potato farmer from Grafton, announced on Tuesday he is withdrawing from the race.

"I feel it would be a better use of my time to avoid a negative campaign, ignoring any threats and focus on the positive, where I can contribute to the well-being of others," Campbell posted to Facebook. "At a time where there seems to be too much division and anger, I believe I can make more of a difference taking a different path rather than as 1 in 435 in Congress." (AP)

Asia

13 elite soldier held

Indonesia top court hears poll 'appeals'

JAKARTA, Indonesia, March 27, (AP): Indonesia's top court heard appeals lodged by two losing presidential candidates who are demanding a revote, alleging widespread irregularities and fraud at the polls in appearances before the judges Wednesday.

Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto won the election with an overwhelming margin: 58.6%, or more than 96 million votes, according to the General Election Commission - more than twice the runner-up's share in the three-way race.

But the losing candidates - Former Jakarta Gov. Anies Baswedan and former Central Java Gov. Ganjar Pranowo - argue that the election was marred by irregularities throughout the campaign. They're asking the Constitutional Court to annul the election results and order a revote, in separate lawsuits.



Both candidates presented parts of their cases in person, focusing on allegations that the court itself, as well as outgoing President Joko Widodo, bent laws and norms to support

"We witness with deep concern a series of irregularities that have tarnished the integrity of our democracy," Baswedan told the court.

Dozens of protesters held a peaceful but noisy rally near

the court building, declaring that they would oversee the trial. Authorities blocked streets leading to the court where about 400 police were deployed in and around the building

Succeed

Indonesian presidents are expected to stay neutral in races to succeed them, but Subianto, a longtime former rival of Widodo who twice lost elections to him before joining his government, ran as his successor. He even chose Widodo's son, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, as running mate, even though Raka did not meet a constitutional requirement that candidates be at least 40 years old.

Baswedan and Pranowo argue that Raka should have been disqualified, and are asking the court to bar him from a revote. Before the election, the Constitutional Court made a controversial exception to the minimum age that allowed him to run, under the leadership of then-chief justice Anwar Usman, who is Widodo's brother in law. Usman was later forced to resign as chief justice for failing to recuse

Baswedan also said that regional officials were pressured or given rewards to influence political choices, and that state social assistance was used as "a transactional tool to help one of the candidates.

Hefty social aid from the government was disbursed in the middle of the campaign - far more than the amounts spent during the COVID-19 pandemic and Widodo distributed funds in person in a number

"If we do not make corrections, the practices that occurred recently will be considered normal and become habits, then become culture, and ultimately become national character," Baswedan said before the

On Tuesday, Subianto himself twice went to the top court to challenge the results of elections he lost to Widodo, but the court rejected his claims as groundless both times.

Baswedan had the first turn before the court in the morning, while Pranowo spoke in the afternoon.

Habits

"If we do not make corrections, the practices that occurred yesterday will be considered normal and become habits, then become culture and ultimately become national character," Baswedan said before the eight-judge panel. "The Indonesian people are waiting with full attention, and we entrust all this to the Constitutional Court who is brave and independent to

The verdict, expected on April 22, cannot be appealed. It will be decided by eight justices instead of the full nine-member court because Usman is required to recuse himself.

In the past two elections, the Constitutional Court has rejected Subianto's bids to overturn Widodo's victories and dismissed his claims of widespread fraud as groundless. Subianto refused to accept the results of the 2019 presidential election, which pitted him against Widodo, leading to violence that left seven dead in Jakarta.

Widodo has reached his term limit and could not run again this year. He has faced criticism for throwing his support behind Subianto, who has links to alleged human rights abuses. Indonesian presidents are expected to remain neutral in elections to replace them.

JAKARTA, Indonesia: Indonesia's military said Monday it has arrested 13 elite troops accused of involvement in a video showing the torture of an indigenous Papua man believed to be a member of a separatist group.

The video that emerged in recent days on social media shows men who appear to be soldiers kicking, beating and dunking the man in a barrel of water.

"This is a violation of the law and we will act according to the applicable laws and regulations," army spokesperson Brig. Gen. Kristomei Sianturi told a news conference, adding: "This is what we regret, that the Indonesian military or Indonesian army never taught, never approved any violence in asking for information.' Sianturi said the incident occurred at a post for the border security task force in Puncak, a mountainous district of **Central Papua** province, on Feb. 3.

At least five men are seen in the video beating a man, taunting him with racist slurs and slicing into his back with a machete.

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia: Six more bodies of Rohingya refugees have been found at sea off Indonesia after a boat with more than 150 people aboard capsized last week, local authorities said Monday.

The bodies of the six women were found off the coast of Aceh province, search and rescue officials said in a statement. Five bodies were found over the weekend.

The United Nations refugee agency confirmed with survivors that the women had been on their boat, staff member Faisal Rahman said.

The agency has said the boat carrying Rohingva Muslims left a refugee camp in Bangladesh but capsized on Wednesday. Fishermen and search and rescue workers rescued 75 people on Thursday after they huddled overnight on the boat's overturned



In this photo released by the Taiwan Presidential Office, Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen inspects the commissioning of two new navy ships in the northern Taiwan port of Suao on March 26. (AP)

Taiwan commissions 2 navy ships as safeguards against threat from China

Taiwan has commissioned two new navy ships as a safeguard against the rising threat from China, which has been ratcheting up its naval and air force missions around the island that it claims as its own territory to be annexed by force if necessary.

The pair of Tuo Chiang class corvettes completes the first order of six of the domestically produced catamarans with stealth capabilities. The ships are relatively small, capable of carrying just 41 sailors

Morque workers move a body of a

victim of a cult for burial in Malindi Fu-

neral home in Kilifi, Kenya on March

26. Kenya government on Tuesday

released seven bodies of victims, who

died due to starvation to their families

for burial. (AP)

Africa

across the country.

coming days.

Schools to reopen in S.Sudan: South

Sudan's government on Tuesday said

schools will reopen next week following

a two-week closure due to extreme heat

The health and education ministries said

temperatures were expected to steadily drop

with the rainy season set to begin in the

South Sudan in recent years has experienced adverse effects of climate change,

with extreme heat, flooding and drought re-

During the heat wave last week, the coun-

Teachers have been urged to minimize

try registered temperatures up to 45 degrees

playground activities to early morning or

indoors, ventilate classrooms, provide water

Health Minister Yolanda Awel Deng

during school time and monitor children for

singled out Northern Bahr El-Ghazel, War-

rap, Unity and Upper Nile states as the most

Kenya handing over bodies: Kenya's

government on Tuesday began handing over

to relatives the bodies of 429 members of a

doomsday cult at the center of a legal case

that has shocked the country.

Exhumed bodies from a vast rural area

in coastal Kenya have shown signs of star-

vation and strangulation. Cult leader Paul

Mackenzie is accused of asking his follow-

ers to starve themselves to death and now

Authorities are using DNA testing to help

identify bodies and their families. On Tues-

day, the first bodies were handed over to

relatives. Emotions ran high at the Malindi

mortuary as families collected loved ones for

Nigeria sentenced man to death:

A Nigerian court on Tuesday sentenced a

Chinese national to death after finding him

guilty of killing his girlfriend, a government

reburial. Some wailed, overwhelmed. (AP)

faces charges that include murder.

signs of heat exhaustion and heatstroke.

ported during different seasons.

Celsius (113 Fahrenheit).

affected areas. (AP)

and officers, but are fast and highly maneuverable and carry a range of missiles and deck guns aimed at countering larger Chinese vessels and rocketry.

Outgoing President Tsai Ing-wen oversaw the commissioning on Tuesday at the northern port of Sugar emphasizing her push to revitalize Tsilvens's

Suao, emphasizing her push to revitalize Taiwan's defense industries, alongside extensive arms pur-chases and support from key ally the United States. Tsai has also fast-tracked the production of train-

er jets and the island's first homebuilt submarines, sometimes pushing budgets for such purchases through the legislature against resistance from representatives of the opposition Nationalist Party, which favors eventual unification with China.

Ma Ying-jeou, the last president from the Nationalists, also known as the KMT, is reportedly planning a visit to China next month that could include a meeting with Communist Party leader Xi Jinping. (AP)

Lat/Am

Book of kids' drawings reflect Brazil's violence

Gangs intensify rampage in Haiti capital

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, March 27, (AP): Gangs have intensified their rampage in the downtown area of Haiti's capital, setting fire to a school and looting pharmacies across the road from the country's largest public hos-

The attacks that began Monday and continued into early Tuesday mark nearly a month since gunmen began targeting key infrastructure across Port-au-Prince including police stations, the main international airport that remains closed and Haiti's two biggest prisons, releasing more than 4.000 inmates.

"The violence and instability in Haiti have consequences far beyond the risk of the violence itself," Catherine Russell, UNICEF's executive director, said in a statement Tuesday. "The situation is creating a child health and nutrition crisis that could cost the lives of countless of children.

The number of children in Haiti estimated to suffer from severe acute malnutrition has increased by 19% this year, according to UNICEF. In addition, some 1.64 million people are on the precipice of famine.

"This malnutrition crisis is entirely human made," Russell said.

Closure

Violence has forced the closure of roads and certain hospitals and prevented aid groups from delivering critical supplies at a time they are needed the most.

Only two of five hospitals in Haiti are operational across the country, according to UNICEF. In addition, the violence in Port-au-Prince has prevented the distribution of health and nutrition supplies for at least 58,000 children who are severely wasted, the agency said.

Meanwhile, members of a regional trade bloc known as Caricom have pushed to accelerate the formation of a transitional presidential council in hopes it could soon help quell the ongoing violence.

The council would be responsible for choosing a new prime minister and a council of ministers. Prime Minister Ariel Henry, who was locked out of Haiti when the attacks began, has said he would resign once the council is created.

However, multiple setbacks continue to delay formation of the council, which will be composed of nine members, seven of them with voting

Also:

RIO DE JANEIRO: Dozens of kids and teenagers from Rio de Janeiro's Mare neighborhood gathered for the launch of a book in which they show, with their own words and pictures, how violence in their poor, bayside community weighs on their young lives.

The book, titled "I Was Supposed to be at School," features drawings and testimonies collected from youngsters aged between 5 and 17.

All too often, when Rio state's military police conduct operations and face off with local drug traffickers, class is canceled and they take shelter behind washing machines, under their beds or far from windows that a stray bullet might shatter. Mare is one of Rio's most populous favelas, with about 130,000 residents.

"Some policemen invade our houses. They turn things upside down, they attack, they even steal our food," according to one child's account in the book, which launched Monday.

"Sometimes police fire at children, too," another account says, going on to reference 14-year-old Marcus Vinícius da Silva, whose death in 2018 sparked outrage and protests. Residents say police shot him in the back as he left home for class, but the case remains unsolved and sealed by Rio police.

Commissioner Haruna Dederi said. Geng-

to a society should be prepared to comply

with the extant laws of that society," Dederi

'This is a signal that whoever is coming

Quangrong had pleaded not guilty.

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina: Judges overseeing a high-profile human rights trial in Argentina convicted 11 former officials of crimes against humanity on Tuesday, in the first case to focus on the former military dictatorship's overlooked practice of committing sexual

violence against transgender women. The trial at the court in La Plata, a southern suburb of the capital, spanned nearly four years and added new details and insight to previously chronicled atrocities, deepening the nation's understanding of its traumatic history. Transgender plaintiffs took the witness stand for the first time in a series of chilling hearings that put a spotlight both on the suffering of the transgender community and on the widespread tactic of sexual violence under the right-wing dictatorship that ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1983.

Human rights groups estimate that 30,000 people suspected of opposing the military government were abducted, systematically tortured in clandestine detention centers and "disappeared" during the time.

CARACAS, Venezuela: Venezuela's main opposition coalition said Tuesday afternoon that the country's government allowed them to register a provisional candidate for the upcoming presidential election, amid a wave of criticisms after opposition leaders said they were blocked from registering their candidate of choice the night

The coalition, the Unitary Democratic Platform, said they temporarily enlisted former diplomat Edmundo González Urrutia as their candidate as a way to preserve the exercise of the political rights that correspond to our political organization" until they are able to register another candidate. In a post on X, formerly Twitter, the coalition said it was not allowed to access the registration system, but was later granted an extension.

Death sentences for capital offenses are common in Nigeria and sometimes involve foreigners. A Danish man in 2022 was sentenced to die by hanging for killing his wife and daughter. (AP)

4 get death in Tunisia: A Tunisian court sentenced four people to death and two to life in prison on charges stemming from the murder of a left-wing politician, a public prosecutor said Wednesday.

Chokri Belaid, the 48-year-old leader of the Popular Front coalition, was shot in his car outside his home in Tunis in February 2013. His assassination, the country's first in decades, prompted mass protests and helped lead to the resignation of the thenprime minister.

Those criticisms and subsequent assassinations later that year set off a political crisis for Tunisia as it struggled to transition from dictatorship to democracy. (AP)

Journalist to face trial: A prominent Tunisian journalist was put under pre-trial detention on a judge's order after a Tuesday

hearing in which he dangled the prospect of publishing reporting on corruption and the misuse of public funds by several ministers and public institutions. Mohamed Boughalleb's court hearing came four days after he was arrested in Tu-

nis on suspicion of insulting a public official on social media. (AP)

official told The Associated Press, vowing to recommend execution if he unsuccessfully appeals the ruling.



Women scuffle for plates of food for their children at a shelter for families displaced by gang violence, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on March 22. Gangs have intensified their rampage in the downtown area of Haiti's capital, setting fire to a school and looting pharmacies across the road from the country's largest public



oil price up

The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 87 cents to USD 86.44 per barrel on Tuesday compared to USD 85.57 pb the day before, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Wednesday. The price of the Brent crude went down by 50 cents to USD 86.25 per barrel, the same with the West Tex-as Intermediate, which went down by 33 cents to USD 81.62 pb. (KUNA)

Iraq raises oil prices

The Iraqi government has announced an increase in gasoline prices as part of its efforts to alleviate traffic congestion, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to a statement from the media office of the Iraqi Prime Minister, the price of improved gasoline has been raised to 850 Iraqi dinars per liter (65 US cents) from 650 dinars, while premium gasoline now costs 1,250 dinars (95 US cents) compared to the previous price of 850 dinars. However, the price of regular gasoline remains unchanged at 450 dinars (34 US cents) per liter.

Bitcoin rebounds to \$70K

Yesterday's trading saw varied cryptocurrency prices, with Bit-coin bouncing back to \$70,000 after experiencing a correction movement following its recent record highs, reports Al-Jarida daily. Bitcoin's price fell by 0.43 percent to \$70,531.50, dipping slightly from its peak above \$71,000 during Monday's trading session. Meanwhile, Ethereum saw a modest increase of 0.26 percent to reach \$3,643.12, while Ripple experienced a 1.17

percent decline, dropping to 64.51 cents.

Alex Thorne, the head of research at Galaxy Digital, noted that Bitcoin underwent a correction phase last week, which is typical during market upswings. He stated that the decline observed by the end of the week aligns with historical correction patterns observed in the market's trajectory.

gold climbs to \$2,177/oz.

Gold prices experienced an uptick during yesterday's trading session, following a period of consolidation as investors turned their attention to upcoming US inflation data, reports Al-Anba daily.

The focus on this data stems from its potential to provide insights into the timing of the US Federal Re-

serve's interest rate adjustments for the year. Spot transactions saw the yellow metal climb to \$2,177 per ounce, while US gold futures rose by 0.25% to \$2,177.20 per ounce. Kyle Rodda, financial markets analyst at Capital.com, remarked, "We lack new catalysts, but at the moment the market appears to be consolidating and catching its breath after a fairly strong rally."

