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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2024 / RABEE'A AWWAL 28, 1446 AH

emergency number 112

Established in 1977 / www.arabtimesonline.com

NO. 18711

16 PAGES

**150 FILS** 

# **NEARLY 60,000 KUWAITIS YET TO COMPLETE BIOMETRIC FINGERPRINTING** Transaction freeze as deadline passes

**Opinion** 

# Amiri speech is faster than the govt's march

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

must be honest.



an executive body to a legislative workshop in order to carry out its renecessary laws.

forced to switch from

tions concerning the legislation that require development. How-

evident until recently. It seems we have been freed from the irritation of the lawmakers, only to be confronted with yet another irritation and slow progress.

verse that goes: "Like camels in the desert, thirsty, yet they carried water on their backs' to criticize the State's numerous waste management practices. Although there are solutions, they are often disregarded in order to appease those with influence. This means that reform is merely a catchphrase.

It seems that officials are more comfortable with being "thirsty", so as not to exert effort in drinking water on the backs of camels in this dusty desert with a lot of erratic

that do not cost much in terms of effort or money. For example, there should be companies in which the State and the people have a share; similar to cooperative societies, and that the citizen should be the owner and con-In this manner, the large bill that the State pays in vain, without any benefit to the citizen, is reduced.

Therefore, for instance, would it not be better to have a non-public sector administration, for Jaber Hospital and other health facilities, and to employ the world's top doctors; instead of sending citizens abroad for treatment, or the corruption practiced in health insurance that has many question marks, especially after the corruption appeared in 'Afiya'? Experience has proven that it was a big gate for squandering funds; and it is for the benefit of private hospitals and clinics, more than serving the pensioners.

ahead in reaping the benefits of contemporary legislation and boosting their overall economic and productive activities, the Council of Ministers is obligated to stop those who are trying to thwart development and its require-

granting it land; and then the sector has to build and employ local manpower, and invest in the field in which it works.

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from and providing guidance to his team throughout the weekend on the latest developments in the Middle East, Pentagon said

A statement by Pentagon Press Secretary Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder said that Austin and DoD leaders remain focused on the protection of US citizens and forces in the region,

Secretary Austin stressed that the Unitand Iranian-backed partners and proxies from exploiting the situation or expanding the conflict, Ryder carried on saying.

K-Net, Visa, MasterCard suspended after Oct 15

**By Munif Naif** 

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Director of the Criminal Evidence** General Department in the Interior Ministry Major General Eid Al-Awaihan has revealed that a total of 59,841 citizens did not complete the biometric fingerprint procedures by the end of the deadline on Monday.

In a televised interview, Al-Awaihan stated that the ministry will suspend all the transactions of those who failed to complete the biometric fingerprint procedures. He added that all the biometric devices were transferred from the shopping malls to the service centers affiliated with the department on Sunday night.

He revealed the abovementioned citizens can do the biometric fingerprint procedures in these centers in order to complete their transactions in government institutions and

**Continued on Page 5** 

## Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

BEFORE May 10, parliamentary pressure was being used to influence the Council of Ministers through a game of interests. As a result, when His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah made his firm decision, things changed; but the crises and problems remain the same. This is where we

Due to the significant Amiri step four months ago, the Council of Ministers was



form role and draft the It is common knowledge that numerous committees carry out their advisory func-

Al-Jarallah ever, this has not been

More than two years ago, I used a poetic

This is clearly evident in the financial waste on support and subsidies, or the poor medical care in the health sector in general, or services such as electricity and others; whereas the past summer months exposed their flaws.

We also lament the lack of pay raises and the loans that have ravaged citizens' finances Regarding housing care, feel free to discuss it openly. Nothing has changed in this regard. Neither the salary increase nor the loan crisis offers any suggestions on how to break the

Furthermore, for a long time, everyone has been demanding a solution to these problems sumer at the same time in the service sectors.

Since other Gulf states are already years

In many countries, governments seek the private sector in the field of development,

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Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The State of Kuwait

condemned on Monday the attack on the

headquarters of the Ambassador of United Arab Emirates in Khartoum, reject-

ing such violations of international laws

Affairs stressed importance of respecting

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign

and norms.

1961. (KUNA)



Hezb acting leader vows to fight on

# **KRCS** funds Gaza medical care

CAIRO, Sept 30, (Agencies): Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) signed two agreements with Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) to cover the costs of the treatment of Palestinians who were wounded in the attacks by the Israeli occupation forces on Gaza

The two documents were inked by KRCS Secretary-General Maha Al-Barjas and PRCS President Dr. Younes Al-Khatib in Cairo on Sun-

Speaking to KUNA following the signing ceremony, Al-Barjas said KRCS was keen on helping the Palestinian health facilities to alleviate the suffering of the victims of the brutal aggression of the Israeli occupation forces.

"Under today's deals, KRCS will contribute to the funding of the accommodation and the treatment of wounded Palestinians at Palestine hospital in Cairo and the rehabilitation of KRCS field hospital in Gaza,"

"Since the start of the war on Gaza, the Kuwaiti leadership, government and people have been keen on offering full support to our Palestinian brothers and providing medical supplies to the Palestinian health

"The Kuwaiti government and non-government aid agencies spare no effort in providing relief supplies to the Palestinians to help them over-



KUNA photo Photo taken during the signing of agreements between the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS).

come the ongoing crisis," Al-Barjas added.

Later today, she paid an inspection tour of Palestine hospital - an affiliate of PRCS, and called on injured Pal-

Built in 1976, the nine-story hospital has 85 beds, 12 ICUs, four surgery rooms and wards for various medical specializations.

In other news, Hezbollah's acting leader vowed Monday to keep battling Israel and said the Lebanese militant group was prepared for a long fight even after much of its top command was wiped out, including its leader, Hassan Nasrallah.

Israeli strikes have killed Nasrallah and six of his top commanders and officials in the last 10 days, and have hit what the military says are thousands of militant targets across large parts of Lebanon. Over 1,000 people have been killed in the country in the past two weeks, nearly a quarter of them women and children, according

to the Health Ministry. Early Monday, an airstrike hit a residential building in central Beirut, wiping out one apartment, damaging others, and killing three Palestinian militants, as Israel appeared to send a clear message that no part of Lebanon is out of bounds.

Despite the heavy blow Hezbollah has suffered in recent weeks, acting leader Naim Kassem said in a televised statement that if Israel decides to launch a ground offensive, the group's fighters are ready. He said the commanders killed have already been replaced.

"Israel was not able to affect our (military) capabilities," Kassem said in a televised statement, the first time any senior Hezbollah figure has been seen since Nasrallah was killed. "There are deputy commanders and there are replacements in case a commander is wounded in any post."

He added that Hezbollah, which fought Israel to a stalemate in their monthlong war in 2006, anticipated "the battle could be long."

# GCC clean energy talks DOHA, Sept 30, (KUNA): The 18th meeting of Undersecretaries of the GCC Ministries of Oil kicked off on Monday in Qatar with

Kuwait makes strides in

the participation of Kuwait.

In his speech, Director of Energy Policies and International Relations in Qatar Sheikh Mishaal Bin Jabr Al-Thani said that the importance of the meeting is as important as the strategy that the energy sector has.

He pointed out that the participation of the undersecretaries reflects the joint commitment to continue teamwork to enhance the energy sector in general and the oil and gas sector in particular, as it represents a main pillar for economic and social growth and stability in the GCC countries that have become providers of energy for international economy.

He mentioned that these meetings come in a very important time for international economy that is witnessing several developments, affirming the importance of focusing on coordination and cooperation in facing those challenges of the international energy sector.

He pointed out that cooperation between the GCC countries has always been an example for joint coordination and effort to confront various challenges, indicating that the meeting comes as an opportunity to exchange ideas and proposals about strengthening this cooperation and anticipating the future to develop the energy sector in line with global changes, especially due to the nature of the topics presented on the meeting's agenda.

After his participation in the meeting, Kuwait Undersecretary of the Oil Ministry and head of the Kuwaiti delegation Sheikh Nimr Fahad Al-Malik Al-Sabah said in a statement for KUNA that it has been agreed to rename the president of the energy team for the upcoming period and agreed to hold coordination meetings with member states ahead of the Gulf-China seminar on climate.

**Continued on Page 5** 

# **Kuwait elevates** foreign policy at **UNGA** meetings

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait's participation in the UN General Assembly's session and related meetings in New York was yet another milestone in the Gulf nation's diplomacy as an active player in international affairs.

Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah's participation in the UNGA meetings and consultations contributed to further cooperation with international partners. The State of Kuwait sent messages at

the regional and international levels which reflected aspirations of peoples to overcome regional and global tensions and conflicts, as well as security, stability, sustainable development and human rights. The Arab Gulf country highlighted its

support to international peace and security, and its preventive policy as a major pillar of its foreign policy. Kuwait called for comprehensive re-

forms of UN and international financial institutions in order to address growing challenges and repeated violations of UN Charter and international law. His Highness the Crown Prince said the UN, established some 79 years ago,

should be modernized especially the Security Council (UNSC) which failed to preserve international peace and security.
"We are surrounded by danger and no

one is immune from the consequences of this danger, we have no other way but to cooperate and unite towards common objectives," he said.

**Continued on Page 5** 



Highness the Crown Prince speaks at the United Nations General Assembly.

# Merging agencies could slash government spending by 50%

By Mohammad Ghanem and Mohammad **Al-Musleh** 

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: A study carried out by the Ministry of Finance on 39 government entities revealed that the estimated expenditures for these entities could be reduced by up to 50 percent through the merger or abolition of government agencies, authorities and institutions with overlapping functions.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the study, which was referred to the Council of Ministers; indicating the merger or abolition will reduce government spending by 20 percent in the near term, and by 50 percent in the medium and long terms, as a result of the elimination of middle and leadership positions and bonuses.

A decrease of 25 percent is also expected through

the merger of contracts like cleaning, security, messengers and others. The study also showed 30 percent reduction in the amount spent on official missions.

According to the study, the merger will not only help the public sector grow, but it will also lay the groundwork and regulations for any future government institution creation; preventing the public sector from growing too large and avoiding organizational overlap and duplication. Additionally, it will speed up the process of digital transformation and increase the productivity and efficiency of institutions.

The study looked at the rationale behind the consolidation or dissolution of certain government organizations. It was verified that since its founding, the Competition Protection Authority has only generated three percent of the projected income.

**Continued on Page 5** 





WASHINGTON: US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has been receiving updates

the sanctity of diplomatic missions and providing them with full protection, in acplomacv cordance with the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of

the defense of **Israel**, and the de-escalation of the situation through deterrence and died States is determined to prevent Iran

# **Day by Day**

BRITISH playwright and critic George Bernard Shaw once said: "One of the shortcomings of democracy is that it forces you to listen to the opinion of the fool. It gives the chance to 51 percent of the people to humiliate 49 percent."

This poignant statement encapsulates a fundamental tension within democratic systems: the inherent conflict between majority rule and minority rights. ... Yet tomorrow is another

**Zahed Matar** 

Expected weather for next 24 hrs: By Day: Hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with moderate to fresh southerly wind to southeasterly wind, with speeds of 20-55 km/h causing rising dust and some scattered clouds will appear.

By Night: Rather hot to mild and

#### Weather

humid especially over coastal areas with light to moderate freshening at times over coastal areas southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-45 km/h with a chance for light fog forming over some areas and some scattered clouds will appear.

**Station Max Exp** Min Rec **Kuwait City** 38 Kuwait Airport 24 23 25 Abdaly Bubyan Jahra Failaka Island 37 Salmiyah

# Landowners skirt laws to avoid paying annual fees

Small structures erected on vacant plots

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: In an emerging trend aimed at circumventing Law No. 126 of 2023, which combats the monopoly of vacant lands, some landowners and merchants have begun constructing one-story buildings on their vacant plots. These developments, built in areas where surrounding buildings often rise two or three stories, are designed to evade the annual fees set to take effect in early 2026 under the new law, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

While this tactic appears to be a legal form of land use, it is, in reality, a means to bypass the law and avoid penalties imposed on undeveloped land. In one case observed by the

Al-Seyassah daily, a landowner constructed 80 small, one-floor houses, each containing only two rooms, a kitchen, and a bathroom . These minimalist structures are fenced off, raising concerns about how they were permitted and how they will be used.

Real estate experts explained that the Anti-Land Monopoly Law was enacted to discourage hoarding land for speculative purposes and encourage development. By imposing annual fees on undeveloped land, the law aims to increase available residential properties.

However, some landowners have exploited loopholes by building minimal structures, giving the impression of compliance while postponing full development to avoid fees.

The daily spoke to several experts about the issue. Some observers noted that these circumvention tactics not only undermine the intent of the law but also disrupt the aesthetic appeal and harmony of neighborhoods, further contributing to the housing crisis in Kuwait.

The manipulation of land development regu-

lations, coupled with speculative practices, continues to delay the availability of much-needed housing in a market already struggling with a shortage of residential land.

Real estate expert Nasser Al-Arbash has urged amendments to key provisions of Law No. 126 of 2023, aimed at combating land hoarding, to prevent exploitation and close loopholes. In a statement to the daily, Al-Arbash emphasized the need for the law to cover abandoned, uninhabitable, or unused homes.

He suggested that properties should be deemed abandoned if they have not consumed electricity or water at standard levels for over five years and should be treated as vacant land, subject to the law's fees.

Al-Arbash proposed revising Article 4, which currently requires that the building area not exceed 50 percent of the plot, to stipulate that it must be no less than 50 percent of the total plot size. Additionally, he recommended adding a clause to treat properties as vacant land if electricity and water consumption have ceased for five consecutive years or more.

#### Tajiks, Azeris tapped

# Kuwait seeks to boost trade ties with nations

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs, Nora Al-Fassam held separate meetings with the Ambassador of Tajikistan, Zubaidullah Zubaidov, and the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Kuwait, Emil Karimov, to discuss ways to enhance economic relations.

In a press release on Monday, the Ministry of Finance stated that Minister Al-Fassam and Ambassador Zubaidov discussed the continuation and strengthening of economic and investment cooperation between Kuwait and Tajikistan.

They explored the possibility of holding the fourth session of the joint Kuwaiti-Tajik joint economic, commercial, and scientific committee in the near future, which would help bolster bilateral ties in various fields, and they also addressed plans to amend and sign the protocol on avoiding double taxation between Kuwait and Tajikistan.

The meeting also touched on boosting joint efforts in foreign investment to support the growth and development of

Proposals were made to organize an economic and trade forum in Kuwait, inviting investment companies and banks to exchange expertise and further develop bilateral relations. Al-Fassam emphasized the importance of the private sector in fostering a favorable investment climate for businesses

to explore potential trade and investment opportunities. During her meeting with the Azerbaijani ambassador, discussions centered on strengthening bilateral economic and investment relations, capitalizing on the opportunities available to both countries.

They also discussed Kuwait's participation in the 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (ĈOP29), scheduled to take place in Baku in November 2024.

# **MEW** says no to power generating ships plan

**By Mohammad Ghanem** 

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has ruled out the proposal to bring power generating ships to supply the electricity grid with enough power for the next summer season.

Sources explained this proposal was eliminated based on the research conducted by the committee tasked to study electricity projects for several technical reasons that are difficult to accomplish at present.

