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Stiffer punishment on cards in rights breach

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17, (KUNA): Minister of Justice Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi has affirmed the State of Kuwait's keenness on harmonizing national legislation with commitment toward international human rights

Al-Wasmi, also the Minister of Al-Awqaf (endowments) and Islamic Affairs, alluded in particular to the convention Kuwait has joined in the field of human rights, renouncing torture and



Dr Al-Wasmi

other accords that condemn cruel and inhumane treatment and penalty, as stipulated in the Decree-into-Law 93/2024. The minister, in a press state-

ment, indicated that substituting provision 53 of Law 31/1970, amending some articles of the penal code 16/1960, aimed at boosting human rights and basic rights, as enshrined by the State of Kuwait Constitution. Moreover, he indicated that the modification was the fruit of coordination between the

ministries of justice and foreign affairs. An amended provision stipulates punishment for torture to get confessions under duress, in addition to fiveyear imprisonment and increasing the fine from KD 500

to KD 5,000 maximum and not less than KD 1,000. Minister Al-Wasmi has confirmed penalties will be taken against officers responsible for the illegal acts and others who abstain from preventing them. Stiffer action will be taken against those who discriminate among the



Dr. Ammar Al-Sayegh

Patient Safety Day marked

Director of the Medical Department at the Kuwait Center for Mental Health Dr. Ammar Al-Sayegh said that the World Patient Safety Day would be a great opportunity to raise awareness and improve patient safety.

Dr. Al-Sayegh explained, in a statement to KUNA on Tuesday, that this year's celebration focuses on the theme (Improving Diagnosis for Patient Safety) and aims to highlight the importance of correct and appropriate diagnosis to ensure patient safety and improve public health.

He pointed out that the celebration confirms the commitment of the Ministry of Health to develop patient safety policies and procedures in all health institutions, based on the ministry's vision that seeks to ensure that all members of society receive safe and high-quality health care. Dr. Alimproved by using advanced health technology and addressing structural problems and human er-ror factors that can lead to diagnostic errors, pointing out that the development of laboratory tests may help in diagnosing mental illnesses. (KUNA)

Filipinos' remittances witness 2.1% decline

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: During the first seven months of 2024, remittances sent by Filipino workers from Kuwait fell by \$7 million, or 2.1 percent, totaling \$317 million compared to \$324 million in the same period of

2023, reports Al-Seyassah daily. Despite this decline, the overall remittances from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries increased by 4 percent annually during the same period.

The total remittances from Filipino workers in the GCC amounted to approximately \$3.20 billion from January to July 2024, up from \$3.08 billion during the first seven months of 2023.

This growth was driven by increases in remittances from five GCC countries, with the UAE showing the highest growth rate of 5.90 percent, while Oman had the lowest at 2.76 percent. Notably, Kuwait saw a 2.15 percent decrease in remittances.

Among the GCC countries, Saudi Arabia continued to hold the largest share of remittances, contributing \$1.17 billion, while Bahrain recorded the lowest remittances at \$158.80 million.

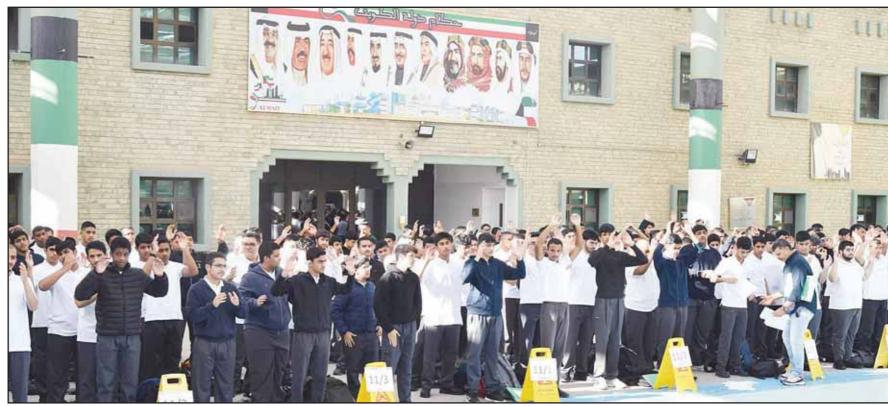
Filipino workers' remittances from the GCC represented 16.55 percent of the total global remittances, which amounted to \$19.33 billion in the first seven months of 2024.

Within the Asian continent, Filipino workers' remittances totaled \$7.67 billion, with the GCC contributing 41.70 percent of this amount.

The Middle East as a whole saw remittances of \$3.32 billion, with 96.22 percent coming from the GCC coun-

The World Bank has projected a 2.3 percent growth in remittances to low- and middle-income countries for 2024, although this growth is expected to vary across different regions.





Students at a boys school on the first day assembly after summer break

KUNA photo

Elementary, middle, high school students return to classes

The Ministry of Education opened its doors to elementary, middle, and high school students on Tuesday as the new academic year began efficiently after summer break, while kindergarten schools are set to welcome their students tomorrow,

According to official figures, a total of 497,206 students have enrolled in public education and private Arabic schools, including 29,637 kindergarteners, 149,316 elementary students, 127,548 middle schoolers, and 92,564 high school students attending govern-

Around half million students return to schools after break

Minister lauds management, securitymen

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: About half a million students in various educational stages returned to school on Tuesday, as academic year 2024/2025 started in an atmosphere of optimism and excitement with the Ministry of Education's confirmation that it is fully prepared for the new academic year.

Police and security patrols were stationed in front of the schools and on the streets leading to the schools.

Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research and actducation Dr. Nader Al-Jalal insp schools on the first day of the new academic year in order to track the advancement of the educational process. He greeted the students, while pointing out that "the start of the academic year is a fresh chance for success and greatness, when aspirations are rekindled and scientific and knowledge-based seeds are sown to eventually bear fruit in the form of a bright future for all of our students.

He stressed the importance of exerting effort and utilizing the available capabilities for exploration and learning to develop the students' skills and abilities, since they are the pillar of the future

and the hope of the nation. He praised the efforts exerted by the sectors in charge of preparations for the new academic year; stressing they worked tirelessly to ensure the schools are ready to welcome students in a safe and stimulating educational environment, in addition to members of the educational and administrative bodies, school administrations and all employees.

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait hosts UN-led talks on migrant, refugee safety

By Fares Al-Abdan Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: A three-day panel discussion on the protection measures for migrants and individuals under international protection began on Monday, September 16 at the United Nations House in Kuwait.

The event was organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The panel featured representatives from relevant government departments, including those responsible for managing deportations, overseeing residency violations, enforcing court orders, and monitoring border crossings. The workshop's multiple sessions covered several basic prin-

ciples related to international migration and asylum law, as well as international human rights and humanitarian law.

Topics of discussion included the principles of non-refoulement, international solidarity in burden-sharing, voluntary return to one's country of origin, durable solutions, and the legal procedures and

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photos

Commandant of the NATO Defense College in Rome, Lieutenant General Max Nielsen speaks during the panel

Gulf region security pivotal: Lt Gen Nielsen

NATO-Kuwait 20-year alliance going strong

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17, (KUNA): Commandant of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Defense

College in Rome Lieutenant General Max Nielsen $c\ o\ m\ m\ e\ n\ d\ e\ d$ on Tuesday the successful and strong 20-year partnership with Kuwait.

In a statement for KUNA on the sidelines of discussion

seminar orga-nized by NATO's regional center and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) titled 'Adapting Defense Education to Challenging Security Environments'.

Nielsen

CSC automates end-of-service

dues for non-Kuwaiti workers

efficient.

Lieutenant General Nielsen expressed NATO's aspiration to continue strengthening the pivotal partnership that enhances security and stability in the Arabian Gulf region and ways to develop it in various areas of bilateral cooperation within the framework of mutual respect

and trust gained between the two sides. He pointed out that Kuwait has established with NATO a positive concept of effective international cooperation in facing regional and international challenges and threats over a period of 20

years since Kuwait joined as the first member of the (Istanbul Cooperation Initiative) in June 2004. He mentioned that his visit to Kuwait was to conduct a discussion seminar in the center over the questions related to

defense education and his support for missions and main NATO policies. He added that as part of his tasks is to facilitate political discussion between member states and their partners in the Arabian Gulf region through discussion seminars over security challenges on the international and regional levels and to

all sides. Notably, Kuwait has created NATO-Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) Regional Centre on in 2017 with the aim to strengthen the partnership between NATO and Gulf partners.

making the process simpler and more

It will also facilitate the implementa-

tion of the replacement policy in all gov-

develop mutual understanding between

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable to the President of the Union of the Comoros, Azali Assoumani, expressing relief over the President's safety following a heinous attack during a

In the cable, His Highness the Amir strongly condemned and denounced the criminal act that violates all humanitarian principles and values, and expressed wishes for President Assoumani's continued safety, good health, and success. (KUNA)

funeral ceremony for a tribal leader.

AMMAN: Jordan will host tomorrow (Wednesday) a meeting of the Arab-Islamic Ministerial Committee tasked with international action to stop the war on Gaza, said the Jordanian Foreign Ministry in a press statement.

The committee will discuss the joint Arab-Islamic action during the 79th session of the UN General Assembly (High-Level Week), set to be held in New York this month, as part of its efforts to stop the Israeli occupation's aggression on the Gaza Strip and end this unprecedented humanitarian crisis. (KŪNA)

GAZA: The Palestinian Ministry of Health announced on Tuesday that 23 Palestinians were killed and more than 50 others iniured following an Israeli airstrike on a residential block in the Al-Bureji refugee camp in Gaza.

According to the Palestinian Civil Defense spokesman, Mahmoud Bassal, at least 23 people died in a massacre after the Israeli occupation's warplanes targeted homes in the camp.

Medical teams transported many of the injured to Al-Awda Hospital in the neighboring Al-Nussierat camp, Bassal called the scene tragic and catastrophic. (KUNA)



KUNA photo

Joint aviation body mulled

DOHA, Sept 17, (KUNA): Head of Kuwait's Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Humoud Al-Sabah, stressed on Tuesday the importance of the 20th meeting of GCC Executive Committee of Civil Aviation, in Doha, Oatar.

Sheikh Humoud told KUNA that the meeting discussed, among other topics, the establishment of the Gulf Civil Aviation Authority and the unified program for assessing the safety

Continued on Page 5

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) announced on Tuesday the successful automation of the end-of-service dues settlement process for non-Kuwaiti employees through the interface between their employers' systems and the relevant

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17, (KUNA):

departments in CSC without the need for any paperwork. On its official X account, CSC explained that this automation process is part of its efforts to simplify procedures,

expedite transaction processing, and save time and effort.

ernment agencies, in line with the Civil Service Council's decision. It will ensure that all financial obligations owed to the state by non-Kuwaiti employees are met before disbursing their dues.

CSC affirmed its keenness to train gov-

ernment agency employees on how to implement and complete the end-of-service settlement procedures for non-Kuwaiti employees using the integrated system,

The new system will also enhance the monitoring and auditing the ac-

Chief of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Sabah leading the Kuwaiti delegation.

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Hot with light to moderate freshening over coastal areas northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-40 km/h.

By Night: Hot to rather hot with light to moderate freshening

at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-40 km/h. Station **Max Exp** Kuwait City

43

Kuwait Airport

Abdaly

Weather

Bubyan Jahra Failaka Island Salmiyah Ahmadi Jal Aliyah Nuwaisib

24 29 25 34 26 26 28

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

Event held in collaboration with MoH and WHO office

Kuwait launches 1st workshop to combat obesity with global support

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Kuwait has embarked on the first national workshop to tackle obesity and see the results within a given timeframe, after having been selected as one of 32 leading countries to participate in a global plan to eliminate this condition.

This initiative includes five countries from the Eastern Mediterranean region. The first national workshop for this plan was held under the patronage of Dr. Munther Al-Hasawi, Assistant Under-secretary for Public Health Affairs at the Ministry of Health.

The workshop, organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the World Health Organization (WHO) office in Kuwait, and the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition, was attended by representatives from various official bodies and WHO experts.

The primary focus was on outlining the implementation mechanism of the plan and establishing a timeline for achieving the set goals.

Dr. Hasnaa Ayyad, Director of the Nutrition and Feeding Department at the Ministry of Health, said Kuwait's inclusion in this global effort underscores its commitment to addressing obesity through a coordinated, evidence-based approach.

She emphasized that this initiative aligns with Kuwait's development plan and the New Kuwait Vision 2035, which includes projects aimed at reducing obesity rates.

The experts and officials at the workshop agreed on the importance of creating a national roadmap to accelerate efforts against obesity.

This plan will challenge existing practices, encourage cross-sector collaboration, and enhance community awareness to set new standards in addressing obesity at the national level.



A group photo of the participants in the workshop.

Al-Seyassah photo

Kuwaiti art, folklore and cuisine

NCCAL organizes Kuwait Cultural Week in Moscow from Sept 17-24

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17, (KUNA): Assistant Secretary-General for the Arts Sector at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Musaad Al-Zamil said that Kuwait Cultural Week

would be held in the Russian capital, Moscow, from September 17-24.

Al-Zamil, Head of the council's delegation leaving on Tuesday for Moscow, told KUNA that the cultural relations between Kuwait and Russia represented an im-

portant aspect of bilateral relations between the two countries.

He pointed out that these relations date back to a long period of time and have deepened over the years through the signing of cultural agreements and student and academic exchange programs.

Al-Zamil added that NCCAL has been organizing, since its establishment in 1973, various events to enhance cultural exchange between countries by holding Kuwait cultural weeks abroad or hosting cultural weeks of other countries in Kuwait in cooperation with their embas-

He explained that Kuwait cultural week, held in Moscow, is organized by the Arts Sector and the Foreign Culture Department at NCCAL in Kuwait and the Embassy of Kuwait in Russia, in cooperation with the ministries of Culture and

would include an artistic work of Kuwaiti folklore presented by the Al-Amiri Folk Arts Troupe, as well as an art exhibition by artist Mahmoud Ashkanani, accompanied by a film about his biography.

Kuwaiti-Russian relations presented by Professor of Political Science at Kuwait University Dr. Hala Al-Makimi for students and professors of the Diplomatic Academy affiliated with Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Al-Zamil said that the Kuwaiti cuisine would also be present, as Kuwaiti chef Abdullah Al-Makimi would present a Kuwaiti dinner banquet, indicating the council's keenness to ensure that the event schedule is diverse and highlights

Destruction and sabotage of 'Afia'

By Ahmed alsarraf

During the holiday, I found myself sifting through dozens of messages, videos, and comments regarding the termination of the "Afia" contract. As I delved deeper, it became apparent that the overwhelming sen-

commentators and influencers was a call for the service to be stopped. They urged for a more efficient, equitable, and civilized health insurance system for every-



alsarraf

From my experience – and the experiences of thousands of others what became painfully clear was how "Afia" had inadvertently dulled many Kuwaitis' sense of responsibility towards public interest and fiscal prudence. Instead, it fostered a culture where fraud became not only acceptable but widespread.

The "Afia" system had emboldened many to manipulate its provisions, with people feigning illnesses just to benefit from it. Meanwhile, private clinics, hospital administrators, and even doctors found ways to exploit the loopholes for their own gain. Unnecessary surgeries were performed, heart stents were overprescribed, and medications were doled out in excess. Retirees, placing their trust in the medical system, unknowingly swallowed these pills, unaware of the potential side effects.

Dr. Mohamed Gamal, a wellknown physician, shared his frustrations with the system. He despised performing surgeries on retirees unless absolutely necessary, but the pressures of "Afia" often left him in a moral bind. He recounted instances where, after receiving approval for a surgery, he would open a patient's abdomen only to find that multiple other procedures were needed.

At that point, he had a difficult choice: stick to the pre-approved procedure and leave the patient's other issues untreated, or spend additional hours addressing everything and then face a battle with the insurance company to get compensated for the extra work. In his words, the system put

Foreign Affairs in Russia. The activities of the cultural week

It would also include a symposium on

the Kuwaiti identity in several areas.

Other Voices

him in a dilemma -- should he do his duty as a doctor, or prioritize the insurance company's red tape?

As a result, the "Afia" system had not only drained public funds but also eroded the integrity of both patients and medical service providers. Hospitals became hubs for unnecessary timent among treatments, patients began viewing visits as social outings, and some even went as far as selling the medi-

cations they received. One commentator, Sadiq, shared his experience of going for physical therapy. The hall was packed, and when he asked a European specialist if all these patients truly needed treatment, he was stunned by the reply. Most were from the "Afia" program, simply using their 12 free physical therapy sessions to get massages instead of real medical treatment. The system was a win-win -- for everyone

except public funds. Sadiq also highlighted that Kuwait, despite having a substantial network of public hospitals, boasts one of the highest proportions of private hospitals in the world. It's an irony not lost on many.

As a retiree who benefits from this system, I don't seek to defend the Canadian company that holds the majority stake in the insurance provider. But the truth must be said: the problem lies in the system designed by the ministry. It's flawed and has been abused by all sides. It has corroded the ethics of many, prioritizing financial gains over genuine healthcare.

Former MP Alia Al-Khaled was one of the few who recognized the dangers early on. She took a stand against the "Afia" law in the National Assembly, being the sole voice of opposition. She foresaw the problems, but, as is often the case, reason was drowned out by the masses. Now, the consequences are evident for all

The photos and videos showed that the waiting rooms in clinics and hospitals were empty of patients, compared to the days of "Afia"!

This means: either the diseases suddenly left the bodies of the retirees, or they found the solution somewhere else, or a large percentage of them were cheating!

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MoCl advances digital services to boost business environment

PAHW provides 673,287 services via 'Sahel' over 3 years

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) is committed to advancing its digital platforms and services to better serve beneficiaries, bolster the national economy, and enhance the business environment, reports Al-Seyassah daily. Abdullah Al-Harz, the minis-

try's official spokesman, highlighted recent progress, noting a significant uptick in new commercial licenses issued last

In August 2024, the ministry issued 1,041 new commercial licenses for personal companies and 466 for free businesses.

This increase underscores the ministry's ongoing efforts to streamline and expedite the licensing process through its digital platforms, which now make obtaining licenses accessible and effi lance business licenses, in particular, have become more straightforward to obtain, no longer requiring an office or commercial store.

The ministry also conducted 180,000 tests on precious metals and stones last month to ensure the quality of gold and jewelry. In addition, it managed approximately 124 real estate transactions and issued 24 temporary trade fair licenses.

Notably, the ministry processed 1,577 certificates of origin for Kuwaiti non-oil exports to Gulf Cooperation Council countries and 502 certificates for Arab countries

Compliance

Al-Harz emphasized that the ministry's commercial control teams carried out several market inspections in August to enforce compliance with laws and ministerial deci-

These inspections play a crucial role in maintaining market integrity and promoting fair commercial practices.

Furthermore, August saw the issuance of 8,330 company licenses, 8,784 wholesale and retail trade licenses, 4,667 restaurant licenses, 2,461 general trade and contracting office licenses, and 2,393 licenses for retail sales, gifts, and luxury

goods. The ministry's dedication to improving digital services reflects its commitment to supporting and developing Kuwait's business land-

Meanwhile, Omar Al-Ruwaih, Deputy Director-General for Public Relations and Development Affairs at the Public Authority for Housing Welfare, has reported significant achievements in digital service delivery through the Sahel government application, reports Al-Seyassah

He said, since September 2021, the institution has provided 673,287 services via Sahel, encompassing 29 electronic services

Al-Ruwaih added Sahel was instrumental in the government's digital transformation, streamlining processes and reducing the need for paper transactions.

He went on to say, the votable services include 509,000 'To Whom It May Concern' certificates issued, a highly requested service; 72,000 phone updates processed without requiring physical visits to the institution; issued 19,583 electronic building permit certificates and received 20,113 requests for plot allocations.

These services reflect the institution's commitment to improving efficiency and accessibility through

Essential compliance steps for boat owners mentioned

Marine vessels mandated to install AIS device

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Following the implementation of Ministry of Interior's decision No. 410/2024, which mandates that all marine vessels, regardless of their type or whether they are stationary or moving, must install automatic identification system (AIS), questions have been raised about the procedures for marine vessel owners. There are concerns about how to comply with the decision, including where to purchase the AIS device and how to avoid fines or violations, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a press statement, Lieutenant Colonel Abdulaziz Haider from the Maritime Transport Department of the General Administration of Coast Guard said, "The AIS device can be purchased from local companies approved by the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), or from trusted sites abroad, provided that the device meets the specifications outlined in ministerial resolution No. 410/2024.

There are two types of AIS devices:

1. Class A: For ships sailing internationally. 2. Class B: For marine vessels operating within territorial waters.

Prices for these devices range from KD 250 to KD 300 through local companies, but they can be found online for KD 60 to KD 80. The steps for installing and registering the device

after purchase are as follows: 1. Create an Account - Register on the CITRA web-

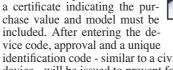
2. Enter Device Details - Log in to the authority's application and enter the AIS device's data, including

the year of manufacture and its code, into the desig-

nated fields. 3. Pay Fees - Once the application is approved, a fee of KD

50 must be paid to CITRA. 4. Receive Approval - The approval process and issuance of an attested certificate typically take between two to five work-

For devices purchased abroad, a certificate indicating the purvice code, approval and a unique



identification code - similar to a civil number for each device - will be issued to prevent forgery.

Documents Required for Marine Service: - Boat registration certificate from the Maritime Transport Department.

Technical specifications for the device.

5. Verify the certificate - Visit the General Administration of Coast Guard's Maritime Transport Department in Shuwaikh for the verification and approval of the certificate.

If the marine vessel is sold or canceled, update the

General Administration of Coast Guard with the new owner's details. 6. Registration requests - Proceed to one of the designated centers for registration requests, which include Doha Port, Al Watiya, Yacht Club, Fahaheel

Marine, Jal Boat, Al Khiran, and the Army Officers At these centers, the special code granted by CIT-



Photo by Rizk Taufiq A file photo of some fishing boats.

RA will be matched with the device and the certificate. The employee will then input the information into the Ministry of Interior's system, allowing Coast Guard personnel to track and monitor the marine vessel's movements via the security radar system."

Lieutenant Colonel Abdulaziz Haidar went on to "Once the device is linked with the Ministry of Interior, it allows us to identify the marine vessel, its details, the owner's information, and whether the vessel is intended for recreational use or fishing purposes.

The device also tracks the vessel's path immediately after it sets sail, and sends notifications to Coast Guard personnel via radar and the security system. This helps in times of emergencies, such as accidents, by pinpointing the vessel's location if it malfunctions, and providing comprehensive information to the Coast Guard.

Recognize

If the security system cannot recognize a marine vessel due to the absence of an identification device, we categorize it as a non-Kuwaiti target and proceed with caution according to security protocols.

The decision to install these devices applies to all transit ships entering Kuwait. We therefore will receive detailed information about them 24 hours before their arrival, including the names of the sailors on board.

Regarding the exemption of jet skis and tugboats less than 16 feet, Lieutenant Colonel Abdulaziz Haidar stated that they are exempted from installing the AIS device due to their limited range and inability to travel long distances.

He explained that since the beginning of the summer season, 7,500 marine licenses (Marine License B) have been issued to citizens and residents, with the majority being for jet skis.

The decision to activate the marine law came after the marine transport sector was transferred to the Ministry of Interior. Since then, approximately 8,500 transactions have been completed for renewing marine vessels, transferring ownership, or issuing title

books for the first time. In addition, a recent decision by the Ministry of Interior allows those with expired marine vessels to be exempt from financial fines of KD 100 for older vessels and KD 300 for new ships with incomplete paperwork. This provides an opportunity for marine vessel owners to take advantage of the exemption before the deadline at the end of this year.

1,391 buses deployed to transport students: Al-Mutairi

KU welcomes students ... efficiently manages volume of traffic

university's commitment to creating

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: The Secretary-General and spokesman of the Kuwait University, Dr. Fayez Al-Dhafiri said approximately 55,000 cars entered the campus on the first day, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The university's Security and Safety Department efficiently managed the high volume of traffic, ensuring smooth operations and coordination with the Ministry of Interior to facilitate a seamless experience for students and

In addition, the campus health clinics processed around 4,000 health forms from students, which were distributed throughout various locations on the campus

Dr. Al-Dhafiri emphasized the

an optimal educational environment. The institution aims to support students by providing the necessary resources and addressing any obstacles, ensuring a successful academic

year ahead. Meanwhile, in an effort to support the smooth start of the academic year, Matrouk Al-Mutairi, Assistant Undersecretary for Financial and Administrative Affairs at the Ministry of Education, announced the de-

ployment of 1,391 buses to transport

students across different educational districts, reports Al-Seyassah daily. This initiative aims to ensure a safe and convenient journey for students to their schools and educational institutes.

The distribution of these buses across various districts is as follows Capital Educational District 100 buses, Hawalli 100 buses, Farwaniya 155 buses, Mubarak Al-Kabeer 86 buses, Ahmadi 360 buses and Jahra 125 buses. In addition to this the ministry

has allocated 125 buses for religious education institutes, 240 extra buses for private schools and 100 buses specifically for students with disabilities studying in private

The contracts for these buses are set to continue until end of August 2026, as part of the ongoing agreements signed with the Ministry since the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years.

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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'HH the Crown Prince ... and partnership with Washington'

"THE recent visit of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled to Washington has drawn the attention of many, particularly as it focuses on the strategic partnership between Kuwait and the United States -- a relationship that is broad, deeply rooted in mutual commitments, and continually strengthened through ongoing dialogues," columnist, former permanent envoy of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations (UN), the former Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) secretary general Abdullah Bishara wrote for Al-Qabas daily. "This visit, his first as Crown Prince,

comes at a time when the bilateral relationship is poised to address critical issues affecting both nations.

"As a former Prime Minister. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled is no stranger to the complex and pressing matters he now brings



to Washington. His vast experience has provided him with keen insights and perspectives, ensuring that he is well-prepared to navigate the intricate discussions ahead.

"What reassures many is not only his dedication to the Kuwaiti-American partnership but also his profound understanding of the significance of such an alliance. His sharp awareness of the strategic necessities strengthens the bond between the two

"The ability of the Crown Prince to grasp the realities of the region, with its tensions and the ever-present potential for conflict, ensures that the dialogue will be approached with the seriousness it re-

quires.