Market Movements

Change Closing pts Nikkei +364.70 40,762.73

6.903.53 66,588.38

27-03-2024

Change Closing pts 4,231.79

Business JAPAN PHILIPPINES - PSFi +5.36 **PAKISTAN** KSE 100 +639.40 Tadawu 12,607.98

KIB approves 5% cash dividend and 3% bonus shares for '23

'Kuwait International Bank achieves impressive results & expand with its strategic plans'

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) held its An-**General Meeting** (AGM) and Extraordinary **General Meeting (EGM)** on Wednesday, March 27, 2024, with 75.22% of shareholders in attendance. The AGM approved the agenda items of both the ordinary and extraordinary General Assembly meetings, among which was the recommendation to distribute cash dividends of 5fils per share and 3% bonus shares (3 shares per 100 shares)from the issued and paid-up cap-

Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman of KIB Group, inaugurated the AGM and EGMwith a speech in which he spoke about the financial results of KIB Group amid ongoing geopolitical conditions and their impact on the global economic landscape. He stated: "We continue to pursue excellence and achievement, despite the successive changes around us, armed with our solid strategic plan, the support of our Board of Directors, and the passion and dedication of our employees. KIB Group continues its path of sustainable growth, reflecting the strength of its financial position, the success of its strategy, and the flexibility of its business model, reinforcing its position as one of the leading Islamic

banks locally. Al-Jarrah added: "The improvement in KIB Group's performance were the hallmarks of the past fiscal year, thanks to the Bank's commitment to expanding its commercial banking services, aiming to achieve diversified and sustainable growth in core business activities and targeted economic sectors that align with its strategic plans. This, alongside strengthening business relationships with key partners and establishing new strategic partnerships, has positively and clearly reflected on the size, quality, and diversity of the Bank's financial and investment portfolio, as well as on the efficiency of its operations and the enhancement of its

customer experience. Commenting on the most important achievements based on its financial statements, Al-Jarrah explained that KIB Grouprecorded a 40% increase in net profit attributable to shareholders, amounting to KD19 million, with earnings per share (EPS) of 10.28 fils at the end of 2023. Meanwhile, total operating income increased by 16% over 2022, reaching approximately KD73 million in 2023. Whereby the audited consolidated financial statements showed a 51% increase in financing revenues, reaching KD172 million, compared to approximately KD114 million in the previous year. They also indicated that investment income grew by 13%, while depositors' accounts increased to exceed KD2 billion by 31 December 2023. Meanwhile, shareholders' equity grew by 31% to reach KD333 million as of 31 December 2023.KIB also maintained adequate levels of Basel III, and the total capital

adequacy ratio stood at 19.8%. Al-Jarrah confirmed that these results were achieved concurrently with the Bank's success in improving the quality of its assets during the year 2023.KIB's total assets amounted to KD3.62 billion while the Bank's financing portfolio reached KD2.49 billion. The investment portfolio grew to reach approximately KD363 million by 31 December 2023, supported by the increase of investments

in high-quality Sukuk. Al-Jarrah added: "During the past year, we have achieved significant progress and real accomplishments in most initiatives and all key pillars of our strategic plan. Foremost among them were the radical developments in our technological infrastructure, which extended to encompass the upgrade or modernization of most of our core systems. This strengthened our capabilities to develop systems and launch digital services and products faster and more innovatively. Consequently, this had a positive impact on our products and services in terms of volume, quality, and diversity. There was a noticeable expansion during the year, with the launch of specialized digital platforms for important sectors such as the real estate sector, entrepreneurship sector, and commercial partners."

Sustainable achievements on the financial and digital fronts





Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman

From his side, Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of KIB Group, said:"The profitability growth of KIB coincides with the enhancement of the Bank's financial position, in addition to its adoption of comprehensive and effective hedging policies to manage risks, and a well-established and trusted approach to crisis management.'

Bukhamseenadded: "The year 2023 witnessed the successful increase ofKIB's share capital, in line with the Bank's adoption of a digital transformation strategy and the fundamental plans it encompasses, and the efforts aimed at modernizing the business model, enhancing sustainable growth indicators, and achieving further development. KIB completed the capital increase subscription process successfully in June 2023, by offering 428,571,429 shares valued at KD60 million. The Bank's paid-up capital increased by 34.98% to reach KD165.4 million.The rights issuewas oversubscribed by 687%, reflecting the shareholders' and investors' confidence in KIB's dynamic strategy and future vi-

On the digital front, Bukhamseen said: "The year 2023 was filled with digital achievements, as the Bank's focus in recent years on investing in digital infrastructure and developing the skills of its human capital has led to a revolution in innovative digital solutions and products that comply with Islamic Sharia and meet the highest global standards." He pointed out thatlast year, KIB unveiled three new, advanced digital platforms: the firstof-its-kind digital real estate platform, KIB Aqari; the all-new and revamped Corporate Online Banking platform; and the upgraded and improved version of the KIB Mobile application. This affirms the Bank's commitment to keeping up with the latest digital innovations and its expansion plan in digital banking services and products, in order to meet all customer needs in a more comprehensive, efficient, and secure

On another note, Bukhamseen praised the official opening of "KIB Mubader Center" to support the entrepreneur segment of small and mediumsized enterprise (SME) owners, in addition to the founding of KIB Invest, the investment arm of KIB, with a capital of KD45 million, which centers its activities on Islamic investment and providing a comprehensive suite of investment services that fulfill the needs and aspirations of the Bank's customers within the domestic and global markets.

Bukhamseen further commented: "The establishment of a new company comes as part of KIB Group's continued efforts to reinforce its pivotal role in vitalizing the domestic capital market and providing its customers with outstanding investment opportunities. It also comes as part of the Bank's endeavors to attract more investors to its customer base, offering them diverse and thoroughly thought-out investment options that guarantee maximum returns with minimum risk." On other hand, KIB Group continues to provide Sharia'a compliant Takaful Insurance services through one of its subsidiaries "Al Dawli Takaful Insurance".

A journey full of successes and



Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Of-

On his part, Mohamed Said El Saka, KIB Group's Deputy CEO, said: "The good financial results achieved by KIB Group for the fiscal year ending on 31 December 2023, reflect its continuous diligence and relentless efforts in focusing on enhancing its position in the local banking market. They also affirm its ability in strategic planning and its long-term vision, enabling it at every stage to progress and move forward towards achieving sustainable positive financial results while maintaining the quality of its assets

El Saka highlighted that: "KIB Group's excellent and strong performance throughout the past year deserved appreciation and recognition, as it has receivednumerous prestigious awards and certificates that confirm its ongoing progress and significant achievements in the fields of Islamic finance and social responsibility. KIB garnered several awards from World Finance magazine, including the "Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait for 2023" award, and the "Best Customer-Focused Islamic Banking Products and Services in Kuwait" award. KIB also won several awards from Capital Finance International (CFI.co). KIB secured the "Best Banking Vision - MENA 2023" award, as well as the "Best Sharia-Compliant Bank MENA" by the magazine for the year 2023. CFI.co also named KIB the "Best Bank in Financial Literacy Program - MENA 2023". KIB was also named the "Best Bank in Kuwait in Terms of Spreading Financial Literacy and Banking Awareness in 2023" by

the World Union of Arab Bankers. On another note, El Saka confirmed that KIB Group worked throughout the year 2023 to develop the approach it adopts in its comprehensive social responsibility program. The Bank renewed its commitment to the principles of environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG), reflecting its keenness to contribute more efficiently and effectively to achieving sustainable development that encompasses all vital

Words of appreciation

In his final remarks, Al-Jarrah extended his sincere thanks and appreciation to all shareholders, members of the Board of Directors, and the Executive Management for their continuous support to the Bank, and to everyone who supported its journey. He also expressed gratitude to the Central Bank of Kuwait for its ongoing support, commending its distinguished regulatory and supervisory role. Additionally, he thanked the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for its relentless efforts in supporting commercial and economic activities in the country, and the Capital Markets Authority for its supervisory and regulatory role in supporting an attractive and competitive investment environment in Kuwait.

Al-Jarrah also thanked the esteemed members of KIB's Sharia Supervisory Board, as well as the Bank's employees for their outstanding efforts, and its valued customers for their trust and continuous support ofits journey and their effective contribution to its achievements. He also commended the efforts made by the State of Kuwait, its Amir, government, and people, to maintain the stability and security of

Operating profit increases to KD 11.3 mln, equal to 84.67%

Kuwait Insurance Co board recommends 40% cash dividends to shareholders for FY 2023

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Kuwait Insurance Company announced that, during the year 2023 it has achieved a gross profit amounting to KD 13.4 million (USD 43.5 million) compared to KD 12.4 million (USD 40.1 million) KD 12.4 million (USD 40.1 million) last year, which was the profit after excluding the exceptional non-recurring profits amounting to KD 31.7 million (USD 103 million) which resulted due to the swap of Ahli United Bank shares held by KIC into Kuwait Finance House shares, after the acquisition in the year 2022 the year 2022.

The Net profit amounted to KD12.1 million (USD 39.3 million) with Earnings Per Share of Fils 65.61 (US Cents 21) after deducting the realized gain from sale of investments during the year 2023 amounting to KD 1.3 million (USD 4.2 million), which, will be transferred directly to the retained

The Board of Directors recommended distributing cash dividends to shareholders at the rate of 40%, which means Fils 40 per share, and this recommendation is subject to the approval of the company's general assembly.

The Gross Written Premium this year amounted to KD61.9 million (USD 201 million), compared to KD50.5 million (USD 162.3 million) last year which shows an increase of KD 11.4 million (USD 37 million), equal to 22.6%.

Earned premiums amounted to KD53.8 million (USD 175 million) for this year, compared to KD50.7 million (USD 165 million) which shows an increase of KD3.1 million (USD 10.1 million) equal to 6.1%

Operating profit amounted to



Mr. Sami Sharif, Chief Executive Officer

KD11.3 million (USD 37 million) compared to KD 6.1 million (USD 19.8 million), which shows an increase of KD5.2million (USD 16.9 million), equal to 84.67%, because of the increase in earned premiums and due to the stability in the cost of insurance and reinsurance.

The total Insurance and reinsurance expenses decreased to KD 42.4 million (USD 137.7 million) for the current period from KD 44.5 million (USD 144.5 million) for the same period last year, which shows a total decrease of KD 2.1 million (USD 6.8 million) equal to 4.77%.

Retained earnings amounted to KD80.5 million (USD 261.4 million) during the year 2023, compared to KD 75 million (USD 243.5 million) last vear, which shows an increase of KD 5.5 million (USD 17.9 million), equal

Mr. Sami Sharif, Chief Executive Officer, stated that we have achieved these operating results as a part of fulfilling our obligations towards shareholders and customers and we continue to follow a conservative policy with our continued success in managing the challenges facing us. In pursuit of diversifying the products and services that we provide to customers, Kuwait Insurance Company acquired 81.5% of the National Takaful Insurance company during the fourth quarter of 2023. which will provide Takaful Insurance

Mr. Sami Sharif mentioned that in addition to the sales and profits, this year was also full of other accomplishments, such as, the reaffirmation of our company's credit ratings from AM Best and Moody's credit rating agencies with an A- (Excellent) and A3 respectively, both with a stable outlook and we have taken progressive steps towards geographical expansion, outside Kuwait.

Aiming to focus on the importance of corporate social responsibility, the company is keen in investing and developing the staff by providing training and enrolling them for educational programs, which will develop them in providing insurance services to organizations, individuals, and stakeholders. With this step, they not only serve the interests of the society but also of the State of Kuwait.

We still look forward to accomplishing a lot in the coming years and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed in achieving our goals, including the Board of Directors, the shareholders, and the company's employees.

Trading session starts strong, ends with minor declines

Boursa Kuwait shows stability in third week

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: During the third week's trading session, the indices of the Kuwait Stock Exchange demonstrates strated stability with minimal changes, ultimately closing in the green, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The general market index experienced a marginal increase of 0.05 percent, or 3.43 points, reaching 7,399.49 points, with liquidity totaling 29.1 million dinars. Trading activity involved 119.1 million shares through 9,465 transactions, with 116 shares traded. Among these, 48 shares gained, 46 shares lost, and 22 shares remained unchanged.

Similarly, the Premier Market Index rose by 0.04 percent, or 3.64 points, ending at 8095.21 points, with liquidity reaching 22.9 million dinars.

Trading saw 78.9 million shares exchanged via 6513 transactions, with 33 shares traded. Of these, 17 shares gained, 12 shares lost, and 4 shares remained unchanged,

along with posting profits. The main market index also witnessed a slight uptick, climbing by 0.05 percent, or 3.28 points, to settle at 6123.00 points, accompanied by liquidity totaling 6.1 million dinars. Trading activity included 40.1 million shares through 2957 transactions, with 83 shares traded. Among these, 31 shares gained, 34 shares lost, and 18 shares remained unchanged.

The trading session began with increased liquidity exceeding 600 thousand Kuwaiti dinars, primarily focusing on leading stocks such as KFH and NBK, as well as projects.

However, as the session progressed, pressure emerged on the indices, leading to minor declines amid variable performance among leading stocks. Notably, while the shares of National Bank, Agility, and Senaat faced pressure, KFH

shares and others experienced modest increases. Amidst fluctuations, Future Kids' stock marked a notable rise, closing at its peak of 141 fils, a growth of 4.4 percent. Nevertheless, overall liquidity remained below 30 million dinars, with changes remaining limited and the performance of leading stocks mixed.

Firms urged to meet regulatory capital requirements

CMA sets compliance rules for investment firms

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: The Capital Markets Authority has instructed investment firms specializing in asset management to ensure compliance with qualified regulatory capital requirements based on risk assessments, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to reliable sources, some investment firms have seen their regulatory capital fall below the risk-based capital requirements, dipping below the specified threshold of 100 percent. These sources emphasized the importance for licensed entities to maintain qualified regulatory capital levels exceeding the risk-based capital requirements.

This ensures that firms have sufficient capital to manage associated risks, assess solvency, meet obligations, and mitigate potential losses in the future. Setting a capital adequacy ratio crucial for stabilizing market conditions and instilling confidence in listed companies, similar to the regulatory frameworks set for local banks by the Central Bank of Kuwait.

The required capital is determined by considering various risk factors, including market, operational, investment, and credit risks, among others. Compliance with capital adequacy standards helps classify companies based on their ability to withstand market shocks and manage risks effectively. Adherence to these standards serves as a reliable indicator of a company's resilience to potential risks and crises.

Furthermore, aligning with international regulations and standards enhances investor confidence in the financial sector's stability, particularly in managing customer funds. Implementing capital adequacy standards ensures financial efficiency, sustainability, and flexibility for licensees, enabling them to anticipate, hedge against, and mitigate risks effectively.

Target price set at 0.280 fils per share

Argaam recommends buying ABK shares

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Arqaam Capital recently released a report on Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait, suggesting investors buy its shares with a target price of 0.280 fils per share, reflecting a 6.9% increase from its current trading price as of March 13, 2024, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The report anticipates an improvement in the return on shareholders' equity at Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait, projected to reach 7.4% compared to 7% in fiscal year 2023 and 5.2% in fiscal year 2022. This increase is attributed to the bank's sustained expansion of profitability margins and positive credit trends following a \$100 million capital increase.

Arqaam Capital underscores the importance of Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait's transformation strategy, emphasizing a focus on high returns. The bank's efforts in managing retail and corporate banking operations are expected to contribute to enhanced returns on shareholders' equity.

Furthermore, the report highlights the bank's emphasis on

cost efficiency as part of its transformation strategy. Operating expenses grew by 8.5% annually in fiscal year 2023, aligning closely with revenue growth of 8.2%. Arqaam Capital anticipates a 5% to 7% improvement in the cost-to-income ratio by the next fiscal year, with further improvements expected by fiscal year 2028.