Sources pointed out that developing countries always resort to bringing such ships, but these countries have unstable electricity grid; while Kuwait has the most stable power net-

After studying other initiatives related to energy purchase projects, the Initiatives Study Committee at the ministry found that all of them do not live up to the expectation, in addition to the exorbitant cost compared to the cost at which the ministry produces electricity. All initiatives to purchase energy from others require the ministry to provide land and to bear the costs of operating fuel, sources added.

On the other hand, sources revealed that the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) requested the ministry to provide about 3,600 megawatts for South Sabah Al-Ahmad and South Saad Al-Abdullah residential cities

As per the plan of PAHW for new residential cities; it requested the ministry to provide about 3,600 megawatts for the plots in the two cities and their public facilities. The ministry and PAHW are coordinating their efforts to determine the electricity and water needs of the new residential cities,

# 'Cut waste to enhance Kuwait's food security'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has emphasized the critical importance of enhancing food security while reducing food loss and waste, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement commemorating the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, the Ministry outlined its commitment to ensuring a fair and sustainable food sup-

The Ministry highlighted several key points such as reducing food waste.

The Ministry underscored that reducing food loss and waste is essential for achieving food security in Kuwait. By minimizing waste, the sustainability of the food supply system can be enhanced, ensuring that food resources are available for everyone.

The Ministry noted that reducing food waste contributes to the national economy by lowering costs and increasing efficiency in resource management and encouraged consumers to purchase only the quantities they need and improve storage methods to maximize the longevity of food products.

The Ministry also advocated directing surplus food to those in need rather than allowing it to go to waste.

# HH Amir congratulates Botswana

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh MIshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations Monday to Botswana's President Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Masisi on his country's national day.

His Highness the Amir wished President Masisi good health and wellbeing, and friendly Botswana progress and

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations Monday to Botswana's President Mokgweetsi Eric Masisi on his country's national day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished President Masisi good health and wellbeing.



Secretary Of State Antony Blinken, left, meets with Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya at the State Department on Monday, Sept. 30, 2024 in Washington. (AP)

Kuwait FM attends meeting

# **Global Coalition Against Daesh to** enhance efforts in anti-terror war

WASHINGTON, Sept 30, (KUNA): The foreign ministers of the Global Coalition Against Daesh (IS) will hold a meeting in the US capital, Washington, later Monday, to discuss joint efforts to achieve a sustainable defeat for IS and enhance coordination to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya heads the State of Kuwait's delegation participating in the ministerial meeting, which comes at the invitation of US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken.

In remarks to KUNA, Deputy Head of the Arab League Mission in Washington Khaled Hosni said that the meeting will discuss the results of the campaign led by the global coalition for 10 years in response to the Iraqi government's request to support its efforts to confront IS.

He also noted that the attendees will dis-

cuss the planned transition of the coalition's military mission in Iraq toward bilateral security partnerships over the next 12 months and explore ways to maintain pressure on IS remnants in Iraq and Syria and confront the group's networks elsewhere, including in Africa and Central and Southeast Asia.

The meeting will also evaluate the priorities of the efforts made by the international coalition to achieve stability in the region, address the issue of foreign terrorist fighters, and combat the financing of IS to ensure that its threats do not return in the future, he

Further, he pointed out that the meeting will stress the importance of enhancing the conditions conducive to a political solution to the Syrian conflict in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 2254 on a ceasefire and reaching a political settlement to the situation in Syria.



Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant General Pilot Bandar Al-Muzain meets the Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Adarsh Swaika.

# Kuwait Army chief, Indian envoy discuss military, bilateral relations

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Lieutenant General Bandar Al-Muzain, Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, held discussions with the Indian Ambassador to Kuwait, Adarsh Swaika, on Monday. The talks focused on key topics of mutual interest, particularly those pertaining to military cooperation.

The General Staff, in an official statement, reported that the meeting took place at the General Staff Diwan. It was attended by Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army, Major General Pilot Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, along with several high-ranking army officers.

# 572 bedoun were naturalized, 10,256 adjusted their status

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: A recent report issued by the Central Agency for Illegal Residents has revealed that a significant number of individuals have undergone status adjustments in Kuwait, reports Al-Rai daily.

From 2019 to the end of 2023, a total of 572 people were naturalized, with 10,256 individuals adjusting their status from 2011 until August 2024.

Among those who changed their nationality, 6,054 hold Saudi citizenship, while 1,188 are Iraqi nationals. Additionally, 868 individuals hold Syrian nationality, 131 are Iranian, 53 are Jordanian, and 1,962 various other nationalities.

According to the report, the total number of illegal residents in Kuwait reached approximately 85,400 in 2023. This figure was derived from extensive research, auditing, and documentation conducted by the Central Agency.

The agency noted that these numbers are dynamic, influenced by various factors such as changes in status, migration, births,

deaths, and naturalization processes. The report also highlighted historical trends in the population of illegal residents,

noting fluctuations from 1990 to 2023. The following are the details 1990:

2015: 96,000, 2016: 92,000, 2017: 88,000, 2019: 85,000, 2021: 83,000, 2022: 84,000

and 2023: 85,400. The rise in numbers during 2022 and 2023 is attributed to an increase in births, with 1,710 recorded in 2022 and 1,582 in 2023.

In terms of social services, the agency emphasized its commitment to providing privileges and facilities for those seeking to amend their status.

This includes immediate, free residency for five years for individuals and their families. The report confirmed that efforts are ongoing to support vulnerable populations, including individuals with disabilities and the elderly, who may be unable to complete their transactions in person. In such cases, a representative from the agency is dispatched to assist with necessary procedures.

The agency also shared data regarding official documents issued in 2022 and 2023 -- birth certificates: 1,710 (2022), 1,582 (2023); death certificates: 328 (2022), 279 (2023); marriage contracts: 909 (2022), 888 (2023); divorce contracts: 507 (2022), 502 (2023) and official documents: 13,643 (2022), 12,946 (2023)



Kuwait's Minister of Finance Nora Al-Fassam meets Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Kuwait Emil Karimov.

#### **Other Voices**

# Jenan, Noura & Marzouq panel

### By Ahmad alsarraf

 $\mathbf{F}^{\mathrm{ormer}}$  MP Jenan Boushehri, who was forced to resign as Minister of Public Works after exposing corruption and manipulation by contracting companies during the 2017 rain disaster, has once again raised concerns about

the awarding of road contracts in Kuwait In a 2023 tweet,

she revealed that she had submitted a parliamentary question to the then Minister of Public Works regarding a statement that the ministry would con-

alsarraf

tract foreign companies for road repairs without requiring a local agent. After further investigation, she discovered that all the selected companies

had been operating in Kuwait for years and had local agents. She then asked the Minister, Amani Bouqammaz, for the names of these agents. However, despite waiting for over two months, she never received a response, and with the dissolution of the

unanswered, and the proposed project was abandoned. Recently, Jenan tweeted again, sharing her concern that road repair contracts would soon be awarded to local companies, some of which were implicated in the 2017 rain disaster. These companies had been previously banned from bidding but were now allowed to participate after their suspensions were

National Assembly, her question went

mysteriously lifted. She urged the new Minister of Public Works, Noura Al-Mashaan, to avoid prioritizing the lowest bid in awarding contracts, especially when the company

in question had a poor track record. In an interesting turn of events, it seemed there was an unspoken alignment between Jenan and the Ministry of Public Works. The ministry had apparently already recommended to the Tender Committee that companies with a history of poor performance, especially those involved in controversial road projects, be excluded from bidding.

The ministry also advised against awarding contracts based solely on the lowest price, citing past problems related to poor execution, lack of expertise, and even some companies' complete lack of experience in road construction.

Despite these recommendations, the Tender Committee's final decision was contrary to the ministry's guidance. Contracts worth 375 million Kuwaiti dinars were awarded to companies based on the lowest price, disregarding the ministry's technical input.

The ministry expressed its frustra-

tion, as a minor increase in the budget -- just over a million dinars -- could have allowed for the exclusion of unqualified companies and the awarding of contracts to more capable firms.

Many, including Jenan and other observers, believe the Tender Committee should have given greater weight to the Ministry of Public Works' legal and technical opinions, particularly since the ministry is tasked with identifying companies that have caused harm to public funds or performed poorly on

previous projects. In such cases, the ministry has the right to exclude such companies from future tenders. The ministry now faces the responsibility of either delaying the final award to review the matter or risk continuing to work with companies that were responsible for the previous de-

struction of the country's roads. These same companies, after having made millions from their initial work, now stand to make millions more to fix the very problems they caused, a situation that raises serious concerns about the protection of public funds.

There is a widespread sense of frustration over the ongoing issue of road quality in Kuwait. On the one hand, the public is desperate to see the problem resolved, as it has led to significant losses, delays, and widespread dissatis-

On the other hand, many believe that the government must proceed with caution when awarding contracts, especially after recent revelations about the questionable practices of certain com-

In any case, the hope is that the Ministry of Public Works will play a more active role this time in ensuring proper oversight of the companies involved in road repair projects.

Effective and honest supervision is seen as the strongest defense against corruption, but questions remain about whether the ministry and the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport (PART), have the capacity and expertise to provide the level of oversight needed to manage these companies effectively.

Finally, attention is now turning to the role of Essam Al Marzouq, whose reputation for sincerity and integrity has been well established.

Many are calling on him to clarify the confusion surrounding the Tender Committee's decision to insist on awarding the contract based on the lowest price, despite the Ministry of Public Works' warnings. If these concerns are true, his intervention may be necessary to prevent further damage to the country's infrastructure and to restore public trust in the tendering process.

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

# diwaniya 💎 چیوانیة

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

# 'Gaza and Lebanon ... in the crosshairs of the conspiracy'

"CONSPIRACY theories have increasingly dominated the public mindset across the globe, not just in the Arab world. Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001, these theories have proliferated, often intertwining with historical narratives of assassination and warfare, the details and repercussions of which remain shrouded in ambiguity," columnist Suad Fahd Al-Moajil wrote

for Al-Qabas daily recent weeks, particularly following the events of October 7, conspiracy theories have surged to the forefront once again. The violence perpetrated by the Israeli forces against Lebanon has led to a devastating



Suad Al-Moajil

cycle of raids, resulting in countless ca-

sualties and displacements. "This ongoing crisis has further complicated an already intricate Middle Eastern landscape, prompting many to seek explanations that the general public often struggles to comprehend. As a result, people are increasingly turning to historical parallels to fill this knowledge

"Political scientist Michael Barkun argues that conspiracy theories are predicated on the belief that the universe operates according to a grand design, encapsulated in three fundamental principles: nothing happens by chance, nothing is as it seems, and everything is interconnected.

"These principles prompt critical questions: Is it not the case that nothing occurs without reason? Are we not witnessing interconnected events? And does the term 'conspiracy' not imply a degree of strategic planning?

"Ultimately, this discourse may boil down to differing interpretations and linguistic nuances. Much of what unfolds in politics, military actions, and economic policies is often guided by meticulously drawn strategic plans that begin in secrecy. As these plans evolve, their implications begin to materialize, shaping the course of events.

"The critics of conspiracy theorists often dismiss those who believe that a shadowy cabal of global elites manipulates governments, industries, and media to further their agendas. They argue that the central banking system serves as a key instrument of this control, having financed most major wars over the past two centuries.

"This critique raises a compelling point: Are these not precisely the dynamics that have played out in both recent and distant history?

"The aftermath of Sept 11, for instance, led to the unilateral legitimization of the concept of terrorism, facilitating military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, and complicating the geopolitical landscape in Syria. This same narrative has helped position Israel as a so-called bastion of democracy in a region often accused of harboring terrorism.

"The term 'conspiracy' encompasses not only the foresight involved in orchestrating events but also the opportunism in exploiting crises for the benefit of the conspirators. This is especially evident in the ongoing situation in Gaza, where the Israeli government, supported by Western allies, has leveraged the fallout from October 7 to further its regional objectives.

"The situation becomes more complex with Israel's military incursions into Lebanon, as military leaders openly articulate aspirations for a "Greater Israel" in a newly defined Middle East.

"While it is true that an over-reliance on conspiracy theories can reflect a sense of weakness and an inability to confront complex realities, outright denial of their validity contradicts the notion that politics often involves strategic evasion and planning.

"Warfare is inherently a game of tactics and maneuvers, necessitating vigilance and strategic foresight to secure victory, regardless of the methods employed.

In this era of uncertainty and upheaval, conspiracy theories provide a lens through which many people attempt to interpret events that often seem

incomprehensible. "Understanding the interplay of history, politics, and public perception is crucial for navigating the murky waters of contemporary geopolitics. While skepticism is warranted, a nuanced examination of the narratives that shape our understanding of global affairs is essential."

#### Also:

"The establishment of the International Cooperation Task Force (ITF) in 1998 by Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson marked a significant step towards promoting Holocaust education, remembrance, and research," columnist Prof Dr Abdullatif Ben Nakhi wrote

"This initiative was officially recognized in January 2000 at the International Holocaust Forum held in Stockholm. In 2013, the ITF was renamed the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) and has since expanded to include 34 member states, one contact state, and seven observer states.

"The IHRA aims to foster international cooperation in Holocaust education, research, and remembrance, ensuring that the lessons of the Holocaust are not forgotten and that the memory of its victims is honored across the globe.

"In 2016, the IHRA General Assembly adopted a "working definition" of antisemitism, which includes illustrative examples of modern manifestations of antisemitism. While this definition is stated to be non-binding, critics argue it poses significant risks by equating criticism of Israeli policies with antisemi-

"This characterization has raised concerns among legal experts, including Giovanni Fassina, director of the European Legal Support Center (ELSC). Fassina asserts that applying this defi-nition limits the rights of Palestinian defenders to protest and criticize, which conflicts with the stance taken by the European Commission.

"'Parallel to these developments, a coalition of 104 civil society organizations, including prominent groups like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, has urged the United Na-

tions to reject the "working definition'.
"They argue it is often weaponized to stifle criticism of human rights violations perpetrated by Israeli authorities, calling for the UN to ensure that its efforts against antisemitism do not compromise human rights.

"Despite pushback from individuals and human rights organizations, many countries have ratified the "working definition." Notably, Albania, a European country with a Muslim majority, ratified the definition in 2020, raising eyebrows given the geopolitical context.

"In the United States, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the "Anti-Semitism Awareness Act" in May, endorsing the IHRA's working definition with a vote of 320 to 91.

"It is anticipated that the Senate will also pass the law in the coming months, followed by presidential approval. Observers of US politics speculate that adopting this definition could pave the way for similar resolutions within the United Nations, particularly following Israel's success in passing a resolution against Holocaust denial in the UN General Assembly in 2022.

"The approval of this working definition is feared to exacerbate perceived double standards in UN resolutions regarding Israel and Palestine.

"Kuwait has actively voiced its stance against these trends. During a recent speech at the Future Summit at the United Nations, a Kuwaiti representative emphasized the need for the organization to uphold international laws and treaties impartially, rather than applying double standards, especially in addressing ongoing human rights violations in Palestine.

"This context raises important questions about the nature of democracy in the US and beyond. The "Anti-Semitism Awareness Act" reflects a disconnect between legislative decisions and the sentiments of the American public.

"Demonstrations and sit-ins across US streets and universities have shown that a significant portion of the population opposes such legislation, particularly in light of the Al-Aqsa Intifada. Observers attribute this contradiction to the strong influence of the Zionist lobby, which is perceived to shape voter perspectives and legislative outcomes.