"His understanding of the underlying causes of instability in the region, particularly in a time when leaderships driven by ideologies of influence, expansion, and power dominate, makes his approach measured and cautious

"One critical aspect of the Kuwaiti-American relationship is the American security presence in the region. This presence plays a vital role in maintaining stability, protecting Kuwait's sovereignty, and fostering an environment of security and confidence domestically. It also acts as a deterrent against external threats, reinforcing a protective wall that safeguards Kuwait's interests.

"Through this visit, the Crown Prince conveys a message on behalf of the Kuwaiti people: their support and approval of the strategic partnership and the security arrangements that contribute to the stability and safety of their nation. This visit marks an important chapter in the ongoing collaboration between Kuwait and the United States, with both sides committed to ensuring a secure and prosperous future.

"I say it is essential to underscore the importance of the trade relationship between Kuwait and the United States within the framework of their strategic partnership. Trade cooperation is one of the most vital mechanisms that strengthens and deepens the bilateral ties between the two nations.

"Kuwait has long welcomed the presence of prominent American companies, recognizing their expertise in management and their ability to implement projects efficiently and complete them within the agreed timelines. This openness reflects Kuwait's commitment to fostering a conducive environment for foreign businesses and investments

"The role of trade in shaping relations between countries cannot be overstated. In many instances, trade relationships have paved the way for diplomatic ties, with commerce often preceding formal political alliances.

"History has consistently demonstrated how trade can play a crucial role in cultivating mutual understanding, building trust, and fostering familiarity between nations. These economic exchanges lay the foundation for stronger political and cultural relationships, enabling countries to

work together on a broader range of issues. "I recall the approach taken by many countries in awarding tenders and import contracts to nations with which they aim to build political understanding or avoid hostility. This strategy, which is often referred to as the 'diplomacy of appeasement and temptations', sidesteps political or security confrontations by fostering economic ties and one of the most notable figures in the region who practiced this approach was the vagabond Saddam Hussein, particularly in his erratic dealings with the United States, even during the period of his invasion of Kuwait.

"Saddam's attempts to leverage economic offers as a means of appeasing the US showcased a misguided use of trade diplomacy. In his bid to secure political favor and soften the US stance against his regime, he resorted to promises of economic incentives. This example highlights how some leaders have used trade as a tool for political manipulation, often to their detriment, as was evident in Saddam Hussein's case.

"On August 6, 1990, just days after the invasion of Kuwait, Saddam Hussein made a desperate attempt to sway US policy. He summoned the US Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Joseph Wilson, and extended an extraordi-

"Saddam promised Washington everything it desired -- access to Iraq's vast oil reserves, investment opportunities, and priority status in all Iraqi imports. He even proposed a bilateral alliance that would grant the US unprecedented influence in Baghdad. The goal was clear: to soften the US position and present Iraq as a compliant ally willing to submit to American interests, all while maintaining his grip on Kuwait, regardless of how humiliating or submissive his proposal appeared.

"The Charge d'Affaires, Mr. Wilson, dutifully relayed Saddam's offer to Washington. However, instead of achieving the desired effect, this gesture only solidified the US determination to liberate Kuwait. It became evident to the United States that it was dealing with an untrustworthy leader, a president who, both in the present and the future, could not be relied upon. This reinforced America's resolve to confront the aggression and pursue the liberation of

Kuwait with even greater urgency.
"In managing our relations with key partners like the United States and the United Kingdom, it is essential to practice diplomacy that balances scarcity with the demands of security and sovereignty.

"This approach is particularly relevant when engaging with companies from these nations, especially those with proven track records and successful experiences. Many of these companies are deeply connected to influential figures in the political landscape, such as senators and members of the US House of Representatives, and they are keen to maintain their distinguished positions within Washington's diplomatic

"Investment plays a significant role in these relationships, and Kuwait has long been adept in this field. Kuwait's investment presence was firmly established in London as early as 1953, and the office continues to be an active and influential player in the global investment arena. This early venture laid the foundation for a strong and enduring partnership with the UK and, by extension, other global mar-

"Kuwait's investment strategy has also been pivotal in strengthening and diversifying its relationships, serving as a vital mechanism for fostering economic ties and enhancing diplomatic engagement. As Kuwait continues to expand its investment portfolio, it is crucial to leverage these assets within the framework of its broader diplomatic strategy, ensuring that investments remain an influential tool in the country's international relations.

"By doing so, Kuwait can continue to cultivate strong partnerships and safeguard its security and sovereignty while promoting mutual benefits through economic col-

"I hope His Highness the Crown Prince will have the opportunity to visit the Senate, where he can present Kuwait's perspectives on the strategic partnership, emphasizing the need to expand its scope in areas such as politics, security, economics, culture, education, and media cooperation, among others.

"Additionally, I hope we can foster connections with the numerous think tanks based in Washington, which maintain diverse relations with the administration, civil society organizations, political parties, and key members of legislative councils.

"Our fellow members of the Gulf Cooperation Council have successfully cultivated relationships with these centers through their efforts, and I believe Kuwait's need for such relationships is even more press-

"It is vital for us to convey Kuwait's reality -- its diplomacy, domestic conditions, constitution, civil society, and freedoms of speech and press -- especially in an environment that often restricts open expression and is frequently marked by unrest and uncertainty.

"We are confident that His Highness the Crown Prince is keen to continue dialogues with Washington, not solely through official political delegations, but by involving Kuwaiti civil society groups in regular exchanges. This includes chambers of commerce, Kuwaiti academics, and cultural figures who can engage with intellectual, humanitarian, and social councils, helping to ensure continuous bilateral communication without leaving any gaps.

"There exists a bond of trust between the Gulf oil states and the United States, rooted in a shared understanding of energy's critical role in global security. This trust was forged during the exceptional circumstances following the 1973 oil embargo, when fears of conflict and misunderstandings prompted serious discussions.

"From these discussions emerged a commitment to recognizing the rights of both consumers and producers, underscoring that energy is a vital commodity for global security. This mutual understanding is based on respect for the sovereignty of producing nations and the needs of consuming countries.

"From this, a Gulf oil diplomacy evolved, aimed at preventing the politicization of energy and curbing extremism on all sides. Undoubtedly, this understanding was largely shaped by the moderate producers in the Gulf, who played a pivotal role in fostering this cooperation. What matters to us in this context is ensuring the continuation of the approach that upholds global stability.

"It is also crucial that the American political presence in Kuwait remains active, preventing any communication gaps or lack of dialogue. The relationship between our two countries must remain dynamic, continually addressing developments in the global political landscape and their effects on regional security, such as climate fluctuations and food supply shortages -humanitarian issues that concern the entire world and pose serious threats to future

"I expect His Highness the Crown Prince to allocate time for a visit to the Pentagon, where he can learn about US defense strategies aimed at safeguarding the Gulf region from potential dangers. Additionally, I hope his program includes a visit to the US.Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), as its director, William Burns, is a seasoned expert on regional affairs and a staunch advocate for Arab and Palestinian issues.

"Lastly, I believe it is essential for His Highness the Crown Prince to address the world through the National Press Club, a platform that broadcasts the speeches of prominent international visitors and ensures they reach a global audience through its far-reaching channels.

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



KUNA photo

The first meeting of the Kuwaiti-UAE Military Cooperation Committee discusses enhancing joint cooperation between the two brotherly sides.

Kuwait and UAE strengthen military ties in inaugural joint cooperation meeting

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17, (KUNA): The Operations and Planning Department of the Ministry of Defense hosted the first meeting of the Military Cooperation Committee between Kuwaiti and Emirati representa-

In a press statement issued by the Ministry of Defense, the meeting focused on important topics of mutual interest, including joint exercises and workshops aimed at exchanging expertise and strengthening military cooperation between the two nations.

Brigadier General Mubarak Al-Zaabi, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations and Planning, welcomed the Emirati delegation to discuss ways to enhance cooperation between the two parties.

15 applicants accepted for **Guard course**

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: The Ministry of Interior has announced 15 applicants have met the requirements for joining the Coast Guard (Naval) Officers Course at the Mohammed bin Ghanem Al Ghanem Maritime Academy in the State of Qatar, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In addition to this, 10 reserve students have been selected from the pool of applicants who passed the conditions for entry.

The selection process took place through a public draw, held in the presence of high-ranking officials from the Ministry of Interior, including Major General Fawaz Al-Sabah, Assistant Undersecretary for Education and Training Affairs; Brigadier Ali Al-Wahib, Director General of the Saad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences; Brigadier General Mubarak Al-Sabah, Director General of the Coast Guard; and Brigadier Nasser Bouslaib, Director General of the General Department of Security Relations and Media.

Kuwaiti accused of wife's killing in Saudi desert 'denied release'

Border officer and Bedoun accomplice arrested for drug peddling

By Jaber Al-Hamoud, Munif Naif Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: The Detention Renewal Department has denied the release of a Kuwaiti citizen who is accused of murdering his wife in Abu Hadriya Desert in Saudi Arabia while they were returning from Bahrain by land.

It is worth highlighting that the citizen continues to deny the allegations.

Earlier, he told the prosecution that he only left his wife in Abu Hadriya desert and did not

His family has claimed that he is an addict and suffers from mental health issues for which he is receiving treatment in a psychiatric hospital.

'Lieutenant' held for drugs: Under the directives of the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, the officers of the Drug Control General Department apprehended an officer of rank "Lieutenant" from the northern borders and his Bedoun accomplice for the sale, distribution, and storage of drugs in a warehouse located

According to security sources, anti-narcotics officers led by Assistant Undersecretary for Criminal Security Affairs Major General Hamed Al-Dawas and Director Brigadier General Mohammad Qabazard, tracked the northern borders officer who was selling drugs along with his Bedoun partner.

Eventually the officer was arrested, and he confessed to committing the crime along with his Bedoun accomplice.

After receiving information that the drugs were being stored in a warehouse in Jahra, a raid on the warehouse was carried out, which led to the discovery of both narcotics and firearms.

Necessary action is being taken in this regard.

'Colonel' declared not guilty: The Court of Cassation overturned the two-month prison sentence imposed on a colonel at the Ministry of Interior; and declared him not guilty of insulting, cursing and slapping a young man during the national holidays celebration when the latter allegedly violated the law by throwing water balloons





KUNA photos

Left: Air Marshal Sheikh Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, meets with Rear Admiral George Wyckoff, and (right) with Brigadier General Gavin Thompson.

Kuwait, US, UK discuss military issues

Kuwaiti Army Deputy Chief-of-Staff Air Marshal Sheikh Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held discussions, separately, on Tuesday with Commander of US Fifth Fleet Admiral George Wyckoff and Head of the British Military Com-

mission Brigadier General Gavin Thompson. A Chief of Staff statement said that important military-related topics and issues of common interest were discussed during the meeting. (KUNA)

at other people.

Attorney Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan, who represented the colonel in court, confirmed that the officer has the right to overpower the young man and arrest him as stipulated by the law on the job of security personnel.

Al-Qattan pointed out the officer used force in dealing with the plaintiff -- Mohammad Munther Abbas and another individual -- in his capacity as a colonel at the ministry.

Case files indicate that the plaintiff threw balloons filled with water at passersby and cars. The colonel asked him to stop doing so, but he did not. The officer's second, third and fourth attempt to stop the plaintiff proved futile, so he had to invoke the right granted to him by law to prevent the plaintiff from continuing the action. When he referred the plaintiff to a nearby security outlet; the latter, his brother and his friends fought with him to prevent him from detaining the plaintiff.

Life in jail sentence overturned: The Court of Cassation has acquitted a defendant who was earlier convicted of drug trafficking, reports AlSeyassah daily.

This decision overturns a life imprisonment sentence handed down by the Court of Appeal for trafficking in heroin, opium, and psychotropic substances. The acquittal was granted due to insufficient evidence supporting the charges.

During the proceedings, defense attorney Enaam Haidar argued that the arrest and search procedures were flawed and added the evidence did not establish that her client possessed the narcotics and psychotropic substances with the intent to trafficking.

In its ruling, the court said it could not rely on the testimony of the arresting officer, as detailed in both the investigation report and the Public Prosecution's testimony The court also noted that the officer had not ar-

rested the defendant in the act of selling or buying drugs through a source he had provided.

The court emphasized that determining the defendant's intent to engage in drug trafficking is a matter for the judge to decide based on the available evidence.

The Court of Cassation then citing lack of evidence upheld the Criminal Court verdict and acquitted the suspect.

Workshops on preparing int'l human rights reports

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17, (KUNA): The Human Rights Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organizes two workshops on preparing international human rights reports, which will last for four days, in cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

In a press statement, the ministry revealed one of the workshops is on the preparation of the fourth national report for the Convention against Torture (CAT) and the other is on preparing the fourth national report on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism for human rights.

The ministry explained these two workshops aim to enhance the capabilities of participants in preparing the State of Kuwait's reports on international mechanisms; which will positively reflect on the quality of the reports submitted by the country and contribute to strengthening its international position in the field of human rights, in fulfillment of its human rights pledges as a member of the Human Rights Council from 2024 to 2026.

The ministry disclosed these workshops are part of the efforts of the Human Rights Department to develop the skills of the concerned national professionals in preparing and discussing reports on Kuwait's commitments in the field of human rights, as the country remains committed to fulfilling its promises and strengthening international cooperation in this field.

So far, the department has organized seven training courses this year, in coordination with the United Nations and its specialized agencies. This clearly demonstrates Kuwait's commitment to fortify technical cooperation and build national capacities in the field of human rights.

'Adhere to amendments'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Counselor Dr. Adel Borsali, President of the Court of Cassation, has issued a circular urging the Director and employees of the Court of Cassation Clerks Department to strictly adhere to the new amendments introduced by Decree-Law No. 94 of 2024, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This decree modifies certain provisions of Decree-Law No. 20 of 1981 and establishes a new department within the General Court to handle administrative disputes, particularly those related to rulings that are not subject to appeal, as specified in Article 14 bis of the amended decree.





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Al-Mishari sets urban renewal in motion

Municipal Council's role vital to future development: minister

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Minister of State for Municipal and Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari has stressed the importance of the Municipal Council, as it is an integral part of the urbanization process in the country.

In a press statement on the sidelines of his first meeting with the chairman and members of the council on Monday, Al-Mishari praised the incumbent council members, their expertise and capabilities; while affirming that he is happy to work with them in order to advance the wheel of urban development in the country.

He disclosed: "We discussed ways to cooperate in dealing with diverse issues and topics concerning the country and its citizens, most notably updating the regulations on buildings, gardens and canopies; in addition to addressing issues related to the State's structural plan and comprehensive urbanization vision.

He revealed that he is arranging other meetings with members of the council to discuss some important issues in detail. He touched on the housing issue and ways to find effective solutions, emphasizing its importance to him as State Minister for Housing Affairs. He said "a plan to solve the housing issue will be announced soon"

Regarding the priority files in the State Ministry for Municipality Affairs, Al-Mishari cited the need to lay down a clear architectural vision as his top priority; indicating the connection between the architectural vision and the behavior of citizens. He asserted such vision reflects the behavior and orientations of citizens,



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

Minister of State for Municipal and Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari poses for a group photo with the Chairman and the members of the Municipal Council.

so it is vital in updating the regulations and systems in this regard. He explained that a clear and accurate architectural vision will lead to a positive change in the behavior and orientations of citizens. He then affirmed his aspiration to work with the council to address all issues.

On the other hand, Chairman of the council Abdullah Al-Mahri stated "we congratulate the minister for gaining the trust of the political leadership in assuming two ministerial portfolios. We ask Almighty Allah to grant him success and assistance."

He lauded the minister's visit to the council and his meeting with the members; as a clear indication of the latter's interest in the council, and his respect for the laws and regula-

He affirmed that he discussed many issues and topics with Al-Mishari, the most important of which are ways to expedite the action of

Room Promotion

Kuwait Municipality regarding the council members' proposals, as well as the speedy completion of laws to support fruitful cooperation between the two parties for the benefit of the country and its people

He said the council is keen on completing the new regulations that support urban development; indicating the council completed many regulations in the previous sessions, such as the regulations for communication towers, canopies and construction of private houses.

He revealed the council's vision is in line with that of the minister who has vast experience in urban development. He hopes the consensus on visions will greatly contribute to the ongoing efforts to address development issues

He added the council will focus on completing its plan, considering its role as a development council; especially in terms of quickly making decisions and laws that serve major development projects like the housing file, specifically approving the allocation of South Qairawan within

Moreover, council member Munira Al-Amir congratulated the minister and implored Allah to grant him success in whatever he does for the sake of the country, armed with determination and strong faith in institutional work. She said the council will fully support him, and that the council members will efficiently play their role in achieving this goal.

Council member Fahad Al-Khanin praised the constructive meeting with the minister; during which viewpoints were exchanged, and the minister shared his ideas and vision for developing the Municipality in line with the New Kuwait vision under the directives of the political leadership.

Virtual sessions start Sept 22

PADA to address complaints, suggestions of beneficiaries

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Wafaa Al-Muhanna, Acting Director General of the Public Authority for the Disabled Affairs, announced that every Thursday will be dedicated to receiving visitors with disabilities at the Authority's main headquarters in Hawally, reports Al-Jarida

This initiative aims to address complaints, suggestions, and re-

move any obstacles they face. Moreover, weekly meetings have been scheduled with key sector representatives:

Sundays with Dr. Khalifa Al-Hilaa, Deputy Director of Medical, Psychological, and Social Services; Mondays with Khaled Al-Harbi, Deputy Director of Administrative and Financial Affairs and Tuesdays with Afnan Al-Hussaini, Deputy Director of Educational and Rehabilitation Services.

These meetings will be conducted through the "Tawasul" platform from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, starting from Sept 22.

PAHW delivers 673K services via Sahel

MPW approves sewage tender for South Abdullah Al-Mubarak

By Mohammed Al-Misleh Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Head of the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak Residents Committee Khaled Al-Daihani says the Ministry of Public Works has approved the flotation of the sewage tender, which will alleviate the difficulties

faced by 3,200 families in the area.

In a press statepraised the Ministry of Public Works' employees for their efforts in advancing the sewage project.

He stressed that addressing this issue is important, as it has been one of the most pressing problems for

Al-Daihani the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak area over the

past two years. Al-Daihani explained that representatives

from the relevant ministries had previously approved the area and dimensions of the project. The treatment facility will be temporary and designed to address sewage issues in the city. There are no obstacles to designating a site for the treatment units, which will cover an area of 7,500 square meters.

Kuwait Municipality has stipulated that the site path be established with service pathways and that it requires a comprehensive study to assess the environmental and social impact of the temporary facility. Once the need for the facility has been met, it must be removed, with the ministry responsible for the removal costs and restoring the land to its original state.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Director General for Public Relations and Development Affairs at the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) Omar Al-Ruwaih revealed that PAHW has provided 673,287 services through the Sahel government application from September 2021 until mid of this month, including 29 electronic services.

He said PAHW was among the first government agencies to embrace digital transformation, affirming that the unified services available through the Sahel app have significantly eased the process for citizens interacting with Al-Ruwaih revealed that PAHW issued

509,000 certificates to citizens through the Sahel application, indicating that this service is one of the most frequently requested by users.

He stressed that approximately 72,000 citizens had their phones updated without needing to visit the PAHW office.

Al-Ruwaih added that PAHW issued 19,583 electronic building permit certificates

via the Sahel app.
Regarding allocation requests, Al-Ruwaih indicated that PAHW received 20,113 requests for plots in existing housing projects over the past three years through the application. Also, 13,587 files for housing welfare were opened during the same period.

Dr Al-Saeed named KU acting director

PAAET kicks off academic year with new programs and student support

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Director General of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Dr. Hassan Muhammad Al-Fajjam extended his congratulations to students at the start of the 2024/2025

In a press statement, he affirmed the importance of adhering to lecture schedules and following educational and behavioral regula-

Dr. Al-Fajjam encouraged students to maintain regular communication with their lecturers and seek guidance on study materials to achieve academic success and complete their required courses for graduation.

He highlighted the importance of the teaching and training staff to commit to building strong relationships with students and enhancing their academic and cognitive

Dr. Al-Fajjam stressed the need for staff to instill knowledge and a sense of patriotism in students, highlighting their important role in Kuwait's future progress and development. He wished the students continued success

and achievement. Dr. Al-Fajjam indicated that PAAET has

exerted efforts this year to support the educational process and students.

He highlighted the introduction of new specializations, including Anesthesia Technician and Respiratory Therapist in the Faculty of Health Sciences, Renewable Energy specialization in the College of Technological Studies, and additional specializations

in the College of Business Studies such as Management Information Systems, Financial Management, Logistics Management, Human Resource Management, and Mar-

Dr. Al-Fajjam stressed that these new programs are designed to meet labor market demands and are complemented by special training courses across various institutes,

leading to employment opportunities.

He highlighted the PAAET administration's commitment to supporting scientific activities and events that enhance the educational process and contribute to its de-

Dr Al-Saeed

these efforts align with the PAAET's vision and strategy for 2023/2028, which aims to elevate the standards of education and training in Kuwait.

velopment.

Dr. Al-Fajjam said

Meanwhile, the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the acting Minister of Education, and the Chairman of the Council of State Universities Dr. Nader Al-Jalal has appointed a professor in the Department of Radiology at the Faculty of Medicine and Deputy Director of Kuwait University for Medical Sciences Dr. Osama Mahous Al-Saeed as the Acting Director of

Kuwait University. This appointment is effective as of Monday and will continue until further notice.

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Reconnaissance Research launches Economic Affairs Unit

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Reconnaissance Research has announced the launch of a new Economic Affairs Unit, aiming to deepen the understanding of economic shifts in the region. The unit will be led by two experts: Bader Abuqamaz, a PhD researcher in economics with a focus on microeconomic policy evaluation, and Mohammad Al-Ghadhouri, a specialist in financial auditing and forensic accounting.

The unit is set to provide concise reports and research designed for both specialists and the general public. It aims to simplify complex economic developments, detailing their causes and both regional and global impacts. The first report will analyze Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 and its role in transforming the country's economy.

Founder and CEO Abdulaziz Al-Anjeri emphasized the significance of the new unit, stating: "As an independent platform for dialogue, Reconnaissance Research bridges Kuwaiti and international perspectives, providing professional research and critical analysis. We aim to produce publications that offer practical solutions areating real value."

tions, creating real value."
Al-Anjeri also welcomed the new team members, saying, "We



Abdulaziz Al-Anjeri



Reconnaissance Research logo

are proud to have Bader and Mohammad on board. Their expertise will play a crucial role in advancing the unit's objectives."

Farwaniya Governor hosts high-level meet with health ministry delegation

Kuwait prepares to host 'Gulf 26'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: The head of the Kuwaiti Supreme Organizing Committee for the "Gulf 26," Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, has emphasized the importance of accelerating efforts to finalize all preparations for the tournament, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He also announced that a registration mechanism will be introduced for individuals aged 18 to 34 who wish to volunteer in organizing the event.

Those interested can register through the Public Authority's official website, ensuring that the volunteer process is efficient and accessible.



Al-Seyassah photo

Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi welcomed a delegation from the Medical Emergency Department.

Advancements of health services tackled

Kyrgyz Prez lauds Kuwaiti charitable initiatives



Sadyr Japarov – Kyrgyz President

BISHKEK, Sept 17, (KUNA): Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov praised on Monday the initiatives of the Kuwaiti Al-Safa Charity and Humanitarian Society, which contributed to improving people's living conditions and development in his country.

In a press statement during his reception with the Society's "Partners in Goodness 16" trip, Japarov expressed appreciation for Al-Safa in support educational and social projects, especially in rural areas, pointing out the importance of these initiatives that contribute to the economic and social development in Kyrgyzstan.

In turn, Al-Safa's Chairman Mohammad Al-Shaya, said in a statement that

the trip in Kyrgyzstan, which began on September 8 and ended today saw the opening of major health projects across the republic.

He explained that the trip witnessed the opening of 16 projects, including a hospital for endocrine and dialysis, Al-Razi Emergency Hospital, in addition to the integrated endowment village of (Fahad Al-Nafisi and Ghazi Al-Nafisi), consisting of 100 houses, a mosque, and a football field.

The Society also established a major water station and 10 water networks to benefit more than a quarter of a million people, in addition to three mosques, and a center for memorizing the Holy Quran.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, Governor of Farwaniya, held a meeting yesterday at the governorate's general office with a delegation from the Ministry of Health, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The delegation included Dr. Ahmed Al-Shatti, Director of the Medical Emergency Department; Dr. Ali Al-Mutairi, Director of Farwaniya Hospital; Abdullah Khalaf, Ambulance Supervisor; Khaled Al-Khabbaz, Commander of the Farwaniya Ambulance District and Muhammad Al-Khabbaz, Faris Al-Dhafiri, Faisal Al-Muraif', Badr Gharib, and Muhammad Al-Sharrah, heads of various centers in the governorate.

The discussions focused on several key areas such as:

Enhancing Health Care Services --The meeting addressed the need for comprehensive and integrated health care across preventive, therapeutic, and rehabilitative levels. It aimed at identifying and overcoming challenges in medical services within the governorate to better align with the needs of the residents.

Ambulance Services -- Dr. Al-Shatti provided a thorough overview of the ambulance centers in Farwaniya, detailing the services they offer and efforts to increase their number to handle the large population and ensure prompt responses to emergencies.

Emergency Response and Training -- The governor reviewed the services provided by medical emergency teams, discussed preparations for crises, and strategies for rapid response to emergency situations. The discussion also included plans to enhance training courses across the governorate to raise awareness among citizens and residents.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Dr. Al-Shatti expressed his gratitude to Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Sabah for the warm reception. He praised

Ministry 'upholds' dismissal decision

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: In response to the recent news published by the Al-Jarida newspaper regarding the potential reinstatement of the two members of a cooperative society who had been dismissed from work citing violations, the Ministry of Social Affairs issued a statement confirming that the ministerial decision to remove the two board members remains in effect.

The decision has not been retracted due to the verified violations and transgressions attributed to the members.

the significant progress made in the governorate, highlighting the advancements in the health sector and the improvements in services provided to both citizens and residents.

Al-Safa Charitable Society organizes 16th trip for partners in Kyrgyzstan

New clinics launched to serve 'Afia' cardholders

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: The Al-Amiri Hospital has announced the opening of new clinics to serve retirees holding "Afia" cards residing in the Capital Health District, reports Al-Jarida daily.