Arqaam Capital forecasts an increase in the bank's net interest margin from 2.27% to 2.33% by the end of 2024, leading to a rise in return on assets to 6.63%. Total operating revenues are expected to increase by 4.39% to 190 million dinars by the end of 2024, with a corresponding improvement in the return on average assets to 0.7%.

Additionally, the report projects an increase in total allocations to 44 million dinars by the end of the year, with total loans and advances reaching 4.85 billion dinars and total liabilities increasing to 5.96 billion dinars in the

China wins WTO dispute with Australia

China has won a nearly three-year-long dispute with Australia at the World Trade Organization over tariffs on steel products that began during a low point of bilateral relations between the countries, and Australia's trade minister said Wednesday his

government accepted the ruling. Beijing took its complaint to the WTO in June 2021 over Australia's extra duties on railway wheels, wind towers and stainless steel sinks imported from China. Trade in these products was worth 62 million Australian dollars (\$40.4 million) in 2022.

On Tuesday, the WTO panel adjudicating the case in Geneva, Switzerland, found that Australia's investigating authority, the Anti-Dumping Commission, had acted inconsistently with some articles of the anti-dumping agreement. Australia's Trade Mir

Don Farrell said in a statement

Wednesday that Canberra accepted the WTO's ruling and supported a rules-based trading

"Australia will engage with China and take steps to implement the panel's findings," Farrell said.

'Australia remains committed to a fully functioning WTO dispute settlement system so that the rights and obligations of all WTO members can be enforced," he added. (AP)

China to challenge Biden's EV plans at the WTO

China has filed a World Trade Organization complaint against the U.S. over what it says are discriminatory requirements for electric vehicle subsidies.

The Chinese Commerce Ministry didn't say what prompted the move. But under a new U.S. rule that took effect Jan. 1, electric car buyers are not eligible for tax credits of \$3.750 to \$7.500 if critical minerals or other battery components were made by Chinese, Russian, North Korean or Iranian companies. The credits are part of U.S. President Joe Biden's signature climate legislation, named the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act.

A ministry statement didn't mention the specific restriction. It said, though, that under the act and its implementing rules, the U.S. had formulated discriminatory subsidy policies for new energy vehicles in the name of

responding to climate change. It said the U.S. move excluded Chinese products, distorted fair competition and disrupted the global supply chain for new energy vehicles

Member countries of the Geneva-based WTO can file complaints about the trade practices of other members and seek relief through a dispute settlement process. The real-world impact of the case is uncertain. (AP)

KIPCO's strategy has resulted in a higher revenue & profit, reflecting positively on the company's financial position: Group CEO

KIPCO's net profit up 19% to KD 30m equivalent to US\$ 98m in 2023

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: KIPCO - Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) - announced a net profit of KD 30 million (US\$ 98 million) for the year ended 31 December 2023, an increase of 19% over the KD 25.3 million (US\$ 82.5 million) reported at the end of 2022. Earnings per share for 2023 stood at 5.1 fils (US\$ 1.7 cents).

KIPCO's total revenue from operations registered an increase of 30% from the KD 1billion (US\$ 3.3 billion) in 2022 to KD 1.3 billion (US\$ 4.2 billion) in 2023. Shareholder equity went up 4% to KD 611.2 million (US\$ 2 billion) compared to KD 587.8 million (US\$ 1.9 billion) in 2022.

At year-end, KIPCO's consolidated assets increased 8% to KD 12.3 billion (US\$ 40.1 billion), compared to KD 11.4 billion (US\$ 37.2 billion) at the end of

Commenting on the results, Sheikha Dana Naser Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, KIPCO's Group Chief Executive Officer, said:

"The results for 2023 reflect the success of the strategy laid down by the Board of Directors and the Executive Management, which aims to achieve a balance in the sector allocation of the Group's investment portfolioand build strategic, revenue and cost synergies between our companies. As part of these efforts, we executed a number of successful exits, mergers and acquisitions during the year that served to di-



Sheikha Dana Naser Al Sabah

versify our portfolio in a manner that reflects greater sectoral balance and enhances stakeholder

value. As a result of these transactions, KIPCO reported higher reflected positively on the company's financial position."

The year 2023 saw KIPCO's exit from Gulf Insurance Group, in a transaction valued at 2.4x book value. KIPCO sold its stake in United Oil Projects Company to NAPESCO, in a move aimed to streamline services provided by our companies in the oil services sector. A 52% stake in Burgan Bank Turkey was sold to KIPCO's wholly owned subsidiary, Al Rawabi United Holding, which resulted in increasing Burgan Bank's capital adequacy by approximately 200 bps. Another major announcement for the year is the intention to combine OSN+ and Anghami, a move that will crelargest streaming entities, but also a media tech company with AI at its core.

In terms of liability management, KIPCO completed the purchase and cancellation of its KD bonds maturing in 2023 and 2024, worth KD 105million (US\$ 342million), thereby extending their maturity to 2028 and alsoraised KD60 million (US\$195 million) of new money. The company repaid its US\$ EMTN worth KD 153.4 million (US\$ 500 million). The year 2023 also saw KIPCO's debut Sukuk issuance, the first-ever KD-denominated Sukuk transaction by a Kuwaiti incorporated company, worth KD 103 million (US\$ 336 million) maturing in 2029.

2 leaders hold meeting

Macron, Lula announce \$1.1 bln investment plan for the Amazon

SAO PAULO, March 27, (AP): The Brazilian and the French presidents have announced a plan to invest 1 billion euros (\$1.1 billion) in the Amazon, including parts of the rainforest in neighboring French Guiana.

The two countries' governments said in a joint statement the money will be spread over the next four years to protect the rainforest. It will be a collaboration of state-run Brazilian banks and France's investment agency. Private resources will also be welcomed, Brazil and France said.

French President Emmanuel Macron and his Brazilian counterpart Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva are meeting this week to revive the relationship between the countries after years of frictions with former President Jair Bolsonaro, deepen cooperation to protect

the rainforest and boost trade. Macron started his three-day visit to Brazil in the Amazon city of Belem, where he met his long-time ally Lula. The French president then took a boat to the Combu island to meet with In-

digenous leaders. Both Macron and Lula saw a protest by Greenpeace Brazil with banners that read "No oil in the Amazon." Brazil's government has contemplated allowing the tapping of oil in a region close to the Para state, where Belem

Lula said during a speech that Macron's visit is part of a global effort to beef up rainforest protections.

"We want to convince those who have already deforested that they need to contribute in an important way to countries that still have their forests to keep them standing," Lula said in a speech next to the French president.

Macron's office prior said to the trip that a potential European trade deal with the South American bloc Mercosur won't be on the agenda. The French president is an opponent of such an agreement as long as South American producers don't respect the same environment and health standards as Europeans, after farmers raised concerns during protests across France and Europe.

The French president decorated Indigenous leader Raoni Metuktire with the prestigious Legion of Honor medal for efforts at conserving the rainforest.

"You were in Europe and I promised to come here to your forest and be with your people in this forest that is coveted," Macron told the Indigenous leader, according to French radio RFI. "President Lula and I have a common cause for one of our friends in this land that belongs to you.'

Lula and Macron will seek to "set a common course" to fight both climate change and poverty, Macron's office said, as Brazil is to host the summit of the Group of 20 leading economies in Rio de Janeiro in November and UN climate talks in Belem next year.

On Wednesday, Macron and Lula will launch a diesel-powered submarine built in Brazil with French technology at the Itaguai shipyard outside Rio de Janeiro. The French president will then head to metropolis Sao Paulo to meet with Brazilian investors. On Thursday, the French president will head to Brasilia to again meet with



French President Emmanuel Macron, from left, Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Chief Raoni Metuktire, pose for photos on Combu Island, near Belem, Para state, Brazil, Tuesday, March 26, 2024. (AP)

U.S. sanctions Russian entities accused of enabling digital currency sanctions evasion

WASHINGTON, March 27, (AP): The U.S. on Monday imposed sanctions on a collection of fintech firms and people, mostly in Russia, accused of enabling sanctions evasion.

Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control sanctioned 13 firms - five of which are owned by an already sanctioned person - and 2 people who have all either helped build or operate blockchain-based services for, or enabled virtual currency payments in, the Russian financial sector, "thus enabling potential sanctions evasion," according to U.S. Treasury.

Included in Monday's sanctions are a group of Moscow-based fintech companies and a Russia and UAE-based virtual currency exchange, among others.

Lawmakers and administration officials have voiced concerns that Russia may be using cryptocurrency to avoid pain from the avalanche of sanctions imposed on banks, oligarchs and the energy industry in response to Russia's

February 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Experts say an increased reliance on cryptocurrency would be an inevitable avenue for Russia to try to prop up its financial transactions, but Treasury officials have rejected the claim that cryptocurrency could be a major driver of sanctions evasion.

"Russia is increasingly turning to alternative payment mechanisms to circumvent U.S. sanctions and continue to fund its war against Ukraine,' Treasury Under Secretary Brian E.

"As the Kremlin seeks to leverage entities in the financial technology space, Treasury will continue to expose and disrupt the companies that seek to help sanctioned Russian financial institutions reconnect to the global financial system."

State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said Monday's action "reaffirms the G7 commitment to curtail Russia's use of the international financial system to further its war against Ukraine. It also reflects our continued efforts to target companies servicing Russia's core financial infrastructure.



Net profit reached KD 32.7 million

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc), a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, held its Ordinary General Assembly (AGM) at the Company's Headquarters - Olympia Mall/West Office Towers on Wednesday, 27 March 2024, where the attendance represented 77.545% from the total shareholders. The AGM was held physically and virtually using the online platform provided by Kuwait Clearing Company.

The AGM approved the Board of Directors' and Financial Position's report, the Auditors' report and the Sharia Committee's report for the fiscal year ended on 31 December 2023. The AGM also approved the Audit Committee report and the Corporate Governance report including the Board of Directors' and the Executive Management's remuneration and benefits report for the year ended on 31 December 2023along with approving all the other items in the AGM agenda. Furthermore, the AGM included the election of the Board of Directors members for a three-year tenure.

The AGM also approved the Company's financial statements and the Board of Directors' recommendation to distribute cash dividends of 35Kuwaiti fils, representing 35% of the share's nominal value for the year ended 2023, for shareholders registered in the Company's shareholders register as at the end of the record date set for it on Monday corresponding to 15 April 2024. The cash dividends will be distributed to the shareholders who are entitled to it at payment date, as of Sunday, corresponding to 21 April 2024.

Commenting on the announcements of these results, Dr. Mahmoud Ahmad Abdulrahman, stc's Chairman, stated: "Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) has achieved numerous financial and operational accomplishments in 2023, paving the way for it to lead Kuwait's ICT market. stc is keen on being innovative and up-to-date in all its operations and services to maintain its competitive position in the market. Accordingly, stc ensures adding value to its shareholders and providing the best offers and services to its customers in light of global trends towards digitization and embracing the latest technologies. Therefore, stc seeks to empower individuals, companies and society as a whole to prosper in an interconnected world, along with providing them with traditional communications services by implementing its strategy, plans and future vision focused on strengthening its internal capabilities and developing its infrastructure to provide the best integrated technical and database solutions for companies in addition to those tailored to meet our customers' needs. The strong results achieved by the company during the financial year ended in December 2023 have demonstrated the success of stc's corporate strategy and its constant efforts to harness the available capabilities and seize potential opportunities in the telecommunications market. This has helped in maintaining the company's



Chairman of the Board of Directors, Dr. Mahmoud Ahmad Abdulrahman, and CEO Muataz Abdullah Aldharrab in the middle of the executive management.

Chinese EV makers challenge mkt leaders at auto show in Bangkok

BANGKOK, March 27, (AP): Chinese electric vehicle makers are showcasing their latest models, including a flying car, as they take on global rivals at the Bangkok International Motor Show.

Companies like BYD, XPeng and Great Wall Motors are quickly growing their sales in Thailand, challenging longstanding market leaders like Toyota, Isuzu and Ford, as they expand exports across the globe.

And Thailand, one of the biggest markets in Southeast Asia, a region of more than 600 million people, has made developing its EV market a priority.

Tesla launched sales in late 2022, offering its popular Model 3 and Model Y at prices aimed at competing with rivals like China's BYD.

BYD, or Build Your Dreams, displayed a wide range of its EV lineup, including its Dolphin, a pure EV that it says runs 490 kilometers (about 300 miles) on a single charge and is priced at 859,999 Thai baht (\$23,700).

At the higher end of the spectrum is the Seal, promising 580 kilometers (about 360 miles) on a charge and

distinguished position in the ICT mar-

ket. It has also contributed to fulfilling-

stc's willingness to support its internal

capabilities, enhance its market share,

and to develop and enrich the customer

Commenting on the company's financial position as at 31 December

2023 Dr. Abdulrahman, stated: "stc's total assets reached KD 447.7mn by

the end of December 2023, while total

shareholders' equity increased by 1%

reaching KD 243.9mn. Moreover, stc

has a strong solvency position among

cash dividend recommendation of 35%

of the Company's total capital for the

fiscal year ended December 31, 2023,

saying: "stc has demonstrated its ca-

pacity by maintaining good cash flows

resulted from adopting its successful

business model as well as financial

planning that ensure good financial

returns and results that would enable

the company to distribute sustainable

cash dividends on an annual basis, and

in the best interest of the company's

Commenting on stc's achieve-

ments in 2023, Eng. Muataz Abdullah

valued shareholders.'

Dr. Abdulrahman commented on the

its peers in the Middle East."

experience.'

costing nearly 1.6 million baht (about \$44,000).

BYD sold 30.650 EVs in Thailand last year, followed by 12,777 sold by Neta, a brand of Chinese electric vehicle maker Hozon Auto, which is based in eastern China's Zhejiang province. They were trailed by Tesla, British brand MG and Chinese car maker Great Wall Motor.

"It's very colourful now. Many brands come in. I think this is very good and it's looking very bright for the whole market of EV cars to be honest," Pratarnwong Phornprapha, chief executive officer of the RÊVÊR Group, BYD's distributor in Thailand, said in an interview.

Also at the show: VinFast, a Vietnamese newcomer that says it plans to expand sales of its EVs to 50 countries by the end of this year. It is building or planning factories in the U.S., India and Indonesia.

Neta has announced plans to begin assembling EVs in Thailand, and Great Wall Motor bought a former General Motors plant in Rayong, south of Bangkok, as a base for its expansion

Aldharrab, stc's CEO stated: "By the

into Southeast Asia.

Thailand's market for EVs accounted for just 0.5% of all EV sales globally, but nearly 60% of EV sales in Southeast Asia in 2022, ahead of both Vietnam and Indonesia, according to market research firm Counterpoint Re-

Thailand is already an auto manufacturing hub, with strong sales especially of pickups that are widely used for taxi services, hauling equipment for people running food stalls and carrying farmers' crops to markets.

The roads are jammed with a wide array of models, with a strong presence of Toyotas, Hondas, Isuzus, Fords, Nissans and Mercedes-Benz. There's also a hefty share of luxury models such as Porsches and Maseratis.

