



akhsan d day

jab wearing have become a flash-point during the protests, with a string of sportswomen competing overseas appearing without their headscarves in public.

Khadem, born in 1997 and also known as Sarasadat Khademal-sharieh, is ranked 804 in the world, according to the International Chess Federation website. The website for the Dec. 25-30 event listed her as a participant in both the Rapid and Blitz competitions.

Iranian news outlets Khabar-varzeshi and Etemad in reports on Monday said that Khadem had competed at the championship in Almaty without a hijab.

‘unfairly

Britain’s main opposition Labour Party has asked for new sanctions on organisations and individuals who have been involved in Iran’s crackdown on the protests.

“The killings and repression being carried out by the Iranian regime against courageous Iranian protesters seeking a better future is appalling,” Labour’s foreign affairs spokesman David Lammy said in a statement.

“There must be an end to impunity.”

Asked about the potential for future sanctions on Iran, a British foreign ministry spokesperson said it had already imposed human rights sanctions on more than 40 Iranian officials and the entirety of the so-called “Morality Police”.

“We will continue to hold Iran to account for the shocking violence they have inflicted on their own people,” the spokesperson said.



er storm in Buffalo, New York, U.S. Storm- g out from a deadly weekend blizzard, with nd turn the frozen landscape to slush. emerged as ground zero for an Arctic deep ek and through the Christmas holiday as

Philippines hunts for 26 still missing after weekend weather disaster

Reuters | Manila

Rescue teams across nine provinces in the Philip- pines raced yesterday to try to locate 26 people missing after weekend rains, floods and land- slides that have killed at least 25 people, in one of its deadliest weather events this year.

The national disaster agency on Wednesday said casualties reported so far had increased to 25 from 17 the previous day, with most deaths caused by drowning from flash floods.

“Search and rescue operations continue, led by the coast guard as most of them were missing fishermen,” the disaster agen- cy’s Diego Agustin Mariano told DZMM radio.

The rain-induced floods and landslides are unlike previous disasters in the Philippines,



A rescue worker holds a child while helping people affected by floods, in Plaridel, Misamis Occidental Province, Philippines

which are typically triggered by more severe typhoons and tropical storms, of which the archipelago nation usually sees about 20 each year.

The agency also recorded more than 300 flooded areas and 20 rain-induced landslides, which collectively have forced more than 80,000 people to take shelter in evacuation centres. Most of the floods have since subsided. Local media showed images on Wednesday of people crammed in gymnasiums turned into evacuation centres and residents removing debris and cleaning up homes after days of heavy rains.

The state weather agency said occasional light to moderate rains will continue in central and southern areas until Thurs- day.

More than a thousand people evacuated from Jordan world heritage site due to flash floods

Wion

In Jordan’s Petra thousands of visitors had to be evacuated from a famed archaeological site as heavy rains triggered flooding at the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Amman Net reported that the evacuations were done to ensure the safety of the visitors. Reportedly due to the heavy rains water from surrounding mountains poured down into the city located in the south of the kingdom.

As per estimates circulating on social media websites close to 1,700 have been evacuated.

Official sources as per Jordan News said that an inci- dent involving a bus that was



Screen grabs from a video circulating online shows rescuers in action on a bus caught in the flash flood

tipped over due to torrential rains has resulted in the death of three people in the Maan governorate south of the King- dom. Maan’s energy operations centre said that the bus was

on its way to the Al-Hussein Bin Talal University. Following the incident, Al-Hussein Bin Talal University has suspended classes citing unsafe weather conditions.

Rare hail brings winter white to desert hotspot Kuwait

AFP | Kuwait City

Kuwait, one of the hottest countries on Earth, has been hit by a rare hail storm that delighted children and their parents, with images of the winter white shared widely on social media yesterday.

“We have not seen so much hail during the winter season in 15 years,” Muhammad Karam, a former director of Kuwait’s me- teorological department, said.

Pictures and videos of south- ern roads partially blanketed in hail and ice spread online to celebrate the rare weather event.

Children donned scarves and raincoats as they scooped up hail in the Umm al-Haiman dis- trict, about 50 kilometres (30 miles) south of Kuwait City.

Kuwait’s meteorological de- partment said precipitation since Tuesday had reached up to 63 millimetres but that the weather was clearing up.

Karam said he expects the phenomenon to reoccur as climate change disrupts weather patterns. The oil-rich Gulf na-



Pictures and videos of southern roads partially blanketed in wintry white spread online to celebrate the rare weather event

tion endures blistering summer heat, and scientists predict it could become unlivable in fu- ture because of climate change.

In 2016, summer tempera- tures peaked at 54 degrees Cel- sius (129 degrees Fahrenheit).

Parts of Kuwait could get 4.5 degrees Celsius hotter from 2071 to 2100 compared with the historical average, the En- vironment Public Authority has warned.



Children toss handfuls of hail after a winter storm

Saudi seizes 30 tonnes of the narcotic khat

AFP | Riyadh

Saudi Arabia yesterday said it had seized nearly 30 tonnes of the mildly narcotic shrub khat this month, as part of a larger drug crackdown by the oil- rich kingdom.

Khat, or qat, is a leaf which is packed into the cheek and slowly chewed, releasing chemicals similar to amphetamines and re- sulting in a mild high.

It is very popular in Yemen and Horn of Africa countries like Ethiopia and Somalia.

Saudi border authorities seized 29.2 tonnes of khat in the country’s south, near the border with Yemen, as well as in the north, near Jordan, according to the official Saudi Press Agency.

The shipments were seized between December 3-24, according to SPA.

More than 360 smugglers were arrested, most of them Yemeni but also some Ethi- opians and Saudis, it said.

Yemen, mired in civil war since 2014 and long the Ara- bian Peninsula’s poorest nation, is a major produc- er and consumer of khat, which is banned in some countries but has been part of Yemen’s social fabric for thousands of years.

The country was once best known for its coffee industry, but khat profits have eclipsed that trade and spread into other agricul- tural lands including Ethi- opia and Kenya.

Saudi Arabia is also a ma- jor market for the addictive amphetamine called cap- tagon.

A bundle of khat, or qat, a mildly narcotic shrub, at a market in the Yemeni capital Sanaa



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Today marks a ter- rible milestone for Paul Whelan: Four years wrongfully detained in Russia, following a se- cret trial with secret evidence. His detention remains unacceptable, and we continue to press for his immediate release at every opportunity.

@SecBlinken

02



We have the tools to make sure COVID doesn’t leave its mark on 2023 like it did in years past. Use them, protect yourself, protect those around you. http://COV- ID.gov.

@POTUS

03



Every day & in every corner of the world, my @UN colleagues bring to life the values and principles of our Organization. I’m pro- foundly grateful for their service & commitment.

@antonioguterres

04



Congratulations SpaceX Falcon team on 60 successful launch- es this year!!

@elonmusk

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