These clinics will offer specialized outpatient medical care in various fields, including internal medicine with all its specialized units, surgery, and cardiology. Referrals to the clinics are made electronically through primary care centers.

Clinic hours are as follows -- Internal Medicine Clinics 3 pm to 6 pm; Surgery Clinics 2 pm to 6 pm and Cardiology Clinics 2 pm to 6 pm.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Al-Safa Humanitarian Charitable Society organized its 16th charitable trip for donors and supporters in a bid to highlight the transparency of charitable work, reports Al-Anba daily.

The 16th Partners for Good Trip delegation attended the opening and launching of several projects in Kyrgyzstan

from Sept 8-16.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the charitable society Mohammad Al-Shaya expressed his happiness over the success of this trip; stressing it was a distinguished trip

due to the launching of 16 projects, including a number of major health projects, in Kyrgyzstan.

President of Kyrgyzstan Sadyr Japarov warmly welcomed the board chairman of the society and his accompanying delegation; expressing his gratitude for the activities and projects of the society to support educational, social and charitable projects in his country. He affirmed that the society's initiatives contributed to improving the living conditions of the people.

'Let's Be Aware'/Diraya campaign

Burgan Bank shares vital safety tips against phishing, scamming threats

with the back-to-school season and the growing financial responsibilities that accompany it, Burgan Bank renewed its efforts to raise awareness about safe banking practices and financial literacy as part of its ongoing support for the "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) awareness campaign running for its fourth year under the supervision of the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), with the support of Kuwaiti banks. The latest awareness campaign shed light on some of the most common phishing attacks and online scams, as well as the security measures that all customers must adopt to guarantee the safety of their personal information, bank accounts, and hard-earned savings.

accounts, and hard-earned savings.

The Bank's continued support of the Diraya campaign comes as part of its comprehensive social responsibility program and its commitment to advancing

Kuwaiti society and domestic economy. "The ever-speeding technological advancements that we are witnessing today have undoubtedly added a lot of ease and convenience to our everyday lives; however, they have also brought upon us new means of fraud and theft that we must remain vigilant about to avoid becoming scam victims," said Mrs. Kholoud Al-Feeli, Deputy General Manager – Marketing and Communication at Burgan Bank. "While we spare no effort to deploy the latest cybersecurity technologies



Kholoud AlFeeli, Deputy General Manager – Marketing and Communication at Burgan Bank

and data protection systems, the safety of our customers' bank accounts can still be compromised if they unknowingly cooperate with a scammer. That's why we advise all customers, especially if they regularly use their card for making online purchases, to stay alert and always follow the recommended safety precautions."

Burgan Bank noted that, with the rise and growing access to AI tools, scammers are now more adept at drafting seemingly professional emails and text messages that may be hard to identify as fraudulent. That's why the Bank warns

in emails or text messages from unknown senders. Unverified links can often trick users into downloading malware that jeopardizes the safety of their personal information. Meanwhile, other scams are carried out by replicating popular websites, giving the illusion of safety, and then stealing users' personal and banking information.

Similarly, the Bank warned against

Similarly, the Bank warned against making purchases from unknown websites, especially if the price seems significantly below the market average. In addition to luring victims with phantom products or services at remarkably low prices, deceptive vendors can also deploy unsecured payment portals intended for stealing banking card information.

Burgan reminded its customers that its representatives would never collect or request to update data via phone, text, or email and that customers should never respond to such requests. Another vital safety precaution is abstaining from sharing the one-time password (OTP) with anyone under any circumstances, reminding customers that the OTP is for personal use only. Burgan Bank urges/ encourages customers to report any fraud attempts as swiftly as possible to minimize potential damage. To report fraud, customers can get in touch with the Burgan contact center at 1804080, send a WhatsApp message to +965 1804080, or email at info@burgan.com.

Kuwait hosts

Continued from Page 1

detention practices for migrants and individuals under international protection. Senior government officials from various departments in the Ministry of Interior attended the panel, which was

and the IOM offices in Kuwait.

The commission reviewed the fundamentals of international law, highlighting the non-refoulement principle as a

moderated by experts from the UNHCR

cornerstone of global security.
Also, the IOM presented the Guiding Principles on the Protection of Victims of Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons as well as a definition of international migration law.

The two organizations discussed ways to better implement the relevant principles and guidelines to prevent human rights violations, strengthen global solidarity and shared responsibility, and promote cooperative efforts to protect the rights of people traveling worldwide. They also talked about the opportunities and challenges this entails.

Emphasizing the importance of such seminars in the country, the UNHCR Representative in Kuwait Nisreen Rabian said, "The role of the commission extends beyond mobilizing funding and resources to provide a humanitarian response in collaboration with donor countries and the private sector.

It also involves raising awareness of international human rights law principles by building the capacity of local organizations and decision-makers. This ensures that these principles are effectively taken into consideration and applied, thereby strengthening the comprehensive protection framework for refugees and others in need of international protection."

Meanwhile, the Head of Mission at IOM Kuwait Mazen Abu Al-Hassan affirmed the importance of strengthening international cooperation in migrant protection.

He said, "The cooperation between IOM and the Ministry of Interior in Kuwait has been ongoing for many years. We are pleased to organize this workshop alongside the Refugee Commission in the presence of members of the National Security College in order to enhance understanding of international law and its implementation. This session underscores our commitment to highlighting protection mechanisms for migrants and workers on temporary contracts."

Furthermore, Director General of the National Security College Brigadier General Mishal Hadi Al-Huwaila highlighted that this event is special for all members of the Ministry of Interior, including both male and female police officers from the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and above. It also involves the National Security College, officials responsible for border crossings, law enforcement, managing residency violations, and overseeing deportation operations.

In addition, Director of the Institute of Strategic Security Studies Colonel Abdul Wahab Ibrahim Al-Najada affirmed the importance of these sessions.

He said, "This is the third collaboration with the UNHCR and participants from the Ministry of Interior and various state ministries and agencies. The goal is to discuss issues, develop solutions, and enhance the efficiency of ministry employees to improve administrative practices. We also hope that the discussions will be beneficial to all our participating colleagues."

Around half

Continued from Page 1

He also highlighted the importance of continuing the concerted efforts to develop the educational environment in order to realize the aspirations of the

country and its generous people.

Meanwhile, Director of Umm
Kulthum Bint Uqbah Intermediate
School for Girls Maha Al-Mutairi revealed her impressions on the first day
of school; particularly the preparations
for the new academic year.

She affirmed "the administration opened the academic year with the highest level of organization and preparation; taking into consideration the quality of maintenance works including construction and electrical extensions, in addition to closely following up the effectiveness of operating air conditioning systems and lighting devices. We have always been committed to creating a safe, stimulating and encouraging environment for learning; hence, the teachers are trained on higher education skills that contribute to the development of the stu-

dents' scientific capabilities."

She added the study plans were created ahead of time, along with educational objectives that were planned and established to raise students' academic

and scientific achievement levels and instill positive values in them through their participation in regional and global competitions and activities that foster ambition and self-confidence. She then wished the students an academic year full of dedication, benevolence and excellence.

Joint aviation

Continued from Page 1

of foreign aircraft operating at GCC airports.

The meeting also discussed the culture of aviation security and training, as well as the achievements of GCC countries in air navigation and civil aviation.

Kuwait is taking part in the 20th meeting of the Executive Committee of Civil Aviation in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, held Tuesday in Qatari capital, Doha.

Qatari Acting Chief of General Civil Aviation Authority (QCAA) Mohammad Al-Hajri, during opening speech, stressed the need for working together in order to maintain leadership and face all the challenges and changes occurring in the civil aviation industry, reported the state-run news agency (QNA).

He said that the integration of air systems and the modernization of aviation infrastructure are a top priority to ensure the safety and efficiency of air operations, and commended the close cooperation between GCC countries that has contributed to developing and strength or increase the contributed to developing and strength or increase that has contributed to developing and strength or increase that the contributed to developing and strength or increase that the contributed to developing and strength or increase the contributed to develop the contributed to developing and strength or increase the contributed to develop the contributed to develop

strengthening relations.

He also highlighted the vital role played by the Gulf air transport industry at the global level and the advanced position that this industry has reached in the Gulf region thanks to joint effect the strength of the strength of

Al-Hajri pointed to the need to benefit from this meeting to review the available opportunities and increase cooperation to achieve all common goals.

GCC Assistant Secretary General Khaled Al-Senedi mentioned that the meeting's agenda is brimming with important topics including the unified program for assessing the safety of foreign aircraft operating at the airports of the Council.

Heading the Kuwaiti delegation is Chief of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Sabah.

Bureau addresses 'appointment' of zoology graduate

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: The Civil Service Bureau has responded to a video clip circulating online that questioned the appointment of a female graduate with a degree in Zoology to the position of Administrative Coordinator, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In what is seen as a clarification statement, the Bureau said the concerned individual was registered in the central employment system with a Bachelor's degree in Zoology, not a Master's degree in Anatomy as initially reported.

The appointment process is conducted based on the needs and qualifications required by each government institution, which are reviewed by the Bureau.

The job title "Administrative Transactions Coordinator" was given to her in 2023, rather than "Secretary," which is typically reserved for those with a diploma or less.

Ministry of Commerce & Industry



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World News Roundup

Europe

MSF closes ops in Russia

EU's Von der Leyen unveils 'new' team

BRUSSELS, Sept 17, (AP): European Union chief Ursula von der Leyen put women in many of the top roles on her new team for her next five-year tenure at the head of the bloc on Tuesday, despite the reluctance of many EU member states to give in to her demand

Von der Leyen put only two men in her top echelon with four women as vice presidents, including Kaja Kallas as foreign policy chief. Kallas was already agreed on by government leaders.

Von der Leyen on Tuesday added Spanish Socialist Teresa Ribera to lead the green transition, along with Ribera also becoming the competition czar. Finland's Henna Virkkunen was her pick for rule of law and digital leader, and Roxana

Minzatu of Romania for social

The appointments of the Commission team - which veers to the right after the June elections saw a surge of farright parties - still have to be confirmed.

The appointment as executive vice president of Raffaele Fitto of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's hard right Brothers of Italy party is bound

mation hearing in the coming weeks. Also on Tuesday, von der Leyen gave French Foreign Minister Stephane Sejourne the industrial portfolio, after French heavyweight Thierry Breton resigned and openly criticized the EU chief for allegedly "questionable governance" on Monday,

to cause controversy during the parliamentary confir-

Von der Leyen

Shock

It left France with a strong voice in the Commission, and many saw Breton's shock resignation more as a removal by von der Leyen of one of her most open internal critics after exerting pressure on French

Compounding such problems was the defiance of many of the 27 member states as von der Leyen struggled to get anywhere close to gender parity on her Commission team - they staunchly refused to give her a choice between a male and a female candidate.

She said that originally, EU nations only proposed 22% female candidates before she started to push for

"So I worked with the member states and we were able to improve the balance to 40% women and 60% men. And it shows that - as much as we have achieved - there is still so much more work to do," von der Leven said.

If she could not get full gender parity in numbers, von der Leyen made sure they were more than well represented in the top jobs.

MSF closes operations in Russia: Doctors Without Borders said Tuesday it has closed its operations in Russia after 32 years, citing a Justice Ministry letter that said the medical aid group had been removed from a register of foreign nongovernmental organiza-

The aid group, also known by its French language name Médecins Sans Frontières and acronym MSF, said it will retain its branch office in Moscow, but op erations - run by its Dutch affiliate - have stopped. It was MSF Netherlands whose registration was withdrawn, a group spokesman said in an email.

MSF has been in Russia since 1992, and has operated programs that provided aid for homeless people and migrants, tuberculosis treatment, and general health care including for infectious diseases like HIV.

The aid group said it had provided assistance to more than 52,000 people who either crossed into Russia from Ukraine or internally displaced people in Russia since Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine

MSF said it recently had been planning to respond to the humanitarian and medical needs of the internally displaced people in the Kursk region in Russia, where Ukrainian forces have recently made inroads.

Norman Sitali, the operations manager for MSF programs in Russia, said the aid group was "very sad" to end the programs, "as many people in need of medical and humanitarian assistance will now be left without the support we could have provided to them.'

CDU taps Merz as candidate for chancellor: Germany's opposition center-right Christian Democratic Union announced Tuesday that it has chosen its leader, Friedrich Merz, to be its candidate for chancellor in next year's national election.

The decision sets the stage for a possible challenge of Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the federal election scheduled for September 2025.

Germans are looking ahead to next year's vote at a critical time, as the country's struggles to integrate large numbers of refugees and migrants and as the major European economy weakens. Recent extremist attacks have fueled a backlash against migration that is leading to a surge in support for the far right.

The fate of Ukraine will also be influenced by Germany's political direction. Berlin under Scholz has been one of the largest weapons donors to Kyiv, but many German voters are growing tired of the 2 1/2year war against Russian invasion, and have turned their support to far-right and far-left parties that oppose arms deliveries to Ukraine.

The choice was announced at a news conference in Berlin with Merz and Markus Soeder, the leader of the CDU's smaller Bavarian counterpart, the Christian Social Union, who had also been a contender for the

Budapest, Wroclaw reinforce river banks: Soldiers dropped sandbags from military helicopters to reinforce river embankments and evacuated residents as the worst flooding in years spread Tuesday to a broad swath of Central Europe, taking lives and destroying homes.

Heavy flooding has affected a large part of the region in recent days, including the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Austria. There have been at least 16 deaths reported in the flooding, which follow heavy rainfall across the region.

Other places are now bracing for the flood waves to hit them, including two central European gems: Budapest, the Hungarian capital on the Danube River, and Wroclaw, a city in southwestern Poland on the Oder

River, its old town filled with architectural gems. Hungary's government of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán deployed soldiers to reinforce barriers along the Danube, and thousands of volunteers assisted in

filling sandbags in dozens of riverside settlements.



A pipeline carrying liquified natural gas burns near Spencer Highway and Summerton on Sept 16 in La Porte, Texas. Inset: Firefighters take a break from battling a fire at a pipeline carrying liquified natural gas near Spencer Highway and Summerton on Monday. (AP)

Flames from massive pipeline fire near Houston subside but continue burning

A flame that towered over a southeast Houston suburb had subsided Tuesday, but continued to burn following a massive pipeline explosion after a vehicle drove through a fence and struck an aboveground valve, officials said.

"Progress has been made as first responder crews worked through the night. The fire is significantly smaller," according to a statement from the

City officials have said investigations by police and local FBI agents have found no preliminary reports that would suggest a coordinated or "terrorist" attack and that "this appears to be an isolated

The investigation included efforts to learn more about the driver of a vehicle that was incinerated by the pipeline explosion as flames scorched the ground across a wide radius, severed adjacent power transmission lines and ignited homes at a

An evacuation area included nearly 1,000 homes and initial shelter orders included schools

The City of La Porte said it has slightly reduced the evacuation area south of the pipeline fire, but did not say how many people were affected.

Operators shut off the flow of natural gas liquids in the pipeline, but so much remained in the miles of tubing that firefighters could do nothing but watch and hose down adjacent homes.

Deer Park Mayor Jerry Mouton Jr. described intense heat from the fire that has continued burning for nearly 24 hours as ladder trucks showered houses from above. (AP)



Former Independent candidate for president Robert F. Kennedy Jr., (left), and former Democratic Rep Tulsi Gabbard speak at a campaign event for Republican presidential nominee former US president Donald Trump on Sept 14 in Glendale, Ariz. (AP)



Meadows



America

US tracks Russia vessels: The US Coast Guard said Monday that it tracked a group of Russian naval vessels as they crossed into U.S. waters off Alaska in an apparent effort to avoid sea ice, a move that is permitted under international rules and

Crew of a US Coast Guard cutter witnessed the Russian military vessels cross the maritime boundary and venture 30 miles (48 kilometers) inside an area extending bevond US territorial waters known as the US Exclusive Economic Zone.

The Russian vessels consisted of two submarines, a frigate and tug boat, the Coast Guard said in a news release. The encounter took place nearly 60 miles (100 kilometers) northwest of Point Hope. (AP)

'Nichols wasn't a threat': Tyre Nichols posed no threat to police when he was snatched out of his car during a traffic stop that preceded a fatal beating by five Memphis officers, according to testimony Monday by a former officer who has pleaded guilty in the case, which led to national protests and sparked renewed calls for police

Emmitt Martin III took the stand in the federal trial of former colleagues Tadarrius Bean, Demetrius Haley and Justin Smith. The three officers have pleaded not guilty to charges that they deprived Nichols of his civil rights through excessive force and failure to intervene, and obstructed justice through witness tampering.

The four men, along with fellow officer Desmond Mills Jr., were fired after the January 2023 death of Nichols. The beating was caught on police video, which was released to the public. The officers were later indicted by a federal grand jury. Martin and Mills have taken plea deals and are testify-

Politics

Vance, Kemp project Republican unity

'RFK's name to stay on Wisconsin ballot'

MADISON, Wis., Sept 17, (AP): A judge denied Robert F. Kennedy's request Monday to erase his name from the presidential ballot in swing state Wisconsin, ruling that state law requires candidates to remain on the ballot unless they die.

Dane County Circuit Judge Stephen Ehlke's decision marks the latest twist in Kennedy's push to remove himself from ballots in key battleground states where the race between Republican Donald Trump and Democratic nominee Kamala Harris is tight.

Removed

Kennedy suspended his campaign in August and endorsed Trump. Kennedy said he would try to get his name removed from ballots in battleground states while telling his supporters that they could continue to back him in the majority of states where they are unlikely to sway the outcome.

Kennedy won a court order in North Carolina earlier this month to remove his name from ballots there. Michigan's Supreme Court ruled last week that he'll remain on that state's ballot, however.

Kennedy filed a lawsuit in Wisconsin on Sept 3 seeking a court order removing him from the ballot. He argued that third-party candidates are discriminated against because state law treats Republicans and Democrats running for president differently.

He pointed out that Republicans and Democrats have until 5 p.m. on the first Tuesday in September before an election to certify their presidential nominee but independent candidates

ing against the other officers. (AP)

Ohio police to protect schools: Ohio

state police will help protect schools in a

city at the center of a political furor over

Musk deletes post about Harris & **Biden assassination after criticism** While he has removed posts in

WASHINGTON, Sept 17, (AP): Elon Musk has deleted a post on his social media platform X in which he said "no one is even trying to assassinate" President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris in the wake of an apparent assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump while he was playing

Musk, who has nearly 200 million followers on the social media site he bought for \$44 billion in 2022, has increasingly embraced conservative ideologies in recent years and endorsed Trump for

like himself can only withdraw before the Aug. 6 deadline for submitting nomination papers.

Also:

ATLANTA: A leading conservative group put on a show of Republican unity Monday, cementing the new détente between Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp and GOP nominee Donald **Trump** while vice presidential nominee JD Vance tried to smooth over differences on abortion policy across the evangelical community ahead of Election Day.

The Faith & Freedom Coalition, led by longtime evangelical politi-

Haitian migrants, the governor announced

cal powerhouse Ralph Reed, brought Vance and Kemp to the same stage with a shared focus: advocating for Trump, criticizing Democratic nominee **Kamala Harris** and ignoring several years of tension stemming from Trump's attacks on Kemp for his refusal to help overturn Trump's 2020 defeat. Trump's efforts to undo the election results led to criminal charges against him in the state.

the past, Musk has also kept up

and even doubled down on other

such inflammatory comments.

Last week, he made a joke about

impregnating Taylor Swift after the

singer posted an endorsement for

the post about the apparent Trump assassination, the 53-year-old

billionaire wrote on the platform:

"Well, one lesson I've learned is

that just because I say something

to a group and they laugh doesn't

mean it's going to be all that hilarious as a post on X."

Early Monday, after taking down

"We have to expand our majority in Congress, take back control of the US Senate and send Donald Trump back to the White House," Kemp told a full ballroom of evangelical political activists and donors.

Monday, while local officials canceled an annual celebration of cultural diversity in the fallout over former President Donald

Trump's false claims about pet-eating.

Ohio Gov Mike DeWine, a Republi-



Trucks wait to enter Germany near Slubice, Poland on Sept 16. Germany tightened border controls on Monday. The new measures affected Germany's borders with France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, and Poland, (Xinhua)

can, has denounced the debunked rumors that spread online before Trump amplified them at last week's presidential debate, saying there is no evidence of it. He said at a news conference in Springfield on Monday that dozens of members of the Ohio State Highway Patrol will be stationed in city schools starting Tuesday following a series of threats across the city, sweeping each building every morning before the arrival of faculty or students. Security cameras have also been stationed at strategic spots in the city, and a bomb-sniffing dog will be in the city and available round-the-clock. (AP)

Meadows request rejected: A judge has rejected a bid by **Mark Meadows**, former chief of staff to President Donald Trump, to move his charges in Arizona's fake elector case to federal court, marking the second time he has failed in trying to get his charges out of state court.

In a decision Monday, US District Judge John Tuchi said Meadows missed a deadline for asking for his charges to be moved to federal court, didn't offer a good reason for doing so and failed to show that the allegations against him related to his official du-

ties as chief of staff to the president. Meadows faces charges in Arizona and Georgia in what authorities allege was an illegal scheme to overturn the 2020 election results in Trump's favor. He had unsuccessfully tried to move charges in the Georgia case last year. (AP)

Africa

Extremists attack army training camp in Mali: Extremists attacked a military training camp in Mali's capital, the army said, as explosions were heard in the area.

A sweep operation was underway after gunmen attempted to infiltrate the Faladie gendarme school, the military said in a statement. The army said the situation was under control and asked

Early Tuesday morning an Associated Press reporter heard two explosions and saw smoke rise in the distance. The training school



is located on the outskirts of the city. Mali, along with its neighbors Burkina Faso and Niger, has for over a decade battled an insurgency fought by armed groups, including some allied with al-Qaida and the Islamic State group. Following military coups in all three nations in recent years, the ruling juntas have expelled French forces and turned to Russian mercenary units for security assis-

Since taking power, Col Assimi Goita has struggled to stave off growing attacks Goïta by the jihadis. Attacks in central and northern Mali are increasing. In July, approximately 50 Russian mercenaries in a convoy were killed in an

al-Qaeda ambush. The mercenaries had been fighting mostly Tuareg rebels alongside Mali's army when their convoy was forced to retreat into jihadi territory and ambushed south of the commune of Tinzaouaten.

Attacks in the capital are rare. In 2022, gunmen struck a Malian army checkpoint about 60 kilometers (37 miles) outside the city, killing at least six people and wounding several others. (AP)

US military completes withdrawal from Niger: The withdrawal of US troops from Niger is complete, an American official said Monday A small number of military personnel assigned to guard the US Embassy remain, Pentagon spokesperson Sabrina Singh told re-

Earlier this year, Niger's ruling junta ended an agreement that allowed US troops to operate in the West African country. A few months later, officials from both countries said in a joint statement

that U.S. troops would complete their withdrawal by the middle of September. The US handed over its last military bases in Niger to local authorities last month, but about two dozen American soldiers had remained in Niger, largely for administrative duties related to the

withdrawal, Singh said. Niger's ouster of American troops following a coup last year has broad ramifications for Washington because it's forcing troops to abandon critical bases that were used for counterterrorism missions in the Sahel. groups linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group operate in the vast region south of the Sahara desert.

One of those groups, Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin, known as JNIM, is active in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, and is looking to expand into Benin and Togo.

Niger had been seen as one of the last nations in the restive region that Western nations could partner with to beat back growing jihadi insurgencies. The U.S. and France had more than 2,500 military personnel in the region until recently, and together with other European countries had invested hundreds of millions of dollars in military assistance and training. (AP)

Niger road accidents kill 9: Eight people died on the spot and another succumbed to injuries at a local hospital following two road

accidents in Niger on Monday, reported the national television. More than 100 were injured, including 30 in critical condition, said the report.

Both accidents occurred in Dosso, a city in western Niger. The first occurred at the village of Seyti and the second at the city's entrance.

The victims were returning from the city of Kiota, where they celebrated Mouloud, a holiday marking the birth of the Prophet The two accidents involved vehicles unsuitable for transport or

overloaded, reflecting a lack of respect for road traffic rules, said the governor of the region, General Iro Oumarou, during his visit to the hospital and the scene of the accidents. (Xinhua)

Nigeria flooding affects over 400,000: Priority needs for re than 400,000 victims of northeast Nigeria flooding are food assistance, potable water, hygiene, sanitation and shelter, UN

humanitarians said on Monday.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said a joint mission of the heads of UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the Nigeria Red Cross Society visited Maiduguri over the weekend and met with affected people and government officials. Many people they met needed aid before the floods, having been displaced multiple times by conflict and insecurity.

Maiduguri is the capital and largest city in Borno state.

The office said there is an urgent need for protection activities to reduce the risk of gender-based violence and to protect unaccompanied children.

OCHA said local authorities reported that 300,000 temporarily displaced people have been registered since the Sept 9 collapse of the Alau Dam. "In support of government efforts, the United Nations and hu-

manitarian partners are responding by providing hot meals, facilitating food air drops in hard-to-reach areas cut off by flood waters and trucking water," the office said. "We are also providing water and sanitation hygiene services, as well as water purification tablets to stem outbreaks of diseases. This in addition to supplying hygiene and dignity kits for women and girls, as well as emergency health and shelter services."

OCHA said the UN humanitarian coordinator in Nigeria, Mohamed Malick Fall, announced a 6-million-US-dollar allocation from the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund and that it is also working closely with donors to secure additional funds. (Xinhua)

Building collapse kills 8 in Sierra Leone: At least eight people were killed on Monday after a seven-story building collapsed in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) of Sierra Leone confirmed.

The NDMA said six survivors have been rescued from the rubble, while many people remain trapped beneath the debris. According to eyewitnesses, the building was used for residen-

tial and commercial purposes. The NDMA and other partners are making an all-out effort to

recover more victims trapped beneath the collapsed structure, and NDMA authorities have initiated investigations into the cause of the disaster.