The variety of automakers keen to win Thai customers was evident in the

displays.
"The highlight this year would be that most automakers are joining us here, including Japanese, European

and Chinese," said Peeraphong Eamlumnow, an organizer of the show. services for both individuals and enter-

grace of Allah, stc demonstrated its significant success during the year, in terms of operational and financial operations, due to the implementation of its corporate strategy based on leading the ICT market in Kuwait, which relies primarily on the company's robust infrastructure and the most advanced 5G network, enabling stc to provide the best integrated technological solutions and corporate database solutions that target and meet the needs of all the company's customers, surpassing their expectations. This has positioned stc at the forefront of leading companies in supporting the digital transforma-

cations sector." Aldharrab noted: "In addition, stc was able to achieve these strong results with significant support from its subsidiaries, Solutions by stc and E-Portal - the company's arms specialized in providing integrated solutions related to the field of telecommunications and networking. As well as advanced technical solutions, fixed services, broadband, integration systems, and cloud

tion process and providing integrated

solutions, which are considered added

value to the traditional telecommuni-

prises. Through expanding its business model and strengthening its position as a top-tier company in the ICT sector, stc has empowered itself to achieve sustainable growth in the future through the integrated business system, which greatly supports the strategic pillars of digital transformation" Commenting on the announcement

of company's financial results for the year ended December 31, 2023, Eng. Aldharrab said: "stc proudly managed to achieve strong financial results in 2023, recording the highest total revenue since inception to reach KD 351.4mn with a growth rate of 4.5% in 2023, compared with KD 336.4mn last year. This growth in revenue was achieved with the significant support from the increase in stc's customer base which has reached 2.3 million customers by the end of December 2023, representing a rise of 0.5% compared to December 2022. Accordingly, EBITDA witnessed a growth of 3.7% to reach KD 85.1mn in 2023 which resulted in a net profit of KD 32.7mn (earnings per share 33 fils) during 2023, driven by the increased revenue and the efficiency of stc's operational expenditure."



Al-Ablani highlights bank's vision for employees' growth and leadership

IBS honors 25 NBK employees for earning professional certifications

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: As part of their strategic partnership, the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS) honored 25 employees from National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) who participated in a number of IBS training programs, as part of the Professional Certification Programs for year 2023, with total 40 certificates obtained by the bank's employees. These programs are accredited by The London Institute of Banking and Finance, which is one of the leading international institutions in professional banking and finance studies.

The honoring was presented in the awarding ceremony held at NBK HQ 38th Floor – Ballroom on 25 March 2024, and attended by Ms. Rana AlNibari – General Director of IBS.

NBK employees received various professional certificates including: Advanced Certificate in Credit Management (ACCM), Certified Bank Branch Manager (CBBM), Certified Bank Relationship Manager for High-Net-Worth Customers (CBRM), and Certified Bank Wealth Manager (CBWM).

Commenting on this, Mr. Emad Al-Ablani, GM –Head of Group Human Resources at National



Group photo during the awarding ceremony held at the bank's headquarters.

Bank of Kuwait said, "NBK adopts a strategy that promotes employees' continuous development and improvement of their skills and expertise. To this end, the bank links promotions and financial incentives to academic certificates and training courses obtained by employees, to ensure continuous development for them."

"In line with our leadership in the banking sector, we regard professional certification as paramount in employees' career, and always motivate them to pursue continuous development of their capabilities and skills. In addition to being globally accepted tools for continuous learning and training, these certificates help boost the professional competence of banking sector employees to keep pace with global changes in this regard," he added.

"NBK holds an unwavering commitment to furnishing future

leaders with the necessary training programs and capabilities. These initiatives aim to cultivate adaptability, motivation of others, and delivering advanced and innovative services, thus solidifying the bank's leadership position among local banks," he emphasized.

Al-Ablani expressed NBK's appreciation of the significant contributions of IBS in providing these professional certificates

that enrich the banking business, as they help upskill national talent working in local banks and enhance their capabilities to ensure that they are up to date with the latest advancements in the global banking industry and qualify them to become active contributors to the economic development in Kuwait.

It is worth mentioning that IBS' initiatives align with NBK's strategy of investing in human

capital, as seen in its consistent endeavors to support, empower, train national talent and provide them with promising employment opportunities.

This reflects NBK's role as one of the top private sector employers of Kuwaitis, and keenness to deliver training programs designed according to advanced scientific methodologies, to help improve employees' performance

Bringing convenient banking options to customers

Gulf Bank expands 'Ayadi' service to branches and ITMs for Eid Al-Fitr



The event gathered children and families to celebrate Girgeaan.

Company sponsors annual Girgeaan event to bring joy to children and families

Zain continues support to Al Kharafi Special Needs Center

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Zain continues to support the annual Girgeaan celebration (traditional candy distribution) organized by Al Kharafi Center for Special Needs Activities. The event featured fun and interactive programs that brought joy to children with special needs and their families and was attended by the center's Director Aisha Al Salem.

This step came under the Zain Alshuhoor campaign, through which the company reaches out to the entire community with a plethora of initiatives and contributions that last throughout the Holy Month of Ramadan. Zain's support to the event also comes as part of its extended strategic partnership with Al Kharafi Center for Special Needs Activities, where the company supports its events during special seasons and occasions.

The joyful event featured many entertaining segments, like on-stage traditional acts performed by the center's children, engaging competitions and interactive programs designed to nurture their creative talents, and more. At the end of the event, Zain's team joined in giving out Girgeaan candy to the children and their families, bringing joy to everyone.

Zain Alshuhoor is one of Ku-wait's biggest and most successful community programs during the Holy Month. The campaign features a wide range of humanitarian, charitable, social, religious, health, and sports programs that continue throughout Ramadan. Every year, the company introduces a bigger, renewed version of the campaign that expands upon the previous year's initiatives and programs.

Al Kharafi Center for Special Needs Activities aims to offer a specialized, safe, engaging, and entertaining environment for all children with special needs. The center offers children and their families a wide range of services, including rehabilitation, entertainment, training, awareness, and more.



In line with its commitment to Diraya campaign

KFH warns against donations to unknown entities

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) advises customers to exercise caution when donating or making financial contributions through websites on certain occasions.

In a press release, KFH highlighted how fraudsters exploit specific events. They do this by sending phishing emails that request donations through bank transfers or payments on fake websites. Their goal is to steal money from unsuspecting victims.

KFH warned about the dangers of new phishing scams that have recently emerged. The bank advised customers to verify the website's safety, legitimacy, and authenticity before making any donations.

As part of its ongoing support for Diraya campaign to promote banking awareness, in collaboration with



Diraya logo

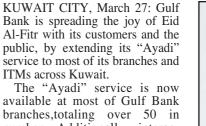
the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwait Banking Association, KFH explained that scammers are employing new methods of fraud.

The rise of digital payments and the growing reliance on smartphones and the internet have created new

avenues for fraudsters. They exploit this by targeting the millions of customers who conduct their transactions and daily business online. These fraudsters attempt to trick users into revealing sensitive account information, ultimately aiming to steal their money.

Fraudsters can leverage advanced AI and vast datasets to analyze online purchases and identify patterns that suggest potential victims with vulnerable accounts.

KFH added that fraudsters can target anyone, regardless of age or social status. They employ various tactics, including enticing but fake offers, seemingly urgent bank warnings about account problems, suspicious friend requests online, or pleas for help over the phone.



branches,totaling over 50 in number. Additionally, interactive Teller Machines (ITMs), are available at various locations including Crystal Tower, Al-Adan, Al-Salam (South Surra), Fahaheel (Xcite Mall), Hawally, Kuwait International Airport (T1), Mishref, Al-Fanar Mall, Al-Khiran Mall, and Sabah Al-Ahmad branch.

The bank offers its Private

and Priority banking clients the chance to schedule cash deliveries through the concierge service. They can do so by dialing 22969955, specifying their preferred denominations, and arranging the delivery time.

The "Ayadi" service provides customers with fresh banknotes in

denominations of KD20, KD10, KD5, and KD1, addressing the increased demand for new banknotes during the Eid Al Fitr celebrations. Additionally, Gulf Bank offers its customers the Pay Link service

via its mobile application featuring

easy and simple steps.
Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and



Gulf Bank Eid Fitr flyer

diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining robust developments in sustainability at environmental, social and governance levels through diverse sustainability initiatives, strategically selected to benefit the Bank both internally and externally. Gulf Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various parties to achieve it.

ABK announces Duaa Mohammad Ibrahim as Alfouz KD 100,000 quarterly draw winner

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is excited to announce Duaa Mohammad Ibrahim as the winner of Alfouz KD 100,000 quarterly draw on Monday 25 March2024. The draw took place in the presence of a Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative, ensuring transparency.

From the highly coveted mega annual draw of a KD 5,000 monthly salary for 10 years to its KD 10,000 weekly prize, the Alfouz account has already attracted the attention of the Kuwaiti market. Based on the account's great success, ABK decided to go above and beyond to reward customer loyalty.

By introducing a KD 100,000 quarterly draw, in addition to an exciting KD 20,000 monthly draw, the Alfouz offering has continues to surpass expectations and deliver even more customer satisfaction.

To top it off, ABK has simplified the ability to open the account and win! Customers can enter the draws and get extra entry chances for every KD 10 deposited as opposed to KD 100 previously. The more you save, the higher your chance to be the next Alfouz winner!

ABK encourages everyone to open an Alfouz draw account or increase their balance to participate in the upcoming weekly draw, which is scheduled to take place on 1 April 2024.

Open an Alfouz account today and enjoy increased opportunities to win the lifestyle you've been waiting for!

To learn more about the Alfouz account and its range of exciting draws and prizes, please follow the ABK's Instagram account @ abk_kuwait, visit eahli.com, contact Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 or visit one of the Bank's branches across Kuwait.



Alfouz Quarterly Winner flyer.

LONDON: Bruce Springsteen is the first international songwriter

to be named a fellow of The Ivors Academy, the UK's professional association of music creators. The American icon was announced as the next recipient of

the 80-year old Academy's highest

honor Tuesday, in recognition of

the impact his career has had on

the cultural landscape of the UK.

Over the last half century, the

"Born to Run" musician has sold

worldwide - from his 1973 debut

"Greetings from Asbury Park, NJ'

"Only the Strong Survive" in 2022 - with a liberal dusting of top

honors along the way, including

20 Grammys, an Oscar and the

Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Springsteen, 74, said he was

proud of the honor in a statement

tion to recognising my songwrit-

ing, the award stands as a tribute

to the fans and friends who have

supported me and my work for the

last fifty years. This entire country

step of the way, and for this, I will always remain deeply apprecia-

The news comes a week after

Springsteen's triumphant return to

the stage with the E Street Band in

Phoenix for a nearly three-hour set.

Springsteen announced in

September he was pausing his

tour, citing doctor's advice as

he recovered from peptic ulcer

LOS ANGELES: Following the

success of "Wonka" and the

"Dune" movies, Warner Bros.

is staying in the **Timothée**

Chalamet business. The star

signed a first look deal with the studio to collaborate on future

projects as an actor and producer, Warner Bros. said Tuesday. This doesn't mean that Chalamet can only make movies with Warner Bros., just that the

studio is entitled to right of first

not released, but it is a "multi-

year" agreement

refusal. The terms of the deal were

Warner Bros. Motion Picture Group co-chairs and CEO's **Mike**

De Luca and Pam Abdy said in

a statement that they've admired

his "commitment to his craft" and

his "unwavering dedication to give

disease. (AP)

has made me feel welcome every

released by the academy. "In addi-

more than 140 million records

to his most recent studio album

NBC News cuts ties with Ronna McDaniel amid internal uproar

NEW YORK, March 27, (AP): NBC News cut ties Tuesday with former Republican National Committee chief Ronna McDaniel less than a week after hiring her as an on-air political contributor, a decision that followed a furious protest by some of its journalists and commentators.

In announcing the decision in a memo, NBC Universal News Group Chairman Cesar Conde apologized to staff members who felt let down by the hire, acknowledging he had signed off on it.

"No organization, particularly a newsroom, can succeed unless it is cohesive and aligned. Over the last few days, it has become clear that this appointment undermines that goal," Conde said. But he said the network remained committed to centering "voices that represent different parts of the political spectrum."

There was no immediate comment from McDaniel, who stepped

down as RNC leader just over two weeks ago. She found out she lost her job through media reports, not from NBC directly, said a person close to her who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak about it publicly.

NBC announced Friday that McDaniel would contribute commen-

NBC announced Friday that McDaniel would contribute commentary across network platforms. It said it wanted the perspective of someone with inside knowledge about the Republican Party and former President Donald Trump heading into the 2024 election, in which Trump is seeking a second term.

The response from journalists and others within the network was swift - and public. Former "Meet the Press" moderator Chuck Todd criticized his bosses on the air Sunday for the hire, saying he didn't

know what to believe from her after she supported former President Donald Trump in "gaslighting" and "character assassination" following the 2020 election.

An extraordinary succession of MSNBC hosts - Joe Scarborough, Rachel Maddow, Joy Reid, Nicolle Wallace, Jen Psaki and Lawrence O'Donnell - all publicly protested the decision to hire McDaniel on their shows Monday.

Republicans countered that the protest indicates that people at NBC News, particularly at MSNBC, were unwilling to countenance opposing viewpoints. The hiring, and quick firing, represents one of those rare instances likely to unite the left and right - in anger.

Censors

"NBC caving in to the censors," Elon Musk, owner of X, formerly Twitter, posted on his platform.

On his Truth Social site, Trump said, "These Radical Left Lunatics are CRAZY, and the top people at NBC ARE WEAK."

Those who protested her hiring claimed that it wasn't because McDaniel is a Republican, but it was because she helped promote Trump's lies about the 2020 presidential election and assisted in efforts to overturn the results.

Efforts by news organizations to hire former politicians is hardly new. NBC News hired Psaki directly from her job as press secretary to President Joe Biden, and another former Republican National Committee chairman, Michael Steele, hosts a weekend show on MSNBC.

But there are concerns that the McDaniel episode may make it difficult for networks to find voices this year that can provide insight into Trump and his campaign. Former Trump chief of staff Reince Priebius is an ABC News contributor and Alyssa Farah Griffin, a former White House communications director during the Trump administration, is a CNN commentator.

Conde said that NBC News remains committed to the principle that there must be diverse voices on the network. "And to that end, we will redouble our efforts to seek voices that represent different parts of the political spectrum."

McDaniel's tenure at NBC may have lasted less than a week, but a mess surrounding it could last much longer. She was dropped Tuesday by Creative Artists Agency, who she hired to negotiate her TV deal, and has been consulting with lawyers since learning that deal had ended.

The succession of MSNBC stars who denounced McDaniel and the hiring reached its apogee during the weekly show by Maddow, the network's most popular personality. She spent nearly half an hour on the issue, drawing a comparison between crackpot efforts by authoritarians to gain power in the US, and the GOP backing of Trump under McDaniel's leadership. She called her hiring by NBC News "inexplicable," comparing it to a mobster being given a position in a district attorney's office

Maddow appeared Tuesday on Reid's show. Reid said she was grateful for the decision to oust McDaniel, and Maddow echoed that.

Variety



This image released by Apple TV+ shows Steve Martin in a scene from the documentary 'Steve! (Martin) a Documentary in 2 Pieces.' (AP)

Film

Martin reflects on past and present in new documentary

Discover the multi-faceted 'Steve'

By Lindsey Bahr

Steve Martin has never been one to follow any sort of playbook. It is fitting the first official documentary about his life is similarly unconventional: A freewheeling story told in two parts, one part focused on "Then" and one part focused on "Now" (kind of) with both parts debuting on Apple TV+ on Friday. Both documentarian and subject are trying, the best they can, to make sense of whatever "Steve Martin" is.

Directed by self-proclaimed superfan Morgan Neville (the Oscar-winner who has told the story of Fred Rogers and Anthony Bourdain), "STEVE! (martin)" never commits to one form. Like its subject, it allows itself to be a little looser, utilizing every technique available to help paint a truer picture of Martin, a man so enigmatic that his close friends don't even seem to have a handle on him. He'd hardly be the first performer to save it all for the stage: Martin says that it was somewhat comforting to be able to put on a persona during shows. He was also able to continually reinvent himself. Who else could have walked away from stand-up just as they'd reached rock star status?