"This leads to critical inquiries about the legitimacy of the democratic process in theUS and in emerging democracies that may lack the same level of organizational structure and political influence. Are the voices of the people genuinely represented in legislative actions, or are they overshadowed by powerful lobbying groups?

"This situation calls for a deeper examination of how democracy functions in practice, particularly concerning issues that resonate on a global scale, such as human rights and international

"In conclusion, while Kuwait's commitment to human rights and international law reflects a principled stance against injustice, the contrasting dynamics in countries such as the US underscore the complexities and challenges facing democracies worldwide.

"The call for transparency, fairness, and adherence to universal human rights principles remains vital in ensuring that legislative actions align with the values and beliefs of the people they repre-

- Compiled by PFX Fernandes

#### Nazaha calls on Dr Al-Fulaijawi

# 'Submit evidence to support your claim'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Public Authority for Combating Corruption (Nazaha) has called on Dr. Jassim Al-Fulaijawi to provide evidence supporting his claims on the salaries and bonuses paid to ministers, which he disclosed in a video posted on the X platform, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In the video, Al-Fulaijawi made statements about ministers' remuneration, and Nazaha is now requesting that he submit any documents or proof that validate his

The Nazaha request reflects its commitment to ensuring transparency and integ-

rity in government operations.

The authority has been vigilant in following up on public statements that relate to corruption or financial misconduct, encouraging individuals to back their claims with solid evidence to initiate any formal investigations.

#### **Al-Thunayan addresses General Assembly of Court**

# Judges urged to uphold justice with diligence, integrity

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: In his address during the General Assembly of the Court, Abdul Latif Al-Thunayan, President of the Court of First Instance, emphasized the judiciary's crucial responsibilities, urging judges to uphold justice with diligence and integrity.

He called on them to strictly adhere to session schedules, treat litigants with respect, and exercise patience in listening to all sides. Al-Thunayan particularly stressed the importance of resolving cases that have been pending for more than two years, avoiding unnecessary delays unless required by law.

He underscored the profound weight of judicial decisions, stating, "The litigants, their freedoms, their wealth, and their honor are protected by your pens," emphasizing the significance of their rulings in ensuring truth and justice.

He further highlighted the necessity for the judiciary to remain independent and maintain its integrity, free from external influences. Al-Thunayan also spoke about recent de-

velopments within the court, including the promotion of 14 advisors to the Court of Appeal and the appointment of 53 new judges who transitioned from the Public Prosecution to the General Court.

He expressed confidence in the abilities of



President of the Court of First Instance, Counselor Abdul Latif Al-Thunayan, with members of

the new judges and encouraged them to learn from senior colleagues, who, in turn, would provide support and guidance.

Introducing the court's new judicial year project, Al-Thunayan outlined initiatives aimed at distributing work fairly and efficiently.

These include opening over 40 new de-

partments to manage the growing caseload, covering areas such as rental appeals, criminal, juvenile, administrative, and commercial civil matters. This expansion is part of a broader effort to deliver swift justice and address the increasing demands on the judi-

# KD 2,000 bail, pledge of good conduct for ex-MP

### Ex-minister requests to dismiss his hearing

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Court of Appeals has refrained from sentencing former MP Hamad Al-Alyan and obliged him to sign a pledge of good conduct for two years with KD2,000 bail on the charge of challenging the powers of HH the Amir.

The court previously suspended the prison sentence imposed on Al-Alyan and released him on bail of KD 2,000 until the issuance of a ruling on the appeal.

Case files indicate that the Criminal Court ordered the arrest of Al-Alyan who attended his trial session at the Justice Palace, and referred him to the Central Prison for challenging the Amiri powers.

Case of football officials Oct 6: The Criminal Court set Oct 6 for the trial of Kuwait Football Association President Haif Al-Daihani, his deputy Ahmed Aqla and Secretary Salah Al-Qanaei in a State security case filed against them in view of the unfortunate turn of events during the Kuwait-Iraq match.

The Public Prosecution demanded that the defendants be punished for making statements that could harm Kuwait's relations with friendly countries, the unfortunate turn of events at the Kuwait-Iraq match, and poor organization of the match.

The prosecution previously ordered the detention of the defendants for 21 days and to refer them to the Central Prison. 

Al-Quraifa released on bail: The Court of Appeals decided to release Musaed Al-Quraifa, a citizen, on bail of KD1,000 and imposed a travel ban on him in a State se-

curity case filed against him. The higher court also set a session for Oct 21 to pronounce the verdict.

Case files indicate that the Criminal Court sentenced Al-Quraifa to four years in prison with hard labor, after the

Public Prosecution filed four charges against him; most notably challenging the powers of His Highness the Amir and offending the Amiri status.

Request to dismiss 'hearing': Former Minister of Defense and Interior Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah has submitted a request to dismiss the court hearing of his case, in which he is accused of forgery "by submitting false information to an investigation body, which resulted in the closure of a public money case," reports Al-Seyassah daily.

It is worth noting that the Ministerial Court ruled that the hearing of the former minister's forgery case is not part of its jurisdiction.

The Ministerial Crimes Investigation Committee, headed by Justice Dr. Omar Al-Masoud with Justice Saud Al-Sanea and Dr. Ahmed Al-Muqallad as members, had earlier referred former Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah to the Ministerial Court on charges of forgery "by submitting false information to an investigation body, which resulted in the closure of a public money case."

One person held for drugs: The  $\underbrace{\mbox{support }pa-\mbox{}}$ trol officers at Ahmadi Security Directorate arrested an individual in Fintas for the possession of narcotics and drug paraphernalia,

A security source told the daily that the accused was arrested when the officers got suspicious of a parked car, indicating he tried to escape upon sensing police presence. He was subjected to a precautionary search that led to the discovery of five packs of shabu, two empty syringes and a cigarette loaded with hashish, the source revealed.

During interrogation, the accused confessed to using and trading in drugs. He was referred to the Drug Control General Department, the source added. 

Fire destroys vehicles: Fire engulfed a

number of vehicles at a mosque parking lot in Farwaniya, reports Al-Anba daily.

Firefighters rushed to the location after the Operations Unit at Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) received information about the fire incident.

An abandoned car being lifted.

# Twenty 'abandoned' vehicles impounded

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Supervisor at Fahaheel Center for Public Sanitation and Road Occupancy Mohammad Al-Hajri confirmed that 20 neglected vehicles were impounded, while two shipments of waste and two lorries of used tyres were removed in the recent inspection campaign in Ahmadi, reports Al-Anba daily.

Al-Hajri revealed that as per the directive of Kuwait Municipality Director General Eng. Saud Al-Dabous to Director of the Public Sanitation and Road Occupancy Department at the Municipality branch in Ahmadi Governorate Saad Al-Khurainij and General Supervisor at the center Dr. Mubarak Al-Mujawwab; he along with Shift B Officer Mohammad Faleh and inspectors Abdulaziz Rajaan, Ahmed Eid and Nasser Rashid carried out the campaign in the presence of Head of the Centers Department Mohammed Al-Batani.

He added they issued two violation citations for non-compliance with public sanitation regulations, put 45 warning stickers on neglected vehicles, and issued three warnings for failure to comply with public sanitation regulations.

# ATM robbery bid thwarted

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Raqqa Investigation Department officers thwarted an attempt to rob the ATM of a bank in the vicinity of Raqqa Cooperative Society; where the accused -- an expatriate -- was arrested, reports Al-Anba daily.

A security source confirmed that Assistant Undersecretary for Criminal Security Affairs at the Ministry of Interior Major General Hamed Al-Dawas was in constant contact with the Raqqa investigation officers until the mission was completed and the perpetrator was arrested who had in his possession some tools he intended to use to take money from the machine.

The source revealed that the Raqqa investigation officers received information about an expatriate planning to rob the ATM and that he would commit the crime at night. Accordingly, a task force was formed and they waited for the suspect who came with

the tools and began to break the machine. The source added that the plan devised by the Raqqa detectives to catch the accused red-handed prevented major damage to the ATM, indicating the accused admitted he planned to steal money from the ATM to buy drugs and that he has been an addict for a long time.

# 6-yr-old's fingers cut after air pump failure at Abdally farm

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Several fingers of a six-year-old child were cut when an air pumping machine for inflating toy balloons malfunctioned at a farm in Abdally, reports Al-Anba daily.

The child was with his family at the farm when the incident happened. He was rushed to Jahra Hospital, where he was given first aid and then he was transferred to Al-Razi Hospital.

Qashaniyya Police Station was notified about the incident and it referred the case to the Investigation Office at Saad Al-Abdullah City Police Station, where the incident is under investigation to determine the causes of the child's injury; and why the child headed alone to the air pumping machine.

Initial investigations revealed the suction force of the machine pulled the child's hand, cutting the little, ring, middle and index fingers of his right hand. The Accident Clinic at Al-Razi Hospital reported that the little finger was severely injured, confirming the child's condition is stable.

# Live ammunition drills in Kuwaiti territorial waters

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Public Relations and Security Media Department of the Ministry of Interior has announced that the General Department of Coast Guard is conducting military exercises using live ammunition on Sept 30-Oct 1 from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm, in Kuwaiti territorial waters, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The designated shooting area is southeast of Bubiyan Island and northeast of Failaka Island -- the area extends from the southern tip of Boubiyan Island to Ras Al-Qaid at a depth of 11 nautical miles towards the southeast.

Additionally, it reaches towards Ouha Island at a depth of 15 nautical miles towards the northeast and is approximately 2.8 nautical miles away from Failaka Island in the same direction. The overall range covers a length of 15 nautical miles and a width of 11 nautical miles.

In light of the upcoming exercises, the administration has issued a warning to all seafarers to avoid approaching the designated shooting site during the specified





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# Major proposals on housing, accessibility, regulations set for Municipal Council talks

Al-Amir to lead discussions

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30:** The Technical Committee at the Municipal Council will discuss the allocation of a permanent headquarters for the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises Development at its meeting that will be presided over by Munira Al-Amir on Tuesday.

The committee will also refer to

the executive body the proposal of members Abdullatif Al-Daai and



Sherifa Shalfan on determining the locations of medium-density housing in the existing urban area, proposal of the committee's chairperson on determin-

ing the architectural identity of government buildings and proposal of Alia Al-Farsi to prevent delivery bikes from stopping and plying through sidewalks.

It will also discuss Abdullatif Al-Daai's proposal on allowing a covered setback for commercial activities, proposals related to building regulations, delay in the response of the executive body to Al-Farsi's proposal regarding the formation of a joint committee to follow up the implementation of the requirements for people with disabilities and the Kuwait Code for Accessibility according to the general design.

In a related context, the Legal and Financial Committee will hold its meeting on Wednesday, to be presided over by Fahad Al-Abdul

The agenda includes the following:

■ Farah Al-Rumi's proposal on preparing a sustainability regulation and guidelines for rehabilitating and preserving archaeological sites and historical buildings,

■ Sherifa Al-Shalfan's proposal on preparing a regulation for dismantling buildings based on a field study of the types of extracted buildings and the local market,

Letter of the Public Utilities Company regarding the advertising regulations.

■ Proposals of Fahad Al-Jader to form a committee specialized in studying proposals and requests for naming cities, suburbs, regions, roads, streets and squares; and amendment of some fees stipulated in Advertising Regulation no.

# Ahmadi Committee to review fodder market and infrastructure proposals

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Ahmadi Governorate Committee in the Municipal Council will hold a meeting to be presided over by Nassar Al-Azmi on Thursday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Items in the agenda of the meeting include the following:

Proposal of council member Fahd Al-Khenin to establish a joint market for fodder and livestock, as well as a slaughterhouse in Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential

Request to add a part of the public square to one of the plots in Mangaf, Block 52;

■ Request of the Ministry of Social Affairs to allocate a site for a walkway, three playgrounds, children's games center, lighting, landscaping and an irrigation network in Fahaheel, Block Four;

■ Request of members Nasser

Al-Jadaan and Nassar Al-Azmi to allocate a site for a walkway in Fa-

haheel, Block One; ■ Request of Kuwait National Petroleum Company to allocate a site for Fuel Filling Station No. 49

in Mahboula, Block Three; ■ Request of the Ministry of Social Affairs to amend the Municipal Council's decision to allocate a site for a Mini Central Market in Hadi-

ya, Block One: ■ Request of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) to allocate sites for basins, water channels and connections to collect and drain rainwater in Ahmadi and Mangaf;

■ Request of PART to allocate sites for 10 basins with seven water channels and an earthen barrier to collect and drain rainwater in Sabah Al-Ahmad and South Sabah Al-Ahmad residential areas.

#### **Advancements in medical research**

# Ministry of Health launches 1st ENT training course for doctors

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): The Ministry of Health organized the first training course for doctors of the Kuwaiti Board of Otorhinolaryngology (ENT) and participants from various specialties on the mechanism of conducting scientific research, with practical training on how to perform research and develop the necessary

Head of the Otorhinolaryngology Department at Farwaniya Hospital and Director of the Otorhinolaryngology Program at the Ministry, Dr. Ahmad Al-Rashidi, said in a press statement on Saturday that the aim of the course, organized by the administration of the Kuwaiti Board of the Otorhinolaryngology Program, is to teach all the requirements and techniques needed to publish scientific research, both locally and internationally. Al-Rashidi emphasized that this initiative is part of the ministry's

ongoing efforts to develop and enhance the capabilities of its doctors. He also highlighted the continuous encouragement of the Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, to support ongoing medical education and raise the scientific and professional levels of doctors in Kuwait. The course was held with the support of officials from the Postgraduate Studies Department at the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specializations.

#### Scientific research

He added that Dr. Ahmed Haraz delivered a lecture on the principles and basics of scientific research and how to structure it to ensure its acceptance for international publication. The course saw notable participation from Kuwaiti Board doctors and other ministry doctors with an interest in scientific research.

Consultant Otorhinolaryngologist and Head of the College of Otorhi-

nolaryngology, Dr. Abdul Mohsen Al-Turki, explained that scientific research is essential for progress and improvement in medical services, keeping pace with medical advancements globally. He also indicated that similar scientific and research events would be organized in the future.

Al-Turki emphasized the impor-

Number of participants in the training course. tance of encouraging doctors to engage in medical research to enhance their skills and improve their ability to provide highly accurate diagnostic and treatment services, as well as the best health practices for society.

For his part, Consultant Otorhinolaryngologist and Scientific Research Officer at the Kuwaiti Board of Otorhinolaryngology, Dr. Tamim Al-Ali, said that the interest of Kuwaiti Board doctors in scientific research and their efforts to learn its foundations is a clear sign of raising the level of future medical services and elevating Kuwait's medical standing among other nations.

Al-Ali stated that the ministry

places great importance on medical education and training programs and supports scientific activities and training courses to encourage the adoption of the latest global and local developments. This, he said, helps exchange knowledge and expertise, positively impacting patient care and the overall health system.



KUNA photo

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The launching of the, 'Their Future is a Trust 2' campaign.

Over 3K individuals to receive financial aid

# 'Their Future is a Trust 2' campaign launched to support needy students

**By Mohammad Ghanem** 

Al-Sevassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Chairman of the Union of Charitable Societies and Foundations Saad Al-Otaibi on Sunday announced the launching of the, 'Their Future is a Trust 2' campaign, which aims to provide financial support to the neediest students in Kuwait, as part of the ongoing efforts to support education and promote social responsibility.