Brima Sesay, director general of the NDMA, reaffirmed the agency's commitment to raising public awareness about the risks associated with using unqualified contractors and substandard building materials. (Xinhua)

No casualty as aircraft crashes in Kenya: No injuries were reported after a light aircraft with 11 people on board crashed during takeoff at a western Kenya airstrip on Monday, the flight com-

The incident occurred at around 12:30 pm (0930 GMT) when the aircraft, registration number 5Y-ZBW, operated by Boskovic Air Charters, veered off the runway while attempting to take off

from Lichota Airstrip in Migori County. "The aircraft was carrying 10 passengers and one crew member at the time of the incident. We are relieved to confirm that there were no fatalities or injuries," the company said in a statement.

Boskovic Air Charters said that they have engaged the relevant authorities to assist in the investigation.
"We are closely monitoring the incident. Further updates will be provided if more information becomes available," the company

added. (Xinhua)

OIC condemns Comoros prez assassination attempt: The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) condemned, Monday, the assassination attempt on President of the Comoros Azali Assoumani.

The OIC General Secretariat affirmed in a statement its support and solidarity with the Union of the Comoros and its people against threats, wishing Assoumani speedy recovery and contin-

ued security and prosperity for the Comoros. President Assoumani was subjected to an assassination attempt last Friday with a knife, resulting in minor injuries while attending a funeral ceremony in the capital, Moroni. (KUNA)



A high view of flooded areas in Naypyitaw, Myanmar on Sept. 15. Inset: Flood victims take rest at temporary camp opened at monastery. (AP)



Protesters clash with police during demonstrations against the official election results declaring President Nicolas Maduro's reelection, the day after the vote in Caracas, Venezuela on July 29. (AP)



Asia

China tails US spy plane: Chinese warplanes tailed a US military aircraft through the sensitive Taiwan Strait on Tuesday, China's military said.

The US aircraft was a P-8A Poseidon patrol and reconnaissance plane, capable of conducting long-range anti-submarine warfare, according to a statement by the People's Liberation Army's Eastern Theater Command.

Chinese military forces "organized warplanes to tail and monitor the US aircraft's flight and handled it in accordance with the law," said Li Xi, a senior colonel and spokesperson for the command.

"Theater command troops will remain on constant high alert and resolutely safeguard national sovereignty and security as well as regional peace and stability," he added. The US Navy didn't immediately com-

ment on the incident. China claims the self-ruled island of Taiwan as its own territory and bristles at other countries' patrolling the body of water sepa-

rating it from the island. On Friday, Germany sailed two warships through the Taiwan Strait in its first transit of the disputed waters in more than two decades, drawing criticism from Beijing.

In 2001, a US surveillance plane and a Chinese navy fighter collided mid-air near the Chinese island province of Hainan, resulting in the Chinese pilot's death. (AP)

Bebinca kills 2 in China: Two people died in China's eastern Jiangsu province as Typhoon Bebinca brought torrential rains and powerful winds before easing into a tropical storm, state media reported Tuesday.

Two residents of Zhoushi Town, about 80 kilometers (31 miles) northwest of Shanghai, were hit by a falling high-voltage power line and electrocuted on Monday, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

They are the only known deaths thus far to be caused by Bebinca, which swept over the megacity of Shanghai and neighboring provinces on Monday, flooding roads with water and broken tree branches and knocking out power to some homes.

One resident of Shanghai's Chongming Island was also reported injured by a falling tree.

More than 414,000 people were evacuated ahead of the powerful winds and torrential rain. Schools were closed and people were advised to stay indoors, while flights, ferries and train services were suspended.

The typhoon, which weather authorities described as the strongest to hit Shanghai since at least 1949, weakened as it moved inland. Around 2 a.m. on Tuesday, it was downgraded to a tropical storm. (AP)

Myanmar Yagi toll rises to 200: Floods and landslides in Myanmar trig-

Lat/Am

Bolivia ex-prez Morales calls for anti-govt march

UN decries repression in Venezuela

GENEVA, Sept 17, (AP): Independent UN human rights experts said in a new report Tuesday that their findings show Venezuela's government has intensified the use of "harshest and most violent" tools of repression following the disputed July presidential election.

The official results of the July 28 vote have been widely criticized as undemocratic, opaque and aimed to maintain President Nicolás Maduro in power

In its report, the fact-finding mission on Venezuela, commissioned by the UN-backed Human Rights Council, denounced rights violations including arbitrary detentions, torture, and sexual and gender-based violence by the country's security forces that "taken as a whole, constitute the crime against humanity of persecution on political

"During the period covered by this report, and especially after the presidential election of July 28, 2024, the state reactivated and intensified the harshest and most violent mechanisms of its repressive apparatus," said the experts in the report, which covered a one-year period through Aug. 31.

The findings echo concerns from UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Human Rights Watch, and others about Venezuela and its democracy, including repression before and after the highly anticipated vote and the subsequent flight into exile of Venezuela's opposition leader Edmundo González.

Arrested

Marta Valiñas, head of the experts team, said that between July 29 and Aug 6, Venezuelan authorities acknowledged they arrested more than 2,200 people.

"Of these, we have confirmed the arrest of at least 158 children - some with disabilities," Valiñas told reporters at a news conference Tuesday in Geneva, noting that some had been accused of serious crimes, such as terrorism.

"This phenomenon is something new and extremely worrying," she said. "We are facing a systematic, coordinated and deliberate repression by the Venezuelan government which responds to a conscious plan to silence any form of dissent."

Venezuela's National Electoral Council, which is stacked with Maduro loyalists, said he won the election with 52% of the vote. But opposition

gered by last week's Typhoon Yagi and

seasonal monsoon rains have claimed at

least 226 lives, with 77 people missing,

The death toll, reported in the state-run

Myanma Alinn, was almost seven times

Friday's initial total of 33, with strong

prospects of it continuing to rise. The

state-run media reported Tuesday.

supporters collected tally sheets from 80% of the nation's electronic voting machines, and said that indicated González had won the election - with twice as many votes as Maduro.

Global condemnation over the lack of transparency prompted Maduro to ask Venezuela's Supreme Tribunal of Justice, whose members are aligned with the ruling party, to audit the results. The high court reaffirmed his victory.

Morales calls for march: Bolivia's hugely popular and controversial former leftist president, Evo Morales, on Monday called on supporters to take to the streets in protest against his bitter political rival, current President Luis Arce, who hours earlier accused Morales on national TV of trying to overthrow him.

Morales' appeal to Bolivia's farmers, miners and peasants followed President Arce's unprecedented televised speech late Sunday lambasting his former mentor. Accusing Morales of trying to sabotage his administration and undermine democracy, Arce escalated a high-stakes power struggle that has pushed Bolivia to the brin

"Enough, Evo!" Arce exclaimed on state TV. "Until now, I have tolerated your attacks and slander in silence. But putting the lives of people at risk is something I cannot tolerate."

Arce, who has faced a series of mounting crises with his ruling party riven by disagreements, alleged that Morales' attempts to mobilize support and run against Arce in next year's presidential election was "putting democracy at risk."

"You are threatening the entire country," Arce said, claiming that Morales sought to return to power by "means fair or foul."

His dramatic speech in the Andean nation of 12 million dredged up the chaos and bloodshed of 2019, when Morales ran for an unconstitutional third term and won. After accusations of fraud sparked mass protests, Morales resigned under pressure from the army, in what his supporters call a coup. At least 36 people were killed in the ensuing crackdown by security forces.

Candidate treated in hospital: A candidate in Sao Paulo 's mayoral race was treated and released Monday from a hospital after one of his five rivals in a televised debate slammed him with a

counting of casualties has been slow, in

part due to communication difficulties with

the affected areas as Myanmar is wracked

Typhoon Yagi earlier hit Vietnam, north-

ern Thailand and Laos, killing almost 300

people in Vietnam, 42 in Thailand and four in

Laos, according to the ASEAN Coordinating

by civil war.

metal chair following references to allegations of misconduct.

Pablo Marçal, a personal development influencer turned right-wing politician, referred to the allegations against José Luiz Datena, a former TV presenter turned candidate, during the debate Sunday evening and said Datena had wanted to slap him. He added: "You're not even man enough to do this."

Datena, who has denied the allegations, then came over toward Marçal's podium with the chair above his head and slammed it into Marçal's side as the influencer put up his arms. The moderator of the TV Cultura debate then quickly interrupted and cut to commercials, and the debate resumed later Sunday night without Marçal.

Marçal's team shared video of him subsequently rushing to a hospital in an ambulance while receiving respiratory support. He explained on social media channels Monday that he had felt pain while breathing, and had suffered a fracture at the bottom of his rib cage.

Peru wildfires kill 5: Wildfires in Peru have left at least 15 dead since July and more than 3,000 hectares (7,400 acres) of cultivated land and natural areas scorched, authorities said Monday.

Prime Minister Gustavo Adrianzén told reporters that the fires were started by human activity and that 22 of the 24 regions that make up the country have active outbreaks. He added that clouds, smoke and winds were hampering the operations of the aircraft available to fight the fires. A Civil Defense report seen by The

Associated Press indicates that since July at least 15 people have died and another 98 have been injured due to the fires. Of the fatalities, 10 died in the last two weeks and more than 1,800 people have been affected. The livestock sector was reported to have lost 334 animals. Peru's National Forest and Wildlife

Service, SERFOR, indicated that the effects of climate change intensify the conditions that facilitate the spread of

"Extremely strong winds and prolonged droughts dry out vegetation, turning it into highly flammable fuel," said Romina Liza, a specialist in monitoring and management of forest Fires at SERFOR. "This allows the fires to spread rapidly."

Center for Humanitarian Assistance. (AP)

4 could face death in Bali: Indonesian authorities said Tuesday that they have arrested six people on drug charges on the tourist island of Bali since July.

Four could face execution under the country's strict drug laws.

Two Thai nationals, Rachanon Jongseeha, 33, and his girlfriend Woranawan Wongsuwan, 31, were arrested upon arrival at Bali's Ngurah Rai airport on Sept 8, with 1.9 kilograms (4.1 pounds) of methamphetamines mixed with ecstasy powder packed in 108 sachets of a fruit-flavored collagen drink, and 20 pills of the party drug ecstasy, according to provincial anti-narcotics chief Rudy Ahmad Sudraiat.

Police later arrested two Indonesians on accusations of ordering the drugs from Thailand. All four could face execution by firing squad if charged and found guilty, Sudrajat said. In Nov. 2019, a court in Bali sentenced two Thais to 16-year prison terms for smug-gling 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) of methamphetamine.

Authorities also announced the July arrests of two European men on drug charges. Sudrajat said a Latvian man, identified by the initials VS, was arrested at the airport on July 4 carrying 450.41 grams (15.8 ounces) of hashish and 977.83 grams (34.5 ounces) of marijuana concealed in his suitcase.

Sudrajat said VS had a tattoo indicating affiliation with organized crime groups in the former Soviet Union.

He faces a possible life sentence for cannabis smuggling. (AP)

People make lanterns for the upcoming Mid-Autumn Festival at the provincial library in Changchun, northeast China's Jilin Province on Sept 14. The Mid-Autumn Festival is one of China's most important traditional holidays. Taking place annually on the 15th day of the eighth month in the Chinese lunar calendar and observed on Sept 17 this year. (Xinhua)

oil down

The price of Kuwait oil went down by 31 cents to USD 73.70 per barrel on Monday as opposed to USD 74.01 pb last Friday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Tuesday.

Globally, the price of Brent crude oil went up by USD 1.14 to USD 72.75 per barrel, the same occurred with the West Texas Intermediate, which also went up by USD 1.44 to USD 70.09 pb. (KUNA)

As of June 30, 2024, the total liabilities of the 128 companies listed on the Boursa Kuwait, excluding banks, stood at KWD 28.92 billion, reports Al-Jarida daily

This marks a decrease from the 31.04 billion dinars reported for 136 companies in the first quarter of the year. The change reflects a shift in the number of listed companies due to exits from the exchange and differences in

fiscal year reporting.

The liabilities encompass various financial obligations, including accounts payable, wages, salaries, dividends, taxes, and other debts.

Among these companies, 90 conventional firms reported liabilities totaling approximately 25.31 billion dinars, which accounts for 87.5 percent of the total. In contrast, 38 listed Islamic companies had liabilities amounting to 3.61 billion dinars, representing 12.5 percent of the total. The financial services sector leads in terms of liabili-

ties, with 14.48 billion dinars, representing 50.06 percent of the total liabilities and involving 23 companies The communications sector follows with 3.86 billion di-

nars from 4 companies, making up 13.34 percent of the total. The industrial sector is next, with liabilities of 3.85 billion dinars from 21 companies, representing 13.3 per-

The real estate sector holds the fourth spot, with 31 companies reporting 3.23 billion dinars in liabilities, or 11.1 percent of the total. The consumer services sector, with 13 companies, has 1.09 billion dinars in liabilities, representing 3.8 percent. The financial services sector (licensed persons) reports 823.14 million dinars, or 2.8 percent of the total.

Other sectors include Oil and Gas: 551.05 million dinars, representing 1.9 percent from 5 companies; Basic Materials: 380.54 million dinars, representing 1.3 percent from 3 companies; Healthcare: 310.33 million dinars, representing 1.07 percent from 2 companies; Consumer Goods: 184.35 million dinars, or 0.63 percent; Utilities: 132.32 million dinars, representing 0.45 percent and Technology: 1.6 million dinars, or 0.34 percent.

Market Movements

17-09-2024

Change Closing pts **SAUDI** +18.29 11,885.66 PHILIPPINES - PSEi +71.16 7.175.36

DUBAI JAPAN **EGYPT**

Change Closing pts -0.04 -378.54 Nikkei 225 EGX 30 -101.09



Boursa Kuwait liabilities drop to KD 28.92 bln as of June

As part of Diraya Campaign

KFH promotes banking awareness for PR Academy students

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: In support of Diraya Campaign, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) remains committed to disseminating financial literacy awareness. These efforts align with the objectives of the campaign launched in 2021 by the Central Bank of Kuwait in cooperation with the Kuwait Banking Association.

In this context, KFH has organized an experience with PR Academy students to enhance their banking awareness, providing tips related to cyber threats and protecting their banking accounts.

The awareness initiative focused on testing students' banking information with the aim of enhancing their financial literacy and highlighting the various methods of fraud that customers might encounter. These include text messages, emails, phone calls, or social media channels.

Students were informed that KFH would never request personal information from its customers via email, text messages, or phone calls.

KFH also emphasized the importance of avoiding responses to such messages, as they are fraudulent attempts aimed at stealing their banking information including their money and data. KFH also educated students to the ways of updating their personal data and the importance of not



KFH's banking awareness poster.

falling victims of fraudulent activities.

The initiative also addressed the importance of not sharing an OTP code with any party and being cautious when

interacting with online links, as simply clicking on a link could expose their banking information to theft.KFH also provided helpful tips that can protect bank accounts such as refraining from saving any confidential information on the mobile phone including numbers of debit or credit cards, and PINs.

KFH also advises not to share such information with third parties, and to log out of KFH application or website immediately after completing a transaction. The Bank noted that some fraudsters take advantage of advanced AI technology to track the customer's transactions patterns, targeting their money and hacking into their personal data.

PR Academy by KFH It is worth noting that the PR Academy, recently launched by KFH in its first edition, equips undergraduate students and recent graduates with the latest trends and role of public relations and media, helping them develop technical and practical skills in this vital field in line with the Bank's social responsibility.

The 4-week program included lectures, seminars and workshops, in addition to field visits to KFH's strategic partners and several official entities that have an active role in

Saudi inflation hits 1.6 percent in Aug

Apartment rentals up 10.8%

RIYADH, Sept 17, (Xinhua): The Saudi General Authority for Statistics announced on Sunday that the annual inflation rate in the kingdom reached 1.6 percent in August.

The authority highlighted in a report that the percentage is primarily attributed to an 8.9 percent rise in the prices of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, and a 0.9 percent increase in the prices of food and beverages.

The report revealed that the actual housing rents increased by 10.7 percent this month, which is influenced by a 10.8 percent increase in apartment rental prices.

Food and beverage prices increased by 0.9 percent, thanks to a 4.6 percent rise in vegetable prices, the report

Restaurant and hotel prices also rose by 1.6 percent.

On the other hand, prices of furnishing and home equip-

ment decreased by 3.5 percent; clothing and footwear prices decreased by 3.2 percent; transportation prices decreased by 3.4 percent, which was affected by a 4.9 percent decrease in vehicle purchase prices, data showed.

Kuwait's industrial loans reach KD 390 mln in 2024

July sees 61% monthly increase

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: In a notable development for Kuwait's industrial sector, local banks have provided substantial financial support over the past seven

From January to July 2024, banks issued loans totaling approximately 390 million dinars to support indus-

In July alone, financing surged to 57 million dinars, marking a significant 61.4 percent increase from the 35.3 million dinars granted in June. Despite this monthly boost, annual comparisons reveal a

drop of 40.7 percent, as financing in July 2023 had reached 96.2 million dinars. The overall balance of industrial loans, however, showed a decrease of 0.69 percent, falling from 2.657 billion dinars in June to 2.639 billion dinars in July.

This reduction is even more pronounced on a yearly basis, down 4.5 percent from 2.764 billion dinars in July

The Central Bank of Kuwait's monthly statistics highlight a broader trend in industrial financing. Throughout the fiscal year 2023, total monthly financing for the sector plummeted by 31 percent, decreasing by 466 million dinars from 1.499 billion dinars at the end of 2022 to 1.033 billion dinars in 2023. The highest financing level for the year was recorded in December 2023, with 198.9 million dinars.

The industrial sector has faced numerous challenges in recent years, particularly exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The sector experienced significant setbacks due to activity bans, disruptions in the supply chain, and production delays. Additionally, a decline in demand and a limited number of new projects further strained the sector.

Several critical issues have emerged, including a shortage of developed industrial plots, bureaucratic hurdles in completing transactions, a heavy reliance on imported goods, and high factory rent costs.

Furthermore, lack of facilities for exporting Kuwaiti products and insufficient support for national produce have compounded the difficulties facing local industrial projects.

On a related note, consumer loans in Kuwait have also seen an increase. During the first seven months of 2024, consumer loans grew by 59 million dinars, or 3 percent, reaching a total of 2.03 billion dinars by the end of July, compared to 1.97 billion dinars at the end of December

Overall, while industrial financing has seen some recent improvements, the sector continues to grapple with significant challenges that affect its long-term growth and stabil-

Over the first seven months of 2024, Kuwaiti banks have significantly increased their loan activity, with the total volume of loans granted reaching 1.82 billion dinars.

This represents a 3.4 percent rise, pushing the overall redit extended in the country to 55.37 billion dinars by the end of July, up from 53.55 billion dinars at the end of December 2023

The increase in loan volumes is attributed to growth across various economic sectors. Notably, housing loans · long-term personal loans for purchasing, building, or renovating private residences --totaled 16.24 billion dinars by the end of July.

This marks an increase of 230 million dinars over the past seven months, or 1.42 percent, compared to 16.01 billion dinars at the end of December 2023.

Personal credit facilities also saw a boost, reaching 19.01 billion dinars by the end of July. This figure reflects a 250 million dinar increase, or a 1.35 percent growth rate, from the 18.76 billion dinars recorded at the end of 2023. Additionally, loans directed towards the purchase of se-

curities climbed to 3.62 billion dinars by the end of July, up from 3.5 billion dinars at the end of December 2023. This 3.5 percent increase translates to an additional 120 million dinars. In terms of deposits, the CBK reported a rise in the total

deposits held by Kuwaiti banks. By the end of July 2024, deposits had grown to 49.48 billion dinars, up from 48.72 billion dinars at the end of December 2023. This increase of 755 million dinars represents a 1.55 percent growth rate.

Overall, the data highlights a robust increase in both loan issuance and deposits, reflecting a positive trend in the financial sector amidst a broader economic landscape.

17 sector financing preferred in latest Central Bank survey

Kuwaiti banks avoid financing 18 sectors

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: In a revealing survey conducted by the Central Bank of Kuwait, the financing preferences of Kuwaiti banks were laid bare, reports Al-Rai

The survey highlighted 18 sectors that banks find undesirable for lending, including small and newly established projects, administrative services, and exchange compa-

In contrast, there were 17 sectors that banks actively prefer to finance, alongside five sectors that remained neutral in the eyes of lenders. Among the favored sectors were oil and gas, state ten-

ders, consumer products, food, educational services, environmental, social and governance (ESG) contracts, and infrastructure-related activities. Additionally, industries like public services, health-

care, manufacturing, renewable energy, and children's entertainment made the cut. On the flip side, sectors such as micro-enterprises, con-

sulting, small retail shops, transportation, and administrative services were deemed less favorable. Sectors like restaurants, retail, tourism, travel, and real estate were classified as neutral in terms of financing potential.

The reluctance to finance certain industries stems from several challenges. Banks cited high credit risks, lack of adequate collateral, weak financial data, and intense competition as key reasons. There were also concerns about inexperienced entrepreneurs and the difficulty in evaluating the performance of newer projects.

The sources shared that while some banks offer financing starting from 50,000 dinars for small business owners, others provide up to 500,000 dinars or more, depending on the institution.

In spite of this, financing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) remain challenging due to 20 factors identified by banks which include regulatory obstacles, lack of guarantees, difficulty in assessing performance and issues with collecting debts.

In response to these hurdles, banks proposed several solutions. These included offering training and advisory services for entrepreneurs, ensuring businesses have proper financial management, providing guarantees for loans, and creating laws that allow banks to recover debts more efficiently.

Additionally, banks suggested the development of financing products tailored to the needs of entrepreneurs and lowering the cost of financing for small projects.

With these measures in place, the financial landscape for small businesses in Kuwait could shift, making it easier for entrepreneurs to secure the funding they need.

However, the competition and challenges they face in the broader market will still require innovation, careful planning, and support from both financial institutions and

Korek Telecom to cover \$3.47 million in expenses

Agility's Iraq Telecom wins \$1.2 billion arbitration case against Korek Telecom

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Agility Public Warehousing Company has announced a significant victory for its subsidiary, Iraq Telecom Limited (UAE), in an arbitration case against Korek Telecom Limited in Iraq, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The International Court of Arbitration, part of the International Chamber of Commerce, has ruled in favor of Iraq Telecom, awarding it a total of \$1.2 billion.

The arbitration decision declared the subordination agreement invalid and mandated Korek to pay \$1.17 bil-

Additionally, Korek is required to cover \$3.47 million in expenses and costs. This decision relates to a claim against Korek Telecom concerning a guarantee agreement linked to a loan contract dated July 27, 2011.

Despite the favorable ruling, Agility stated that there is no immediate financial impact on the company

In its latest financial report, Agility recorded a profit of 24.69 million dinars for the first half of 2024, marking a 16.2 percent decrease from the 29.49 million dinars earned during the same period in the previous

ECB cuts interest rates by 0.25 points, deposits now at 3.5% amid sluggish growth

Federal Reserve's rate cut path uncertain amid market volatility

By National Bank of Kuwait

United States

US Consumer Price Index

n August, inflation fell to its lowest level since February $\blacksquare 2021$, with the consumer price index rising by 0.2% for the month, putting the 12-month inflation rate at 2.5%. This was lower than the expected 2.6%. However, core inflation, excluding food and energy, rose 0.3%, slightly above the forecasted 0.2%, keeping the 12-month core inflation rate at 3.2%. This complicates the Federal Reserve's decision on a potential interest rate cut. Despite the overall moderation in inflation, housing costs, which make up a third of the index, rose 0.5%, contributing significantly to the overall CPI increase. Other factors, such as rising prices in apparel, airline fares, and motor vehicle insurance, also pushed costs higher, while energy prices dropped 0.8%. Markets are currently pricing a 59% probability of a 50bps cut in the upcoming FOMC meeting.

US Producer Price Index & Unemployment claims

The final inflation data released before the Federal Reserve's anticipated interest rate cut showed wholesale prices rising in August at a pace slightly above expectations. The producer price index, which measures the costs producers receive for final demand goods and services, increased 0.2% on the month, matching the consensus forecast. Core PPI, excluding food and energy, rose 0.3%, slightly hotter than expected, and remained at the same level when trade services were excluded. On an annual basis, headline PPI rose 1.7%, while core PPI excluding food, energy, and trade increased 3.3%. Additionally, initial claims for unemployment benefits rose marginally to 230,000, suggesting that layoffs remained low despite a slowing labor market. This combination of a relatively stable labor market and persistent inflation further reduced the likelihood of a 50-basis-point interest rate cut by the Federal Reserve in its upcoming meeting

■ US Consumer Price Index m/m and y/y came in line with expectations.

■ US Producer Price Index m/m came in at 0.2% vs expectations of 0.1%

■ US Core Producer Price Index m/m came in at 0.3% vs expectations of 0.2%.

■ US unemployment claims came in at 230,000 vs expectations of 227,000.

■ European Central Bank delivered a quarterpoint interest rate cut.

■ UK GDP m/m came in at 0.0% vs expectations of 0.2%

■ China's CPI rose less than expected in the August figure, with the index at 0.6% y/y.

The Greenback closed the week at 101.114. Europe

ECB Press Conference

The European Central Bank, in a widely anticipated move, delivered a quarter-point interest rate cut on Thursday, marking its second such reduction this year, as sluggish economic growth and cooling inflation across the euro zone pushed policymakers to ease monetary policy. This brings the deposit rate to 3.5%. The central bank lowered its 2024 growth forecast to 0.8% due to weaker domestic demand, while reaffirming its commitment to a data-dependent approach to future rate decisions. While market participants were largely expecting the rate cut, uncertainty remained over whether the ECB would provide clues about its future rate path, with economists divided on whether a pause in Oc-

This Week's Expected 3-Month Previous Week Levels Range Currencies Open Low High Close Minimum Maximum Forward EUR 1.1080 1.1001 1.1101 1.1076 1.1075 1.1200 1.1144 GBP 1.3164 1.3114 1.2999 1.3157 1.3122 1.3100 1.3240 140.82 JPY 138.37 140.27 143.79 139.50 141.00 CHF 0.8433 0.8419 0.8549 0.8489 0.8375 0.8500 0.8374

tober or further rate cuts in December would be more likely. The ECB's meeting comes just days before the Federal Reserve is expected to begin its own rate-cutting cycle, adding to the complexity of global monetary policy coordination. The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.1076.

United Kingdom

UK GDP m/m

In July, the UK economy showed no growth, following a stall in June, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). This fell short of the expected 0.2% growth. The services index grew by 0.6% over three months, down from June's 0.8%. Additionally, industrial production and manufacturing production both declined unexpectedly, falling by 0.8% and 1.0% respectively, missing market expectations. The GBP/USD currency closed the week at 1.3122.