And so the medium becomes a kitchen sink: There is stock footage, animation, reenactment, home videos, movie clips, stand-up segments, talk show appearances, new interviews with famous friends (Martin and Jerry Seinfeld in conversation, for example), scripted voiceover and some fly-on-the-wall footage of him just spending time with Martin (Marty) Short bike riding, walking through town, playing cards and workshopping jokes for their show. It's probably the only way to capture an artist who has taken the hyphenate to absurd levels: Magician/balloon artist/novelist/banjo player/screenwriter/essayist/art collector/joke teller/cartoonist/movie star/father/husband/friend. What am I missing?

For anyone who's read Martin's memoir "Born Standing Up," "Then" might not be especially revelatory, but it's all context and it remains interesting to hear Martin reflect candidly on a moment that now feels "like a blip." While he might not have had a plan, he did possess a keen sense of when he'd hit a dead end, whether that be in magic, stand-up or even movies.

His life in movies is saved for "Now," and you see someone still struggling with the agony of never really knowing if a thing would work. Everyone misses once in a while, but Martin had a brutal back-to-back of a wild success in "The Jerk" followed by an epic flop in "Pennies From Heaven" and that was just the start of his rollercoaster in Hollywood. He's kind of moved on from that (and "Mixed Nuts") but also kind of not. He said he had to do 40 movies to get five good ones. He's being a little sarcastic, but hopefully he knows that a lot of people out there love far more than a measly five Steve Martin movies.

It is especially fascinating to get a glimpse into his complex relationship with critics and how he found an outlet in writing both fiction and non-fiction. Personally, I wish even more time had been spent on the movies and his writings, like "Shopgirl." Everyone is bound to have a favorite that this doesn't cover enough.

Biography

If you want to keep Steve Martin in your mind as that wild and crazy guy, or George Banks or Navin or Lucky Day (the list could go on), and don't care about his relationship with his father, his decision to become a father late in life, reflections on his art collection, the memorabilia he kept over the years and the things he didn't do that he wishes he did, these films might not be for you. There are no rules to being a fan. For some, biography can mean everything. For others, it matters little when there's so much joy to be had without it.

Martin, who has been both an open book in some ways and also guarded in others, is really quite vulnerable here - especially in "Now." Neville captures him looking at the script for "Planes, Trains and Automobiles" and reflecting on his late friend and co-star John Candy. There was a great monologue, he said, in which Candy's Del Griffith tells the story of his life. Martin recalled bawling off camera as Candy delivered it. And yet for whatever reason, it was chopped down to a line or two. He reads a bit of it and starts to cry.

There's more, but if that sounds intriguing, you should really just watch it. Neville has said it doesn't matter which order. And what does it add up to? On

a certain level he's still an enigma. It's hard for mere mortals to comprehend a half century of otherworldly fame, but it's also just nice to watch a familiar face reflect on how he has, at 78, finally found happiness. Besides, Steve Martin's story is not even remotely finished. These are just two parts.

"STEVE! (martin) a documentary in 2 parts," an Apple TV+ release streaming on Friday, is rated TV-MA. "Then" is 98 minutes. "Now" is 95 minutes. Together, they add up to three stars out of four.

Also:

NEW YORK: The Golden Globes and CBS have reached a five-year deal to broadcast the annual award show and stream it live on Paramount+, it was announced Monday.

The new agreement, which begins with January's telecast, gives the Globes a new broadcast home following years of turmoil. The Globes had long resided at NBC before scandal enveloped the organization behind the awards, leading NBC to give them up.

CBS stepped in to air the 81st Golden Globes in January, and was rewarded with a ratings boost. The telecast pulled in an average of 9.4 million viewers, up about 50% from 2023, when NBC moved the Globes to a Tuesday.

to a Tuesday.

"CBS' collaboration with the Globes for this year's broadcast was a big win for both of us and established strong momentum for awards shows in 2024," said George Cheeks, president and chief executive of CBS, in a statement. "The Globes is a one-of a-kind live event that adds another marquee special and valuable promotional platform to CBS' annual calendar."

Though host Jo Koy drew bad reviews, a ceremony that featured Hollywood stars as well as Taylor Swift helped stabilize a Golden Globes that for a time was teetering on the brink. After The Los Angeles Times reported that the Hollywood Foreign Press Association had no Black members, Hollywood boycotted the organization and the 2022 Globes were booted off the air.

The HFPA has since been dissolved. The Globes were acquired by Eldridge Industries and Dick Clark Productions, which Penske Media owns, and turned into a for-profit venture. (AP)

100% of his time and attention to every project he has made."

Chalamet, in a statement, said of De Luca and Abdy: "These are studio heads who believe in real movie making, and I'm so grateful for their support as an actor, producer and collaborator. This partnership feels like a natural next step. Let's go!"





became the first star in over four decades to be in two top-grossing films released within eight months of each other with "Dune: Part Two," which has a running box office total of \$575.5 million, and "Wonka," which made over \$632 million globally. The previous record-holder was **John Travolta**

The 28-year-old recently

with "Grease" and "Saturday Night Fever." (AP)

KUALA LUMPUR: The art of Shadow Theater, or Wayang Kuilt as it is locally known in Malaysia, is a form of storytelling that was

once quite popular with the local

community as they used to gather

around and watch epic narratives unfold right before their eyes.

The UNESCO listed Wayang Kuilt as a puppet show relying

The UNESCO listed Wayang Kuilt as a puppet show relying on the play of light and shadow, presenting to its audience ancient Indian legends interlaid with relevant messages and accompanied by traditional orchestra music known as Gamelan. (AP)

People & Places

Books

Bullwinkel delivers

Laughs & life lessons in 'Glorious Exploits'

Best friends Lampo and Gelon are potters by trade, but their souls are filled with poetry. It's 412 B.C. and the city of Syracuse doesn't know what hit it when these two hatch up the best worst idea: They'll put on a play using the Athenian prisoners of war who are starving to death down in the rock

If the googly eyes on the cover didn't make it apparent, Ferdia Lennon's knockout debut novel "Glorious Exploits" is hilarious. In fact, it's loaded with dark humor literally from page one. Never before has history been such a riot, and so indelibly endearing

The book is crass, quick-witted, and dialogueheavy, making it a quick read to boot. Born in



Dublin, Lennon infuses the with a delightfully Irish lilt, complete with very Irish cursing, that gives the whole thing a kind of bizarre yet familiar approachability. The author's also applied his deep interest and knowledge in classical history to give us exactly the context needed to set the stage for the epic tale he'll tell. And, while I'm sure his-

tory buffs will get some extra layers of entertainment, rest assured that even for someone like me who is woefully bad at history and has never taken much interest in Greek or Roman stories,

"Glorious Exploits" is a story largely built as if on happenstance. The directors-in-the-making stumble on children playing in the street with valuable armor they found, that Lampo and Gelon can then sell to fund their project. Later, they happen to come across an old man singing for money in the streets whose story strikes Gelon deeply, but that Lampo only sees as a story, driving a wedge between the two.

But their friendship - and the story itself - is stronger than this. Watching them morph and grow with the project's progression is deeply gratifying. And relieving. If at first Lampo seems almost unbearably awful sometimes, fret not, because it gets

As Gelon says, "It's poetry we're doing. It wouldn't mean a thing if it were easy.'

The main characters are sympathetic and their goals admirable - certainly feeding the Athenians is humanitarian, even if gruffly so - but before long I found myself also rooting for their success in every venture that branches off from the play, from Gelon's search for happiness to Lampo's courting of Lyra, the new girl down at their favorite water-

All told, the project is so much more than putting on a couple of Euripides tragedies; it's lifegiving, and it challenges the barriers thrown up between "us" and "them.

I never thought I could be so enraptured reading a book describe a play performance - especially a tragedy I didn't know. Yet, somehow, when we finally get to the big day, Lennon has infused the pages with nervous anticipation that's closer to reading a thriller than a historical comedy.

"Glorious Exploits" is a celebration of stories and storytelling lavishing in the emotional power of the arts, and one that's especially apt in dealing with the fallout of the Peloponnesian War at a time when, in our present reality, fighting has left cities in rubble and millions of people facing starvation. Lennon offers a window through which to see past the fog of messy politics and view these tragedies with empathy.

Rita Bullwinkel knows a thing or two about the human body and the abuse it can take. In an interview with The Paris Review, the author, who played water polo in college, talked about the beating her body took for a sport few people care about. "My nose and all of my fingers have been broken. One time, when I was 16, I vomited for two days straight because of a full-force kick I took directly to the stomach.'

Bullwinkel brings that intimate knowledge of bodies in competition to her debut novel, "Headshot," which takes place in Reno, Nevada, over two sweltering days in July as eight teenage girls vie for the Daughters of America Cup at Bob's Boxing Palace, a faded, dusty gym that is far

Andi is haunted by thoughts of a 4-year-old boy who drowned in a swimming pool when she was on duty as a lifeguard. Artemis, whose older sisters excelled at boxing, too, worries about not living up to the family legacy.

Bullwinkel gives us "head shots" of the other girls, too, each with her own weird obsessions and dreams. Andi may be fixated on the child's corpse but she is also thinking about a boy lifeguard she wants to kiss. One moment Artemis hates Andi, "this sorry zit-ridden girl;" the next, she wants to

Bullwinkel's rhythmic, muscular prose matches the visceral, sometimes stomach-churning material — vicious hits to the face and body, "Andi's nose feeling like cornflakes" after Artemis's glove lands between her eyeballs.

Stylistically, she takes risks. Though the story unfolds over just the 48 hours of the tournament, the omniscient narrator projects into the future to imagine the girls' fates. She is clear-eyed, unsentimental. When Artemis is 60, she will not be able to hold a cup of tea because her fingers have been broken so many times. "Her injury... will not be some battle relic, but, rather, a sorry, pathetic disability.'

In 2018, Bullwinkel made a splash in the literary world when she published "Belly Up," a collection of short stories with grotesque, surreal plot twists. One reviewer described it as full of 'squirmy pleasures.'

Her new work continues in that vein with dark scenes and characters that can be difficult to read. Yet it also feels important because she gives agency to a group of girls who might not otherwise be seen and shows them to us in the full flush of youth, striving for recognition and glory. (AP)



A model wears creations from Yazheng Guan during the China Fashion Week in Beijing, Wednesday, March 27. (AP)



Executive producer Diarra Kilpatrick poses for a portrait to promote the television series 'Diarra from Detroit' during the Winter Television Critics Association Press Tour on Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2024, at The Langham Huntington Hotel in Pasadena, Calif. (AP)



Variety

NEW YORK: Famed American artist and sculptor Richard Serra, known for turning curving walls of rusting steel and other malleable materials into large-scale pieces of outdoor artwork that are now dotted across the world, died Tuesday at his home in **Long Island**. New York. He was 85.

Considered one of his generation's most preeminent sculptors, the San Francisco native originally studied painting at Yale University but turned to sculpting in the 1960s, inspired by trips to **Europe**.

His death was confirmed Tuesday night by his lawyer, John Silberman, whose firm is based in **New York**. He said the cause of death was pneumonia.

Known by his colleagues as the "poet of iron," Serra became world-renowned for his large-scale steel structures, such as monumental arcs, spirals and ellipses. He was closely identified with the minimalist movement of the 1970s.

Serra's work started to gain public attention in 1981, when he installed a 120-foot-long (36.5-meter-long) and 12-foot-high (3.6-meter-high) curving wall of raw steel that splits the Federal Plaza in New York City. The sculpture, called "Tilted Arc," generated swift backlash from people who work there and a fierce demvand that it should be removed. The sculpture was later taken down, but Serra's popularity in the New York art scene had been cemented. (AP)

URAWA, Japan: One Japanese creation grabbing attention on the Oscars red carpet wasn't a movie: the kitsch shoes that seemed to be clenched in Godzilla's claw.

They were the work of Ryosuke Matsui, who recently described his joy at seeing "Godzilla Minus One" director Takashi Yamazaki and his Shirogumi special-effects team walk the red carpet and win the visual effects Oscar, all while wearing his shoes

"The director loves my shoes. He calls them his uniform," Matsui told The Associat-

Television

Kilpatrick's personal journey reflected in new series

Diarra offers fresh take on detectives

LOS ANGELES, March 27, (AP): Diarra Kilpatrick recalls writing for NBC's Debra Messing procedural "The Mysteries of Laura" when she got feedback from the network over wanting to have Messing's character, a homicide detective with the NYPD, out on a date.

"The network was like, 'Do people hate her? There are still criminals at large." And I remember thinking, 'What? She has to have something for her," Kilpatrick said recently over Zoom.

A date is now at the center of a new comedic mystery series Kilpatrick created, executive produces and stars in for BET+ called "Diarra from Detroit.'

Kilpatrick ("Perry Mason") plays a school teacher — also named Diarra — who is going through a divorce and has returned to her childhood home. She meets a man on the dating app Tinder and the two spend the night together. When Diarra doesn't hear from him again, her friends say she's been ghosted, but her conclusion is that something must be wrong and launches an investigation. This amateur sleuthing leads Diarra into dangerous situations

Ghosting, says Kilpatrick, "is something that happens to all my girlfriends. They talk about it with such ease. They're like, 'I was talking to this guy, and then he ghosted. And so then I was talking to that guy, and then I ghosted.' It's such a prolific act. I feel like no one's really talking about what it's saying about us as a society, that we just aren't communicating with each other any-

Kenya Barris, creator of hit shows such as "black-ish" and "grown-ish,"

is also an executive producer on the series. Barris is a partner at BET Studios and "Diarra from Detroit" is its first scripted series.

Kilpatrick recalls first meeting Barris at the NAACP Awards in 2017 where he told her he had read one of her scripts.

"That was such a big moment for me because I was like, 'How on earth would you ever have time to read my script?" recalled Kilpatrick. "It was vears before it turned but was just kind of that Black Hollywood 'How do you do' turning into something that's amazing." Like her TV character, Kilpatrick

is from Detroit and her last name is familiar. Kilpatrick's father is Bernard Kilpatrick and her half-brother is disgraced former mayor Kwame Kilpatrick who was convicted in 2013 on corruption charges. He served more than seven years of a 28 year sentence and was granted clemency by President Trump in 2021.

Campaign

The elder Fitzpatrick, who worked on political campaigns including his son's mayoral bid and former Gov. Jennifer Granholm's 2002 campaign, was also convicted in 2013 of tax fraud and spent 10 months in

Kilpatrick says she's aware that questions will come up about her family now that she's in the spotlight.

"I'm prepared for it," she said. "I do realize that in order to amplify my voice, I have to amplify my face, too. And that's just going to come with the territory.'

Kilpatrick attributes spending time with her dad growing up that helped her to learn about the different neighborhoods of Detroit and to appreciate its people.

"I say I'm from all of Detroit because on the weekends, it was very common for my dad to be running a campaign or something, and me to be in the campaign office with him or going canvassing, passing out literature in a neighborhood, asking people to vote for this person or that person. So I saw a lot of the city, and I had a really warm point of view on

Also:

LOS ANGELES: Prime Video introduces "The Baxters" on Thursday. The Christian-based series stars Roma Downey and Ted McGinley as John and Elizabeth Baxter, who have five adult children. The family's faith is tested when one of the Baxter daughters learns her husband has had an affair. It's based on a book series by Christian author Karen Kingsbury. Cassidy Gifford (daughter Frank Gifford and Kathy Lee Gifford) also plays one of the Baxter daughters.

Beloved for playing Gus Fring on "Breaking Bad" and "Better Call Saul," Giancarlo Esposito executive produces and stars in his own series called "Parish" for AMC. Esposito plays Gracian "Gray" Parish, who is drawn back into the crime world after a family tragedy. "Parish" is a passion project for Esposito, who worked to get it developed for eight years. Skeet Ulrich co-stars and Bradley Whitford has a recurring role. "Parish" is based on a BBC One show called "The Driver" and debuts Sunday, March 31 on AMC

ed Press in an interview. At 35 with a fashion career that's barely a decade old, Matsui heads his own brand called Hazama, which means "the space-in-between" in Japanese.