Al-Otaibi stressed that the initiative stems from a deep belief in the importance of education in building a strong and sustainable future.

In his speech during the press conference held Sunday to announce the launching of the campaign, Al-Otaibi pointed out that "through this campaign, we seek to bridge the financial gaps for students whose families are unable to pay tuition fees to ensure that they continue their education without interruption. Education is the foundation upon which the future of Kuwaiti society is built.'

He affirmed there is direct coordination with schools to ensure that donations reach the neediest students with complete transparency.

He praised the values embodied by this campaign, saying, "we do not only provide financial support, but we also establish the values of mercy and cooperation that distinguish our Kuwaiti society.

He said the campaign conveys a broader message than just financial support, as it contributes to strengthening community partnership and building a generation capable of facing future challenges and contributing to the renaissance of Kuwait.

He pointed out that the Ministry of Social Affairs is fully supervising the campaign, while appreciating the Ministry of Information for its support of the campaign. He also urged the schools hosting the

beneficiaries of the campaign to cooperate with charitable societies by granting discounts for student fees, calling on those with money to support the students and orphans.

Meanwhile, campaign manager and member of Kuwait Charitable Societies Union (KCSU) Abdullah Al-Haider stated that "education is a fundamental pillar for advancing societies. The progress of countries is measured by the level of education, its quality and the number of learners in it. Interest in education is also reflected in society in all aspects of life -- economically, culturally, politically, socially and security-wise."

Al-Haider explained this is a continuation of last year's campaign. He cited statistics indicating that more than 3,000 students are unable to pay their tuition fees.

Moreover, Sinan Al-Ahmad, a member of KCSU, said: "One of the necessities for the stability of education is maintaining the student's attendance and not dropping out for any reason. This is what the initiative seeks by providing the required financial support for students whose parents are unable to pay their tuition fees.

#### **News in Brief**

Clinic tender announced: The Ministry of Health has announced its plan to float the tender for completing the remaining works for the construction and maintenance of the Farwaniya Specialized Health Clinic building according to a number of conditions, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The ministry called on the contractors to visit its Financial Affairs Department to obtain a compact disc containing the tender documents and submit a 'To Whom It May Concern' certificate issued by the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), confirming the absence of a suspension in the contractor's file for government contracts registered in the authority. It also emphasized that bids without this certificate will be rejected.

It added that the last date for submitting

bids is on Nov 11, through the bidding box at the Purchasing Department; stating the bids are valid for 90 days starting from the closing date.

**Scholarships open:** The Secretariat General of the Private Universities Council has announced the opening of electronic registration for the unified national admission test for those wishing to apply for internal scholarships in engineering courses from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm on Oct 1-7.
The Secretariat General also set the

dates for the unified national test as a requirement for admission to engineering specializations courses as follows:

Saturday Oct 26, 2024, Saturday Nov 9, 2024, Saturday Nov 23, 2024.

10 tons of aid for displaced Sudanese

# **Kuwait Society for Relief launches** 14th humanitarian flight to Sudan

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): The 14th relief plane of the Kuwaiti airbridge took off, Monday, to Port Sudan International Airport, carrying ten tons of tents, organized by Kuwait Society for Relief (KSR), to shelter displaced people affected by rains, floods and ongoing conflicts in Sudan.

The Society's Director General Abdulaziz Al-Obaid told KUNA that the planeload comes at a time when the internal conflicts and natural disasters have increased in Sudan, including floods that hit many areas, resulting in hundreds of victims and thousands of displaced people.

KSR is working in parallel with the increasing urgent humanitarian needs due to the ongoing conflicts in Sudan to cooperate with official bodies inside and outside Kuwait to deliver various materials to those who need them, stressed Al-Obaid.

He praised the efforts made by the official supervising and supporting bodies, headed by the Kuwaiti Ministries of Social Affairs, Defense, Information and Foreign Affairs, which helped in facilitating the Kuwait airbridge flights.

He appreciated the role of Kuwaiti charitable societies and organizations that are partners in the joint Kuwaiti humanitarian work, including the societies participating in the campaign for Sudan, as well as Kuwaiti people's efforts and charitable social institutions.

For his part, the society's head of relief and projects sector Mahmoud Al-Misbah affirmed to KUNA that the current flight comes within the campaign launched by KSR in partnership with eight Kuwaiti charitable societies and institutions, to fill the gap in urgent and pressing humanitarian needs in Sudan.

Al-Misbah noted that the organizations participating in the campaign include Charitable Organization, Society of the Revival of Islamic Heritage, Namaa Charity, Al-Najat Charity, Al-Nouri Charity, Direct Aid, Patient Aid, and Global Mercy



The 14th relief plane from the Kuwaiti Air Bridge carrying ten tons of tents to shelter displaced people affected by rains, floods and ongoing conflicts

#### Turkiye-Kuwait diplomacy marks 60 years of friendship

# Turkish Embassy, UN-HABITAT Kuwait organize special Golden Mosque tour



Türkiye Ambassador Tuba Nur Sönmez and Dr. Amira Al-Hassan, the Head of the UN-HABITAT Kuwait (GCC) Office, pose for a group photo inside the Golden Mosque

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Turkish Embassy in Kuwait and UN-HABITAT Kuwait (GCC) Office held a special tour of the Golden Mosque, organized as part of a series of events marking the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Türkiye and

This beautiful mosque, completed in 2020, showcases a harmonious blend of Ottoman and Kuwaiti architecture. Designed by engineer Muhammad Amr and inspired by the renowned Ottoman architect Sinan Pasha, the mosque's golden domes and intricate details reflect the rich heritage of both nations. Spanning 1,600 square meters, the mosque features a grand prayer hall that accommodates 1,000 people and a women's section for 400. The Badriya Nasser Al-Jeyan Mosque, also known as the Golden Mosque, was established in 2020 as a donation from Sheikh Miteb Al-Sabah and bears the name of

The mosque's construction involved

materials imported from various regions of Türkiye, including:

Travertine stone from Afyon and

Denizli, Ceramics from Iznik and

Konya, Stained glass from historic periods of Istanbul, Wooden doors from Edirne, Chandeliers from Istanbul, Carpets from Gaziantep, Mihrab and

**Awqaf Ministry strengthens** 

anti-Islamophobia strategy

Al-Wasmi updates summer work for experts

The Golden Mosque stands as a powerful symbol of the strong and ever-growing ties between Türkiye and

> Ambassador Tuba Nur Sönmez and Dr. Amira Al-Hassan, the Head of the UN-HABITAT Kuwait (GCC) Office, were joined by members of the diplomatic corps, academics from the College of Architecture at Kuwait University, and cultural envoys in exploring the mosque's unique architectural and cultural style. Mr. Muhammad Amr, the mosque's designer, guided the guests throughout

the tour. Ambassador Sönmez emphasized the significance of the Golden Mosque as a symbol of the enduring and growing friendship between Türkiye and Kuwait. The event, part of a series of celebrations marking this milestone anniversary, underscored the historical and cultural connections between the



Ambassador Tuba Nur Sönmez speaks at special tour of the Golden Mosque.

# Jahra Governor reiterates strong support for student-centric activities & exhibitions

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi reiterated his strong support for student-focused activities and exhibitions, particularly those that emphasize the teachings of Islam and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), reports Al-Seyassah daily

He was speaking at the "Prophet's Biography" exhibition, sponsored by him and organized by the Kuwaiti Teachers Association (Jahra Branch).

The event, held in the presence of numerous supervisors, teachers, and students from Jahra Governorate schools, featured a documentary film that highlighted the life and legacy of the Prophet.

Governor Al-Habashi expressed his deep appreciation for the efforts of the Teachers Association's President and members, acknowledging their dedication to fostering Islamic teachings through such educational initiatives.

He commended the creativity and innovation displayed at the exhibition and stressed the importance of continuing similar events to promote valuable educational messages to



Al-Seyassah photo

Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi with the teachers, and students from Jahra Governorate schools.

#### Amiri speech

#### **Continued from Page 1**

This is what Saudi Arabia and the Emirates have done; as well as the United States, Germany, France and many other countries where corruption is almost non-existent, because they have put in place modern legislation. They do not work with quotas and fa-

Today, the ministers of Finance, Commerce, Municipality and the rest of the service ministries must develop executive plans to address problems in their jurisdiction.

In fact, since His Highness the Amir outlined a reform roadmap in his speech, the Council of Ministers as a whole needs to take these issues more seriously in order to resolve them. Otherwise, people will lose faith in the government, while the number of crises will increase.

#### **Kuwait makes**

#### **Continued from Page 1**

He noted that the meeting tackled several topics related to Circular Carbon Economy and transition towards renewable energy instead of displaying Carbon neutrality strategies that GCC countries seek to achieve within the framework of international guidelines to reduce

carbon emissions. He stressed that Kuwait played a pivotal role at the meeting by submitting a number of important proposals, as Kuwait was among the countries supporting the development of the petroleum media strategy for the GCC countries, which aims to unify the Gulf media discourse on oil issues and enhance public awareness of the importance of the transition towards clean energy and Circular Carbon Economy.

#### **Kuwait elevates**

#### **Continued from Page 1**

The State of Kuwait called for solidarity among UN members, who should have a serious political will to reform international action including UNSC on the basis of democratic decision-making and fair representation of member countries as well as better deal with a world that is different than it was in 1945.

It will be illogical to meet aspirations of people, Kuwait argued, without punishing those who violated UN Charter, international law and international humanitarian law. "Justice and equality will not be achieved amidst double standards.

Kuwait, reaffirming its respect of countries' sovereignty and non-interference in their affairs, called for resolution of conflicts among countries through dialogue and peaceful means.

It reiterated support for just causes, foremost the Palestinian question and affirmed that peace in the region would only be achieved through establishment of the independent Palestinian State on the June 4, 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital in accordance with UN resolutions and Arab peace initiative.

His Highness the Crown Prince, in a speech before the Summit of the Future, highlighted the UNSC's failure to stop the genocide in Palestine which "reflected the double standards in implementing the international law."

The UN commended the State of Kuwait for its support of UN agencies to achieve their objectives.

His Highness the Crown Prince, meanwhile, held a series of meetings with heads of state and government regarding the further promotion of relations and cooperation in political, development, investment, security, diplomatic and sport domains.

At the Gulf level, the State of Kuwait expressed determination to continue the march of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and to continue strategic partnerships with regional and international organizations.

The GCC has proven to be a foundation of stability and prosperity in "our region, and the GCC will always remain a voice of wisdom and moderation, and a beacon of constructive dialogue in a region engulfed in challenges and strategic transformations, said His Highness the Crown Prince.

His Highness the Crown Prince's meetings focused on development, economy and investment, reflecting his desire to see big companies transfer knowledge and expertise to the State of Kuwait.

His meeting with World Bank President Ajay Banga focused on development of services and consultations, and training programs for Kuwaitis.

His Highness the Crown Prince's meeting with Ruth Porat, President and Chief Investment Officer of Alphabet and its subsidiary Google, LLC, touched upon the framework agreement, the data center and transfer of knowledge and expertise to Ku-

The State of Kuwait tabled its development vision to its partners with the objective of transforming the nation into a trade and commercial hub.

# Merging agencies

#### **Continued from Page 1**

The research findings indicate that subsequent to the merger, several new authorities and institutions were established. These include the Central

#### KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Director of the **Civilization Communication Department** at the Ministry of Awgaf and Islamic Affairs Salah Aba Al-Khail confirmed that the department is improving its strategy to encourage ideological diversity and com-

Al-Khail affirmed these efforts are within the framework of Kuwait's global leadership in Islamic work; as reflected in the performance of the departments, centers and sectors of the ministry as a whole, in order to highlight the humanitarian role of the State in supporting Muslims in western countries, especially in light of the challenges they are facing in those countries. He pointed out that the valuable project adopted by the department aims to change the misconceptions about Islam at the local, regional and international levels.

bat Islamophobia, reports Al-Anba daily.

He explained that this goal requires comprehensive social reforms to narrow the cultural and civilization gaps between peoples, especially those stemming from religious and cultural differences. He said building bridges of understanding between different peoples is on top of the priorities of the department, which is keen on spreading the values of societal and religious tolerance. He stressed that correcting misconceptions hindering cooperation between civilizations is essential in the department's path towards enhancing un-

derstanding and cultural dialogue. He added that combating Islamophobia -- an excessive

Agency for Information Technology,

Public Authority for Communications

and Information Technology, Nation-

al Center for Cybersecurity, and the

Communications Sector at the Minis-

The study revealed the following

- Establishment of the Public Au-

thority for Food Security after merging

the Public Authority for Agriculture

and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) and

the Public Authority for Food and Nu-

Roads and Transportation (PART) and

merge it with the Ministry of Public

(KUNA) with the Ministry of Informa-

Housing Welfare (PAHW) and Ku-

wait Credit Bank (KCB) to become the

Housing Finance and Welfare Author-

ity in order to solve the housing issue,

Planning and Development due to the

existence of the Secretariat General for

ment Promotion Authority (KDIPA),

Public-Private Partnership Authority,

Privatization Authority and Small Pro-

jects Fund with the aim of attracting

Civil Information and the Central Sta-

tistics Bureau to unify official statistics

- Put the Expropriation Department

and Financial Controllers Authority

under the management of the Ministry

- Merge the Youth Authority, Sports

Merge the Financial Investigations

Authority and Kuwait Anti-Doping

Agency due to the similarity in the na-

Unit and the National Bureau for Hu-

- Merge the Public Authority for

Planning and Development,

local and foreign capital,

in the country,

of Finance.

ture of work

- Abolish the Supreme Council for

Merge Kuwait Direct Invest-

- Abolish the Public Authority for

Merge Kuwait News Agency

- Merge the Public Authority for

try of Communication.

proposals:

trition (PAFN),

and unjustified fear of Islam -- is one of the main axes in the strategy of the department. He affirmed the department remains committed to highlighting the humanitarian values of Islam and enhance the role played by Kuwait in supporting Muslims around the world, in line with the new world trends that reject violence and extremism.

He stated that the participation of the department in the Gothenburg International Exhibition in Sweden is part of efforts aimed at developing cultural and civilization communication. He added the distribution of the 'Divine Calls' booklet in the Swedish language reflects the tolerant humanitarian values of

Meanwhiule, Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi issued a ministerial decision regarding the assignment of experts for summer work. The decision states that Article Two of Ministerial Resolu-

tion No. 233/2011 shall be replaced with the following text: "If the number of experts who meet the conditions for assignment to summer work exceeds one-third, they shall be assigned in the following order of priority:

1. Experts who have not previously been assigned and granted summer work bonus in the previous year,

2. Experts who have been assigned the least number of times and received a summer work bonus.

3. Occupants of the highest position stipulated in the Kuwaiti Experts Job Schedule attached to Civil Service Commission Resolution No. 6:1993 as follows:

- Senior Expert, - First Expert, - Second Expert, - Third Expert, - Assistant Expert A, - Most senior in terms of appointment to the Experts Department, - The oldest in terms of age. The decision added: "All competent authorities must im-

plement this decision, according to their capacity."

#### man Rights to be under the Ministry of Justice,

- Transform Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) as affiliated bodies instead of being independent entities.