Asia Pacific

China Consumer Price Index China's CPI rose less than expected in the August figure, with the index at 0.6% y/y, missing expectations of a 0.7%

increase while higher than the previous 0.5% figure. Declines were seen in costs of transportation, rentals, and home goods. Meanwhile, food prices rose 2.8%, the first positive print since June of 2023. Core CPI rose 0.3% from a year ago, while the producer price index fell by 1.8%, higher than the estimated 1.4% figure.

China Producer Price Index

China's PPI continued to decline, falling 1.8% y/y, worsening from July's 0.8% drop. Meanwhile, China's exports grew by 8.7% y/y, surpassing forecasts, while imports increased by just 0.5%, reflecting weak domestic demand. The economic outlook of the world's second largest economy remains pressured by a persistent property market slump, unemployment concerns, rising trade tensions, and deflationary pressures, prompting calls for more fiscal stimulus.

The CNY/USD currency pair closed the week at 7.0876.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30520.

Boursa Kuwait hosts 'Women & Prosperity' event, brings together women leaders

Playbook rings in a new financial future for the region

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: As part of its commitment to empowering women and enhancing their leadership role in the financial sector, Boursa Kuwait sponsored and hosted the "Women and Prosperity" event on Tuesday, September 17, 2024. Organized by Playbook, the region's leading e-learning platform for women in leadership positions, the initiative brought together some of the standout female leaders from Kuwait and across the GCC to highlight the growing role women are playing in shaping the future of the financial services industry.

The day's festivities began with a powerful welcome address by Boursa Kuwait board member Mrs. Dalal Behbehani, who hailed the "Women and Prosperity" event as one that celebrates the achievements of women across this region and beyond and lays the foundation for a future where women's leadership and innovation are acknowledged and rewarded."

Mrs. Behbehani also highlighted the changes taking place in the financial sector, adding that "There is a growing recognition of the importance of gender diversity in leadership, driven by both business imperatives and social and econom-

"Playbook is a dynamic platform that empowers women by offering mentorship, resources, and essential tools to help them excel in leadership roles across various industries. It stands as a testament to the collective drive of women who come together to share their stories, uplift one another, and create opportunities for growth and excellence," she added.

Her Excellency Dr. Aisha bin Bishr, Global Digital Transformation Expert and a Strategic Leader in Smart City Initiatives gave the keynote speech entitled "Shaping the Future of Finance Through Smart Cities", in which she said: "Smart cities are not only transforming the way we live but also reshaping the financial landscape for businesses and individuals alike in three fundamental ways. First, they drive wealth creation through advanced digital infrastructure and by fostering financial innovation. They also use data and artificial intelligence to promote financial inclusion, empowering individuals—particularly women—to take control of their financial futures. Finally, smart cities are building resilient financial systems capable of withstanding economic shocks, ensuring long-term stability and prosperity."

The day was filled with thought-provoking discussions, beginning with Baroness Helena Morrissey, Founder of the 30% Club and a member of the House of Lords, who deliv-



Boursa Kuwait board member Mrs. Dalal Behbehani and Playbook Founder and CEO Wafa AlObaidat in a group photo during the Boursa Kuwait sponsored 'Women and Prosperity' event on Tuesday, September 17.

ered a compelling keynote titled "Financial Leadership: Secrets from the Top." Baroness Morrissey shared her insights on how women can lead effectively in today's evolving financial landscape, emphasizing the critical role they play in shaping the future of finance. Her speech resonated deeply with attendees, reinforcing the importance of strategic leadership in navigating a dynamic financial environment.

The event continued with a panel discussion on "Inspiring Future Generations: Strategies for Wealth, Education, and Well-being." Moderated by Mrs. Behbehani, the panel featured Haya Ayman Boodai, Board Member at the Kuwait Economic Society, Dr. Mariam Alawadhi, Consultant Psychiatrist, and Nada Al Harthi, Strategy Executive and Advisor. The discussion centered around the pressing need for finan-

cial literacy and long-term wealth strategies, offering valuable insights into how today's leaders can inspire and educate the next generation to take control of their financial futures.

The day's program also included an impactful presentation by Nadine Mezher, Co-founder of Sarwa, entitled "Strategic Investment Mastery: Executive Insights for a Dynamic Future." Mezher, a recognized leader in the financial technology space, provided executive-level insights on mastering investment strategies in an increasingly complex financial landscape. Her expertise in investment diversification, risk management, and market trends was both informative and actionable, empowering participants to navigate the dynamic financial environment with confidence.

A key moment of the event was the ceremonial Ring the

Bell for Financial Prosperity. In a powerful demonstration of collective leadership, 150 women from diverse industries took to the trading floor, ringing the closing bell at Boursa Kuwait. This act was more than symbolic—it marked a turning point in the financial future of the region and served as a beacon to women everywhere that they have the power, influence, and capability to shape the broader economic landscape.

The event also offered attendees practical knowledge through two key workshops designed to equip them with tools for long-term financial success. Baroness Helena Morrissey led the first workshop on "Raising Financially Savvy Kids," sharing her expertise on empowering the next generation with the skills needed for financial independence. The second workshop, "Building a Resilient Investment Portfolio," was facilitated by Nadine Mezher, who provided deep insights into creating investment portfolios that thrive, even amid market volatility.

As the event drew to a close, Playbook Founder and CEO Wafa AlObaidat emphasized the profound impact this event would have on the region's financial ecosystem. "We are at the start of something truly transformative – building the largest network of women investors, whose leadership will shape the future of finance. The Women & Prosperity event has highlighted the incredible potential women have to drive financial innovation in Kuwait and the region. Today's discussions have inspired us and laid the foundation for lasting impact, allowing us to redefine success by creating opportunities for women to lead with confidence, resilience, and purpose. I would like to thank Boursa Kuwait for their unwavering dedication and support of women's financial prosperity.

The partnership between Boursa Kuwait and Playbook is more than an event—it is a catalyst for long-term economic transformation. By leveraging the power of technology and financial leadership, this collaboration will continue to drive bold financial moves by women, ensuring that they are at the forefront of shaping the region's economic future. Aligned with Boursa Kuwait's Corporate Sustainability strategy, the Women & Prosperity initiative underscores the importance of financial literacy, sustainability, and leadership, and is a testament to the region's commitment to fostering a more inclusive and prosperous financial ecosystem.

Case could lead to a ban

TikTok, US face off in court

WASHINGTON, Sept 17, (AP): TikTok faced off with the U.S. government in federal court on Monday, arguing a law that could ban the platform in a few short months is unconstitutional while the Justice Department said it is needed to eliminate a national security risk posed by the popular social media company.

In a more than two hour appearance before a panel of three judges at a federal appeals court in Washington, attorneys for the two sides - and content creators - were pressed on their best arguments for and against the law that forces the two companies to break ties by mid-January or lose one of their biggest markets in the world.

Andrew Pincus, a veteran attorney representing the two companies, argued in court that the law unfairly targets the company and runs afoul of the First Amendment because TikTok Inc. - the U.S. arm of TikTok - is an American entity. After his remarks, another attorney representing content creators who are also challenging the law argued it violates the rights of U.S. speakers and is akin to prohibiting Americans from publishing on foreign-owned media outlets, such as Politico, Al Jazeera or Spotify.

"The law before this court is unprecedented and its effect would be staggering," Pincus said, adding the act would impose speech limitations based on future risks.

The measure, signed by President Joe Biden in April, was the culmination of a years-long saga in Washington over the short-form video-sharing app, which the government sees as a national security

threat due to its connections to China.

The U.S. has said it's concerned about TikTok collecting vast swaths of user data, including sensitive information on viewing habits, that could fall into the hands of the Chinese government through coercion. Officials have also warned the proprietary algorithm that fuels what users see on the app is vulnerable to manipulation by Chinese authorities, who can use it to shape content on the platform in a way that's difficult to detect.

Daniel Tenny, an attorney for the Justice Department, acknowledged in court that data collection is useful for many companies for commercial purposes, such as target advertisements or

tailoring videos to users' interests.

"The problem is that same data is extremely valuable to a foreign adversary trying to compromise the security of the United States," he said.

RABAT, Sept 17, (KUNA): Over the

past two decades, China expanded its

presence in Africa through its econom-

ic and geographical influence across

the continent, this strategy aligns with

the ongoing international competition

for influence and resources among ma-

jor powers, particularly the US, Rus-

key battlegrounds in this global com-

petition due to its strategic location.

abundant resources, and economic

opportunities, making Africa vital to

the economies of countries like China,

which has pursued strong partnerships

with African countries to secure access

to raw materials, fuel its industries,

and enhance its standing regionally

Africa has emerged as one of the

sia, and China.

Pincus, the attorney for TikTok, said Congress should have erred on the side of disclosing any potential propaganda on the platform instead of pursuing a divesture-or-ban approach, which the two companies have maintained will only lead to a ban. He also said statements from lawmakers before the law was passed shows they were motivated by the propaganda they perceived to be on TikTok, namely an imbalance between pro-Palestinian and pro-Israel content on the platform during the war in Gaza.

But the panel - composed of two Republican and one Democrat appointed judges - expressed some skepticism, pressing the attorneys on TikTok's side if they believe the government has any leeway to curtail an influential media company controlled by a foreign entity in an adversarial nation. In parts of their questions about TikTok's foreign ownership, the judges asked if the arguments presented would apply in cases where the U.S. is engaged in war.

Judge Neomi Rao, who was appointed by former President Donald Trump, said the creators suing over the law could continue speaking on TikTok if the company is sold or if they choose to post content on other platforms. But Jeffrey Fisher, their attorney, argued there are not "interchangeable mediums" for them because TikTok - which has 170 million U.S. users - is unique in its look and feel, and the types of audiences it allows them to reach.

Paul Tran, one of the content creators who is suing the government, told reporters outside the courthouse on Monday that a skincare company him and his wife founded in 2018 was struggling until they started making TikTok videos three years ago. He said they had tried to market their products through traditional advertising and other social media apps. But the TikTok videos were the only thing that drove views, helping them get enough orders to sell out of products and even appear on TV shows.

"TikTok truly invigorated our com-

"TikTok truly invigorated our company and saved it from collapse," Tran

Currently, he noted the company -Love and Pebble - sells more than 90% of its products over TikTok, which is covering the legal fees for the creator lawsuit

In the second half of the hearing, the panel pressed the Justice Department on First Amendment challenges to the law.

China strengthens presence in Africa

Latest US jobs report adds to concerns over recession

PwC announces plans to shed approximately 1,800 workers

WASHINGTON, Sept 17, (Xinhua): As a recent U.S. job report shows expanded layoffs and shrinking job creation, observers have expressed broader concerns over the U.S. economic outlook as negative effects of an aggressive monetary policy continue to emerge.

Layoffs rose to 1.76 million in July, the most since March 2023, according to the U.S. Labor Department.

Leading accounting firm PwC announced plans to shed approximately 1,800 jobs in the United States this October, marking its first U.S. layoffs since 2009. Similarly, Intel Corporation, grappling with declining demand, unveiled its largest-ever layoff plan, reducing nearly 15,000, or 15 percent of its staff.

The strained job market is partly attributed to the Federal Reserve's aggressive interest rate policies, with high borrowing costs stifling corporate investments and job creation, said a USA Today report. Coupled with growing fears of an impending recession, many companies are awaiting greater policy clarity, particularly as the U.S. presidential election is around the corner.

The retail sector has been particularly hard hit. The sector has seen a wave of bankruptcies since the beginning of last year, including such household names as Bed Bath & Beyond, Party City, and Serta Simmons. UBS said in April 2023 that this trend may result in the permanent closure of over 50,000 U.S. retail stores in the following five years.

S&P Global Market Intelligence reported that 63 public and private companies filed for bankruptcy in August, three of which had liabilities exceeding 1 billion U.S. dollars. This brings the total number of U.S. bankruptcies in the first eight months of 2024 to 452, the highest level since the peak of the COVID-19 crisis in 2020.

Michael Hunter, vice president of bankruptcy information services platform Epiq AACER, said that with high interest rates, growing debt levels and increasing delinquency rates in various domains, they expect a "continued increase in new (bankruptcy) filing volumes this fall and into the winter of 2024."

Besides retailers, a number of tech firms have also announced layoffs since last year. Among them were corporate heavyweights such as Google, Amazon, Microsoft, IBM, Spotify and Tesla.

A tally from the Crunchbase News shows that more than 191,000 workers at U.S.-based tech firms were laid off in 2023, and job cuts have continued into this year.

Consumers are becoming more cautious about spending, as the job market has been slowing and U.S. households' pandemic excess savings are running out. The weakening of consumer spending has been fueling worries about a potential U.S. economic recession.

Media reports noted that reduced consumer spending power, experiencing the hit from rising unemployment, will create a vicious cycle of job cuts. Scott Paul, president of the Alliance for American Manufacturing, said the "draconian interest rates" have harmed business investments for capital equipment and dampened purchases of vehicles and houses.

Stocks also tumbled on concerns over the slowing U.S. economy. A



Customers select goods at a supermarket in Foster City, California, the United States, May 15, 2024. According to the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. consumer price index (CPI) rose by 0.3 percent from March. (Xinhua)

Google's millisecond ad auctions are the focus of monopoly claim

ALEXANDRIA, Va., Sept 17, (AP): It happens in milliseconds, ideally, as you browse the web. Networks of computers and software analyze who you are, what you are looking at and buy and sell the advertisements you see on web pages.

The company that most likely determines which ads you get, and how much an advertiser paid to get on your screen, is Google.

In fact, the Justice Department and a coalition of states say Google's dominance over the technology that controls the sale of billions of Internet display ads every day is so thorough that it constitutes an illegal monopoly that should be broken up.

A trial under way in federal court in Alexandria, Virginia, will determine if Google's ad tech stack constitutes an illegal monopoly. The first week has included a deep dive into exactly how Google's products work together to conduct behind-the-scenes electronic auctions that place ads in front of consumers in the blink of an eye.

Online advertising has rapidly evolved. Fifteen or so years ago, if you saw an internet display ad, there was a pretty good chance it featured people dancing over their enthusiasm for low mortgage rates, and those ads were foisted on you whether you were looking at real estate or searching for baseball scores.

Now, the algorithms that match ads to your interests are carefully calibrated, sometimes to an almost creepy Google, for its part, says it has invested billions of dollars to improve the quality of ads that consumers see, and ensure that advertisers can reach the consumers they're seeking.

The Justice Department contends that what Google has also done over the years is rig the automated auctions of ad sales to favor itself over other would-be players in the industry, and also deprived the publishing industry of hundreds of millions of dollars it would have received if the auctions

were truly competitive.

Government witnesses have explained the auction process and how it has evolved over the years in detail at the Virginia trial.

In the government's depiction, there are three distinct tools that interact to sell an ad and place it in front of a consumer. There's the ad servers used by publishers to sell space on their websites, particularly the rectangular ads that appear on the top and right-hand side of a web page. Ad networks are used by advertisers to buy ad space across an array of relevant websites.

And in between is the ad exchange, which matches the website publisher to the would-be advertiser by hosting an instant auction.

Publishers naturally want to receive as high a price as possible for their ad space, but testimony at trial has shown that didn't always happen due to the rules Google imposed.

For years, Google gave its ad exchange, called AdX, the first chance to match a publisher's proposed floor

price. For instance, if a publisher wanted to sell a specific ad impression for a minimum of 50 cents, Google's software would give its own ad exchange the first chance to purchase. If Google's ad exchange bid 50 cents, it would win the auction, even if competing ad exchanges down the line were willing to pay more.

Google said the system was necessary to ensure ads loaded quickly. If the computers entertained bids from every ad exchange, it would take too long.

Publishers, dissatisfied with this system, found a workaround to conduct the auctions outside of Google's purview, a process that became known as "header bidding." Internal Google documents introduced at trial described header bidding as an "existential threat" to Google's market share.

Google's response relied on its control of all three components of the process. If publishers conducted an auction outside Google's purview but they still used Google's publisher ad server, called DoubleClick For Publishers, that software forced the winning bid back into Google's Ad Exchange. If Google was willing to match the price that publishers had received under the header-bidding auction, Google would win the auction.

Professor Ramamoorthi Ravi, an expert at Carnegie Mellon University, said rules imposed by Google failed to maximize value for publishers and "seem to have been designed to advantage Google's own products."

broad market sell-off of AI stocks in early September, after the release of tepid economic data, led to a decline in the market value of technology stocks.

the market value of technology stocks.
Notably, shares of AI giant Nvidia
plunged by 9.5 percent on Sept. 3 and

lost 279 million in market capitalization, registering the biggest ever single-day loss of market value for a U.S. stock. The Nasdaq Composite, an index with a tech-heavy focus, dropped more than 3 percent on the same day.

J.P. Morgan Research has recently raised the probability of a U.S. recession starting before the end of 2024 to 35 percent from 25 percent in its earlier forecast, and sees a 45-percent chance of recession by the end of 2025.

Two key pillars of China's strategy to bolster its influence in Africa are the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), established in 2000, and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) strategy, adopted by the Chinese government in 2013. also reached directed toward opment project continent's lar investor, as we be adopted by the Chinese government in 2013.

These initiatives serve as the foundation for China's economic engagement and geopolitical goals in Africa, a continent rich in minerals and resources, making it an arena for international competition.

FOCAC, held every three years, focuses on investments in economic

development, social infrastructure, energy, and sustainable developmental projects, aligning with the China-Africa Cooperation Vision 2035 aiming to enhance bilateral and multilateral exchanges, trade and investment, industrial development, digital economy, green and low-carbon development, health, cultural exchange, security and international affairs.

FOCAC has made significant strides in cementing the strategic partnership between China and Africa, this has been demonstrated through the rapid growth of trade between the two regions, which increased from USD 14 billion in 2000 to around USD 263 billion in 2022, and surpassed USD 282 billion in 2023.

Chinese investments in Africa has also reached USD 40 billion, largely directed towards funding local development projects, making China the continent's largest trading partner and investor, as well as its largest creditor.

During its recent ninth session, held in Beijing from September 4 to 9, 2023, FOCAC highlighted China's commitment to deepening its ties with Africa amidst growing competition with the US, under the theme of "Joining Hands to Advance Modernization and Build a High-Level China-Africa Community with a Shared Future."

What's On

In collaboration with Ministries of Interior, Education and Information

Zain partners with joint awareness campaign for new school year

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Zain announces a community partnership with the joint awareness campaign for the new school year 2024-2025. This initiative comes in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Information, and Center for Government Communication. The campaign aims to instill national identity, promote the values of education, and raise students' awareness of security and traffic safety across all grade levels.

The campaign represents a successful collaboration between public and private sector organizations, aimed at achieving shared community goals. This is especially evident in its focus on supporting education, a key driver of societal growth and prosperity, and a vital contributor to building Kuwait's future.

Zain is committed to aligning with national plans and initiatives to promote social development, recognizing the private sector's crucial role in supporting public institutions to ensure sustainable growth across various essential sectors. This commitment is reflected in the numerous partnerships Zain has formed with public institutions over the years, which have led to many successful



Zain's team with Mol officials during a school visit.

joint initiatives.

The campaign seeks to deliver a range of positive messages to students, including fostering national identity, expressing love and loyalty to Kuwait, respecting the national flag, promoting the importance of education, highlighting the role of teachers and valuing their efforts, encouraging discipline and adher-

ence to laws, preparing students mentally for the school year, and enhancing security and traffic aware-

ness to ensure student safety. As part of this initiative, during the first week of the new school year, Zain visited several elementary, middle, and high schools across various governorates. The visits aimed to welcome students, distribute gifts

and school supplies, and motivate them to approach the academic year with a positive mindset, aligned with the campaign's core values.

This campaign will run throughout the academic year, targeting not only students but also engaging parents and teachers to maximize its positive impact. It includes awareness seminars, distribution of educational materials, training programs, and the use of social media and other channels to amplify the campaign's messages and values.

As a key partner, Zain will build on its previous initiatives, particularly those focused on child protection, children's rights, and online safety, to add value to the campaign's content. This aligns with Zain's broader efforts to support and protect chil-

Zain firmly believes that children and youth are the foundation of society. To safeguard them in the digital age, the company has developed strategies to mitigate risks associated with technology, integrating this focus into its operations. As part of its commitment to meaningful connectivity, Zain continues to raise public awareness on critical issues such as online child safety

Bank aligns with Kuwait Vision 2035

Gulf Bank reveals SMEs banking solutions & Agility hosts entrepreneurship and future growth strategy in 'GB Talks' series

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: As part of the GB Talks series, Mr. Mohammad Bujbarah, Corporate Banking Portfo-lio Officer at Gulf Bank, outlined the banking services and facilities available to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These services aim to enhance the continuity, sustainability, growth, and competitive edge of SMEs

Mr. Bujbarah emphasized that Gulf Bank offers a wide range of services and transactions tailored to SMEs, available either directly or through a dedicated online platform. This includes the ability to apply for both cash and non-cash credit facilities, without needing an existing Gulf Bank account.

Services available include electronic payroll transfers, ATM card issuance, registration for point-of-sale systems, payment gateways, logistics, consulting services, and more. All of these can be accessed and registered for via the bank's website.

He explained that clients interested in financing for their SME can visit the bank's website, go to the SME section, fill out the application on the small and medium-sized business financing solutions page, and submit it. After submission, they will receive an email requesting audited financial statements for the past three years and a recent management report. Following an initial review, the bank will contact the client if the business is deemed economically viable.

Mr. Bujbarah also highlighted Gulf Bank's dedication to improving nonbanking services for SMEs, assisting them in operating efficiently without the need to invest in or manage their own warehouses or specialized teams for customs clearance and inventory transport.

He stressed that Gulf Bank's 2025



Mohammad Bujbarah speaking during the GB Talks series.

Mohammad Bujbarah

■ Gulf Bank offers a wide range of services and transactions tailored to SMEs, available either directly or through a dedicated online platform.

strategy is centered on supporting SMEs by expanding its range of products and banking services to promote their growth and development.

It is important to note that SMEs eligible for Gulf Bank financing are independent businesses with assets approximately valued at KD 500,000, annual sales up to KD 1.5 million, and at least 150 employees.

Gulf Bank aims to be Kuwait's leading bank, fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace to deliver exceptional customer service while contributing sustainably to the community. Through its extensive branch network and innovative digital services, the bank empowers customers to conduct banking transactions conveniently and efficiently, ensuring a seamless experience.

In alignment with Kuwait Vision 2035, "New Kuwait," and its commitment to fostering collaborative partnerships, Gulf Bank is dedicated to driving robust sustainability initiatives across environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions. The bank is committed to implementing strategically selected and diverse sustainability programs both internally and externally.

Company invests in Kuwaiti youth through CODED Academy

technology workshop at Academy X

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Agility, a supply chain services, infrastructure and innovation company, held an educational workshop on entrepreneurship and technology for students at Academy X, part of the CODED Academy for programming.

The workshop, led by Agility Chairperson Henadi Al-Saleh, is part of the company's ongoing investment in youth education and commitment to building Kuwait's future.

The workshop highlighted the strong connection between entrepreneurship and technology. Al-Saleh walked the students through practical concepts, drawing from Agility's extensive expertise as a technology developer and investor. The session also provided a detailed overview of how to pitch business ideas and secure support for innovations. The workshop sparked lively discussion among the students, concluding with conversation about promising future opportunities and innovation likely to arise in Kuwait.

Al-Saleh said women entrepreneurs and innovators are playing a larger role in society and business in Kuwait and

"Empowering women has always been at the heart of Agility's strategic partnerships. We have chosen to support initiatives that help young women develop technical skills and foster entrepreneurship. Academy X is part of that model, and this workshop reflects our commitment to developing a new generation of innovative Kuwaiti women." Al-Saleh said.

In August, Agility Corporate Ventures executive Lamia Hayat led an Academy X session on the basics of venture capital and its role in tech innovation. Hayat shared real-world challenges, case studies, and interactive pitch sessions, encouraging them to think critically about their tech-fo-



Chairperson Henadi Al-Saleh during the student workshop.

cused business ideas. This year, Agility is funding coding skills programs for more than 1,300 school students in Kuwait through CODED Academy. Agility has sponsored the launch of the Academy X program, which will teach 300 female students modern programming basics. The curriculum includes building applications using AI; lessons on leveraging technology in entrepreneurship; and other vital skills that equip students for the job market. Academy X

students and is now in its first full year. **About Agility**

was photed fast year by

Agility is a global leader in supply chain services, infrastructure, and innovation with 54,000+ employees across six continents. Listed in Kuwait and Dubai, Agility specializes in growing and scaling operating businesses. Agility's portfolio of companies include the world's largest aviation services company (Menzies Aviation); a global fuel logistics business (Tristar); and a leading logistics parks developer and operator across the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa (Agility Logistics Parks). Other Agility companies



plauding the students.

offer customs digitization services, remote-site infrastructure services, defense and government services ecommerce-enablement and digital logistics, and waste management and recycling. Agility invests in supply chain innovation, sustainability, and resilience, and has minority holdings in a portfolio of listed and non-listed

Over 30 Kuwaiti medical students visit London

Warba Bank sponsors Kuwait medical students' educational visit to London

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Warba Bank has announced its sponsorship of the Kuwait Medical Students Association's educational visit to London, which includes over 30 students aiming to enhance their expertise. The program features visits to the Kuwait Health Office and the Embassy of Kuwait in the UK, along with tours of several hospitals to learn about the latest treatment methods and medical advancements. This experience will help students apply cutting-edge technologies in their academic studies and future careers. The itinerary also includes visits to Kuwaiti patients in various London hospitals to monitor their health and follow up on their treatment plans.

Ayman Salem Al-Mutairi, Director Marketing & Corporate Communication at Warba Bank, emphasized the importance of sponsoring and supporting Kuwaiti students at Kuwait University as part of the bank's commitment to empowering young talents across scientific, cultural, and sports fields, both domestically and internationally. This sponsorship underlines Warba Bank's belief in the power of education as a cornerstone for achieving economic growth, aligning with Kuwait's broader vision of national advancement.

Al-Mutairi reiterated Warba Bank's conviction that Kuwait's true strength lies in its promising youth, who strive for the highest levels of academic achievement to serve their nation and propel the wheels of development forward.