A small business with just six employ ees, Hazama offers girlie outfits with fluffy skirts, as well as Gothic themes, kimono and sweaters in gradient colors, jackets

with repetitive motifs evocative of Andy Warhol, sofas and coffee tables, and, of course, the shoes with the crazy heels. One pair has a pistol trigger you can really pull though without any bullets, while

another looks like it's stuck in an alien's blood-red teeth.

"Dark fantasy" is what Matsui calls his



(Pic C) Andrew MacDonald, (from left), Kirsten Dunst, Alex Garland and Allan Reich pose for photographers on arrival at the special screening of the film 'Civil War' in London, on Tuesday, March 26. (AP)

motifs. His imaginary world is filled with odd creatures like witches, scary penguins and iridescent polar bears, where objects suddenly melt, a face might get replaced by a giant rose, or a horrific hand grabs your heel from underground.

His brand's spaces in-between are the filters through which Matsui sees and expresses his mesmerizing stories of the beginnings of time, inhabited by "the people" he's concocted. He would love to have his own café or work on an animation project. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Sean "Diddy" Combs' lawyer said Tuesday that the searches of the rapper's Los Angeles and **Miami** properties by federal authorities in a sex trafficking investigation were "a gross use of military-level force" and that Combs is "innocent and will continue to fight" to clear his name

It's the first public statement from the music mogul's team since Monday's raids of his homes by Homeland Security Inves-

"Yesterday, there was a gross overuse of military-level force as search warrants were executed at Mr. Combs' residences," said the statement from attorney Aaron Dver. "There is no excuse for the excessive show of force and hostility exhibited by authorities or the way his children and employees were treated.'

The searches were part of an ongoing sex trafficking investigation by federal authorities in New York, two law enforcement officials told The Associated Press.

The Conversation

Mathematics meets artificial intelligence to unravel chaos

Al can help engineers predict critical failure via pattern absence

By John Edward McCarthy

Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis

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

Humans are very good at spotting patterns, or repeating features people can recognize. For instance, ancient Polynesians navigated across the Pacific by recognizing many patterns, from the stars' constellations to more

subtle ones such as the directions and sizes ocean swells. Very recently

mathematicians like have me started to study large



McCarthy

collections of objects that have no patterns of a particular sort. How large can collections be before a specified pattern has to appear somewhere in the collection? Understanding such scenarios can have significant real-world implications: For example, what's the smallest number of server failures that would lead to the severing of the internet?

Research from mathematician Jordan Ellenberg at the University of Wisconsin and researchers at Google's Deep Mind have proposed a novel approach to this problem. Their work uses artificial intelligence to find large collections that don't contain a specified pattern, which can help us understand some worst-case

Collections

The idea of patternless collections can be illustrated by a popular card game called Set. In this game, players lay out 12 cards, face up. Each card has a different simple picture on it. They vary in terms of number, color, shape and shading. Each of these four features can have one of three values.

Players race to look for "sets," which are groups of three cards in which every feature is either the same or different in each card. For instance, cards with one solid red diamond, two solid green diamonds and three solid purple diamonds form a set: All three have different numbers (one, two, three), the same shading (solid), different colors (red, green, purple) and the same shape (dia-

Finding a set is usually possible - but not always. If none of the players can find a set from the 12 cards on the table, then they flip over three more cards. But they still might not be able to find a set in these 15 cards. The players continue to flip over cards, three at a time, until someone spots a

So what is the maximum number of cards you can lay out without forming a set?

In 1971, mathematician Giuseppe Pellegrino showed that the largest collection of cards without a set is 20. But if you chose 20 cards at random, "no set" would happen only about one in a trillion

times. And finding these "no set" collections is an extremely hard problem to solve.

If you wanted to find the smallest collection of cards with no set, you could in principle do an exhaustive search of every possible collection of cards chosen from the deck of 81 cards. But there are an enormous number of possibilities - on the order of 1024 (that's a "1" followed by 24 zeros). And if you increase the number of features of the cards from four to, say, eight, the complexity of the problem would overwhelm any computer doing an exhaustive search for "no set" collections.

Programs

Mathematicians love to think about computationally difficult problems like this. These complex problems, if approached in the right way, can become tractable.

It's easier to find best-case scenarios - here, that would mean the fewest number of cards that could contain a set. But there were few known strategies that could explore bad scenarios here, that would mean a large collection of cards that do not contain a set.

Ellenberg and his collaborators approached the bad scenario with a type of AI called large language models, or LLMs. The researchers first wrote computer programs that generate some examples of collections of many that contain no set. These collections typically have "cards" with more than four features.

Then they fed these programs to the LLM, which soon learned how to write many similar programs and choose the ones that give rise to the largest set-free collections to undergo the process again. Iterating that process by repeatedly tweaking the most successful programs enables them to find larger and larger setfree collections.

This method allows people to explore disordered collections - in this instance, collections of cards that contain no set - in an entirely new way. It does not guarantee that researchers will find the absolute worst-case scenario, but they will find scenarios that are much worse than a random generation would yield.

Their work can help researchers understand how events might align in a way that leads to catastrophic failure.

For example, how vulnerable is the electrical grid to a malicious attacker who destroys select substations? Suppose that a bad collection of substations is one where they don't form a connected grid. The worst-case scenario is now a very large number of substations that, when taken all together, still don't yield a connected grid. The amount of substations excluded from this collection make up the smallest number a malicious actor needs to destroy to deliberately disconnect the grid.

The work of Ellenberg and his collaborators demonstrates yet another way that AI is a very powerful tool. But to solve very complex problems, at least for now, it still needs human ingenuity to guide it. (AP)



A group photo from the event.





Some photos from the event.

KCICAI hosts exclusive Iftar and CPE event

KCICAI event delves into Al's role in professions and digital transformation's effect on humanity

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: The Kuwait Chapter of The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (KCICAI) hosted a thought-provoking Continuing Professional Education (CPE) and Iftar event centred around two paramount topics: "Impact of AI on our Profession" and "Digital Transformation and its Effect on Humanity." The event, graced by distinguished speakers, Heshana Kruppu, President of South Asia Federation of Accountants (SAFA) and President of The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka, and Mr. Dheeraj Bhardwaj, CEO of City Group, garnered insightful discussions and reflections.

CA Rabin Gonsalves, the esteemed Chairperson of KCICAI, officially welcomed the audience, providing insights into the chapter's recent activities and upcoming initiatives. Emphasizing the crucial role of professionals in embracing technology and driving innovation, Gonsalves set the tone for an enlightening evening. CA Sweta Chipra and CA Venkata Ramana, executive committee members of KCICAI, co-hosted the event, ensuring its smooth flow and engaging at-

The event commenced with Mr. Heshana Kruppu's compelling discourse on "The Impact of AI on Our Profession," captivating attendees with profound insights into the evolving landscape of the accounting profession in the era of AI. Kruppu emphasized the importance of embracing AI as a tool for transformation, stating, "People do not lose jobs to AI, but they lose jobs to people who know AI." His presentation illuminated how AI is revolutionizing traditional practices and driving efficiencies, urging professionals to evolve into value enablers in decision-making

Following Kruppu's engaging presentation, Mr. Dheeraj Bhardwaj took the stage to address "Digital Transformation and Its Effect on Humanity." Drawing from his extensive experience in leading technological advancements within City Group, Bhardwaj provided invaluable insights into the broader societal implications of digital transformation. He explored the ethical considerations, challenges, and opportunities arising from the rapid pace of technological change, urging attendees to prioritize a human-centric approach to digi-

The event provided attendees with a unique opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the intersection between AI, digital transformation, and professional domains. Through thought-provoking discussions and expert perspectives, participants were encouraged to reflect on the evolving landscape and strategize for the

"We are delighted to have hosted such an enlightening event that brought together professionals from diverse backgrounds to explore the transformative power of AI and digital technologies," remarked CA Surin Gandhi while presenting the vote of thanks.

As industries evolve and technology reshapes the landscape of professions worldwide, it is imperative for professionals to stay abreast of these changes. KCICAI recognizes this need and remains committed to fostering knowledge-sharing and collaboration within the community. The chapter looks forward to organizing more impactful events in the future.

For more information about KCICAI and upcoming vents, please visit icaikw.org

KFSH&RC scientists uncover novel bacterial strain

New bacteria species to help combat 'super bugs'

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, March 27: In a ground-breaking development, scientists at King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre (KFSH&RC) have identified a new species of bacteria, referred to as "Stenotrophomonas Riyadhensis" through the application of whole-genome sequencing (WGS) technology. This discovery signifies a major advancement in understanding how bacteria interact with existing drugs, paving the way for innovative therapeutic strategies. Such efforts are essential in the global fight against antibioticresistant bacteria, highlighting KFSH&RC's advanced research capabilities and its leading role in fostering scientific discoveries and enhancing patient care.

The discovery of "Riyadhensis" reinforces the potential of genomic tests in innovating promising diagnostic and therapeutic methods, as well as deepening the understanding of bacterial resistance mechanisms, particularly in sensitive environments like intensive care units (ICU) and among patients with compromised immune systems. This represents substantial progress in combating antibiotic resistance, developing pharmaceuticals, and preventing the spread of diseases.

This newly identified bacteria was discovered amid an in-depth investigation into a suspected outbreak in

the ICU of KFSH&RC in 2019, highlighting challenges previously unrecognized by the global scientific and medical communities in pinpointing and countering new bacterial strains. Initially thought to be a variant of Pseudomonas aeruginosa, a disease-causing bacterium known for its resistance to antibiotics, subsequent WGS analysis revealed it did not share the common characteristics of the Pseudomonas genus. Instead, Riyadhensis was found to belong to the Stenotrophomonas family, with a unique genetic composition and morphological traits, unlike any other scientifically recognized members.







Defending champ puts up a sterling all-round show

Chennai thumps Gujarat by 63 runs for 2nd straight win in IPL

CHENNAI, India, March 27, (AP): Defending champion Chennai Super Kings thumped Gujarat Titans by 63 runs on Tuesday for back-to-back home wins in the Indian Premier League.

Chennai put up a sterling all-round show as Gujarat limped to 143-8 against pace-dominated attack after the home team had used the conditions to perfection and posted an above-par total of 206-6.

Impact player Ŝai Sudharsan top-scored with 37 off 31 balls, but the rest of the Gujarat batters struggled to put up partnerships with Chennai holding onto some brilliant catches in the deep.

Captain Shubman Gill made a five-ball eight before he played Deepak Chahar (2-28) across the line and was out plumb leg before wicket in the third over of a tall chase.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who relinquished the captaincy to Ruturaj Gaikwad on the eve of the tournament, made a splendid diving catch to his right to dismiss Vijay Shankar, while Ajinkya Rahane took a blinder at deep mid-wicket to dismiss dangerous David Miller for 21.

Rachin Ravindra capped Chennai's brilliant night with three catches in the deep as fast bowler Tushar Deshpande (2-21) and Mustafizur Rahman (2-30) kept on striking with regular intervals.

Earlier, Ravindra set the tone for Chennai with a 20ball 46 that featured six boundaries and three sixes. Gaikwad also capitalized on a drop catch when on 1 to make 46 as he provided a solid start of 62 inside the batting power play with Ravindra.

Shivam Dube (51) then didn't let the spinners settle down in the middle overs with a half-century off 23 balls as the left-hander dominated ace spinner Rashid Khan

CRICKET

(2-49) and Sai Kishore.

Rashid had Ravindra stumped in the last over of the power play before the leg-spinner had to wait until his last over to dismiss Dube, who mistimed the googly and was caught at extra cover.

Sameer Rizvi, playing his first IPL season at the age of 20, showed no signs of nerves and smashed Rashid for two sixes as Chennai posted a challenging total.

Chennai had defeated Royal Challengers Bengaluru by six wickets in the season opener while Gujarat notched a six-run win over Mumbai Indians.



Chennai Super Kings' Deepak Chahar bowls a delivery during the Indian Premier League cricket tournament between between Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans, in Chennai, India. (AP)

Lakers 'defeat' Bucks 128-124 in 20T behind Reeves' triple-double



Dallas Mavericks forward Tim Hardaway Jr. (10) shoots past Sacramento Kings center Alex Len, top right, during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Sacramento, Calif., Tuesday, March 26, 2024. (AP)

Warriors blast past Heat

MILWAUKEE, March 27, (AP): Staring at a double-digit deficit midway through the fourth quarter without LeBron James available, Austin Reaves and the Los Angeles Lakers faced a clear choice.

"It was one of those moments that you could either flip the page to tomorrow, get ready for that game or you could go out and compete 110% and give yourself an opportunity or at least try to give yourself an opportunity to get back in the game," Reaves said.

The Lakers chose the latter option and delivered a comeback for the ages. Reaves had his second career tripledouble and made a tiebreaking 3-pointer with 38.6 seconds left in the second overtime as the Lakers overcame

BASKETBALL

James' absence and rallied to beat the Milwaukee Bucks 128-124 on Tuesday night.

Reaves had 29 points, 14 rebounds and 10 assists in 47 minutes as the Lakers opened a six-game trip by winning their fourth straight despite trailing by 19 points in the fourth quarter and never leading in regulation. Anthony Davis provided 34 points and 23 rebounds while playing 52 minutes despite dealing with a knee problem late

"A 20-point lead in this league now, it's nothing because of the way the offense is right now in the league, so high-powered that you can wipe away a lead pretty fast," Davis said.

The Lakers won't have much time to celebrate their stunning comeback. They're playing again Wednesday at

Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo had 29 points, a season-high 21 rebounds and 11 assists for his ninth triple-double of the season. Damian Lillard scored 27 but shot 9 of 29. Malik Beasley added 21.

James had an issue with his left ankle that prevented him from being available as the Lakers opened a six-game trip. James also had missed the Lakers' 123-122 victory over the Bucks on March 8.

The Lakers still found a way to beat Milwaukee again.

"We've got to watch this game, learn from this game," Antetokounmpo said. "Watch why we weren't able to get a stop. Watch why the ball wasn't moving down the stretch. Watch why we lost the game. Watch why there was a lot of 50-50 balls and we weren't able to get them.'

D'Angelo Russell had 29 points, 12 assists and seven rebounds for the Lakers. Rui Hachimura added 16 points

and 14 rebounds. The exhaustion of both teams was apparent as nobody scored in the first three minutes of the second overtime. The Lakers briefly trailed by two in the second OT, but pulled ahead for good on Reaves' last-minute 3-pointer.

After Antetokounmpo missed two free throws with 24.2 seconds left, Russell hit two free throws to make it 126-121 with 14.7 seconds remaining, Beasley made a 3-pointer to cut the lead to two, but Davis hit two free throws with 1.7 seconds left to seal the victory.

The Lakers never led until Spencer Dinwiddie sank a tiebreaking 3-pointer with 2:19 left in the first overtime. From there, the game went back and

Lillard's corner 3-pointer put Milwaukee ahead with 13.6 seconds left in the first overtime, but Russell drew a foul and hit both free throws to tie with

3.1 seconds remaining Davis blocked Lillard on a driving layup attempt to force a second over-

Milwaukee seemed firmly in control

for most of the night. After a Lillard jumper with 8:25 left gave the Bucks a 94-75 advantage matching their largest lead of the game

- the Lakers outscored the Bucks 26-7 the rest of the fourth quarter to force "Sometimes the ball just bounces different, and if you don't stay disciplined and do the things that go into how we built that lead, those leads can go away quick in this league with the

did tonight," Lillard said. "That's what happened. Taurean Prince drew a foul with 43.9 seconds remaining and made both

shooting that's in the league, like they

Milwaukee Bucks' Damian Lillard gets past Los Angeles Lakers' Austin Reaves during the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, March 26, 2024, in Milwaukee. The Lakers won 128-124 in double overtime. (AP) free throws to tie the game. Both teams had a chance to win it at the end of the fourth quarter but couldn't convert.