- Merge or abolish the Ministry of Awqaf, Public Authority for Printing and Publishing the Holy Quran and the Secretariat General of Awqaf,

- Separate the judiciary from the Ministry of Justice and become an independent body called the Judicial

The study explained that the procedures for merging the entities will contribute to reducing expenses and stopping the inflation of the State's administrative structure.

#### **Transaction freeze**

#### Continued from Page 1

banks, urging them to quickly complete the procedures to avoid being subjected to investigation. He explained such an investigation is aimed at determining the reasons for not doing the biometric fingerprint procedures.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior, through the General Department of Criminal Evidence, announced that working hours at all biometric fingerprint centers and select shopping malls across various governorates will be extended until midnight today, Monday.

In a statement, the General Department of Security Relations and Media explained that this extension is aimed at easing the process for citizens to complete their biometric fingerprinting, as today marks the final deadline.

The ministry urged all citizens to complete the biometric fingerprint procedure to avoid suspension of their civil ID cards and all government and banking transactions.

Starting tomorrow, October 1, 2024, biometric fingerprinting services at shopping malls will cease, but criminal evidence centers will continue to offer the service daily from 8 AM to 8 PM.

With the deadline for citizens to complete their biometric fingerprinting Monday, banking sources disclosed to Al-Rai that the duration for banks to freeze the accounts of Kuwaitis who fail to comply has been shortened to 30 days.

This new directive means that a "block" will be imposed on the accounts of non-compliant citizens, preventing any access to their bank balances starting November 1, rather than at the end of December as previously planned.

According to the banking plans, beginning October 1, access to all electronic channels and payment systems for customers who have not completed the biometric fingerprinting will be stopped.

This includes restrictions on viewing account balances, obtaining account statements, transferring money, and making payments via financial links or services such as "Wamd." In essence, all electronic transactions for those who have failed to fulfill the biometric fingerprint requirement will be suspended.

Furthermore, all bank cards -- including the K-Net, Visa, and Master-Card -- for non-compliant customers are expected to be deactivated by October 15.

This means these cards will no longer function for both withdrawals and deposits. During this time, customers will be forced to visit their banks in person to withdraw any funds from their accounts.

However, starting November 1, even in-person withdrawals will be prohibited, effectively barring customers from accessing their funds alto-



Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris speaks during a campaign appearance on Sept 29 in Las Vegas. (AP)

Death toll rises to nearly 100 in US

# Supplies rushed to communities isolated by Helene

PERRY, Fla., Sept 30, (AP): North Carolina officials pledged to get more water and other supplies to flood-stricken areas by Monday after Hurricane Helene left a trail of destruction across the U.S. Southeast and the death toll from the storm rose to nearly 100.

At least 91 people across several states were killed. A North Carolina county that includes the mountain city of Asheville reported 30 people killed.

Gov. Roy Cooper predicted the toll would rise as rescuers and other emergency workers reached areas isolated by collapsed roads, failing infrastructure and widespread flooding.

Supplies were being airlifted to the region around the isolated city of Asheville. Buncombe County Manager Avril Pinder pledged that she would have food and water to the city by Monday

"We hear you. We need food and we need water," Pinder said on a Sunday call with reporters. "My staff has been making every request possible to the state for support and we've been working with every single organization that has reached out. What I promise you is thet we pre very close."

that we are very close."

Officials warned that rebuilding

from the widespread loss of homes and property would be lengthy and difficult. The storm upended life throughout the Southeast. Deaths also were reported in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and Virginia.

Cooper implored residents in western North Carolina to avoid travel, both for their own safety and to keep roads clear for emergency vehicles. More than 50 search teams spread throughout the region in search of stranded people.

One rescue effort involved saving 41 people north of Asheville. Another mission focused on saving a single infant. The teams found people through both 911 calls and social media messages, North Carolina National Guard Adjutant General Todd Hunt said.

President Joe Biden described the impact of the storm as "stunning" and said he would visit the area this week as long as it does not disrupt rescues or recovery work.

In a brief exchange with reporters, he described the impact of the storm as "stunning" and said that the administration is giving states "everything we have" to help with their response to the storm.

Hurricane Helene roared ashore late

Thursday in Florida's Big Bend region as a Category 4 hurricane with 140 mph (225 kph) winds. A weakened Helene quickly moved through Georgia, then soaked the Carolinas and Tennessee with torrential rains that flooded creeks and rivers and strained

There have been hundreds of water rescues, including in rural Unicoi County in East Tennessee, where dozens of patients and staff were plucked by helicopter from a hospital rooftop Friday.

More than 2 million homeowners and other utility customers were still without power Sunday night. South Carolina had the most outages and Gov. Henry McMaster asked for patience as crews dealt with widespread snapped power poles.

"We want people to remain calm. Help is on the way, it is just going to take time," McMaster told reporters outside the airport in Aiken County.

The storm unleashed the worst flooding in a century in North Carolina. One community, Spruce Pine, was doused with over 2 feet (61 centimeters) of rain from Tuesday through Saturday.



A firefighter tries to extinguish the flames near the village of Kallithea as fanned by strong winds raged uncontrolled despite the attempts of the authorities to stop the wildfire, some 149 kilometers (93 miles) west of Athens, Greece, in the region of Corinthia on Sept 29. (AP)

### Wildfire in southern Greece kills 2

Two people died overnight in a large wildfire burning through forestland in Greece, near a seaside resort in the country's south, authorities said.

The fire service said about 350 firefighters, assisted by 18 water-dropping aircraft, managed to largely bring the blaze near Xylokastro in the Peloponnese region under control early on Monday.

day.
Scattered fires burned in the area but the initial large front had been put out, officials said.

Half a dozen villages were ordered evacuated overnight as a precaution after the blaze broke out on Sunday. There was no threat to Xylokastro. The flames were fanned by very strong winds blowing through forests left tinder-dry by a warm spring and hot summer attributed to climate change.

Authorities said the two dead men were believed to be local residents who were declared missing late Sunday. No one else was reported missing. There were no immediate reports of burned homes in the affected area, located some 150 kilometers (93 miles) southwest of Greece's capital, Athens.

Another wildfire near Andravida, in the western Peloponnese was also brought under control on Monday, but firefighters remained on alert in the area for flareups, the fire

service said.

Greece, like other southern European countries, is plagued by destructive wildfires every summer that have been exacerbated by global warming. Over the past few months, authorities have had to cope with more than 4,500 wildfires in countryside left parched by a protracted drought and early summer heatwaves, in what was considered the most dangerous fire

season in two decades.

A big investment in extra waterbombing aircraft, warning drones and other equipment have enabled firefighters to extinguished most blazes shortly after they broke out. (AP)

#### America

**New York City closes tunnel:** A stretch of aqueduct that supplies about half of New York City's water is being shut down through the

ter is being shut down through the winter as part of a \$2 billion project to address massive leaks beneath the Hudson River.

The temporary shutdown of the Delaman and the shut of the Market New York has been shut of the Market New Y

ware Aqueduct in upstate New York has been in the works for years, with officials steadily boosting capacity from other parts of the city's sprawling 19-reservoir system. Water will flow uninterrupted from city faucets after the shutdown begins this week, officials said, though its famously crisp taste might be affected as other sources are tapped into more heavily.

ily.

"The water will alway be there,"
Paul Rush, deputy commissioner for
the city's Department of Environmental Protection. "We're going to be
changing the mix of water that consumers get."

The Delaware Aqueduct is the longest tunnel in the world and carries water for 85 miles (137 kilometers) from four reservoirs in the Catskill region to other reservoirs in the city's north-

ern suburbs. Operating since 1944, it provides roughly half of the 1.1 billion gallons (4.2 billion liters) a day used by more than 8 million New York City residents. The system also serves some upstate municipalities.

But the aqueduct leaks up to 35 million gallons (132 million liters) of water a day, nearly all of it from a section far below the Hudson River.

The profuse leakage has been known about for decades, but city officials faced a quandary: they could not take the critical aqueduct offline for years to repair the tunnel. So instead, they began constructing a parallel 2.5-mile (4-kilometer) bypass tunnel under the river about a decade ago. (AP)

Interstate closed outside Atlanta:

Some residents east of Atlanta were evacuated while others were told to shelter in place Sunday to avoid contaminants from a chemical plant fire that sent a massive plume of dark smoke high into the sky that could be seen from miles away.

Interstate 20 was shut down in both directions in the area, the Georgia

Department of Transportation said in a post on X. Reports said traffic was snarled as vehicles backed up in the area after tvhe closure.

The fire ignited when a sprinkler head malfunctioned around 5 a.m. Sunday at the BioLab plant in Conyers, Rockdale County Fire Chief Marian McDaniel told reporters. The malfunction caused water to mix with a water-reactive chemical, producing a plume of chemicals. (AP)

McDaniel said there were employees inside the plant but no injuries have been reported at this time, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported.

The newspaper said the billowing cloud of smoke was visible Sunday afternoon as far as 30 miles (50 kilometers) away at Atlanta's international airport south of the city. It added no injuries were immediately reported.

"Once we can get that chemical out of the building and allow it to burn off we'll be in a much better shape," Mc-Daniel said.

McDaniel said she wasn't sure what chemicals may have been contained in the plume. (AP)

#### **Crowds pretty big: LA fundraiser**

# VP Harris trolls Trump at Vegas rally

LAS VEGAS, Sept 30, (AP): US Vice President Kamala Harris poked at Donald Trump over crowd sizes, his refusal to debate again and his privileged background on Sunday as she hauled in campaign cash in California and held a raucous rally at the same Nevada venue where the Republican nominee had appeared just two weeks ago.

During the presidential debate, Harris appeared to get under the former president's skin when she said people were leaving his rallies early because of his rambling speeches. And she's kept it up on the campaign

The vice president told donors at a tony Los Angeles fundraiser that, as she campaigns around the country, her "crowds are pretty big." And then before a roaring Las Vegas crowd estimated at 7,500, she renewed her jabs at Trump over being reluctant to debate again, saying, "The American people have a right to hear us discuss the issues. And as you say here in Las Vegas, I'm all in. I'm all in."

Harris' four-day West Coast trip had dual purposes: She opened and closed it with stops in Sun Belt battlegrounds - Arizona and Nevada - where the vice president is trying to shore up support as Trump pounds her relentlessly over illegal migration. And her mid-stay in California was devoted to hauling in campaign contributions from donors in her blue

home state.

Harris also moved into what Trump considers his terrain - immigration - with a Friday visit to the border town of Douglas, Arizona. It was her first trip to the U.S.-Mexico border since taking over for President Joe Biden atop the Democratic presidential ticket.

Harris' border visit in Arizona seemed to irk Trump. The GOP leader has spent two days railing about the vice president during his rallies, upping his personal attacks against her, claiming she was responsible for a border "invasion," and stirring up unfounded fears that she'd usher in lawlessness if elected.

Harris gave the same response she usually does to his insults, even despite Trump calling her "mentally impaired."

"We just see the same old tired show from the same old tired playbook," she told a Los Angeles crowd of donors on Sunday, some who shouted "boring!" in response.

Hours later in Las Vegas, she also revived her jabs at Trump for his "silver platter" background that nonetheless produced six bankruptcies, saying, "I come from the middle class, and I will never forget where I come from."

Harris has warned the race is as close as it could possibly be, a "margin-of-error" race. But at the Los Angeles fundraiser, she added: "The

election is here and let me be clear. We are going to win."

That event was full of celebrities: Stevie Wonder, Keegan Michael-Key, Sterling K. Brown, Demi Lovato, Jessica Alba and Lily Tomlin attended and Halle Bailey and Alanis Morissette took the stage. It, and a fundraiser a day earlier in San Francisco, raised a combined \$55 million for Harris' campaign.

Harris was spending Sunday night in Las Vegas and had planned campaign stops in the city on Monday. But her office announced that she'd instead head back to Washington earlier than expected and will attend a briefing on the damage caused by Hurricane Helene at the headquarters of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Meanwhile, the vice president is continuing to notch Republican support. Former Arizona Sen. Jeff Flake became the latest to endorse her. He credited Harris with a "fine character and love of country" and said he wants a president who does not treat political adversaries as enemies or try to subvert the will of voters.

Flake, a longtime critic of the former president, joins a list of anti-Trump Republicans who have said they will vote for the Democratic ticket, including Dick Cheney, the deeply conservative former vice president, and his daughter, Liz.



This aerial drone view shows damaged homes and a vehicle collapsed into water after storm surge from Hurricane Helene on Sept 28 in Madeira Beach, Fla. (AP)

#### **Chances of governing unclear**

# Austria's Freedom Party wins election

VIENNA, Sept 30, (AP): The Freedom Party secured the first far-right national parliamentary election victory in post-World War II Austria on Sunday, finishing ahead of the governing conservatives after tapping into anxieties about immigration, inflation, Ukraine and other issues. But its chances of governing were unclear.

Preliminary official results showed the Freedom Party finishing first with 29.2% of the vote and Chancellor Karl Nehammer's Austrian People's Party was second with 26.5%. The center-left Social Democrats were in third place with 21%. The outgoing government - a coalition of Nehammer's party and the environmentalist Greens - lost its majority in the lower house of parliament.

Herbert Kickl, a former interior minister and longtime campaign strategist who has led the Freedom Party since 2021, wants to be chancellor.

But to become Austria's new leader, he would need a coalition partner to command a parliamentary majority. Rivals have said they won't work with Kickl in government.

The far right has benefited from frustration over high inflation, the war in Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also built on worries about migration.

In its election program, titled "Fortress Austria," the Freedom Party calls for "remigration of uninvited foreigners," for achieving a more "homogeneous" nation by tightly controlling borders and suspending the right to asylum via an emergency law.

The Freedom Party also calls for an end to sanctions against Russia, is highly critical of Western military aid to Ukraine and wants to bow out of the European Sky Shield Initiative, a missile defense project launched by Germany. Kickl has criticized "elites" in Brussels and called for some powers to be brought back from the European Union to Austria.



Herbert Kickl, leader of the Freedom Party of Austria waves to supporters, in Vienna, Austria on Sept 29, after polls closed in the country's national election. (AP)

"We don't need to change our position, because we have always said that we're ready to lead a government, we're ready to push forward this change in Austria side by side with the people," Kickl said in an appearance alongside other party leaders on ORF public television. "The other parties should ask themselves where they stand on democracy," he added, arguing that they should "sleep on the result."

Nehammer said it was "bitter" that his party missed out on first place, but noted he brought it back from lower poll ratings. He has often said he won't form a coalition with Kickl and said that "what I said before the election, I also say after the election."

More than 6.3 million people

More than 6.3 million people were eligible to vote for the new parliament in Austria, an EU member that has a policy of military neutrality.

Kickl has achieved a turnaround since Austria's last parliamentary election in 2019. In June, the Free-

dom Party narrowly won a nationwide vote for the first time in the European Parliament election, which also brought gains for other European far-right parties.

Dutch far-right leader Geert Wilders, whose party dominates the Netherlands' new government, congratulated the Freedom Party on social network X Sunday. So did Alice Weidel, a co-leader of the Alternative for Germany party.

The Freedom Party is a long-established force but Sunday's result was its best yet in a national parliamentary election, beating the 26.9% it scored in 1999.

In 2019, its support slumped to 16.2% after a scandal brought down a government in which it was the junior partner. Then-vice chancellor and Freedom Party leader Heinz-Christian Strache resigned following the publication of a secretly recorded video in which he appeared to offer favors to a purported Russian investor.