He stressed that supporting education across various sectors is integral to the bank's mission, aligning with its social responsibility and commitment to fostering educational success, particularly at the university level, which serves as a gateway to the job market.

Warba Bank aims to be a leader in social responsibility. aspiring to be close to its customers and the younger generation through meaningful initiatives that support and serve the community at large.

Al-Mutairi emphasized Warba Bank's dedication to supporting the community, particularly young graduates entering the healthcare field, reflecting the bank's commitment to education and social responsibility. He expressed gratitude for academic professionals who play a crucial role in nurturing students and building Kuwait's future workforce.

Moudi Naif Al-Hassawi, Chair of the Research Committee at the Kuwait Medical Students Association, highlighted that the committee organized a summer workshop in London from July 27 to August 1, 2024. "The workshop focused on emergency response (suture) skills at Imperial College - London." She continued, "in addition to the workshop, we, as students, visited a group of Kuwaiti patients at Cleveland Hospital (London) and learned about some cases, and this is



Musaed Alghareeb with Al-Hassawi

Al-Mutairi:

- Supporting and nurturing national medical talents is a top priority and social responsibility for Warba Bank.
- Our sponsorship reflects our deep appreciation for education and its vital role in driving economic development.

based on the social responsibility of students." Al-Hassawi mentioned that the students also visited Ku-

wait Embassy's in London, where they were warmly welcomed by the embassy staff, reinforcing the importance of supporting Kuwaiti youth abroad and highlighting the positive reception from the diplomatic community.

She added that the experience was highly beneficial, equipping students with practical knowledge and skills, presenting a model of diligent Kuwaiti university student.

Al-Hassawi concluded by expressing gratitude to Warba Bank for their generous sponsorship, which significantly contributed to the workshop's success which demonstrates Warba's commitment to supporting education and social development.

It is important to note that, Warba Bank continues to achieve remarkable success, earning recognition for its innovative digital banking services aligned with Sharia principles. As one of Kuwait's leading banks, Warba remains committed to serving the community and enhancing its outreach to all segments of society.

Best account of its kind offering highest monthly returns

KIB unveils winners of Al Dirwaza account's draw

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the winners of the weekly draw held under the Al Dirwaza account's 2024 campaign, which is distinguished by the highest number of winners throughout the year. The third weekly draw, based on customers' August deposits, recently took place in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as representatives from the Bank. The KD 1,000 prize was awarded to Fahad Aoda Halil Albadali, Nasrin Mohammad Hossein Nasab, Nada Abdulrahman Murekhan Alrashidi, Harbi Mosaad Alharbi, and Ibrahim Abdelmajid Alkaddah, whilst the KD 500 prize was awarded to Latifah Muhail Mohammad Alsallal, Rana Said Abdel hamid Abdeltawab, Ahmed Ewida Mahmoud Ewida, Atallah Hameed Shahab Nazal, Abdulaziz Ateyah Eid Sagheer, Salah Ahmad Rashed Alkhalaf, and Mahdi Abdulghaffar Mohammad Atash.

It serves to note that Al Dirwaza account is a savings account for individual customers, based on the Wakala investment principle, launched by KIB as one of its banking products for individuals. The account is currently the best of its kind in the sector, with annual expected profits of up to 2% disbursed on a monthly basis, where the customer gets an expected profit of 2% for the first 3 months from the account opening date and up to 1% expected rate onward. The expected profits are automatically deposited into the customer's account within the first day of the beginning of each month.

Al Dirwaza account holders are eligible to enter the weekly, monthly and annual draws on the condition of maintaining at least KD 100 in their account. For the weekly and monthly draws, each KD 1 that has completed a full month's cycle in the account will count for one chance, and chances are calculated based on the lowest monthly balance preceding the draw. As for the mega draw, chances are calculated for each KD 1 that completes a two-month cycle in the account - based on the lowest two monthly balances prior to the draw.

Al Dirwaza account is also in compliance with the provisions of Islamic Sharia and approved by the KIB's Sharia Supervisory Board. Furthermore, the account comes with a wide range of benefits, including the ease of opening the account, which does not require a salary transfer, and the customer's ability to open it remotely without visiting a branch through KIB Online on the Bank's website or KIB Mobile application on smartphones.

Additionally, Al Dirwaza account automatically grants customers instant issuance of an ATM card, with a KD 2,000 ATM daily withdrawal limit, as well as the ability to issue credit cards against the cash collateral in the account.



KIB's Al Dirwaza account.

To open the account and participate in its draws, a minimum of KD 100 is required and can only be withdrawn upon account closure.

About KIB

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and development. As part of its new strategic direction, the Bank focuses on offering a nextlevel customer experience under the slogan: "Bank for Life".

Through a network of branches spread across the State of Kuwait, KIB offers a broad range of banking products and services, as well as innovative digital banking solutions in line with international best standards. As part of its duty towards the community, the Bank also encompasses a leading social responsibility program that aims at positively impacting all members of the community through a wide range of impactful initiatives and activities.

Today, KIB has taken concrete steps in implementing its new strategic objectives. The Bank has cemented its role as a key player in the local banking industry and has continued to maintain its strong financial performance; enabling it to be globally recognized for its strong credit rating and financial position.

ARAB TIMES

In 'The Critic,' McKellen's critic takes his job very seriously

By Lindsey Bahr

The arts rarely have anything good to say about critics. That they're not generally the hero of many stories is, at the very least, understandable. More often they're portrayed as joyless, cruel and a little pathetic; themselves failed artists who live to take down others, or, worse, sycophants in search of a famous friend.

Without getting into any sort of philosophical, or even factual debate about the nature of the kind of person drawn to criticism (besides perhaps a staunch antipathy to either job security or amassing wealth), it is safe to say that the drama critic of "The Critic" takes all the worst stereotypes to hysterical heights.

Set in the 1930s in London, Ian McKellen is Jimmy Erskine, a veteran theater critic whose reviews can make or break a play or a performer. He has a monastic devotion to telling the truth, as entertainingly as he can, and knows what he must sacrifice to do so. "The drama critic is feared and reviled for the judgement he

must bring," McKellen says in an ominous voiceover. "(He) must be cold and perfectly alone."

When one woman dares to chat him up after a play, offering her take on the material and performances, he swiftly tries to have

her removed from the restaurant claiming he must be protected from the general public. When an actress, Nina Land (Gemma Arterton), confronts him about his wildly inconsistent criticisms of her (how can she be both plump and emaciated, she wonders), he refuses to apologize. And he scoffs when the new boss at the newspaper, David Brooke (Mark Strong), implores him to tone it down: "Be kinder," he says. "More beauty, less beast."

Satire

But what starts as satire spirals into a wildly messy tragedy with contrivance upon contrivance. This is a film that could have listened to its anti-hero's advice to the flailing actress: Do less. That someone as great as Lesley Manville, as Nina's mother, gets a mere handful of scenes and is only minimally consequential to it all is telling. It strives to be an intricate spider-web of compelling, intersecting stories, but few characters are fleshed out enough for us to care.

"The Critic," handsomely directed by Anand Tucker ("Hilary and Jackie," "Leap Year") and written by Patrick Marber ("Closer," "Notes on a Scandal"), is very loosely based on Anthony Quinn's novel "Curtain Call," itself more a murder mystery than

this ever allows itself to be. Instead, the film is about the desperate lengths a man will go to when his job and freedom are threatened. Erskine is the kind of gentleman critic whose power and authority have gone unchallenged for so long, he's become delusional beyond recognition. His words don't just destroy, though. They've also inspired. Even the actress he obliterates time and time again admits as much: She tells him it was his writing that made her fall in love with the theater.

There are some fun ideas here, and good performances. Mc-Kellen is having a wonderful time living inside this charismatic monster who you are with until you're really not. Erskine is an open secret that becomes a liability with his new boss and the rise of fascist thought around him. But none of it really adds up to anything poignant or enormously entertaining; its darkness is both lopsided and superficial, as most become casualties of Erskine's aims. Theater critic as tyrant is a juicy premise; "The Critic" just can't live up to the promise.

"The Critic," a Greenwich Entertainment released in select theaters recently, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "some language and sexual content." Running time: 100 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four. (AP)

Variety



This image released by Greenwich Entertainment shows Ian McKellen in a scene from 'The Critic.' (AP)

People

Legal troubles escalate after music mogul's arrest

Combs charged with sex trafficking

RENO, Nev.: Rupert Murdoch and four of his children on Monday went before a Nevada probate commissioner behind closed doors to an evidentiary hearing that could decide who controls Murdoch's media empire after his death. The hearing scheduled to resume

The hearing scheduled to resume Tuesday and continue into next week comes after Murdoch, 93, moved last year to change the terms of his irrevocable family trust.

The New York Times reported, based on a sealed Washoe County court document, that it was part of a bid to ensure that his eldest son, Lachlan, remains in charge of his cadre of newspapers and television networks, including The Wall Street Journal and Fox News Channel.

The court has kept the hearings closed to the public and most documents sealed, largely rejecting requests for access by news organizations including The Associated Press.

The trust was originally set up to give equal control over Rupert Murdoch's businesses to his four oldest children upon his death, according to the Times.

Murdoch stepped down as leader of both Fox News' parent company and his News Corp. media holdings last fall. He is arguing that to preserve his businesses' commercial value for all his heirs, the trust must be changed so Lachlan can ensure his newspapers and TV networks continue to have a conservative editorial outlook, the Times reported.

Lachlan succeeded his father as chairman of News Corp. in November. He's also executive officer at Fox Corp., home to conservative news network Fox News, the Fox broadcast and sports networks, and local TV stations. The media empire spans continents and helped to shape modern American politics.

Rupert Murdoch's bid to change the trust has pitted him against his other three children named as beneficiaries: James, Elisabeth and Prudence, and they have united to stop their father from revising the trust, according to the Times. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: The Emmys telecast on ABC reached nearly 7 million viewers, a jump of more than 50% from the record low of the last ceremony in January and the biggest audience since 2021, according to numbers released Monday by the network.

Sunday night's 76th Primetime Emmy Awards, in which "ShoNEW YORK, Sept 17, (AP): Sean "Diddy" Combs has been indicted on federal sex trafficking and racketeering charges. The indictment against the music mogul was unsealed Tuesday. He had been arrested late Monday in Manhattan, roughly six months after federal authorities conducting a sex trafficking investigation raided his luxurious homes in Los Angeles and Miami. Over the past year, Combs has been sued by people who say he subjected them to physical or sexual abuse. He has denied many of those allegations, and his lawyer, Marc Agnifilo, said outside the courthouse Tuesday

morning that Combs would plead not guilty.

Combs was expected to appear before a federal judge in New York on Tuesday after his indictment on undisclosed criminal charges.

The music mogul was arrested late Monday in Manhattan, roughly six months after federal authorities conducting a sex trafficking investigation raided his luxurious homes in Los Angeles and Miami.

The indictment detailing the charges was expected to be unsealed Tuesday morning, according to US Attorney Damian Williams.

Over the past year, Combs has been sued by people

Over the past year, Combs has been sued by people who say he subjected them to physical or sexual abuse. He has denied many of those allegations and his lawyer, Marc Agnifilo, said outside the courthouse Tuesday morning that Combs would plead not guilty. Agnifilo said he would "fight like hell" to try and get his client released from custody.

Agnifilo said he didn't have details on the indictment, but that Combs knew it was coming and had relocated to New York two weeks ago in anticipation. Of Combs, he said, "His spirits are good. He's confident."

Combs, 54, was recognized as one of the most influential figures in hip-hop before a flood of allegations that emerged over the past year turned him into an industry pariah.

In November, his former girlfriend, the R&B singer

Cassie, whose legal name is Casandra Ventura, filed a

lawsuit saying he had beaten and raped her for years.

She accused Combs of coercing her, and others, into unwanted sex in drug-fueled settings.

The suit was settled in one day but months later CNN aired hotel security footage showing Combs punching and kicking Cassie and throwing her on a floor. After the video aired, Combs anologized, saying, "I was dis-

the video aired, Combs apologized, saying, "I was disgusted when I did it."

Combs and his attorneys, however, denied similar al-

leastions made by others in a string of lawsvits

legations made by others in a string of lawsuits.

Douglas Wigdor, a lawyer for Cassie, said in a statement Tuesday that "neither Ms. Ventura nor I have any comment."

"We appreciate your understanding and if that chang-

es, we will certainly let you know," he added.

A woman said Combs, raped her two decades ago

A woman said Combs raped her two decades ago when she was 17. A music producer sued, saying Combs forced him to have sex with prostitutes. Another woman, April Lampros, said Combs subjected her to "terrifying sexual encounters," starting when she was a college student in 1994.

Abused

The AP does not typically name people who say they have been sexually abused unless they come forward publicly, as Cassie and Lampros did.

Combs, the founder of Bad Boy Records, has gotten out of legal trouble before.

In 2001, he was acquitted of charges related to a Manhattan nightclub shooting two years earlier that injured three people. His then-protege, Shyne, was convicted of assault and other charges and served about eight years in prison.

A day after the raids, his attorney Aaron Dyer called them "a gross use of military-level force," said the allegations were "meritless."

Combs, then known as Puff Daddy, was at the center of the East Coast-West Coast hip-hop battles of the 1990s as the partner and producer of the Notorious B.I.G., who was shot and killed in 1997. But like many of those who survived the era, his public image had softened with age into a genteel host of parties in Hollywood and the Hamptons, a fashion-forward businessman, and a doting father who spoiled his kids, some of whom lost their mother in 2018.

But a different image began emerging in November, when his former protege and girlfriend, the R&B singer Cassie, became the first of several people to sue him for sexual abuse with stories of a steady stream of sex workers in drug-fueled settings where some of those involved were coerced or cajoled into sex.

In her November lawsuit, Cassie alleged years of abuse, including beatings and rape. Her suit also alleged Combs engaged in sex trafficking by "requiring her to engage in forced sexual acts in multiple jurisdictions" and by engaging in "harboring and transportation of Plaintiff for purposes of sex induced by force, fraud,

on occupion "

It also said he compelled her to help him traffic male sex workers Combs would force Cassie to have sex with while he filmed.

The suit was settled the following day, but its reverberations would last far longer. Combs lost lingering allies, supporters and those reserving judgment when CNN in May aired a leaked video of him punching Cassie, kicking her and throwing her on the floor in a hotel

hallway.

The next day, in his first real acknowledgement of wrongdoing since the stream of allegations began, Combs posted a social media video apologizing, saying "I was disgusted when I did it" and "I'm disgusted now." Cassie's lawsuit was followed by at least a half-

dozen others in the ensuing months.

In February, a music producer filed a lawsuit alleging Combs coerced him to solicit prostitutes and pressured him to have sex with them.

Another of Combs' accusers was a woman who said the rap producer raped her two decades ago when she was 17.

Another woman who filed a lawsuit, April Lampros, said she was a college student in 1994 when she met Combs, and a series of "terrifying sexual encounters" with Combs and those around him began that lasted for years.

Combs, and a series of "terrifying sexual encounters" with Combs and those around him began that lasted for years.

Combs and his attorneys denied nearly all of the lawsuits' allegations.

While authorities did not publicly say that the lawsuits set off the criminal investigation, Dyer said when the warrants were served that the case was based on "meritless accusations made in civil lawsuits." The AP does not typically name people who say they

have been sexually abused unless they come forward publicly as Cassie and Lampros did.

As the founder of Bad Boy Records, Combs became one of the most influential hip-hop producers and executives of the past three decades Along with the Notorious B.I.G. he worked with a slew of top-tier artists including

Mary J. Blige, Usher, Lil Kim, Faith Evans and 112.
Combs' roles in his businesses beyond music - including lucrative private-label spirits, a media company and the Sean John Fashion line - took major hits when

the allegations arose.

The consequences were even greater when the leaked beating video emerged. Howard University cut ties with him, and he returned his key to the city of New York at the request of the mayor.

gun," "Hacks" and "Baby Reindeer" won top awards, was back in its traditional mid-September spot after the rare January ceremony that was delayed four months by Hollywood's strikes.

That show, which aired on Fox, reached a record low audience of 4.3 million viewers.

ABC said Monday that the



Murdoch

Sunday night show hosted by **Eugene** and **Dan Levy** reached 6.87 million viewers, a jump of 54% despite competition from NFL football. (AP)

AMMAN: Located in northeast from Amman, Umm Al-Jimal ruins -- built using black basalt

blocks supported with similar rectangular blocks -- is considered home to almost 2,000 years of fascinating history and culture.

Umm Al-Jimal was first established in the first century A.D. as a rural suburb of the ancient Nabataean capital of **Bostra**.

The ruins also houses an ancient village constructed exclusively

with dark, volcanic basalt rock, referred by archaeologists as the "Black Gem of the Desert".

UNESCO announced earlier this year the inclusion of Umm Al-Jimal as the seventh Jordanian sites on the list of World Heritage along with Petra, Quseir Amra, Umm Al-Rasas, Wadi Rum, Al-Maghtas and Salt. (KUNA)

People & Places

People

Letterman's tryout

Haley unveils weekly SiriusXM radio show

NEW YORK, Sept 17, (AP): Former Republican presidential candidate **Nikki Haley** is launching her own radio talk show next week on SiriusXM that's set to air once a week at least through the inauguration of a new president

She'll do interviews, take listener calls and talk politics on the show, which will be carried Wednesdays from 8 to 9 a.m. ET on the satellite radio system's Triumph channel. Expect some talk mixed in about Clemson football, her passion for running and music maybe even Taylor Swift.

The former UN ambassador's own politics won't be a secret, but she said she wanted to get away from some of the tribalism that dominates the media.



"My kids, they don't watch the news, because they think both sides are crazy," she told The Associated Press. "And they're not wrong about that. I think we have to take the craziness out. I think we have to take the noise out and I think we have to break things down in a way that people feel empowered."

Haley was former President
Donald Trump's last opponent
left standing for the GOP nomination this year. She endorsed Trump and supported
him at the convention, but until the last two weeks,

Trump hadn't sought her help on the general election campaign trail.

But she said Tuesday that Trump's team had reached out to hers in the past two weeks to discuss some options for joint appearances, though none have been scheduled. Her radio show, however, "is not going to be about campaigning for a particular candi-

date," she said.

She said she'd been approached by some partisan news outlets about doing some work for them but wasn't interested. She didn't identify them. Her campaign, she said, taught her how the media is tainted and partisan outlets are predictable.

Family

"I think that's what Americans are tired of," Haley said. "They don't want to go on and watch a news show and know exactly which candidate they're pushing and exactly what politics are pushing. They want to know the issues. They want to know exactly how it's going to affect their family. I want to take all of the politics out and really break it down on a policy level."

Haley said she's open to continuing the show past January "if Americans like what they hear."

The longtime host of "The Late Show with David Letterman" found himself answering questions rather than asking them when a federal judge in New York City put the entertainer through an audition of sorts on Monday for a possible role as a juror in a criminal trial.

It was the serious setting of a criminal trial over a cryptocurrency fraud when Judge P. Kevin Castel confronted the famous bearded comedian, identified in court only as "Juror 16," with questions just as he did three dozen other potential jurors to determine who would be on a panel of 12 jurors and four alternates.

The prospective jurors had already survived a general round of questioning in which individuals are dismissed for hardship reasons, such as medical issues or jobs from which they cannot be spared. The trial is expected to last less than two weeks.

When Letterman, who stepped down from his show in 2015, made it to what could be the final round for admittance on the jury, the judge lobbed a softball:

"Where do you live?"
"Hartford," Letterman responded, proving that he couldn't make it through a single word without delivering a joke.

"No, it's a joke," Letterman quickly let the judge know. Hartford is in Connecticut, which would have disqualified him from the jury because it is outside the area where jurors are drawn from.

"Nice try," the judge responded, adding, "You figured you would forgo Queens," another location outside the area covered by the Southern District of New York. Queens is located in the Eastern District of New York.

After Letterman revealed his true area of residence - Westchester County - the pair began a volley of questions and answers totaling nearly three dozen exchanges

Degree

Along the way, the judge, lawyers and three dozen or so prospective jurors learned a lot that the world already knows about Letterman. He was born in Indianapolis, obtained a degree from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, and has a 20-year-old son in college in Massachusetts.

Asked what he does for a living, Letterman said he was currently "working for a company called Netflix."
"Spouse or significant other?" Castel asked.

"I've had both. Currently I just have the spouse," Letterman responded.

Asked how he gets his news, Letterman gave a nod to the past, saying: "Every morning I used to pick up the paper off the front porch. Now, I turn on the computer and it's an aggregation of news sources from all over the United States and around the world."

Asked what he likes to watch besides any Netflix pro-

grams he's involved with, Letterman said, "I like sports."
"I'm happy football is here. I'm happy it's this time
in the baseball season. I like motor sports. I like pretty
much what most Americans watch on TV," he said.

The judge asked him if he's an Indianapolis Colts football fan.
"Big Colts fan. 0 and 2, but still a fan," he said,

"Big Colts fan. 0 and 2, but still a fan," he said, referring to the fact that the Colts have lost their first two games this season.

For hobbies, Letterman said he likes to fish, ski and

be outdoors. "Fiver collections of inverse," the index collection.

"Ever called as a juror?" the judge asked.
"Been called many times. Just couldn't make it hap-

pen," Letterman answered.
"You know, this may be the charm," Castel said, aware that Letterman had a 50-50 chance to make it

onto the panel.
"It would be a pleasure," Letterman said.

In the end, shortly before the jury was sworn in, Letterman was ejected when a prosecutor exercised what is known as a "strike," which allows lawyers on either side to release a certain number of potential jurors from the panel for any reason at all. It was the third of four strikes exercised by prosecutors. No reason was given.



Lily Donaldson wears a creation for the Burberry Spring Summer 2025 fashion show on Monday, Sept. 16, in London. (AP)



Lil Tecca poses for a portrait on Tuesday, Sept. 10, 2024, in New York. (AP)

Variety

LONDON: American writers **Percival Everett** and **Rachel Kushner** are among six finalists shortlisted for the prestigious Booker Prize for fiction this year, organ-

izers said Monday.

Five of the six authors are women - the largest number in the prize's 55-year history.

Everett, a 2022 Booker finalist for "The Trees," is again nominated for "James," which reimagines Mark Twain's "Huckleberry Finn" from the point of view of its main Black character, the enslaved man Jim.

Kushner, another former Booker finalist with her bestseller "The Mars Room," is a contender again with spy story "Creation Lake." (AP)

BOSTON: The alternative rock band Jane's Addiction has scuttled its latest tour following an onstage scuffle between lead singer **Perry Farrell** and guitarist **Dave Navarro**. Farrell later apologized for "inexcusable behavior."

"The band have made the difficult decision to take some time away as a group. As such, they will be cancelling the remainder of the tour," the band said in a brief statement Monday.

Videos captured Farrell lunging at Navarro at a Friday concert in Boston, bumping Navarro with his shoulder before taking a swing at the guitarist with his right arm. Navarro is seen holding his right arm out to keep Farrell away before Farrell is dragged away by others on stage. The show ended shortly after and the band apologized. (AP)

LONDON: Former BBC news anchor **Huw Edwards**, once one of the most prominent media figures in Britain, was given a suspended prison sentence Monday for images

of child sexual abuse on his phone. Edwards, 63, pleaded guilty in Westminster Magistrates' Court in July to



'It's never a plan B'

Tecca's album 'Plan A' highlights his journey

NEW YORK, Sept 17, (AP): There's the story everyone knows about Lil Tecca, and then there is Tyler Sharpe, the rapper-producer with big aspirations and the dedication to see it through. His fourth studio album, appropriately titled "Plan A," out Friday, isn't a culmination of his career to date but it does reflect the journey.

"Plan A' summarizes my plan for life," he told the Associated Press. "It's never a plan B."

The popular narrative goes a little something like this: Five years ago, a then-teenage MC from New York released "Ransom," introducing the world to his singsong-y, AutoTune-inspired flow and hook-heavy melodies. People loved it, and quickly. As of last month, the Recording Industry Association of America has accredited it eight-times platinum.

A hit at the start of a career is usually a sure-fire way to kneecap it, to burn bright and fast, but Lil Tecca managed to avoid the cliche. He has a loyal and fervent fanbase, and he never let the hype overwhelm him. The music was always first. It's why his last album, "Tec," which arrived almost exactly a year before "Plan A," was celebrated in hip-hop circles, with tracks like "500 lbs" and an inspired collab with Kodak Black, "Hvn on Earth."

For this album, Tecca enlisted the producers he's been working with since day one - like Rio Leyva, Taz Taylor and the like - to evolve the sound he's spent the last few years cultivating.

"My most favorite people to collaborate with are producers," he says. "We mainly create with no expectations."

mainly create with no expectations."

Their process hasn't changed much from the early days: Tecca picks a beat and freestyles or writes to it. "Sometimes I might just rap on the loop. No beat, no drums, no nothing," he says. "The only difference is just sharpening the craft."

There's only one listed feature on the album - Don Toliver on the futuristic trap-rock, "I Can't Let Go."

Perfect

"Don Toliver is fire," he says, simply. "When it came to having the Don song on there, it just felt like the perfect moment, honestly, for what I was trying to achieve in that first half of the project."

"This one is definitely way more personal. I'm speaking about things I've never spoken (about) like my mom and stuff like that," he says, referring to the smooth throwback, "MAMA."

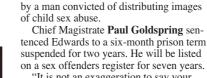
Part of that goal is transparency.

"So I kind of just wanted to let people take another step closer to me, on the personal side."

It's found in songs about relationships and miscommunication, too, like the single "Taste."

Tecca says the many elements that make up "Plan A" manifest in a few different ways, fashion among them. He's been wearing a lot of leopard print lately; it appears on the album cover, the single artwork for "Bad Time," and elsewhere.

three counts of making indecent images of children, a charge related to photos sent to him on the WhatsApp messaging service



"It is not an exaggeration to say your long-earned reputation is in tatters," Goldspring said.

Edwards' fall from grace over the past year has caused turmoil for the BBC after it was revealed the publicly funded broadcaster paid him about 200,000 pounds (\$263,000) for five months of his salary after he had been arrested in November while on leave. The BBC has asked him to pay it back. (AP)

Tradition

Timeless craft

Dedicated artists preserve 'temari'

KAWARAMACHI, Japan, Sept 17, (AP): Time seems to stop here. Women sit in a small circle, quietly, painstakingly stitching patterns on balls the size of an orange, a stitch

at a time.