Warrios 113, Heat 92

In Miami, Klay Thompson scored 28 points, Jonathan Kuminga added 18 and Golden State pulled away in the second half to beat the still-shorthand-

Stephen Curry and Andrew Wiggins each scored 17 for Golden State, which led by two at the half and then led by as many as 22 points in the fourth.

Bam Adebayo scored 24 points for Miami, which played without leading scorer Jimmy Butler - sidelined by an illness. The Heat also were without Tyler Herro (foot) for a 16th consecutive game, Kevin Love (heel) for a 14th consecutive game and Duncan Robin-

son (back) for a fourth game in a row. Thunder 119, Pelicans 112

In New Orleans, Jalen Williams scored 26 points and Oklahoma City rallied with a 12-0 run during the final 2:31 to escape with a 119-112 victory over New Orleans.

Josh Giddey scored 25 points and Shai Gilgeous-Alexander added 24, including a tying 3 with 1:29 left.

Zion Williamson had 29 points and 10 assists, and CJ McCollum scored 23 points for the Pelicans, who trailed 88-68 before using a 20-2 run to get themselves - and the crowd - back into the game.

Mavericks 132, Kings 96

In Sacramento, Calif. Luka Doncic scored 26 of his 28 points in the first half and Dallas beat Sacramento Kings for their fifth straight win.

Doncic added 11 rebounds, six assists and three steals as the Mavericks moved into sixth place in the Western Conference, a game ahead of the Kings, with both teams trying to avoid the play-in tournament. Kyrie Irving had 24 points and eight assists, and Tim Hardaway Jr. scored 22 off the bench.

De'Aaron Fox led the Kings with 18 points but was held to 6-of-18 shooting. Keegan Murray added 17.

Domantas Sabonis had 12 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists for his 55th straight double-double, tying Jerry Lucas for the longest streak in franchise

Men's 3x3

Fredette, Barry, Maddox & Travis picked for USA Basketball roster

WASHINGTON, March 27: Jimmer Fredette, Kareem Maddox, Canyon Barry and Dylan Travis piled up enough wins together last year to get USA Basketball qualified in men's 3x3 for the Paris Olympics.

They're staying together to chase gold in France.

USA Basketball announced its men's 3x3 roster for the Paris Games on Tuesday, going with the same foursome that won a silver medal at the World Cup and gold at the Pan American Games last year. Other players were considered, including some from the NBA, but in the end the Americans decided to stick with what has worked.

"It's the way that we wanted it to Fredette

said. "I think it's what USA Basketball was looking for and it's what we were hoping for." To them, it

seemed right: The four players who did the bulk of the work - 3x3 rosters have only four players - should

Fredette

have gotten the opportunity to see what they can do on the sport's biggest stage. USA Basketball evidently agreed.

"They're the best team. And I think when you're putting together a roster, you want the best team, the best group of four guys that are going to give you the best chance to win," USA men's 3x3 coach Joe Lewandowski said. "You're not looking for an All-Star team. You're not looking for the highest jumpers, the fastest guys. You're looking for the best team, the guys who play so well together they take

their game to another level.' USA Basketball's picks for men's, women's and women's 3x3 are expected later this spring.

The U.S. didn't qualify for men's 3x3 when the sport debuted at the Tokyo Games; the Americans won gold in women's 3x3 that summer, as well as in traditional men's and women's basketball. Every team that USA Basketball has sent to an Olympics - all 31 of them - has won a medal, 26 of them gold.

The 3x3 game is played on a half court with a 12-second shot clock and play is super-fast. Baskets are worth one or two points, and the winner is either the first team to 21 points or the leader when the 10-minute clock expires. Games rarely take the full 10

The foursome announced Tuesday

currently hold the world's No. 2 ranking behind Serbia - which rallied late to beat the Americans in the final at the World Cup.

"They really represent the United States well," Lewandowski said.

They came from wildly different backgrounds: Fredette was an NBA lottery pick, Maddox is a Princeton grad who hosted "All Things Considered" on National Public Radio in Colorado before returning to basketball, Travis retired once from playing and nearly retired from 3x3 as well because it was interfering with his job as a special education teacher, while Barry watched three of his brothers play in the NBA and is the son of Basketball Hall of Famer Rick Barry.

He didn't get to the NBA. But neither his dad, nor his siblings, played in the Olympics.

"I'm very honored to be an Olympian," Canyon Barry said. "And in

OLYMPICS

the Barry family, it's very hard to do something in the basketball realm that hasn't been previously accomplished, whether it's winning NCAA championships, winning NBA championships, becoming members of the Hall of Fame, playing in the All-Star Game. There are very few areas of basketball that have been unexplored by the Barrys, so to become an Olympian and kind of round out that portfolio is a cool treat.'

There isn't a ton of money in 3x3, they fly coach without much of a support staff and they remember a tournament in Mongolia where, to be frank, coming across food they found edible was a challenge. They do their own laundry before rushing to airports to catch the next flight.

And it was one of those laundry missions that helped bring the group together. Maddox and Travis were hurrying to get some washing done in Amsterdam when they noticed a unique storefront nearby. They went in and emerged with a yellow stone, which has become a good-luck charm of sorts for the group. Where they go, the rock goes. And before they play, everyone touches the rock.

"It was very random," Maddox said. "The gem dealer told us that rock was good for teamwork and leadership."

It became a thing, and a few more rocks - Maddox says they represent good fortune and vitality - have since been added to the team collection. Nobody is quite sure what the vellow rock is: Maddox thinks it's amethyst but can't say for certain.

Best of the Rest

MLS and refs reach 7-yr deal: Major League Soccer and its referees

announced a seven-vear labor contract Tuesday, ending a 37-day lockout that led to the use of replacement Match officials will average a

28.36% increase this year, followed by hikes of 3% in 2025, 6% in 2026, 3% each in 2027 and 2029, and 4% apiece in 2029 and 2030, according to Peter Manikowski, president of the Professional Soccer Referees Association. He said a top-scale referee will earn a minimum \$200,000 starting in 2028.

The Professional Referee Organization, which supplies match officials to MLS, the NWSL and some lowertier leagues, locked out officials on Feb. 18, three days ahead of the MLS opener, after the union rejected a tentative five-year deal to replace the expired deal.

PRO and the union, which has about 260 members, said they had ratified an agreement reached last week that expires at 11:59 p.m. EST on Jan. 31, 2031.

Replacement officials were used in the first 69 games over the opening five weeks of this season, drawing some criticism.

"Human beings make individual mistakes, but it's the avoidance of mistakes and it's the situational awareness that make our officials the most experienced and the best ones in North America, in some cases in the world," Manikowski said. "It's not what happens on an individual call, but what leads up to that which is, I think a big change that folks will see on the field of play this coming week-

PRO did not have any comment beyond a prepared statement.

MLS also used replacement officials for the first two weeks of its 2014 season before reaching a fiveyear contract after the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service entered talks. (AP)

John Stones injured: John Stones was substituted early after sustaining a suspected adductor injury in England's friendly match with Belgium on Tuesday.

The Manchester City defender was replaced by Joe Gomez after 10 minutes at Wembley Stadium. Stones signaled that he was in dis-

comfort after kicking the ball in the opening minutes, which prompted England to quickly prepare Gomez to come on.
"Of course we're disappointed if he's got a problem. It looks like it's

in the adductor area," England man-

ager Gareth Southgate said. "He came in on the back of not playing for two weeks, so it's not about overload. But I hate sending players back to their clubs injured. The game ended in a 2-2 draw after Jude Bellingham's equalizer in the

fifth minute of stoppage time. Youri Tielemans had scored either side of an Ivan Toney penalty in the first half. Stones is the latest injury concern for

Southgate and City boss Pep Guardiola after Kyle Walker hurt his hamstring in Saturday's game against Brazil.. (AP)

Dr. Al Mahawish commends success of event

171 team wins Kuwait Airways Workers Union Futsal Tournament



Team 171 champion of the futsal tournament.

teenth Ramadan session of the Kuwait Airways Workers Union and its affiliated subsidiaries concluded yesterday evening with an exhilarating final match in the futsal five-a-side tournament for the year 2024. In a showdown between the 171 team and the Shuaib Ali Shaaban team at the Martyr Fahd Al-Ahmad Hall in Daiya, the 171 team emerged victorious with a commanding 5-1 win. The event was graced by the presence of leaders from Kuwait Airways, Kuwait Aviation Services Company (KASCO), and the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Airways Workers Union and its subsidiaries, led by Dr. Ahmed Falah Al Mahawish.

FUTSAL

Mahdi Yahya was honored with the prestigious title of the best player of the tournament, while goalkeeper Muhammad Rayhan secured the accolade for the best goalkeeper. The closing ceremony featured the distribution of various awards to the enthusiastic fans who attended the final match. Dr. Ahmed Falah Al-Mahawish expressed his delight and pride in the remarkable success achieved during the sixteenth Ramadan session of the Kuwaiti Syndicate.

He stated, "Thanks to the grace of God, the tournament has surpassed all expectations and has significantly enriched the sporting landscape of our beloved Kuwait.

Kuwait Club 'defeat' Kazma in the West Asian Championship

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: In the first encounter of the semi-finals in the West Asian Basketball League Championship for the Gulf region, Kuwait Club emerged victorious over Kazma with a score of 101-87. Meanwhile, Manama from Bahrain secured a win over its compatriot Muharraq with a score of 86-78 in the other semi-final match.

This stage follows a playoff format of three matches, with the team winning two matches advancing to the final. Kuwait's basketball team has secured a spot for its representative in the Asian finals, which will feature teams from the Levant region, Iran, and Central Asia. This is guaranteed regardless of the outcome of the Kazma-Kuwait Club matches in the Gulf region final, as both teams in the final will qualify for the continental finals.

BASKETBALL

The match was marked by intense rivalry from the onset, with both teams exchanging scores as they sought to establish early dominance. Kazma gradually gained the upper hand through the exceptional performances of players like Abdulaziz Al-Hamidi, Ahmed Al-Balushi, and the American players Williams and Chapman, ending the first quarter with a 31-27 lead.



Kuwait Club players control the ball as Kazma player defends.

Kuwait Club swiftly regained momentum in the second quarter, albeit with difficulty, ending it with a narrow 51-50 advantage.

The third quarter mirrored its predecessors, with both teams displaying a high level of play amidst a slight decline in performance due to the intense efforts exerted. Leads were exchanged before Kuwait Club managed to pull ahead by the end of the quarter, leading 76-71.

In the final quarter, Kuwait Club, known as Al-Abyad, asserted its dominance as its opponent's performance waned, especially after the injury of Kazma's player Abdulaziz Al-Hamidi. The match concluded with Kuwait Club securing a 14-point victory.

Napoli call ruling 'astonishing'

Acerbi won't be penalized for alleged racial abuse of Jesus

MILAN, March 27, (AP): Inter Milan defender Francesco Acerbi will not face sanctions for allegedly racially abusing Napoli's Juan Jesus in a Serie A match because there wasn't enough proof

The alleged incident on March 17 was revealed when Juan Jesus told the referee Acerbi directed a racial slur at him

Acerbi has repeatedly denied he used the offensive word.

The Italian soccer federation prosecutor questioned the players and witnesses last week. He reported to the Italian league sporting judge, who also studied images from the match, as well as audio from the referee and VAR, before announcing the decision.

Gerardo Mastrandrea said in a lengthy statement that while it was clear Acerbi insulted Juan Jesus, the "minimum level of reasonable certainty" had not been reached that it was of a racial nature.

SOCCER

Napoli called Tuesday's decision "astonishing."

"Napoli will no longer take part in anti-racism and anti-discrimination initiatives run by football institutions that are merely symbolic, but we will continue to organize them ourselves, as we have always done, with renewed conviction and determination," the club said in a statement.

The club wrote "I'm with JJ" on its statement and on X posted a photo of a raised fist - which Juan Jesus also added to his Instagram account.

If Acerbi was found guilty, he would have faced a minimum 10-match ban that would have ruled the Italy international out of the rest of the season and most likely the European Championship.

Acerbi was part of the Italy squad that won Euro 2020 although he didn't play in the quarterfinal, semifinal or

The 36-year-old Acerbi could have also faced further sanctions from Inter, which was reportedly considering cutting ties with the player if he was found guilty.



In this file photo, Inter Milan's Nicolo Barella jumps for the ball with Napoli's Juan Jesus, right, during the Serie A soccer match between Inter Milan and Napoli at the San Siro Stadium, in Milan, Italy. (AP)

Juan Jesus, a 32-year-old Black Brazilian, was visibly upset when he walked up to the referee during the second half at San Siro and was also pointing at his shirt sleeve which had a 'Keep Racism Out' badge - as part of the league's anti-racism campaign

Juan Jesus said after the match that Acerbi apologized and seemed to wish to put the matter behind him, adding, "What happens on the field, stays on the field ... he is a good guy."

Acerbi was sent home from the

Acerbi was sent home from the Italy training camp the next day ahead of friendlies against Venezuela and Ecuador - although coach Luciano Spalletti and the players apparently agreed "there was no defamatory, denigrating or racist intent on his part."

Acerbi then told reporters he had been misunderstood, prompting Juan Jesus to issue a statement on Instagram about the "despicable matter" and revealing what he alleged the Inter defender said to him.

France beatable, hosts Germany resurgent, Italy seek redemption

The state of play ahead of Euro 2024

LONDON, March 27, (AP): The 24-team lineup for the European Championship is complete after Poland, Ukraine and Georgia became the final teams to qualify for the tournament in Germany.

France will likely go into the tournament as the favorite, given its status as the leading European team in the FIFA ranking - at No. 2 - and having been the champion or runner-up at three of its last four major international tournaments. Fronted by Kylian Mbappé, the French squad remains deep and will be motivated by its loss in the World Cup final in Qatar. Similarly, No. 3-ranked England has regrets after losing the title match against Italy at the last Euros in 2021 and has its strongest pool of players for 20 years, with Jude Bellingham now a star at Real Madrid. Over the recent international break. France lost soundly to Germany and England was defeated by Brazil, underlining their vulnerability and showing that perhaps there's no overwhelming favorite at the Euros. Belgium has lost some of its luster and will be concerned by the absence of goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois and the persistent injury issues of Kevin De Bruyne. Portugal, meanwhile, has so much talent in his squad and was the only team to qualify with a flawless record, albeit from a weak group. At 39, can Cristiano Ronaldo win the Euros for a second time?

SOCCER

Never write off Germany. After a miserable 2023 ended with friendly losses to Turkey and Austria, the Euro 2024 host kicked off this year by beating France and the Netherlands over the last week. Former Bayern Munich coach Julian Nagelsmann seems to have Germany ticking again with help from Real Madrid midfielder Toni Kroos, who was back in the German lineup for the first time since the last Euros in 2021. Bayer Leverkusen's 20-year-old attacking midfielder Florian Wirtz set a record with his goal just seven seconds into the win over France. Germany will have something to prove as host. Group-stage exits at the last two World Cups and a roundof-16 loss to England at the last Euros mean Germany has won just three of its last 10 games at major tournaments. Facing Scotland, Hungary and Switzerland in the group stage at Euro 2024 seems a relatively kind draw

There is a familiar feel to Italy seeking redemption at the European Championship after failing to qualify for the previous World Cup. However, the defending European champion has faced more upheaval over the past year with coach Roberto Mancini quitting and key player Sandro Tonali banned for gambling. While there is no doubting new coach Luciano Spalletti's credentials after he led Napoli to its first league title in more than three decades last season, there are some question marks about the talent he has at his disposal. There have been positive signs as Spalletti appears to have Italy playing the type of entertaining soccer he delivered at Napoli, but the Azzurri still have problems in attack. Lazio forward Ciro Immobile was dropped by Spalletti after struggling with form, as was Atalanta's Gianluca Scamacca.