The leader of the Social Democrats, a party that led many of Austria's post-World War II governments, positioned himself as the polar opposite to Kickl. Andreas Babler ruled out governing with the far right and labeled Kickl "a threat to democracy."

While the Freedom Party has recovered, the popularity of Nehammer's People's Party declined sharply compared with 2019. Support for the Greens, their coalition partner, also dropped to 8%.

During the election campaign, Nehammer portrayed his party, which has taken a tough line on immigration in recent years, as "the strong center" that would guarantee stability amid multiple crises.

But crises ranging from the CO-VID-19 pandemic to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and resulting rising energy prices and inflation also cost it support. The government also angered many Austrians in 2022 with a short-lived coronavirus vaccine mandate, the first in Europe.

# Le Pen denies 'wrongdoing'

PARIS, Sept 30, (AP): French farright leader Marine Le Pen denied violating any rules as she and her National Rally party and two dozen others went on trial on Monday, accused of embezzling European Parliament funds, in a case that has the potential to derail her political ambitions.

Arriving at the court in Paris, Le Pen said "we have not violated any political and regulatory rules of the European Parliament" and vowed to present "extremely serious and extremely solid arguments in the trial."

The nine-week trial will be closely watched by Le Pen's political rivals as she is a strong contender in the race to succeed Emmanuel Macron when the next presidential election takes place in 2027



French far-right leader Marine Le Pen, front, speaks to the media as she arrives at the court house in Paris on Sept 30. (AP)

#### 'Potentially very destructive'

# Powerful typhoon lashes Philippines

MANILA, Philippines, Sept 30, (AP): A powerful typhoon was lashing the northernmost islands of the Philippines Monday, prompting officials to evacuate villagers, shut down schools and inter-island ferries and warn of "potentially very destructive" damage to coastal villages.

Typhoon Krathon was last tracked over the coastal waters of Balintang island off the provinces of Cagayan and Batanes with sustained winds of up to 175 kph (109 mph) and gusts of up to 215 kph (133 mph), according to government forecasters.

The slow-moving Krathon was blowing westward and could strengthen into a super typhoon when it veers northeastward Tuesday toward Taiwan, they said.

There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage.

Guilmar Cabejo, a police officer on the island of Sabtang in typhoon-prone Batanes, said the streets were deserted in the town of more than 1,800 people as the ferocious wind rattled roofs, walls and trees.

"There's nobody outside, zero, because the wind is so strong," Cabejo told The Associated Press by cellphone. "Nobody could stand normally outside in this wind, it will force anybody down to the ground."

Residents, locally renowned for their resilience against seasonal storms, strengthened their roofs with ropes, covered windows with wooden boards and secured their fishing boats away from the sea two days before the typhoon hit, he said.

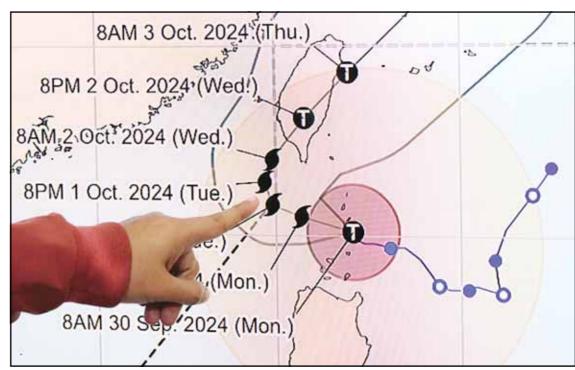
The weather agency warned of "moderate to high risk of life-threatening storm surge" in the next 48 hours in the coastal villages of Batanes, the nearby Babuyan islands and Cagayan province and said fierce winds could rip off roofs, topple trees, damage farmlands and whip up high waves.

"The situation is potentially very destructive to the community," it said. Hundreds of villagers were evacuated away from the coast and flood-prone communities in Cagayan province, where power outages were reported. Classes in all levels were suspended Monday in several northern provinces as a precaution, officials said.

Sea voyages were also halted in northern towns and provinces being battered or threatened by the typhoon, locally called Julian, officials said.

About 20 storms and typhoons batter the Philippines each year. The archipelago also lies in the "Pacific Ring of Fire," a region along most of the Pacific Ocean rim where many volcanic eruptions and earthquakes occur, making the Southeast Asian nation one of the world's most disaster-prone.

In 2013, Typhoon Haiyan, one of the strongest recorded tropical cyclones in the world, left more than 7,300 people dead or missing, flattened entire villages, swept ships inland and displaced more than 5 million in the central Philippines.



Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration weather specialist Veronica Torres points at the path of powerful Typhoon Krathon on Sept 30, in Quezon city, Philippines as it is projected to go towards Taiwan the next day after hitting northern Philippines. (AP)

Top party leadership lineup unveiled

Shigeru Ishiba, the head of Japan's governing party, the Liberal Democratic Party speaks during a press conference at the party's headquarters in Tokyo on Sept 30 to announce that he plans to call a parliamentary election on Oct 27 after he is formally elected as prime minister. (AP)

# Ishiba to call Japan poll for Oct 27 once he takes office

TOKYO, Sept 30, (AP): Shigeru Ishiba, the head of Japan's governing party, plans to call a parliamentary election to be held on Oct. 27 after he is elected as prime minister on Tuesday.

Ishiba was chosen as the Liberal Democratic Party's leader on Friday and is assured to also succeed Fumio Kishida as prime minister because the party's coalition controls parliament.

Ishiba mentioned the election date as he announced his top party leader-ship lineup Monday ahead of forming his Cabinet. The plan is not official since he is not prime minister yet, but Ishiba said he mentioned the date early for the logistical convenience of those

who have to prepare on relatively short notice.
"I believe it is important to have the

new administration get the public's judgment as soon as possible," Ishiba said.

He appointed former Environment

Minister Shinjiro Koizumi, who came in third in the party leadership race, to head the party's election task force.

He is expected to name defense

experts and his longtime confidantes Takeshi Iwaya as foreign minister and Gen Nakatani as defense chief once he takes office. Ishiba has proposed an Asian ver-

Ishiba has proposed an Asian version of the NATO military alliance and more discussion among regional

partners about the use of the U.S. nuclear deterrence. He also suggested a more equal Japan-U.S. security alliance, including joint management of US bases in Japan and having Japanese Self Defense Force bases in the United States.

The LDP has had a nearly unbroken tenure governing Japan since World War II. The party members may have seen Ishiba's more centrist views as crucial in pushing back challenges by the liberal-leaning opposition and winning voter support as the party reels from corruption scandals that drove down Kishida's popularity.

Ishiba on Friday stressed Japan needs

to reinforce its security, noting recent violations of Japanese airspace by Russian and Chinese warplanes and repeated missile launches by North Korea.

He pledged to continue Kishida's economic policy aimed at pulling Japan out of deflation and achieving real salary increases, while tackling challenges such as Japan's declining birthrate and population and resilience to natural disasters.

Ishiba, first elected to parliament in 1986, has served as defense minister, agriculture minister and in other key Cabinet posts, and was LDP secretary general under former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

# **South Korea gives prison sentences** to 3 officers over 'Halloween crush'

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 30, (AP): A South Korean court gave three police officers prison sentences on Monday over their botched handling of a 2022 Halloween crush in a Seoul nightlife district that killed nearly 160 people.

It was the first conviction of officials over the failure by authorities to prevent or adequately respond to the overcrowding that occurred in the popular Itaewon district. No top-level officials have been charged or held accountable, prompting criticism from bereaved families and opposition politicians.

The crush, one of the biggest peacetime disasters in South Korea, caused a nationwide outpouring of grief. The victims, who were mostly in their 20s and 30s, had gathered in Itaewon for Halloween celebrations.

The Seoul Western District Court sentenced Lee Im-jae, the former chief of Seoul's Yongsan police station, whose jurisdiction includes Itaewon, to three years in prison. It sentenced another Yongsan police officer to two years in prison and gave a third officer a suspended two-year term.

The three officers were convicted of professional negligence result-

ing in death. The court ruled that the crush wasn't a natural disaster and could have been prevented or the toll reduced if the three officers had prepared properly for the crowd, alerted others of the danger quickly and supervised other police officers appropriately

The police officers and prosecutors

can both appeal the ruling.

The court also ruled that Park Heeyoung, head of the Yongsan ward office, and three other ward officials were not guilty. It said a ward office was unlikely to have a legal right to control or break up a crowd of people.

Bereaved family members criticized the acquittal of Park and the other ward officials.

"Does this make sense? We can't really accept this," Lee Jeong-min, a representative of the families, told reporters.

In early 2023, a police special investigation concluded that police and municipal officials had failed to formulate effective crowd control measures despite anticipating a huge number of people in Itaewon. Investigators said police also ignored hotline calls by pedestrians who warned of swelling crowds before the surge turned deadly.

In this aerial image of the Kathmandu valley, Bagmati River is seen flooded due to heavy rains in Kathmandu, Nepal on Sept 28. (AP)

#### Recovery work stepped up

# Nepal flood deaths reach 193

KATHMANDU, Nepal, Sept 30, (AP): The number of people killed by flooding and landslides triggered by heavy rainfall over the weekend in Nepal reached 193 while recovery and rescue work stepped up Monday.

Many of the deaths were in the capital, Kathmandu, which got heavy rainfall, and much of southern part of the city was flooded. Police said in a statement that 31 people were still reported missing and 96 people were injured across the Himalayan nation.

A landslide killed three dozen people on a blocked highway about 16 kilometers (10 miles) from Kathmandu. The landslide buried at least three buses and other vehicles where people were sleeping because the highway was blocked.

Kathmandu had remained cut off all weekend as the three highways out of the city were blocked by landslides. Workers were able to temporarily open up the key Prithvi highway, removing rocks, mud and trees that had been washed from the mountains.

The home minister announced tem-

porary shelters would be built for people who lost their homes and monetary help would be available for the families of those killed and to the people who were injured by the flooding and land-slides.

Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli was returning home Monday from attending the U.N. General Assembly meeting and has called an emergency meeting, his office said.

Improved weather has allowed rescue and recovery work to be stepped up.

Residents in the southern part of Kathmandu, which was inundated on Saturday, were cleaning up houses as water levels began to recede. At least 34 people were killed in Kathmandu, which was the hardest hit by flooding. Police and soldiers were assisting

with rescue efforts, while heavy equipment was used to clear the landslides from the roads. The government announced it was closing schools and colleges across Nepal for the next three days.

The monsoon season began in June and usually ends by mid-September.

Meanwhile, in northern Bangladesh, about 60,000 people were affected by flooding in low-lying areas because of rains and rising water from upstream India.

People have taken shelter on roads and flood protection embankments in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts, the English-language Daily Star reported.

The River Teesta that crosses the border was overflowing at some points and the Dharala and Dudhkumar rivers in the Rangpur region were rising but remained below danger levels, the Dhakabased Flood Forecasting and Warning Center said Monday. Waters could start receding in a day or two, it said.

Bangladesh is a low-lying delta nation crisscrossed by about 230 rivers, including more than 50 that cross borders.

### Region votes in final phase of polls

# India silenced dissenting voices: top Kashmir leader

SRINAGAR, India, Sept 30, (AP): Ahead of the final phase of a local election in Indian-controlled Kashmir, a key resistance leader says the regional polls to choose a local government will not resolve the decades-old conflict that is at the heart of a dispute between New Delhi and Pakistan.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who has spent most of the last five years under house detention, said the polls are being held as political voices contesting India's sovereignty over the region remain silenced after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government stripped the region of its long-held semi-autonomy in 2019.

The detained leader said in a phone interview with The Associated Press that the election, touted by the Modi government as a "festival of democracy" in the region, cannot be an alternative to resolving the dispute.

"These elections cannot be the means to address the larger Kashmir issue," said Mirwaiz, who is also an influential Muslim cleric and custodian of the sixcentury-old grand mosque in the region's main Srinagar city, the urban heartland of anti-India sentiment.

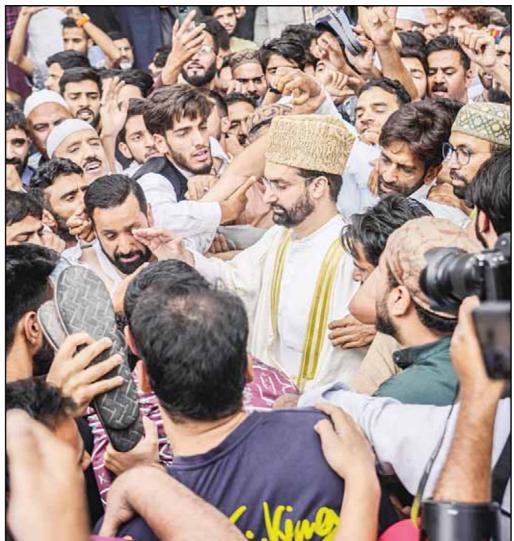
The multistage election, the last phase of which is being held Tuesday, will allow Kashmir to have its own truncated government and a regional legislature with limited powers. It is the first such vote in a decade and the first since 2019, when New Delhi downgraded and divided the former state into two centrally governed union territories - Ladakh and Jammu-Kashmir - both ruled directly by New Delhi through unelected bureaucrats.

Authorities have said the election will bring democracy to the region after more than three decades of strife, but many locals see the vote as an opportunity not only to elect their own representatives but also to register their protest against the 2019 changes they fear could dilute the region's demographics.

India's clampdown following the 2019 move "has silenced people" in the region who "feel dispossessed and disempowered," Mirwaiz said.

"You may not see active turmoil like before 2019 but there is a strong, latent public resistance to all this," he said. "We have been forcibly silenced, but silence is not agreement."

India's sudden move, which largely resonated in India and among Modi supporters, was mostly opposed in Kashmir as an assault on its identity and



Supporters assemble to welcome top Kashmiri separatist leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, (center), as he arrives to offer Friday prayers outside the Jamia Masjid or Grand Mosque in Srinagar, Indian controlled Kashmir, Sept. 22, 2023. (AP)



Bereaved family members of the victims of the Halloween crush in 2022

react at the Seoul Western District Court in Seoul, South Korea on Sept

30. (AP)

**8 dead in Colombia copter crash:** Eight people were killed after a Colombian Air Force helicopter crashed Sunday morning during a humanitarian mission in the eastern department of Vichada, said President Gustavo

Petro.
Petro offered "a hug of solidarity" for the bereaved families as the country mourns the deceased in the tragedy, according to the president's social media account on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Twitter. Earlier, the Colombian Air Force said that the Huey II helicopter, with registration number FAC-4441, had lost contact while on a medical mission. Search and rescue operations were immediately launched after the crash. (Xinhua)



#### Colombia police kills crime leader: Colombian police have shot and killed

Juan Carlos Rodriguez, alias "Zeus," one of the country's most dangerous criminals and the leader of the organized crime ring Clan del Golfo, the National Police of Colombia (PNC) confirmed Sunday.

Rodriguez, an ex-military man and fugitive, was killed on Saturday along

with seven of his men during a gunfight with police in the northwest Colombian department of Antioquia.

"In the development of Operation Agamemnon, Juan Carlos Rodriguez, leader of the Magdalena Medio Block of the 'Clan del Golfo', died," announced PNC General Director Wil-

liam Salamanca on X.

The joint operation to capture Rodriguez involved the police, army, air force and the Attorney General's Office. (Xinhua)

Brazil lake shocks park visitors:

The lake in Sao Paulo's iconic Ibirapuera Park has turned green in recent weeks, as Brazil grapples with a historic drought, both amusing and alarming parkgoers.