At the center of the circle is **Eiko Araki**, a master of the Sanuki Kagari Temari, a Japanese traditional craft passed down for more than 1,000 years on the southwestern island of Shikoku.

Each ball, or "temari," is a work of art, with colorful geometric patterns carrying poetic names like "firefly flowers" and "layered stars." A temari ball takes weeks or months to finish. Some

of dollars (tens of thousands of yen), although others are much cheaper. These kaleidoscopic

cost hundreds

These kaleidoscopic balls aren't for throwing or kicking around. They're destined to be



Araki

heirlooms, carrying prayers for health and goodness. They might be treasured like a painting or piece of sculpture in a Western home.

Beauty

The concept behind temari is an elegant otherworldliness, an impractical beauty that is also very laborintensive to create.

"Out of nothing, something this beautiful is born, bringing joy," says Araki. "I want it to be remembered there are beautiful things in this world that can only be made by hand."

The region where temari originated was good for growing cotton, warm with little rainfall, and the spherical creations continue to be made out of the humble material.

At Araki's studio, which also serves as head office for temari's preservation society, there are 140 hues of cotton thread, including delicate pinks and blues, as well as more vivid colors and all the subtle gradations in between.

The women dye them by hand, using plants, flowers and other natural ingredients, including cochineal, a bug living in cacti that produces a red dye. The deeper shade of indigo is dyed again and again to turn just about black. Yellow and blue are combined to form gorgeous greens. Soy juice is added to deepen the tints, a dash of organic protein.

Outside the studio, loops of cotton thread, in various tones of yellow today, hang outside in the shade to dry.

The arduous process starts with making the basic ball mold on which the stitching is done. Rice husks that are cooked and then dried are placed in a piece of cotton, then wound with thread, over and over, until, almost magically, a ball appears in your hands.

Graceful

Then the stitching begins.
The balls are surprisingly hard, so each stitch requires a concentrated, almost painful, push. The motifs must be precise and even.

Each ball has lines to guide the stitching - one that goes around it like the equator, and others that zigzag to the top and bottom.

These days, temari is getting

some new recognition, among Japanese and foreigners as well. Caroline Kennedy took lessons in the ball-making when she was United States ambassador to Japan a decade ago. Yoshie Nakamura, who promotes

Japanese handcrafted art in her dutyfree shop at Tokyo's Haneda airport, says she features temari there because of its intricate and delicate designs.

"Temari that might have been

everyday in a faraway era is now being used for interior decoration," she said.
"I really feel each Sanuki Kagari

"I really feel each Sanuki Kagari Temari speaks of a special, one-andonly existence in the world."

Araki has come up with some newer designs that feel both modern and historical. She is trying to make the balls more accessible to every-day life - for instance, as Christmas tree ornaments. A strap with a dangling miniature ball, though quite hard to make because of its size, is affordable at about 1,500 yen (\$10) each.

Another of Araki's inventions is a cluster of pastel balls that opens and shuts with tiny magnets. Fill it with sweet-smelling herbs for a kind of aromatic diffuser.

Araki, a graceful woman who talks very slowly, her head cocked to one side as though always in thought, often travels to Tokyo to teach. But mostly she works and gives lessons in her studio, an abandoned kindergarten with faded blue paint and big windows with tired wooden frames.

She started out as a metalwork artist. Her husband's parents were temari masters who worked hard to resurrect the artform when it was declining in the modern age, at risk of dying out.





Edwards

ARAB TIMES, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2024



This undated image provided by OceanGate Expeditions in June 2021 shows the company's Titan submersible. (AP)

'Titan unsafe' testimony

'All good here:' Final text from doomed Titan sub

NEW YORK, Sept 17, (AP): A key employee who labeled a doomed experimental submersible unsafe prior to its last, fatal voyage testified Tuesday that he frequently clashed with the company's co-founder and felt the company was committed only to making money.

David Lochridge, OceanGate's former operations director, is one of the most anticipated witnesses to appear before a commission trying to determine what caused the Titan to implode en route to the wreckage of the Titanic last year, killing all five on board. His testimony echoed that of other former employees Monday, one of whom described OceanGate head Stockton Rush as volatile and difficult to work with.

"The whole idea behind the company was to make money," Lochridge said. "There was very little in the way of science."

Rush was among the five people who died in the implosion. OceanGate owned the Titan and brought it on several dives to the Titanic going back to

His testimony began a day after other witnesses painted a picture of a troubled company that was impatient to get its unconventionally designed craft into the water. The accident set off a worldwide debate about the future of private undersea exploration.I

Implosion

The company, based in Washington state, suspended its operations after the implesion

OceanGate's former engineering director, Tony Nissen, kicked off Monday's testimony, telling investigators that he felt pressured to get the vessel ready to dive and refused to pilot it for a journey several years before Titan's last trip.

"'I'm not getting in it," Nissen said he told Rush.

When asked if there was pressure to get Titan into the water, Nissen re-

sponded, "100%."

But asked if he felt that the pressure compromised safety decisions and testing, Nissen paused, then replied, "No. And that's a difficult question to answer, because given infinite time and infinite budget, you could do infinite testing."

OceanGate's former finance and human resources director, Bonnie Carl, testified Monday that Lochridge had characterized the Titan as "unsafe." Lochridge is expected to provide more perspective on what caused the implosion.

Coast Guard officials noted at the start of the hearing that the submersible had not been independently reviewed, as is standard practice. That and Titan's unusual design subjected it to scrutiny in the undersea exploration community

During the submersible's final dive on June 18, 2023, the crew lost contact after an exchange of texts about the Titan's depth and weight as it descended. The support ship Polar Prince then sent repeated messages asking if the Titan could still see the ship on its onboard

One of the last messages from Titan's crew to Polar Prince before the submersible imploded stated, "all good here," according to a visual re-creation presented earlier in the hearing.

When the submersible was reported overdue, rescuers rushed ships, planes and other equipment to an area about 435 miles (700 kilometers) south of St. John's, Newfoundland. Wreckage of the Titan was subsequently found on the ocean floor about 330 yards (300 meters) off the bow of the Titanic, Coast Guard officials said.

Scheduled to appear later in the hearing are OceanGate co-founder Guillermo Sohnlein and former scientific director, Steven Ross, according to a list compiled by the Coast Guard. Numerous guard officials, scientists, and government and industry officials are also expected to testify. The US Coast Guard subpoenaed witnesses who were not government employees, said Coast Guard spokesperson Melissa Leake.

Among those not on the hearing witness list is Rush's widow, Wendy Rush, the company's communications director. Asked about her absence, Leake said the Coast Guard does not comment on the reasons for not calling specific individuals to a particular hearing during ongoing investigations. She said it's common for a Marine Board of Investigation to "hold multiple hearing sessions or conduct additional witness depositions for complex cases."

Investigation

OceanGate has no full-time employees at this time but will be represented by an attorney during the hearing, the company said in a statement. The company said it has been fully cooperating with the Coast Guard and NTSB investigations since they began.

The time frame for the investigation was initially a year, but the inquiry has taken longer. The ongoing Marine Board of Investigation is the highest level of marine casualty investigation conducted by the Coast Guard. When the hearing concludes, recommendations will be submitted to the Coast Guard's commandant. The National Transportation Safety Board is also conducting an investigation.

OceanGate, based in Washington state, suspended operations after the implosion. The company's former finance and human resources director, Bonnie Carl, testified Monday that she was aware of safety concerns about the Titan, and that the company's operations director, David Lochridge, had characterized it as "unsafe." Lochridge is scheduled to testify on Tuesday. Tym Catterson, a contractor who worked with the company, told the marine board on Monday that "training and operations at sea could have been better."

Australia sees 46% rise in dementia prescriptions

COVID study holds promise for new therapies

SYDNEY, Sept. 17, (Xinhua): A type of white blood cell that fights off viral infections could help produce new vaccines and treatments for COV-ID-19, according to a long-term study in Australia published on Tuesday.

In the study, a team from the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity in Melbourne investigated how memory T cells are established and develop as part of the immune system's defense against long COVID.

The study found that memory T cells that recognize SARS-CoV-2 -- the virus that causes COVID-19 -- can fight subsequent infections for up to two years.

T cells are a type of white blood

cell that fight viral infections by killing off infected cells. They are a key part of the body's immune response because they can remember an encounter with a virus and become long-term memory T cells for protection against subsequent infections.

Researchers from the institute, a joint venture between the University of Melbourne and Royal Melbourne Hospital, found that T cells in 31 participants with long COVID from Australia and China's Hong Kong maintained their protection for two years following SARS-CoV-2 infection.

Peter Doherty, an author of the study and founder of the institute, said the research could lead to breakthroughs in treatments.

"Applying the lessons learned and technologies developed to study the cellular immune response in human influenza has allowed us to move fast on analyzing this aspect of our immune response in COVID-19," he said in a media release. "That opens an important portal for understanding where we need to go with future therapies and vaccines."

Also:

CANBERRA: The number of dementia medication prescriptions dispensed in **Australia** has increased by almost 50 percent in 10 years, a government report has revealed.

According to the report, published on Friday by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), nearly 688,000 dementia medication prescriptions were dispensed to 72,400 Australians aged 30 and over in 2022-23

ians aged 30 and over in 2022-23. It marks an increase of 46 percent from 472,000 prescriptions for 50,800 people in 2013-14 as more Australians seek treatment for dementia, which is an umbrella term for several diseases that destroy nerve cells and damage

the brain.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, accounting for 60-70 percent of cases globally, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Over 80% of regions show gray matter loss

Scientists show how pregnancy changes brain in endless ways

NEW YORK, Sept 17, (AP): Neuroscientist Liz Chrastil got the unique chance to see how her brain changed while she was pregnant and share what she learned in a new study that offers the first detailed map of a woman's brain throughout gestation.

The transition to motherhood, researchers discovered, affects nearly every part of the brain.

Although the study looks at only one person, it kicks off a large, international research project that aims to scan the brains of hundreds of women and could one day provide clues about disorders like postpartum depression.

"It's been a very long journey," said Chrastil, co-author of the paper published Monday in Nature Neuroscience. "We did 26 scans before, during and after pregnancy" and found "some really remarkable things."

Reductions

More than 80% of the regions studied had reductions in the volume of gray matter, where thinking takes place. This is an average of about 4% of the brain - nearly identical to a reduction that happens during puberty. While less gray matter may sound bad, researchers said it probably isn't; it likely reflects the fine-tuning of networks of interconnected nerve cells called "neural circuits" to prepare for a new phase of life.

The team began following Chrastil - who works at the University of California, Irvine, and was 38 years old at the time - shortly before she became pregnant through in vitro fertilization.

During the pregnancy and for two years after she gave birth, they continued doing MRI brain scans and drawing blood to observe how her brain changed as sex hormones like estrogen ebbed and flowed. Some of the changes continued past pregnancy.

shots of the brain before and after pregnancy, but we've never witnessed the brain in the midst of this metamor-

"Previous studies had taken snap-

Hormonal changes harm your gums

Menopause may trigger dental issues but you can protect your 'oral' health

NEW YORK, Sept 17, (AP): Hot flashes and night sweats are among the most infamous menopause maladies. But you might want to pay attention to your teeth and gums, too.

"I'm not sure that people are aware of this," said Dr. Thomas Sollecito, chief of oral medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.

Hormonal changes - mainly a sharp drop in estrogen - can reduce bone density and saliva production and harm your gums. All of that can affect your teeth. Oral care experts say there are ways

to counteract these effects and keep your

menopausal mouth healthy.

Menopause happens when a woman goes 12 consecutive months without a menstrual period. But some of the hormone-related dental problems may begin during perimenopause, when the ovaries gradually make less estrogen, said Dr. Maiara Hister-Cockrell, a den-

One of the biggest concerns is less saliva, which Sollecito called "one of the most important fluids in our body."

tist with the University of Texas Health

San Antonio.



A dentist holds a model of teeth and a toothbrush in Seattle on Aug. 3, 2018. (AP)

When the saliva flow slows, it can cause dry mouth, which brings a greater risk of mouth soreness, oral yeast infections and cavities. Those risks are even higher when people take medicines for high blood pressure or diabetes that can also cause dry mouth, Hister-Cockrell said.

Less saliva also means less of its bacteria-killing enzymes and tooth-strengthening minerals, said Dr. Sally Cram, a periodontist in Washington, D.C.

When your mouth is dry, she said, "those bacteria are proliferating and

you're more prone to get tooth decay."
And if decay festers, tooth loss is possible.

Decreasing bone density and receding gums exacerbate these problems. If the socket that holds the tooth is less dense, Sollecito said, it's more vulnerable to bone loss. And gum recession can leave some tooth surfaces without the enamel that protects them from cavities.

Women in this phase of life are also more likely to develop periodontal disease, when plaque and bacteria collect under gums and around teeth.

"Gum tissue starts to get red and

swollen," said Cram, a spokesperson for the American Dental Association. "It bleeds and it starts pulling away from the teeth, creating deeper crevices around the teeth that are clearly harder to keep clean."

Some people experience "burning mouth syndrome." Hister-Cockrell said a burning sensation can extend to the tongue, palate and lips.

tongue, palate and lips.

"As you could well imagine," Sollecito added, "this could all really spiral out of control."

phosis," said co-author Emily Jacobs of the University of California, Santa Barbara

Unlike past studies, this one focused on many inner regions of the brain as well as the cerebral cortex, the outermost layer, said Joseph Lonstein, a professor of neuroscience and psychology at Michigan State University who was not involved in the research. It's "a good first step to understanding much more about whole-brain changes that could be possible in a woman across pregnancy and postpartum," he said.

Research in animals has linked some brain changes with qualities that could be helpful when caring for an infant. While the new study doesn't address what the changes mean in terms of human behavior, Lonstein pointed out that it describes changes in brain areas involved in social cognition, or how people interact with others and under-

stand their thoughts and feelings, for example.

The researchers have partners in

The researchers have partners in Spain and are moving forward with the larger Maternal Brain Project, which is supported by the Ann S. Bowers Women's Brain Health Initiative and the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. Eventually, they hope scientists can use data from a large number of women for things like predicting postpartum depression before it happens.

Global call for more funds for child malnutrition

NEW YORK, Sept 17, (Xinhua): The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation urged world leaders Tuesday to increase global health spending where it is needed most to boost children's health and nutrition, especially in the face of the global climate crisis.

In its eighth annual Goalkeepers report, "A Race to Nourish a Warming World," the foundation projected that

without immediate global action, climate change will condemn an additional 40 million children to stunting and 28 million more to wasting between 2024 and 2050. Scaling up solutions now can avoid this outcome while building resilience to climate change and spurring much-needed economic growth.

In 2023, the World Health Organization estimated that 148 million children

experienced stunting, a condition where children don't grow to their full potential mentally or physically, and 45 million children experienced wasting, a condition where children become weak and emaciated, leaving them at much greater risk of developmental delays and death. These are the most severe and irreversible forms of chronic and acute malnutrition.

At the same time, the total share

of foreign aid going to Africa has decreased sharply, from 40 percent in 2010 to just 25 percent, the lowest percentage in 20 years. This trend leaves hundreds of millions of children at serious risk of dying or suffering from preventable diseases and threatens the unprecedented progress the world made in global health across Africa between 2000 and 2020.







Diaz fires Banfield past Barracas

Internacional beats Cuiaba to stay in Libertadores qualifying race

RIO DE JANEIRO, Sept 17, (Xinhua): Internacional kept alive their hopes of qualifying for next year's Copa Libertadores by cruising to a 3-0 home win over Cuiaba in Brazil's Serie A championship on Monday.

Alan Patrick opened the scoring from the penalty spot before Gabriel Mercado and Rafael Santos Borre netted either side of halftime as Internacional secured their third straight league victory.

The Porto Alegre outfit are now eighth in the 20-team Serie A standings, four points outside of the Copa Libertadores qualifying places. Cuiaba are 19th, 16 points further back, and face an uphill battle to avoid rel-

"I think the team has clicked as a group," said Colombian striker Santos Borre. "We are all making sacrifices by putting the team first, and the results are starting to show." Internacional will face Sao Paulo in their next league match on September 22 while Cuiaba are due to host Cruzeiro the same day.

PARMA, Italy, Sept 17, (AP): Mandela Keita

was sent off 19 minutes

into his Parma debut as

Udinese fought back from

top of the standings after four

Thing started promisingly for

Parma, with a goal after two min-

utes. Enrico Del Prato poked home

from a corner kick with the

Udinese defense static. Ange-

Yoan Bonny made it two just

SOCCER

Lucca headed home a Hassane

Kamara cross to reduce the deficit

four minutes into the second half.

Thauvin then equalized midway

through the second period when he

knocked in a header from Keinan

Keita's red card in the 73rd, just after replacing Matteo Cancellieri,

Promoted Parma was 12th in the

Also, Lazio beat Verona 2-1 in

Boulaye Dia scored his fourth

goal in four games to put Lazio

ahead after five minutes. The

Senegalese striker got between

two Verona defenders and rifled

later when Casper Tengstedt ran

on to a long pass from Grigoris

Kastanos and slotted the ball under

But Argentine striker Taty

Castellanos bundled the ball home

from a corner kick in the 20th min-

ute to give Lazio all three points.

The result means Lazio leap-

frogs Verona into sixth place.

the advancing goalkeeper.

Verona was level two minutes

gave Udinese an additional boost and four minutes later Thauvin

scored the winner.

home a low drive.

Verona is seventh.

standings.

Rome.

start to Serie A.

games.

before halftime.

In Buenos Aires, Damian Diaz scored a second-half winner as Banfield edged to a 1-0 away victory over Barracas Central in Argentina's Primera Division.

Diaz struck just after halftime with a low 22-yard free-kick that surprised Barracas' defense and nestled into the bottom-left corner of the net.

The visitors were reduced to 10 men in the 93rd minute when Juan Bisanz was shown a second yellow card for violent conduct.

SOCCER

Banfield survived a tense finale to clinch just their third win of the campaign and move to 23rd in the 28-team Primera Division standings. Barracas remain last with just one win so far.

In Monday's only other Primera Division fixture, Franco Romero converted an early penalty as Independiente Rivadavia registered a 1-0 home win over Defensa y Justicia.

Uruguay international defender Damian Suarez has joined Penarol on a free transfer, the Uruguayan top flight club said on Monday.

The 36-year-old agreed to a contract that runs until December 2025 after requesting the termination of his contract with Brazil's Botafogo last month.

He is expected to make his debut for Penarol when the Montevideo club visits Cerro in Uruguay's Primera Division on Sunday.

Suarez will be unavailable for Penarol's bid to win the Copa Libertadores for the first time since 1987 because he was previously registered for the current edition as a Botafogo

Penarol will meet Flamengo in the quarterfinals of South America's premier club competition over two legs on September 19 and 26.

Suarez, who has been capped seven times for Uruguay's national team, began his career with Montevideo-based side Defensor before successful spells in Spain with Sporting Gijon, Elche and Getafe.

Sermanni named as temporary coach for Australia national women's team

SYDNEY, Sept 17, (Xinhua): Football Australia (FA) on Tuesday reinstated Tom Sermanni, a former head coach of the national women's team to the role on an interim basis.

FA announced that Sermanni has taken over as head coach of the Matildas for a third time as the search for the next permanent coach con-

Sermanni, 70, is the longest-serving Matildas coach in history, having previously coached the national team in 1994-1997 and 2005-2012.

An inductee in the Football Australia Hall of Fame, Sermanni led the Matildas to the 2010 Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Asian Cup title - their only major trophy - and the quarterfinals of the FIFA World Cup in 2007 and 2011.

"We are delighted to welcome Tom back to the Matildas program," FA chief executive James Johnson said in a statement.

"With over three decades of football experience in Australia and inter-

SOCCER

nationally, his extensive knowledge of the global women's football landscape, the local Australian game and his previous success with the team make him the ideal candidate to guide the Matildas through this transitional period," he said.

The Scotland-born coach will take charge of the Matildas for two October friendlies while FA searches for a full-time replacement for Tony Gustavsson who left the job at the end of his four-year contract in August.

Sermanni, who has taken a temporary leave of absence from his role as head of women's football at the A-League's Western Sydney Warriors, said it was an honor to return to the Matildas.

He served as the head coach of the U.S. Women's National Team in 2013-2014, as an assistant for Canada in 2015 and as head coach of the New Zealand women's team from 2018 until after the Tokyo Olympics.

Keita sees red on debut as Udinese maintains unbeaten start to Serie A



Parma, Italy, (AP)

Lazio leapfrogs Verona into sixth

Chiles takes his bid to have Oly bronze medal restored to Swiss Supreme Court

two goals down to win 3-2 LAUSANNE, Switzerland, Sept 17, and maintain its unbeaten (AP): American gymnast Jordan Chiles is asking Switzerland's Su-Udinese was 2-0 down at preme Court to overturn a ruling by halftime but a header from Lorthe Court of Arbitration for Sport that stripped Chiles of a bronze medal in enzo Lucca and a double from floor exercise at the 2024 Olympics. Florian Thauvin took it to the

Chiles, with the support of the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee and USA Gymnastics, filed the appeal on Monday, a little over a month after CAS voided an on-floor appeal by Chiles' coach Cecile Landi during the event finals on Aug. 5 that vaulted Chiles from fifth to third.

CAS, following a hearing requested by Romanian officials, ruled Landi's appeal came 4 seconds beyond the 1-minute time limit for scoring inquiries and recommended the initial finishing order be restored. The International Gymnastics Federation complied and the International Olympic Committee ended up awarding bronze to Romanian Ana

Barbosu on Aug. 16.
Chiles' appeal maintains that the CAS hearing violated her "right to be heard" by refusing to allow video evidence that Chiles and USA Gymnastics believe showed Landi appealed within the 1-minute time allotment. Chiles' appeal also argues that Hamid G. Gharavi, president of the CAS panel, has a conflict of interest due to past legal ties to Ro-

USA Gymnastics wrote in a statement Monday night that it made a "collective, strategic decision to have Jordan lead the initial filing. USAG is closely coordinating with Jordan and her legal team and will make supportive filings with the court in the continued pursuit of justice for

The appeal is the next step in what could be a months- or years-long legal battle over the gymnastics scores. Chiles was last among the eight women to compete during the floor

exercise finals initially given a score of 13.666 that placed her fifth, right behind Barbosu and fellow Romanian Sabrina Maneca-Voinea. Landi called for an inquiry on Chiles'

"At this point, we had nothing to lose, so I was like 'We're just going to try," Landi said after the awards ceremony. "I honestly didn't think it was going to happen, but when I heard her scream, I turned around and was like 'What?'

Judges awarded the appeal, leapfrogging Chiles past Barbosu and Maneca-Voinea for the last spot on the podium.

Romanian officials appealed to CAS on several fronts while also asking a bronze medal be awarded to Chiles, Barbosu and Maneca-Voinea. The FIG and the IOC ultimately gave the bronze to Barbosu, who beat her teammate on a tiebreaker because she produced a higher execution score during her routine.

Rayo records 1st victory in La Liga

MADRID, Sept 17, (AP): Abdul Mumin scored an early candidate for goal of the season as Rayo Vallecano came from behind to beat Osasuna 3-1 and record its first win in the Spanish

In a game of great goals, Raúl García de Haro volleyed home from long range to put the visitors ahead after 26 minutes

The second half, though, was all

First, Mumin equalized in the 49th when his angled drive from a tight angle crashed in off the underside of the bar. Then Andrei Ratiu made it 2-1 when

he got on the end of Pep Chavarría's cutback just outside the box and lashed it home. Colombian star James Rodríguez

made his debut for Rayo when he replaced Álvaro Garcia three minutes from time but it was Unai López who grabbed the late glory with a glorious 25-yard strike in injury time.

Motsepe visits stadiums

CAF chief is pleased with Kenya 2027 AFCON preps

NAIROBI, Sept 17, (Xinhua): Confederation of African Football (CAF) President Patrice Motsepe appreciated Kenya's initial preparations to co-host the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) finals.

Motsepe visited three stadiums in Nairobi, Kenya's capital, that are undergoing repairs or construction in preparation for both the 2027 AFCON and the 2025 African Nations Championship (CHAN) tournaments. On Sunday, he met with Kenya's President William Ruto to discuss progress.

SOCCER

During a press conference held Monday after a CAF Executive Committee meeting in Nairobi, Motsepe expressed confidence in Kenya's ability to deliver the necessary infrastructure. "I trust President William Ruto to deliver the stadiums because he is a man of his word," Motsepe told reporters.

Ruto reassured CAF that Kenya would be ready to host the continental football showpiece, despite currently lacking a CAF-certified stadium. The Moi International Sports Centre and Nyayo Stadium in Nairobi, which have been closed for

repairs, are among the venues under renovation. Talanta Sports City Stadium, also in Nairobi, is under con-

'We commit that Kasarani and Nyayo will be ready by the end of this year for the CHAN in 2025, while Talanta Sports City Stadium will be completed by December 2025 for 2027 AFCON," Ruto confirmed.

Kenya will co-host both the CHAN and AFCON tournaments with its neighbors Uganda and Tanzania. Motsepe announced that CHAN 2025 will take place from February 1 to 28, with matches hosted in Nairobi, Kampala (Uganda), and Dar es Salaam (Tanzania).

The CHAN tournament, which features only domestic players, will begin qualifiers from October 27 to 29 and conclude in December. Motsepe expressed excitement about the upcoming tournament: "We have an exciting competition ahead, featuring some of Africa's most successful and popular nations. CHAN attracts significant media coverage both in Africa and globally. We couldn't have chosen better hosts than Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, and I am confident this CHAN will be the most successful in the competition's his-

900 fans will travel to Paris

Girona makes history with Champions League debut

MADRID, Sept 17, (Xinhua): Girona become the 14th Spanish club to play in the Champions League when it makes its debut in the competition on Wednesday.

The side coached by Michel Sanchez, who last season led them to a stunning third place in La Liga, could hardly have picked a more emblematic start to their campaign, as they play away to Paris Saint-Germain.

Around 900 fans will travel to Paris to witness the historic moment, although at the moment, Girona's domestic form is a cause for concern.