Al-Qadisiya hand Kuwait Club first loss in the league

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: Al-Qadisiya's made a decisive statement in the summit clash of the sixth round of the handball league at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex hall, by defeating the defending champion, Kuwait Club 32-30. This victory marked the first loss for "Al-Abyad" in the league so far.

HANDBALL

The "Yellow" team displayed a robust performance with the majority of players shining, while their Macedonian coach, Zoran Katsratovic, played a pivotal role in thwarting the opponent's strategies and securing two crucial points in the match.

Following the conclusion of the

HAY

Al-Qadisiya player makes a goal attempt as Kuwait Club players tries to block the shot.

sixth round, the league standings are as follows: Al-Salmiya leads alone with 12 points, followed by

Kuwait and Al-Arabi each with eight points. Al-Fahaheel follows closely with six points, while Al-Sulaibkhat, Al-Qurain, Burgan, Al-Nasr, and Al-Qadisiya all have five points. Al-Yarmouk stands at three points, with Khaitan trailing behind with two points. Al-Sahel and Al-Tadamon are currently at the bottom of the standings without any points.

The seventh round of the hand-

Kazma with 10 points, and Al-

The seventh round of the handball league kicks off today, Thursday, and will continue until next Sunday. Yarmouk will face Al-Qurain at 8:30 pm, followed by Al-Salmiya's match against Al-Nasr at 10 pm.

It's worth noting that at the conclusion of the General League, the top six teams will qualify to compete in the Premier League, while the remaining teams will participate in the First Division League.

That means an Argentina-born player could be leading the way for Italy in Germany. Mateo Retegui spent his entire playing career in the South American country before moving to Genoa this season. He has Italian citizenship through his maternal grandmother.

The European Championship has produced previous surprise winners in a way the World Cup has not. Denmark won in 1992 after the players came back from vacation when the team was put into the tournament as a late replacement for Yugoslavia. Greece stunned the soccer world by taking the title in 2004. With 16 of 24 teams advancing to the knockout rounds in the current format, the chance to go on a hot streak is always there. In recent Euros, Austria and Turkey were fashionable dark horse picks, although they both flopped. Austria's 6-1 win over Turkey in a friendly on Tuesday suggests coach Ralf Rangnick has created a team of substance. Austria also caught the eye by scoring the fastest-ever international goal last week - through Christoph Baumgartner after six seconds at Euros-bound Slovakia. However, Austria is in a tough group with France, the Netherlands and Poland. The Dutch have a solid foundation for a title shot with

a defense led by Virgil van Dijk. But that would require winning a Euros knockout game for the first time in 20 years. Switzerland also has the talent for a deep run and is in what looks like a relatively weak group aside from top-seeded Germany.

top-seeded Germany.

When war-torn Ukraine beat Iceland 2-1 to qualify through the playoffs Tuesday, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was quick to issue a statement of congratulations on social media to highlight the significance of the achievement.

"Whenever Ukrainians face difficulties but do not give up and continue to fight, Ukrainians certainly win," Zel-

enskyy wrote.

Mykhailo Mudryk's 84th-minute goal secured a comeback win for Ukraine, its second dramatic victory in the space of a week after beating Bosnia-Herzegovina 2-1 in the semifinals on Thursday thanks to an 88th-minute goal from Girona striker Artem

Dovbyk.

The war has meant Ukraine has not been able to play national-team games at home for more than two years. All 18 games of Chelsea forward Muryk's burgeoning international career have been played either away or at neutral venues. That doesn't mean

Ukraine lacks fans. The war means many Ukrainians are living both in Poland - where Mudryk scored the winning goal against Iceland - and in Euro 2024 host nation Germany. The team can probably count on plenty of support from neutral fans at its games, too.

Who else might the neutrals be rooting for at Euro 2024? How about Georgia, which will be the biggest underdog when the country making its debut at a major tournament after qualifying through the playoffs. It gives star forward Khvicha Kvaratskhelia - one of the best players in Europe over the past two seasons - an even bigger stage to shine. Georgia has been an independent nation since 1991 but has only recently started to emerge on the soccer scene. It now became the latest country to benefit from UEFA's decision to expand the Euros to 24 teams since 2016 and opening a path for a low-ranked team to rise to the big stage through results in the Nations League. Other underdogs to watch out for are Albania, appearing in only its second major tournament, and Scotland, whose tartan-wearing fans will be noticeable and whose team's run of impressive results under Steve Clarke has included a win over Spain.



Germany's Pascal Gross (2nd right), leaps up for a header during the international friendly soccer match between Germany and Netherlands at the Deutsche Bank Park in Frankfurt, Germany. (AP)



Qatari players celebrate following team's victory over

Sports

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Pinto optimistic despite Kuwait loss to Qatar

observations regarding the venues ear-

Following a match between Ku-

wait and Qatar, Marafi highlighted

that His Highness the Amir Sheikh

Mishal Al-Ahmad Al -Jaber Al-Sa-

bah prioritizes hosting the Gulf na-tions, evident in his hosting of the

marked for the tournament.

Afghanistan stun India in qualifiers

Minister Marafi assures Kuwait's readiness for the tournament

Kuwait pledges to address Gulf Cup Inspection Committee concerns



A Kuwaiti player looks dejected after Kuwait's loss to Qatar.

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 27: The destiny of Kuwait rests squarely on its shoulders if it aims to secure its spot in the crucial qualifiers for both the 2026 World Cup and the 2027 Asian Cup finals. To achieve this, it must gather 4 points from its remaining two matches against India and Afghanistan next June, provided that these same two teams lose to Qatar in the fifth and sixth rounds.

SOCCER

Kuwait suffered a narrow 1-2 defeat against Qatar, slipping to fourth place in the group with 3 points. This setback follows a surprise Afghanistan 2-1victory r India (2-1) in the same round.

The match, held at Ali Sabah Al Salem Stadium in Kuwait, saw a goalless first half despite both teams creating numerous scoring opportunities.

However, in the second half, Qatar's Almoez Ali, the all-time top scorer for his team, broke the deadlock by scoring in the 77th minute. Kuwait swiftly responded, with Mohammad Daham leveling the score to 1-1 just two minutes later. Yet, Qatar's Ali persisted and secured the victory with another goal a minute after that.

With this triumph, Qatar maintained their flawless record in the qualifiers, securing their progression to the next round and the AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027 with 12 points. Meanwhile, Kuwait finds itself in contention for the second spot in the group, facing India and Afghanistan in their upcoming matches.

Despite the loss, Kuwait displayed one of its finest performances in recent years, dictating much of the game's tempo. However, luck was not on their side, with only one goal to show for its efforts. The team struggled with organization and lacked balance, particularly after conceding the equalizer.

Portuguese coach, Rui Pinto, criticized the delay in substitutions, noting the fatigue evident in some players during the second half. He emphasized the need for better preparation in the forthcoming period, with approximately 70 days until the final two rounds.

In a post-match press conference, Coach Rui Pinto remained optimistic about Kuwait's chances of qualification despite the loss to Qatar. He commended Al-Azraq's performance against the reigning Asian champions and lamented missed opportunities.

Looking ahead, Pinto expressed his determination to secure victories in the upcoming matches against India and Afghanistan, aiming for an exceptional level of play to ensure qualification. He reiterated his pride in the Kuwaiti players' performance and emphasized the long-term plan to rejuvenate the national team, thanking Kuwaiti fans for their unwavering support.

Endrick and Yamal shine

Brazil draw 3-3 with Spain in the 'One Skin' friendly

MADRID, March 27, (AP): Teenagers Lamine Yamal and Endrick took the spotlight as Brazil drew 3-3 with Spain in the "One Skin" international friendly that was set up to highlight the fight against racism after a series of insults aimed at the Real Madrid forward Vinícius Júnior.

Vinícius was relatively quiet in a match in which Brazil equalized with a penalty converted by Lucas Paquetá deep into stoppage time after Rodri's spot kick in the 87th had put Spain ahead

Brazil had rallied from two goals down with an equalizer scored by Vinícius' future Madrid teammate Endrick, the 17-year-old Palmeiras player who had made his scoring debut with Brazil just three days previous.

The Spanish lineup was led by 16-year-old Barcelona forward Yamal, who helped set up three goals and received a standing ovation from the crowd at Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu Stadium when he was substituted near

the end of the match. "Yamal and Endrick are players



the ball during a friendly soccer match between Spain and Brazil at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

who have a chance to be stars at the 2026 World Cup," Brazil coach Dorival Júnior said. "They both play at a very high level."

The international friendly came a day after Vinícius broke down in tears while talking about the continued racist insults that he is subjected to in Spain, saying he was losing his desire to keep playing but pledged to continue his fight against racism.

Vinícius was loudly applauded when he was substituted in the 71st. The 23-year-old Brazilian, the Seleçao's captain on Tuesday, received some of the loudest jeers when his name was introduced ahead of the match.

Brazilian players went onto the field wearing black jackets with the slogan "One Skin, One Identity." The jackets will be auctioned to help an anti-racism campaign.

Vinícius, who has been accused of provoking fans and opponents, got into verbal altercations with Spanish players, including from the bench after leaving the match. He also shoved Spain defender Aymeric Laporte from behind while play was stopped.

SOCCER

Laporte tweeted after the match the question: "Maybe he wanted to dance...?" accompanied by a previous tweet with the image of Vinícius' shove and quoting the Brazilian from Monday, when he said, "I just want to play soccer."

The friendly game was set up by Spanish and Brazilian soccer officials amid the uproar that followed the racist insults aimed at Vinícius in a Spanish league game in Valencia 10 months ago. Many believed the incident would be a turning point for soccer in Spain, but another wave of racist abuse target-

ing Vinícius has followed.

While most of the attention was on Vinícius, it was Yamal threatening the most with his speed and quick moves to get past Brazilian defenders.



Minister Daoud Marafi, flanked by Abdullah Al-Shaheen and Sheikh Ha-

Gulf Federation President and the Qatari Minister of Youth. Marafi assured that Kuwait stands

fully prepared to rectify any noted deficiencies to ensure the seamless organization of this special event, in line with Kuwait's tradition of excellence on such occasions. He mentioned, "The inspection committee has granted us a 45-day period to address certain concerns within the tournament stadiums, and we are committed to rectifying these issues.'

Regarding Kuwait's recent loss to Qatar, Marafi emphasized the shared victory for both sides, underscoring the deep-rooted brotherly ties between Kuwait and Qatar. He expressed optimism about Kuwait's prospects in the qualifiers, showing confidence in the abilities of the Kuwaiti players to ad-

Addressing the issue of the ruling against the Federation's president, Abdullah Al-Shaheen, Marafi stated, "We have yet to receive the official ruling from the Qatari judiciary regarding the Federation's president. If and when the ruling is officially communicated, we will adhere to international and local legal protocols in handling the matter.

The 24-nation lineup finalized

Ukraine, Georgia and Poland qualify Euro 2024 after late playoffs drama



Poland's Jakub Piotrowski, (right), attempts to block a shot on goal from Wales Kieffer Moore during Euro 2024 soccer play-off match between Wales and Poland at Cardiff City Stadium, Wales. (AP)

POLAND, Wroclaw, March 27, (AP): Ukraine found another late winning goal in another comeback win. Georgia and Poland held their nerve in penalty shootouts. All are going to the European Championship.
The 24-nation Euro 2024 lineup was

offs giving a stronger eastern European flavor to the tournament that opens June 14 in Germany. Mykhailo Mudryk's sweeping low shot in the 84th minute lifted Ukraine

finalized with three qualifying play-

to a 2-1 victory over Iceland and a second late comeback win in the playoffs for a team representing the war-torn country.

The "home" game for Ukraine was played in neutral Poland because in-

ternational games cannot be played in Kyiv for security reasons during the military invasion by Russia, whose team UEFA banned from trying to Ukraine fans' displayed yellow-

and-blue banners criticizing Russia and its president Vladimir Putin in the stadium in Wroclaw. "A big thank you to our fans,"

Ukraine midfielder Oleksandr Zinchenko said, "they helped us through these difficult times amaz-

Georgia and star forward Khvicha Kvaratskhelia will make their major tournament debut at Euro 2024 after beating Greece 4-2 in a penalty shootout. It had been a tense and testy 0-0 draw in a raucous atmosphere in

Wild celebrations saw thousands of Georgia fans in a 50,000 crowd at the national stadium pour onto the field and some climbed the goalposts to sit on the crossbar.

Poland became the last team to book its ticket to Germany, beating Wales 5-4 in a penalty shootout in Cardiff also after a 0-0 draw.

Poland captain Robert Lewandowski, who had scored the first spotkick of the shootout, could not bear to watch the action when his goalkeeper Wojciech Szczsny pushed away the final penalty taken by Dan James.



Ukraine's Vitaliy Mykolenko, (left), duels for the ball with Iceland's Hakon Arnar Haraldsson during the Euro 2024 qualifying play-off soc-cer match between Ukraine and Iceland, at the Tarczynski Arena Wroclaw in Wroclaw, Poland. (AP)

"It's big because I probably would have finished my international career tonight had we lost the game," Szc-

Poland will go into a tough Group D with France, the Netherlands and

Ukraine is in Group F with Belgium,

Romania and Slovakia. Georgia goes into Group F to face Cristiano Ronaldo and Portugal, Turkey and the Czech Republic.

Euro 2024 will be played in 10 German cities from June 14 to July 14.

SOCCER

Two years ago, Ukraine fell just short in playoffs to reach the 2022 World Cup, eventually losing to Wales with a team emotionally drained from the effort four months into their homeland's invasion

Ukraine would not be denied this time and twice within five days rallied in the second half and found a late goal to win 2-1. Last week, Coach Serhiy Rebrov's had trailed 1-0 in Bosnia-Herzegovina until the 85th. In a game of stunning goals, Iceland led in the 30th on Albert Gudmundsson's curling shot.

Viktor Tsygankov leveled in the 54th from just outside the Iceland penalty box, close to the spot where Chelsea winger Mudryk would win the game 30 minutes later.

Ukraine starts against Romania in Munich on June 17, then plays Slovakia in Düsseldorf on June 21 and top-seeded Belgium on June 26 in Stuttgart.

Georgian players have been European champions before - in the Soviet Union squad that won the inaugural title in 1960.

Now the independent republic has earned the right to make its own soccer history in Germany. The decisive penalty Tuesday was

scored by substitute Nika Kvekveskiri placed his perfect shot low into the corner to seal Georgia's 4-2 win.

Georgia goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili had saved the first Greece spot-kick, by captain Tasos Bakasetas, then Giorgos Giakoumakis pulled his shot wide of the goal.

Georgia will start against Turkey on June 18 in Dortmund, then play the Czechs on June 22 in Hamburg, and finish against Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal on June 26 in Gelsenkirchen, at the home stadium of Schalke. Georgia's French coach Willy Sa-

gnol knows the territory well after nine years playing for Bayern Munich. Georgia followed North Macedonia, a

debutant at Euro 2020, in taking the path opened by UEFA for a low-ranked team to rise to the big stage via their results in the Nations League competition. Georgia and Greece played the final

of a playoffs knockout bracket open only to teams that performed well in third-tier groups of the Nations League in 2022, before they failed to finish in the top two of a traditional Euros qualifying group last year.

ARAB CTIMES

Editor-in-Chief Editorial Office: Airport Road, Shuwaikh **AHMED AL JARALLAH**

Telephone: 24813566 & 24849144 Fax: 24818267 P.O. Box 2270, 13023 Safat, Kuwait E-mail: arabtimes@arabtimesonline.com E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com

Advertising: Tel: 24813815 Fax: 24845708

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Tel: 24849144