Its verdant color stems from a combination of an algal bloom, abundant nutrients, high temperatures and a lack of rain in the Brazilian metropolis, City Hall said in a statement Thursday. It added that the lake's low water level makes it harder for a pump to remove

Sidney Cardoso, a 49-year-old photographer, said he had never seen the lake's water look so green. (AP)

Change Closing pts



- TASI - DFMGI - Nikkei 225 - KSE 100

-45.67

-17.78

-155.65

-125.49



#### Main market index rises 0.71%

# Boursa Kuwait sees general index shrink by 15.39 points

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Monday with its general index down by 15.39 points, or 0.22 percent, ending at 7,136.28 points. A total of 634.2 million shares were exchanged in 29,087 transactions, with a total value of KD 104.2 million (USD 317.8 million).

The main market index gained 44.03 points, or 0.71 percent, reaching 6,276.68 points. Trading saw 508.3 million shares exchanged through 19,495 transactions, amounting to KD 62 million

(USD 189 million).

In contrast, the premier market index fell by 31.8 points, or 0.41 percent, closing at 7,708.72 points. It saw 125.8 million shares traded in 9,592 transactions, worth KD 42.2 million (USD 128.7 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 index climbed 80.19 points, or 1.32 percent, closing at 6,153.85 points. The index saw 417.14 million shares traded in 14,634 transactions, valued at KD 49.9 million (USD 152.19 million).

# CBK announces latest bond & related Tawarrug issuance

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: THE Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the most recent issues of CBK Bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KWD (240) million for (3) months with Rate of Return (4.125%)

# Bank deposits jumped 2.4 billion dinars in a year, supported by interest, says Al-Haroun

CBK enhances monthly monetary bulletin

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: In a significant move to improve statistical reporting, Basel Al-Haroun, the Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait, announced the development of the bank's monthly monetary statistical bulletin, effective with the issue from August.

This initiative underscores the Central Bank's commitment to refining its statistical databases and providing comprehensive data that adheres

to international best practices.
In a press statement, Al-Haroun emphasized that the updates to the bulletin are part of the Central Bank's ongoing efforts to enhance disclosure and transparency.

By expanding the scope and ease of access to data, the bank aims to better serve researchers and stakeholders interested in the economic, banking, and financial landscape of Kuwait. The enhancements include the creation of new tables and improvements to existing ones, with a particular focus on local banks.

The bulletin now features detailed tables specific to local traditional and Islamic banks, breaking down assets and liabilities more comprehensively. Additionally, the credit facilities agreements have been reorganized into three separate tables -- residents, non-residents, and total -- while the total deposits have been similarly categorized.

The latest data released by the Central Bank indicates a healthy increase in the financial sector. Deposits in Kuwaiti banks saw a rise of 496 million dinars (1 percent) in August, bringing the total to approximately 49.978 billion dinars, compared to 49.482 billion dinars in July.

This marks a significant annual increase of 2.4 billion dinars (5 percent) from 47.553 billion dinars in August 2023, attributed to rising interest

Private sector deposits also experienced a positive trend, increasing by 311 million dinars (1.1 percent) month-on-month to reach 36.843 billion dinars; in contrast, government deposits slightly declined by 47 million dinars (0.9 percent), totaling 5.083 billion dinars.

In terms of bank assets, the net assets rose by 588 million dinars (0.7 percent) to 88.583 billion dinars, while foreign assets increased by 1.5 percent to reach 13.6 billion dinars. Overall, credit facilities for both residents and non-residents grew by 39 million dinars (0.07 percent), totaling 55.376 billion dinars.

The broad money supply (M2) also showed a healthy increase, rising by 0.8 percent to 40.2 billion dinars in August. However, time deposits at the Central Bank fell by 8.8 percent to one billion dinars, while cash credit facilities (loans) slightly increased by 0.1 percent.

In terms of foreign reserves, Kuwait's assets reached 14.4 billion dinars by the end of August. While this figure reflects a 1.64 percent annual decline, it represents the highest level in three months, with a monthly increase of 1.27 percent compared to July.

Al-Haroun reiterated the Central Bank's commitment to enhancing transparency and facilitating access to accurate data, ensuring that all stakeholders can rely on the Central Bank as a key source of information on Kuwait's economic and

Underscoring its belief in nurturing national talent starting their career

# **NBK** participates in 'Al Hamra' career fair

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: In line with its dedication to supporting national talent starting their career, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) participated in the career fair held at Al Hamra Tower, with the participation of a variety of leading local and international companies and top private sector corporations in Kuwait.

NBK's participation in this fair aligns with its strategy focusing on delivering its social responsibilities and supporting development. It also reflects its continuous dedication to supporting and qualifying Kuwaiti fresh graduates for the labor market and familiarizing them with its requirements to help them determine their future career paths.

The fairran for two days, September18th and 19th, during which NBK's booth capture many visitors, as Group Human Resources staff showcased the promising career opportunities for male and female national candidates, briefed them on the nature of work in the banking sector, and gave them advice on choosing the right future career and how to join NBK.

NBK regards fresh graduates as a key source to attract talent that help implement its change and transformation agenda with their high potentials that need support and guidance. On the other hand, the bank provides a unique training and de-



NBK booth at the Al Hamra Career Fair.

velopment environment to upskill those young talents and enable them to build a sustainable professional Commenting on this, Gadeer Al-

Kooheji, Head of Talent Acquisition, Group Human Resources at National Bank of Kuwait said: "We always seek to solidif your leadership among private sector institutions in attracting, training, upskilling national talent and qualifying them as future leaders in the banking sector. We also do our utmost endeavors to build efficient young national professionals who are able to take on leadership roles in the future and foster a sustainable future for the Kuwaiti economy."

"We aim to boost Kuwaitization by increasing acquisition of national talent, and providing them with professional training programs as per the highest international standards to help develop their skills and expertise for a promising and sustainable career, which aligns with the objectives of New Kuwait Vision 2035,

"NBK believes that sponsoring these fairs helps to provide a meeting point between private sector companies and potential candidates looking for a career, as well as to encourage fresh graduates to navigate their way into the labor market and connect directly with companies and institutions to secure job opportunities," she noted.

NBK stands out as an attractive employer offers equal opportunities and embraces diversity in the workplace. Our recruitment strategy is based on attracting, training and developing the young national cadres through the best-in-class programs to help them build a successful career. This makes NBK the private sector employer of choice for Kuwaiti fresh graduates, while also having the highest national employee retention rate.

It is worth mentioning that NBK annually sponsors many career fairs for the Kuwaiti youth to introduce to them suitable job opportunities that meet their aspirations, reflecting its constant commitment to nurture the young national talent and qualify them for the labor market. It also provides unwavering support to all career fairs that help youth and fresh graduates to find the right job.

#### Banks infuse KD 1.85 bln into sectors

# Banking sector in Kuwait reports positive growth in loans, deposits

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: In Kuwait finance, a noteworthy trend has unfolded over the first eight months of 2024. As of August 31, banks across the nation have infused a remarkable 1.85 billion dinars into various economic sectors, marking a 3.46 percent increase since the beginning of the year, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This surge brought the total outstanding loans to an impressive 55.4 billion dinars, a significant rise from 53.55 billion dinars recorded at the end of December 2023.

At the heart of this growth was the personal loans segment, which includes housing, consumer, and securities loans.

This sector witnessed a substantial increase, climbing to 19.083 billion dinars, up from 18.761 billion dinars, representing a 1.7 percent growth and an additional 322 million dinars in just eight months. It was clear that personal loans were driving much of the banking activity.

Following closely behind was the real estate sector, which garnered 10.088 billion dinars in loans, reflecting a 3.5 percent increase -- equivalent to 350 million dinars -- compared to the 9.738 billion dinars recorded at the end of December last year. The rise in real estate financing underscored the sector's vitality and potential for growth.

upward trajectory, experiencing a 3.9 percent increase to reach 2.044 billion dinars, an increment of 77 million dinars within the eight-month span. Meanwhile, securities facilities saw

Consumer loans also showcased an

This was particularly significant as these loans accounted for over 68 percent of the foreign liquidity flowing into the stock exchange, reflecting

a notable rise of 93 million dinars,

growing by 2.6 percent to 3.59 billion

strong investor confidence. The availability of liquidity in the banking sector was bolstered by an increase in private sector deposits, which rose by 1.3 billion dinars -- a 3.6 percent growth -- bringing the total to 38.6

billion dinars by the end of August. Overall, total deposits in the banking sector reached approximately 49.977 billion dinars, a rise of 2.5 per-

cent from 48.72 billion dinars. Government deposits also exhibited positive momentum, climbing 9.7 percent during the first eight months, to-

taling 5.08 billion dinars -- an increase of 452 million dinars compared to 4.6 billion dinars. In contrast, deposits from public institutions experienced a decline, dropping by 549 million dinars (or 8.2 percent) to 6.21 billion dinars, down from 6.7 billion dinars.

The growth trends evident throughout this eight-month period painted a promising picture for the Kuwaiti banking sector.

These figures were in line with the Central Bank's goals, which aim to maintain stable rates while minimizing risks to ensure the sector remains secure from irregular debt levels.

As the financial landscape continued to evolve, the resilience and growth of the banking sector indicated a vibrant economic future for Kuwait.

### **Ahmad Al-Eidan recognized for advancing earth sciences**

# Oman honors KOC chief with AAPG Leadership Award

MUSCAT, Sept 30, (KUNA): Sultanate of Oman Minister of Energy and Minerals Salim Al-Aufi honored on Sunday Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) Chairman Ahmad Al-Eidan, for his participation in the International Conference of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG), hosted by Omani capital Muscat.

Al-Eidan expressed his gratitude to KUNA, stating that this honour reflects the increasing recognition of Kuwait's role in advancing earth sciences both regionally and internationally.

The 'Leadership Award' presented by the AAPG is an international recognition given to individuals who



KUNA photo

Oman Minister of Energy and Minerals Salim Al-Aufi honors Chairman Ahmad Al-Eidan

have made distinguished contributions to the field of Earth sciences, Al-Eidan added.

He highlighted the importance of the conference, which brings together geologists and geophysicists from around the world, facilitating the exchange of expertise and showcasing the latest studies conducted by specialized companies and universities.

Al-Eidan came up with the idea to establish Gulf Geologists Union and has contributed to connecting the oil and academic sectors.

He was the founding president of the Kuwait Geosciences Society and a former president of the Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG) in

# UAE remains top oil supplier

# **Kuwait's oil exports to Japan** drops 18.1 percent in August

TOKYO, Sept 30, (KUNA): Kuwait's crude oil exports to Japan fell 18.1 percent in August from a year earlier to 3.84 million barrels, or 124,000 barrels per day (bpd), down for the 11th consecutive month, government data

showed Monday.

As Japan's third-biggest oil provider, Kuwait supplied 5.5 percent of the Asian nation's total crude imports, compared with 6.0 percent in the same month of last year, the Japanese Natural Resources and Energy Agency said in a preliminary report.

Japan's overall imports of crude oil in August shrank 9.5 percent year-onyear to 2.26 million bpd, down for the ninth month in a row. Shipments from the Middle East accounted for 94.8 percent of the total, up 0.2 percentage point from the year before.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) remained in the top spot, although imports from the country slid 10.9 percent from a year earlier to 1.02 million bpd, followed by Saudi Arabia with 876,000 bpd, down 2.6 percent.

The US ranked fourth with 75,000 bpd and Qatar fifth with 72,000 bpd, respectively. Japan is the world's-third biggest oil consumer after China and



Kuwait's oil exports to Japan declines.

# Iraq exports 105.84 million barrels of crude oil in Aug

BAGHDAD, Sept 30, (Xinhua): Iraq exported about 105.84 million barrels of crude oil in August, the country's Oil Ministry announced Thursday.

During the month, approximately 105.55 million barrels were exported from oil fields in central and southern Iraq via the Port of Basra, while another 286,074 barrels were sent to neighboring Jordan, the ministry said in a statement, citing statistics from the State Organization for Marketing of Oil, an Iraqi company. According to the ministry, Iraq ex-

ported about 108 million barrels of crude oil in July.

crude oil exports, which account for about 90 percent of the country's rev-

### Outer areas see significant price drops, inner regions remain stable

# Residential real estate faces 25% decline since start of 2023

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Imad Haidar, the head of the Real Estate Brokers Association, recently shared insights into the challenges facing Kuwait's residential real estate sector, reports Al-Jarida daily.

He noted a slowdown in demand that began at the start of last year, attributing this decline to several key factors, including rising interest rates on deposits, peak residential property prices, and the implementation of new regulations that have psychologically impacted market participants.

According to Haidar, the residential real estate market has experienced an average decline of 25 percent since the

beginning of 2023, with the most significant drops occurring in outer areas that had previously seen speculative surges in prices.

He pointed out that declines vary by region, with some areas experiencing reductions of 20 percent, while others saw decreases of up to 30 percent. In contrast, inner regions have remained more stable, with some locations even witnessing price increases due to a mismatch between high liquidity and declining demand.

Haidar explained that the real estate market typically goes through distinct phases: starting with a calm period, followed by declining demand, market correction, price declines, and finally stagnation, where prices reach their lowest levels.

He emphasized the influence of bank interest rates on investment decisions, stating that when deposit rates hover between 2 and 2.5 percent, capital tends to flow into real estate. However, if rates exceed 3 percent, investors are more likely to favor deposits, leading to further calm in the real estate sector.

Regarding future price expectations for residential properties, Haidar expressed uncertainty, noting that much hinges on interest rates, which he anticipates may decrease.

He also highlighted the potential impact of legislative changes, such as regulations on land monopolies and measures to expedite housing requests for citizens. If laws are enacted concerning land monopolies or increased utility tariffs for secondary residences, Haidar warned of a potential shift in investment focus from residential properties to investment opportunities. Overall, the insights shared by

Haidar indicate a cautious outlook for the residential real estate market in Kuwait, as it navigates economic pressures, regulatory changes, and shifting investor preferences.

# **CMA approves new money market fund for Al-Ahly Capital Company**

money markets for Al-Ahly Capital Company, reports Al-Jarida daily This decision is part of the CMA's broader strategy, which includes amendments to the provisions of "Collective Investment Systems" of the Executive Regulations of Law No. 7 of 2010.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Capital Markets Authority (CMA) has recently ap-

proved the establishment of a single fund in the local market aimed at investing in

These amendments govern the establishment and organization of securities ac-Despite these regulatory changes, informed sources indicate a growing trend

These regions are appealing due to less stringent oversight and tax exemptions, making them attractive for firms seeking to maximize returns. In contrast, establishing funds within Kuwait involves a more complex regulatory framework and longer processing times.

Sources highlight the need for a review of local licensing requirements and conditions to make Kuwait more competitive in attracting fund establishments.

among investment companies to establish funds outside of Kuwait, finding it easi-

er to create their own investment vehicles in jurisdictions like the Cayman Islands

Iraq's economy heavily relies on

# Warba succeeds in arranging Sukuk Issuances for Qatar International Islamic Bank and Arada Developments – UAE

Offering worth USD 300 million

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Warba Bank announced Qatar International Islamic Bank's USD 300 million perpetual additional Tier 1 capital sukuk offering, which found both regional and global success.