It was outplayed by FC Barcelona on Sunday, crashing to a 4-1 home defeat, engineered by Lamine

Although PSG don't have Lamal, it will have former Barcelona winger Ousmane Dembele leading its attack, and despite Kylian Mbappe's move to Real Madrid, it, like Barcelona, has enjoyed a perfect start to the campaign, with four wins from four in Ligue 1.

It was a difficult summer for Girona, who in some way paid the price for last season's success, with loan spells for Yan Couto, Eric Garcia and Savinho all ending.

Midfielder Aleix Garcia, who was back in the Spain squad for the recent UEFA Nations League games, joined Bayer Leverkusen, and top scorer Artem Dovbyk moved to

The club seems to have worked well to try to cover for the losses, with midfielder Oriol Romeu back after an unhappy return to Barcelona, while forward Arnaut Danjuma, who has European experience, was signed from Villarreal, winger Bry-

SOCCER

an Gil has joined on loan from Tottenham Hotspur, and Abel Ruiz has the tough job of replacing Dovbyk's

The Barcelona defeat is a setback for Girona, but they will look on their two previous matches, a 2-0 win away to Sevilla and a 4-0 thrashing of Osasuna, as the way ahead.

Girona's supporters are still excited at the prospect of watching their side duel with Europe's best, but Michel will hope that his players start to gel as a squad, otherwise it could be a difficult experience.

Scotland to host '26 C'wealth Games

LONDON, Sept 17, (AP): Scotland has rescued the Commonwealth Games that were in jeopardy after Australia's Victoria state backed out of plans to host the 2026 sporting event.

Glasgow, which hosted the event 10 years ago, will do so again, though some sports will need to be dropped as the Commonwealth Games Federation aims to reduce costs to make the competition more

sustainable in the future. "It will be scaled back compared to 2014 but will be a celebration of sporting achievement," Scotland's First Minister John Swinney posted on X on Tuesday. "Excited about

Glasgow 2026." The event held every four years was established in 1930 as the British Empire Games and is open to 74 nations and territories. It has been

land, India, Jamaica, Malaysia, New Zealand, Scotland and Wales. Birmingham hosted the 2022 games. Victoria state lawmakers cited es-

staged in Australia, Canada, Eng-

calating costs when they withdrew their commitment last year to host the games, though an inquiry later found the estimates they relied on were overstated.

Scotland's agreement to pick up the baton will not require any additional government funding, Health Secretary Neil Gray said.

The CGF has provided an additional 20 million pounds (\$26 million) of funding, including 5 million pounds (\$6.5 million) for Glasgow to use in part for capital upgrades, Gray said. The U.K. government will also set aside 2.3 million pounds (\$3 million) if contingency funds are exceeded.



Verona's Reda Belahyane, left, duels for the ball with Lazio's Taty Castellanos during a Serie A soccer match between Lazio and Hellas Verona, at Rome's Stadio Olimpico. (AP)

Al-Hajraf expresses gratitude to the minister for his prompt response

Al-Mutairi to meet Al-Jahra Club former presidents over ongoing crisis



Former Jahra Club presidents during the meeting

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Mohammed Haif Al-Hajraf, the former president of Al-Jahra Club, announced that the Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, has agreed to meet with a delegation of former club presidents to address the ongoing crisis at the club. This crisis, which has persisted for nine months, has resulted in the suspension of the club's activities due to a management dispute involving three parties.

Al-Hajraf expressed gratitude to the minister for his prompt response and for scheduling a meeting with the delegation next Sunday. He commended Al-Mutairi's dedication to resolving not only the issues facing Al-Jahra Club but also broader challenges in Kuwaiti sports.

The former presidents convened at Al-Hajraf Diwaniya to discuss the club's predicament. They outlined several action items, including meeting with the Minister of Youth, the head of the Kuwaiti Olympic Committee Sheikh Fahad Al-Nasser, and officials from the Public Authority for Sports. Their goal is to find a resolution to the ongoing crisis, which has severely impacted the club's games and teams. The lack of an official board of directors has hindered the club's ability to register players and manage employee and player salaries.

They also advocated for activating the General Assembly's role and forming a transitional committee to oversee the club's affairs in the interim. They called for new elections to elect a fresh board of directors to end the club's current troubles.

The presidents urged the three disputing parties to prioritize the club's interests and work together to overcome the challenges that have plagued Al-Jahra Club. They agreed to transfer the club's management to any of the parties involved if they secure an execution ruling from the Kuwaiti courts. The meeting was attended by nine former club presidents: Muhammad Al-Hajraf, Badr Al-Thabet, Lafi Manshed Al-Dhafiri, Khaled Al-Jarallah, Saadoun Rafe Al-Hussaini, Mujbil Gharbi Al-Shammari, Hassan Al-Busairi, Awad Al-Sahou, and Dhaham Al-Shammari. The current head of the Basketball Federation, Dhari Burjas, and former head of the Fencing Federation, Abdul Rahim Al-Sahib, were also present.

Kuwait Club set for CL 2 opener vs Nasaf Qarshi

Whites currently enjoying a period of stability

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Kuwait Club kicks off its AFC Champions League 2 campaign with a match against Uzbekistan's Nasaf Qarshi at 7:00 pm at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, marking the first round of Group 4 action. Simultaneously, Kuwait Club will face Shabab Al-Ahli from the UAE and Al-Hussein Irbid from Jordan at Rashid Stadium in Dubai, UAE.

SOCCER

Kuwait Club earned its spot in the AFC Champions League 2 after a 1-0 victory over Bahrain's Al-Ahli in the qualifying play-off match held at Khalifa International Stadium in mid-August.

The tournament features 8 groups (4 in the West Zone and 4 in the East), each consisting of 4 clubs. The group stage will be played in a two-legged format from September 17 to December 5.

The top two teams from each group will advance to the round of 16, scheduled for February 2025, followed by the quarterfinals in March and semifinals in April. The tournament will conclude with a single-match final on

May 17, 2025.
The AFC has allocated substantial



A file photo of Kuwait Club players celebrating.

prizes for the tournament, with participating group stage teams receiving no less than \$300,000. The tournament champion will earn approximately \$3.28 million.

Kuwait Club has extensive experience in Asian competitions, having won the Federation Cup three times. However, it was eliminated in the group stage of recent editions.

Kuwait Club is currently enjoying a period of stability in domestic competition, leading the Zain Premier League with a perfect record after four rounds. The team is well on its way to retaining the league title for the fourth consecutive season, and the 20th time in its history (a record).

Under Montenegrin coach Nebojsa Jovovic, Kuwait Club boasts several standout players, including professionals Yahya Jabrane and Ayman Abu Al-Fath from Morocco, Tunisian Yassin Al-Khenisi, Bahraini Mohammed Marhoon (who scored the winning goal against Al-Ahli of Bahrain), and Arsen "Malik" Zola from Congo.

The team also has experienced local talent capable of delivering a strong performance, including Mishari Ghannam, Yousef Nasser, Sami Al-Sanea, Fahad Hamoud, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Ali Hussein, Reda Hani, Faisal Zayed, Fahad Al-Hajri, and Amr Abdel Fattah.

Last season, Kuwait Club exited the group stage of the AFC Cup after finishing third in its group, which included Iraq's Al-Kahraba, Jordan's Al-Wehdat, and Syria's Aleppo, accumulating seven points with a win over Al-Wehdat and five draws.

Al Oyoun finishes 2nd in Fatima Bint Mubarak Academy Cup

ABU DHABI, Sept 17: The Kuwaiti Al Oyoun team secured second place in the Fatima Bint Mubarak Academy Wom.en's Volleyball Cup after falling to the Lebanese Al Qalamoun team in the final match, held at the Academy's stadium in Abu Dhabi.

Al Qalamoun dominated the match, winning in straight sets (25-19, 25-22, 25-16), while Al Oyoun put up an honorable performance throughout the tournament, showcasing impressive skills and determination, earning praise from the fans.

VOLLEYBALL

In the third-place playoff, the Fatima Bint Mubarak Academy team clinched victory, defeating Egypt's 6th of October team in a thrilling five-set match (22-25, 25-11, 25-22, 23-25, 15-10).

The Fatima Bint Mubarak Academy Women's Volleyball Cup began on September 12 at the Academy's headquarters in Abu Dhabi, featuring four teams: Fatima Bint Mubarak Academy, Al Oyoun Girls from Kuwait, the 6th of October team from Egypt, and Al Qalamoun from Lebanon.

Dashti crowned champ in Egypt

CAIRO, Sept 17: Ahmed Dashti continued to shine on the tennis courts, recently securing the top spot in the Egyptian Tennis Federation's rankings after winning the Republic Pioneers Championship held on the clay courts of Alexandria Sporting Club.

Dashti claimed the gold medal following a series of marathon matches against seasoned players, including Wissam Farouk, Ahmed El-Qarsh, Ahmed Abou Gabal, Khaled Abdel Rahman, and El-Sayed El-Asrawy. Despite the tough competition, he managed to turn the tide in his favor and secure victories across multiple categories. He also teamed up with Egyptian champion Moataz Mabrouk, who, despite recovering from an injury, delivered an outstanding performance to clinch the gold alongside Dashti. Their partnership has garnered admiration from spectators, and they remain the top-ranked duo in Egypt for the third consecutive year, having previously won numerous titles in Cairo and Alexandria.



Ahmed Dashti



Al Oyoun players celebrate after finishing second

Spin-friendly Galle favors the home team

Sri Lanka changes batting lineup for New Zealand tests

GALLE, Sri Lanka, Sept 17, (AP): Sri Lanka has rewarded Kamindu Mendis for his profitable tour of England by moving him up the batting order for the two-test series against New Zealand starting on Wednesday in Galle.

Mendis reaped a century and two half-centuries from his fourth, fifth and sixth career tests over the past month in England, where he was Sri Lanka's player of the series lost 2-1. In his brief test career, he has three hundreds and four fifties.

It was time to move him from No. 7 to No. 5 in the lineup, Sri Lanka coach Sanath Jayasuriya said on Tuesday. "There was lot of discussion that

CRICKET

Kamindu has to move up the order when we were in England. Too often he was batting with the tail and we felt that we need to make the best use of him," Jayasuriya said.

Former captain Dinesh Chandimal, who occupied the No. 5 slot, has been moved to No. 3 and stripped of wicketkeeping duty. Kusal Mendis, no relation to Kamindu, will keep wickets and bat at No. 7

Sri Lanka is expected to make two more changes from the side that beat England in the third test last week at the Oval. Seam bowlers Vishwa Fernando and Milan Ratnayake are expected to make way for spinners Prabath Jayasuriya and Ramesh Mendis. "Our fast bowlers have done well, but it's horses for courses and we have

to back spin in Galle," Jayasuriya said. Spin-friendly Galle favors the home team, but New Zealand has done well in these contests. Sri Lanka last won a series against the Black Caps in 2009. The last two series in Sri Lanka in 2012 and 2019 ended 1-1.

New Zealand has retired Sri Lanka great Rangana Herath on its staff to help its spinners, but the weather might be a bigger influence. The forecast across the test is not good.

The visitors will be used to that. Rain and a soggy outfield washed out all five days of New Zealand's scheduled one-off test against Afghanistan last week in Greater Noida, India. That was also to be New Zealand's warmup

for this series. "Disappointing, no doubt, but we cannot control the weather," New Zealand captain Tim Southee said. "It would have been nice to have a test match against an ever improving side. However, we have had some good training and have spent time together

both in India and in Galle.' While New Zealand hasn't played a test since March, it won't be cold for

"Eight test matches between now

Sri Lanka's Kamindu Mendis bats during day two of the Third Rothesay Men's Test match between England and Sri Lanka in London. (AP)

and December is lot of cricket. We are excited," Southee said. "We are ranked three in the World Test Championship and it's an opportunity for us to get some points and move forward."

He has another personal milestone in sight, too. Southee needs 20 more wickets to become the second New Zealander to take 400 in tests after Richard Hadlee's 431.

"I have played for a long time and when you do that you come closer to these milestones," said Southee, who has 100 caps. "We have a lot of tours ahead. Especially in this part of the world. Every game you are going out to do your role and take wickets for the side. It will be nice if I can achieve those milestones. But the focus is on winning games.'

Sri Lanka squad: Dhananjaya de Silva (captain), Dimuth Karunaratne, Pathum Nissanka, Kusal Mendis, Angelo Mathews, Dinesh Chandimal, Kamindu Mendis, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Oshada Fernando, Asitha Fernando, Vishwa Fernando, Lahiru Kumara, Prabath Jayasuriya, Ramesh Mendis, Jeffrey Vandersay, Milan Rathnayake.

New Zealand squad: Tim Southee (captain), Tom Blundell, Michael Bracewell, Devon Conway, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Will O'Rourke, Ajaz Patel, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Ben Sears, Kane Williamson and Will

Best of the Rest

Stephens loses in 1st round: Hailey Baptiste defeated fellow American and 2017 U.S. Open champion Sloane Stephens 7-6 (4), 6-2 in the first round of the WTA's Korean Open.

In other matches in Seoul, Amanda Anisimova had an upset 6-3, 7-6 (5) win over sixth-seeded Yulia Putintseva, Polina Kudermetova beat Priscilla Hon 7-5, 6-4 and Viktoriya Tomova beat Tatjana Maria 6-2, 1-6, 6-0.

Play at the WTA's Thailand Open was suspended due to rain and storms. One of the suspended matches included top-seeded Dayana Yastremska's first-round match against Mai Hontama, who led 4-3 in the first set when play was stopped. (AP)

Cyprus FA criticized: The Cyprus president called out the national soccer federation for shirking its responsibilities in helping to stamp out hooliganism and violence.

President Nikos Christodoulides said everyone must live up to their obligations in the fight against soccer violence but singled out the federation and its president George Koumas for "hiding behind" their own autonomy.

"They have responsibilities, we warned them about all of this but they continue to hide." Christodoulides said.

His remarks came after authorities called off a first-division match between crosstown rivals Apollon Limassol and AEL Limassol on Sunday when hundreds of AEL fans clashed with police and rushed the stadium gates without undergoing either a mandated search for concealed contraband or a check of their tickets, according to police. (AP)

BAA lowers times: Runners hoping to qualify for the 2026 Boston Marathon are going to have to pick up the pace.

The Boston Athletic Association has updated its qualifying times for the world's oldest annual marathon, asking most prospective competitors to run a 26.2-mile race five minutes faster than in recent years to earn a starting number.

"Every time the BAA has adjusted qualifying standards - most recently in 2019 - we've seen athletes continue to raise the bar and elevate to new levels," Jack Fleming, president and CEO of the BAA, said in a statement posted Monday. "In recent years we've turned away athletes in this age range (18-59) at the highest rate, and the adjustment reflects both the depth of participation and speed at which athletes are running." (AP)

Olmo to miss 4 to 5 weeks: Barcelona got some bad news a day after extending its perfect start to the season, with winger Dani Olmo being diagnosed with a leg injury that will sideline him for four to five weeks.

The club said tests conducted showed he sustained a right hamstring injury in the second half of the 4-1 win at Catalan rival Girona in the Spanish league on Sunday.

Olmo had to be replaced in the 61st minute, less than 15 minutes after he had scored the team's third goal in the match. (AP)



Birmingham City co-owner Tom Brady meets the players before the Sky Bet League One soccer match in Birmingham, England. (AP)

Sports

Latest sports scores at — http://sports.arabtimesonline.com

Al-Gharafa hopes to continue strong form against Maliha

Kuwait Club faces Al-Salmiya in high-stakes derby

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 17: Kuwait Club, defending champion and host of the 39th Arab Handball Clubs Championship, will face off against Al-Salmiya at 8:00 pm in a highly anticipated Kuwaiti Derby

Earlier in the day, Al-Karkh of Iraq will play Al-Qoton of Yemen at 2:00 pm. In Group 2, Al-Gharafa of Qatar will take on Maliha of the UAE at 4:00 pm, followed by a 6:00 pm clash between Al-Qadsiya and Egypt's Al-Ahly Bank. All matches are being held at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex Hall in Sabah

Kuwait Club opened its campaign with a dominant 44-13 win over Al-Qoton while Al-Qadsiya suffered a narrow 22-24 loss to Qatar's Al-Gharafa in a fiercely contested match. Despite Al-Qadsiya controlling much of the game, Al-Gharafa's experienced stars secured victory in the final moments.

HANDBALL

The top four teams from each group will advance to the quarterfinals.

Today's first match is expected to favor Al-Karkh due to the relative inexperience of Al-Qoton, which is considered the weakest team in the tournament. In the second match, Al-Gharafa hopes to continue its strong form against Maliha, while Al-Qadsiya looks to bounce back from its opening loss. Al-Ahly Bank, which lost to Al-Hashd in the first round, also seeks to recover in its game against Al-Gharafa.

The day's final showdown is the highly anticipated derby between the reigning powerhouse of Kuwaiti handball, Kuwait Club and its rival Al-Salmiya. While Kuwait has had the upper hand in recent local encounters, the stakes and dynamics of the Arab Championship make this a different contest with higher stakes.

Meanwhile, Mubarak Amash Al-Daihani, Board Member of Kuwait Handball Federation, dedicated Kuwait's bronze medal win in the 10th Asian Junior Handball Championship and qualification for the 2025 Junior World Cup Finals to Kuwait's political leadership, represented by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al- Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as to the Kuwaiti people. He expressed gratitude for their continued support of Kuwaiti sports and handball

Birmingham City downs Wrexham

BIRMINGHAM, England, Sept 17: (AP): Tom Brady won bragging rights over Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney when his Birmingham City side beat Wrexham 3-1 in a match dubbed

a Hollywood derby.
The English third-tier match would not normally make a ripple but the profiles of both clubs' owners have changed that story in recent years.

Reynolds and McElhenney bought Wrexham in 2021, while Brady bought a small share in Birmingham through owner Knighthead Capital Management in 2023.

The BBC suggested the game was the biggest in the history of England's League One and it certainly brought new attention and glamour, as well as a smile to the face of Brady.

It took a while for that famous

grin to emerge. The seven-time Super Bowl champion watched from the stands alongside his friend David Beckham and must have squirmed when Jack Marriott put Wrexham ahead after just three minutes.

Birmingham, though, stormed back with record signing Jay Stansfield in fine form.

Stansfield equalized midway through the first half, then headed Birmingham ahead seven minutes into the second period.

Japanese midfielder Tomoki Iwata added a third nearly an hour in as Birmingham dominated in front of its own fans.

Birmingham's Krystian Bielik was issued a red card with four minutes remaining but it was too late for the Welsh side



Kuwait Club players attempt to score against Al-Qoton during the opening match of the 39th Arab Handball Clubs Championship.

Al-Nassr held by Al-Shorta in **Champs League Elite opener**

Kessie nets winner as Al-Ahli edges Persepolis

PARIS, Sept 17, (AP): For more than

a decade, Paris Saint-Germain's Qatari

owners have spent lavishly to attract

Their goal was to make the club

profitable, to erase the amateurish

mage of a side often associated with

hooligans, and to build a competitive

team capable of winning the Champi-

With unprecedented revenues sur-

They also succeeded in ridding

And they also managed to bring

passing 800 million euros (\$890 mil-

lion) for the first time last year, they

their stadium of the violence that often

made the atmosphere at the Parc des

the biggest names in the game to Par-

is. The likes of Zlatan Ibrahimovic,

Lionel Messi, Neymar and Kylian

Mbappé at times offered a glimpse of

the possibility of winning Europe's

But the Champions League crown

The superstars have all now left the

Parc des Princes, and it might sound

paradoxical, but the club may be bet-

ter equipped in its quest for continental

Miami and Neymar to Saudi Arabia

team Al-Hilal in previous years, the

departure of Mbappé to Real Madrid

this summer marked the end of an era

at PSG, where relying on the individ-

Following the exits of Messi to Inter

Princes so tense and hostile.

biggest tournament.

remained a distant dream.

have managed to build solid growth.

ons League.

BAGHDAD, Sept 17, (AP): Without an ill Cristiano Ronaldo, Al-Nassr of Saudi Arabia drew with Al-Shorta of Iraq 1-1 in the first-ever game revamped rebranded **AFC Champions League Elite**

Ronaldo was left behind in Riyadh because Al-Nassr said the Portugal superstar, who has won five UEFA Champions Leagues but has yet to win a major trophy with his current club, had a viral infection and could not travel to Baghdad.

on Monday.

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Sultan Al-Ghannam put Al-Nassr ahead after 14 minutes though Mohammed Dawood leveled 10 minutes later.

There was another blow for Al-Nassr as Croatia international Marcelo Brozovic left the field injured early in the second half.

Al-Ahli, another of Saudi Arabia's three star-studded teams in the tournament, beat Persepolis of Iran 1-0 in Jeddah.

Former Barcelona and AC Milan midfielder Franck Kessie scored in the first minute. Ivan Toney, signed from English Premier League club Brentford in August, made his Asian debut for Al-Ahli but the England striker could not get on the scoresheet.

Former Manchester City star Riyad Mahrez missed a secondhalf penalty but Al-Ahli held on.

Al-Ain of the United Arab Emirates, which in May was the last winner of the Asian Champions League which has been replaced by the more streamlined Elite, started with a 1-1 draw against Al-Sadd of Qatar. Elsewhere, Esteghlal of Iran defeated Al-Gharafa of Qatar 3-0.

The 24 teams were divided into two groups of 12, divided into east and west geographic zones, and each played eight games. The top eight from each group progresses to the round of 16.



Better equipped to succeed

PSG starts Champions League without a galactico

PSG's Ousmane Dembele runs with the ball watched by Lille's Thomas Meunier, left, during the French League 1 soccer match between Lille and Paris Saint-Germain, in Villeneuve-d'Ascq, France.

ual skills of star players and splashing money have been the norm since the 2011 Qatari takeover.

The big hole left by Mbappé was not filled by yet another superstar.

Instead, coach Luis Enrique insisted on moulding what he had. Enrique's project makes sense: Mbappé can't be duplicated but he could be replaced by a handful of attacking players capable of scoring as much, or more, than the France captain did.

"To me, this is the continuation of last season," said Enrique, who has



Shorta's Iraqi player Ahmed Yahya, left, battles for the ball with Arabia's Al-Nassr Sadio Mane, during the AFC Champions League Elite West Region football match between Iraq's Al-Shorta and Saudi Arabia's Al-Nassr at the Al-Madina Stadium in Baghdad, Iraq. (AP)

used 21 players in four French league games so far. "We are a young team, that is true. But we are full of desire and hunger, which is a wonderful thing. I'm so lucky to have this sort of squad.'

Enrique asked for the recruitment of less known but excellent players in every sector to create competition and have second options at every position. It could be even more crucial this season as the Champions League's new format will see more teams playing more games. PSG starts on Wednesday against Spanish side Girona.

PSG signed goalkeeper Matvey Safonov, highly rated defender Willian Pacho and promising midfielder João Neves, as well as winger Désiré Doué. Pacho was impressive at Eintracht Frankfurt while the versatile Neves has already earned 11 caps with Portugal at the age of 19.

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Pacho and Neves have quickly gelled with the team and the new-look PSG has delivered immediately. They have won their first four matches to top the Ligue 1 standings.

"PSG is way stronger collectively than last year, everybody runs and defends,' Brest coach Eric Roy said after his side lost to the French titleholder 3-1 over the weekend. "Especially when they lose the ball, they put a lot of pressure.' The biggest question mark going into

the season was PSG's ability to maintain a potent attack without its best player. With two quick and powerful players on the wings - Ousmane Dembélé and Badley Barcola - partnering Marco Asensio in a false No. 9 role, PSG seems to have found the right answer. The team has scored 16 goals, con-

ceding just three, and boasts the best goal difference after four Ligue matches since Reims in 1952. Only Marseille forward Mason Greenwood has more goals than Barcola and Dembélé, while João Neves leads the league with three assists.

But for all of PSG's dominance of the French league - winning it in 10 of the last 12 seasons - it has reached just one Champions League final since being bought by Qatar Sports Investments. No surprise Enrique does not want to get carried away.

Asked about the perceived improvement, he said, "We will see at the end of the season what the team has achieved."

'Too many games'

Players close to going on 'strike'

MANCHESTER, England, Sept 17, (AP): Manchester City midfielder Rodri says top soccer players are close to going on strike because of the number of games they are having to play.

The Spain international said players are concerned about the way the game is headed as more games are added to the calendar in competitions like the Champions League, which starts on Tuesday.

Rodri was asked on Tuesday if players might start refusing to play because of the

calendar. think we are close to that," he said in news conference ahead of City's Champions League opener against Inter Milan on



Wednesday. "It's easy to understand. You ask any player, he will say the same - it's not the opinion of (just) Rodri or whoever. I think it's a general opinion of the players.

"If it keeps this way, it will be a moment when we have no other option, I really think. It's something that worries us because we are the guys who

Rodri is expected to start his first game for City this season when Inter visits Etihad Stadium, having been given an extended break by the club after winning the European Championship with Spain in July.

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City has two more games to play in the first stage of the Champions League and up to seven matches more in the Club World Cup, which is scheduled to take place in the United States at the end of the domestic season.

of a 32-team Club World Cup, which will be played every four years, is regarded by global players' union FIF-PRO as a tipping point for the expansion of international competitions. The union has started a legal challenge against FIFA over its expanded competitions, which include the first 48-team men's World Cup in 2026, because it believes too much is being asked of players without consultation.

Rodri said players can be expected to "perform at the highest level" if they play 40 to 50 games. Not 60 to 70 matches, a number Rodri might have to play if City goes far in all of the competitions it enters.

Julian Alvarez, who played for City the past two seasons before moving to Atletico Madrid, was picked in 83 match-day squads last sea-son. Another City player, Phil Foden, played in 72.

"In my humble opinion, I think it is too much," Rodri said. "We have to take care of ourselves. Someone has to take care of ourselves because we are the main characters of, let's say, this sport or this business.

"Not everything is money or marketing. It is also the quality of the show. In my opinion, when I rest, when I'm not tired, I perform better. If people want to see better football, we need to rest."

Rodri said teammate Erling Haaland is demonstrating how a player can benefit from getting more of a break.

Norway did not qualify for Euro 2024 so Haaland had the summer off, and has started this season by scoring nine goals in City's first four games.

"It gives you a clue why we ask for this," Rodri said.

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