Warba Bank acted as Joint Lead Manager and Joint Bookrunner on the transaction along with Al Rayan Investment LLC, Citi, Doha Bank, Dubai Islamic Bank, Dukhan Bank, Emirates NBD Capital, HSBC, Lesha Bank, Mashreq, QNB Capital and Standard Chartered.

Books which opened on Tuesday, September 24th, 2024 and closed on the same day, received massive interest from regional and international market participants, as the order book reached USD2.5 billion, 8.33x the issuance size.

Warba Bank said in a press statement that the "Non-Callable in 5.5 Years "USD 300 million perpetual Sukuk was successfully issued at a fixed profit rate of 5.45%. The Sukuk are listed on the International Securities Market (ISM).

Warba Bank also announced the successful Sukuk Tap of USD 150 million for Arada Developments (UAE) issued at a Tap yield of 7.350%. This transaction,linked to the existing USD 400 million Sukuk issuance that was listed in June 2024 on the International Securities Market (ISM) and Nasdaq Dubai, brings the total issue size to USD 550 mil-

The Transaction was successfully led by Abu Dhabi Commercial



Thuwaini Khaled Al-Thuwaini

Bank, Dubai Islamic Bank, Emirates NBD Capital, Mashreq, Sharjah Islamic Bank, Standard Char-

#### **Al-Thuwaini:**

- The high turnout in both transactions reflects investors' confidence in debt capital market capabilities.
- Warba's expertise in Sukuk has drawn global attention and is swiftly becoming one of the goto institutions for Islamic debt instruments for investors and issuers, alike.

tered Bank and Warba Bank, all acting as Joint Lead Managers and Bookrunners generating an order book reaching USD 480 million, 3.2x the tap issued size.

The strong demand for both issuances was reflected in their diverse allocation, which saw significant participation from a wide range of institutional investors across the globe.

In this context, Thuwaini Khaled Al-Thuwaini, Chief Investment Banking Officer at Warba Bank, said, "With the confidence of the market in hand, we succeeded in closing the sukuk issuances amid excellent market participation, which is a testament to Warba Bank's robust Debt Capital Market capabilities and its active participation which has contributed to the successful sukuk

Malallah to succeed Akil as CEO of UPAC

issuances and reflects the market's confidence and enthusiasm in both Warba Bank and the sukuk issuances."

Al-Thuwaini pointed out the importance of Islamic financial tools and their role in strengthening global financial markets, which is evidenced by the level of demand and interest of global investors in recent sukuk issued by regional corporates and banking institutions.

He underscored Warba Bank's path to remain a significant player in the debt capital markets for years to come by continuing to focus on growth and expansion as Warba Bank aims to extend its reach and services to both institutional and individual investors through its commitment to ethical banking and innovative strategies.

Served as head of co-investor UPAC

### Veteran exec to oversee launch of Al Messilah Beach project

# **Akil named CEO of Abu Dhabi's Reem Mall**

ABU DHABI, Sept 30: Nadia Akil, who headed Kuwait-based United Projects for Aviation Services Company (UPAC) during more than a decade of expansion in commercial real estate and facilities management, has been named Chief Executive Officer of Reem Mall, Abu Dhabi's massive new retail, leisure and entertainment destination, effective 1 January, 2025.

Prior to her appointment, Akil helped lead the completion of Reem Mall as CEO of UPAC, an Agility subsidiary and co-investor in the group that developed the \$1.3 billion mega-mall.

"Reem Mall is a must-visit for tourists and residents alike as one of the region's unique and most exciting family destinations. It offers a wide variety of leisure and entertainment and experiences," Akil said. "It's a perfect fit with the growing number of world-class attractions – concerts, cultural events, F1 racing, sports and more – that make the UAE one of the best tourism destinations in the world."

Reem Mall features more than 400 retail outlets and 80 food and beverage locations. Its 185,000 SQM of gross leasable area includes the



Nadia Akil

region's first fully integrated omnichannel retail eco-system with digital, e-commerce, and logistics capabilities. It brings together consumer and retail services and ensures a seamless customer experience with a mobile app that offers hands-free shopping, in-mall navigation, smart parking, and more.

Home to the largest Snow Park in the UAE, Snow Abu Dhabi, Reem Mall officially opened its doors in February 2023, and celebrated its formal opening this past May.

The mall was developed by Al Farwaniya Property Developments (AFPD), a partnership between Agility Global, UPAC and National Real Estate Company (NREC).

At UPAC, Akil oversaw management of the company's various government concessions at Kuwait International Airport, and most recentlylead its expansion into the entertainment and leisure sector, having been recently awarded a 17-year contract by the Touristic Enterprises Company (TEC) to manage and operate the Al Messilah Beach, a 70,000+ SQM beachfront multi-use facility, set to become the new and upcoming 'must visit' family destination in Kuwait.

Before her appointment as UPAC chief executive in 2012, Akil served in a variety of roles at Agility over a duration of 6 years. Prior to joining Agility, she worked for Citigroup in London. In 2024, Forbes Middle East named her one of the 100 most powerful businesswomen in the region.

Hamad Mallallah, currently UPAC VP of Operations, will succeed Akil as UPAC CEO, effective from 1 January 2025.

KUWAIT CITY Sept 30: United Projects for Aviation Company, a commercial real estate and facilities management company, announced that Eng. Hamad Malallah has been named as its new CEO, effective from 1 January, 2025.

Malallah succeeds Nadia Akil, who served as UPAC CEO from 2012 until her recent appointment as CEO of Reem Mall in Abu Dhabi, UAE. UPAC co-developed Reem Mall in partnership with Agility Global and National Real Estate Holding Company (NREC).

Prior to his appointment, Malallah was VP of Operations for UPAC. Since 2013, he led a team responsible for managing over 24,000 SQM of commercial real estate at Kuwait International Airport, including parking, maintenance, and related facilities within Terminal 1, Terminal 4, Terminal 3 (Sheikh Saad Terminal) and Discovery Mall. Prior to joining UPAC, Malallah held various senior positions with the Agility group, including as Director of the Transport Department.

Malallah's appointment comes



Hamad Malallah



UPAC logo

shortly after UPAC announced the signing of a 17-year agreement with Kuwait's Touristic Enterprises Company (TEC) to operate Al Messilah Beach, a new, 70,000+SQM multi-use beachfront leisure and entertainment destination.

Under the agreement, UPAC will manage and operate the facility, handling all components from leasing, facility management, and overall project operations. Al Messilah Beach was recently redeveloped by TEC and is set to become a landmark attraction and a 'must visit' lifestyle and community destination that enhances the tourism offering in Kuwait.

The Al Messilah Beach complex consists of four swimming pools, a variety of kids' waterslides and wet activities, including a wave pool and a Sky Trail amusement park game. The facility also will feature commercial areas set for restaurants, cafes and retail. The property also includes a multi-purpose events hall, an expansive beach to be used for a variety of sports activities, management offices, and 340 shaded parking spots.

### Cairo represents a significant market in Africa

# Egypt seeks to boost Chinese investments

CAIRO, Sept 30, (Xinhua): Egypt is seeking to attract more Chinese investments across several sectors, including energy, renewable energy, chemical industries, textiles, and automotive, according to Hossam Heiba, CEO of Egypt's General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI).

"We also aim to draw Chinese investments in services and tourism, which are areas we need to develop closely," Heiba told Xinhua in a recent interview. He expressed optimism about establishing technology hubs in Egypt through collaboration with

Heiba emphasized that Egypt represents a significant market in Africa and the Middle East, highlighting various factors that make the country appealing to Chinese companies. With a labor force of over 30 million, 35

percent of whom are under 35, Egypt has 24 industrial cities and is expanding their areas.

"These factors enhance the attractiveness of the Egyptian market for Chinese firms," he stated. "We have Chinese companies operating in renewable energy, textiles, chemicals, and home appliances -- companies of all sizes."

On Monday, Chinese home appliance giant Haier held a groundbreaking ceremony for the second phase of its industrial park in the 10th of Ramadan city, northeast of Cairo. This phase, with an investment of approximately 40 million U.S. dollars, will primarily produce refrigerators and freezers.

Heiba noted that Haier is one of the Chinese companies rapidly expanding in Egypt. After receiving a golden license from the Egyptian government, Haier initiated the first phase of its industrial park in early 2023, starting production in May 2024.

"After about five months of operation, Haier has commenced its second phase. This indicates that the Egyptian market is responding and growing, and that Chinese investments in Egypt receive government support," he said.

Heiba highlighted that Egypt has undertaken significant economic reforms to enhance the business environment, offering various incentives to investors. "Among these incentives is the golden license, a one-step approval granted to investors upon submission of their projects, allowing them to execute construction without delays," he explained.

He clarified that once construction is completed, investors can operate immediately with the golden license,

which is issued within 20 working days, making the process straightforward

The official said Chinese investments in Egypt are growing rapidly in recent years, with more and more Chinese companies operating the North African country.

"The comprehensive strategic partnership signed between Egypt and China a decade ago is now bearing fruit. Egypt is part of the Belt and Road Initiative and a member of the BRICS bloc, which illustrates the close ties between the two nations," Heiba added.

"We are focused on translating this relationship into increased investment and trade, facilitating the exchange of investments between Egypt and China, and enhancing bilateral trade relations." he concluded.

# Türkiye announces debt restructuring program to ease burden on consumers

ISTANBUL, Sept 30, (Xinhua): Türkiye announced Friday a decision to allow citizens to restructure their credit card debts with terms of up to 60 months, aiming to ease the financial burden on those awash in debts amid high inflation.

According to a statement published in the Official Gazette, the central bank, in a coordinated move, limited the maximum interest rate for restructuring individual credit card debts to 3.11 percent, the reference interest rate.

Meanwhile, the decision stipulates that the credit limit on the relevant bank's credit cards cannot be increased until cardholders pay at least half their restructured debts.

The central bank stated on its website that the debt restructuring program is designed for individuals with overdue credit card payments, ensuring that those already in debt are minimally affected by tightening policies.

tightening policies.

Murat Tufan, an analyst with the EkoTurk broadcaster, considers that the program could contribute to mitigating the pressures of inflation and high-cost living on consumers, allowing them to manage their debts more effectively in this challenging econom-

ic environment.

"I think Türkiye has achieved a very important success regarding inflation, but we are still very far from declaring victory," Tufan told Xinhua, noting that the country may need at least two more years to achieve disinflation goals.

However, the first public reaction to

the decision was cautious.

Emine Taskin, a mother of two, stressed the importance of limiting non-essential spending amid the rising living costs. "I hope people won't overspend after hearing about the 60-month debt restructuring," she said.

Türkiye has long been grappling with rising inflation and one of the worst cost-of-living crises in its history, forcing Treasury and Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek and his team to implement tight monetary policies to curb the runaway inflation.

As part of the disinflation efforts, the central bank raised its key interest rate from 8.5 percent to 50 percent since June 2023. In September, it kept its interest rate unchanged at 50 percent for a sixth straight month. Türkiye's annual inflation rate moderated to 51.97 percent in August, marking its lowest level in a year.

# Genesis recalls 31,000 vehicles over fuel pump issue

NEW YORK, Sept 30: Genesis has recalled more than 31,000 vehicles, including GV70 and GV80 SUVs, as well as G80 and G90 sedans from the 2022 and 2023 model years, due to a fuel pump defect that could cause the engine to stall while driving, potentially leading to a crash. This latest recall follows a similar one in 2023, which affected 19,000 older models, Consumer Reports confirmed.

The problem is with the fuel pump impeller, which may fail and disrupt fuel delivery to the engine. If this occurs, the engine could stall unexpectedly, though drivers may notice warning signs like the check engine light, engine hesitation, or rough running

beforehand.

Affected Vehicles

■ GV70 SUVs (Manufactured between Dec. 28, 2021, and Sept. 3, 2022)

GV80 SUVs (Manufactured between Nov. 4, 2021, and Sept. 13, 2022)

G80 sedans (Manufactured between Jan. 3, 2022, and Sept. 17, 2022)

G90 sedans (Manufactured between June 2, 2021, and Sept. 14, 2022)

According to documents provided by Genesis to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), there have been 463 complaints regarding the is-



2023 Genesis G80

sue, though no injuries, crashes, or fires have been reported. **Solution** 

Genesis dealerships will replace the faulty fuel pumps at no cost to vehicle owners.

# Britain's last coal-fired electricity plant is closing

LONDON, Sept 30, (AP): Britain's last coal-fired power plant will close on Monday, ending 142 years of coalgenerated electricity in the nation that sparked the Industrial Revolution.

The Ratcliffe-on-Soar station in central England is to finish its final shift at midnight, after more than half a century of turning coal into power. Owner Uniper says many of the 170 remaining employees will stay on during a two-year decommissioning process.

The U.K. government hailed the closure as a milestone in efforts to gener-

ate all of Britain's energy from renewable sources by 2030. The shutdown makes Britain the first country from the Group of Seven major economies to phase out coal - though some other European nations, including Sweden and Belgium, got there sooner.

Energy Minister Michael Shanks said the plant's closure "marks the end of an era and coal workers can be rightly proud of their work powering our country for over 140 years. We owe generations a debt of gratitude as a country."

# China factory surveys show economy weakening, as Beijing steps up support

TOKYO, Sept 30, (AP): China's economy weakened further in recent weeks, according to surveys released Monday, signaling the need for more support as the government ratchets up stimulus.

manufacturing orders fell at the fastest pace in two years in September. "Operating conditions in China's manufacturing sector deteriorated in September after improving during August,"

The Caixin purchasing managers survey showed new

the report said. "Furthermore, firms lowered their hiring and purchasing activity."

The issue of insufficient effective domestic demand re-

mains prominent, with significant pressure on employment and weak.

An official survey released by the National Bureau of

Statistics showed a less drastic decline but it marked a fifth straight month of contraction. The purchasing managers index was at 49.8 in September, up from a six-month low of 49.1 in August. The index is on a scale where figures above 50 indicate expansion.

The survey showed that factory output rose while new orders fell.

Chinese stock markets surged Monday, reflecting enthusi-

Chinese stock markets surged Monday, reflecting enthusiasm over a barrage of policy measures announced last week, including lower interest rates and smaller down payment requirements for mortgages and a cut in required bank reserves.

"There is no doubt that the coordinated and emphatic policy stimulus measures announced by Beijing have justifiably invoked optimism," Tan Boon Heng of Mizuho Bank in Singapore said in a commentary.

The main index smaller market in Shenzhen soared 8.2% while the Shanghai Composite index jumped 5.7%.

"The stimulus package announced last week should help shore activity over the coming months," Gabriel Ng of Capital Economics said in a report. But he noted that imbalances between excess supply of many products versus weak demand persist. And trade measures against China, such as higher tariffs on electric vehicles and other goods, also will weigh on the economy.

"In this environment, a meaningful cyclical recovery would require sizeable fiscal stimulus," he said. "There has yet to be any official announcement on fiscal support, though some media reports suggest that one could come soon."

Over the weekend, Beijing moved forward with the measures announced last week to support the property industry

and revive languishing financial markets. The central bank announced on Sunday that it would direct banks to cut mortgage rates for existing home loans by Oct. 31. Meanwhile, the major southern city of Guangzhou lifted all home purchase restrictions over the weekend, while both Shanghai and Shenzhen revealed plans to ease key buying curbs.

Property developers have struggled after the government cracked down on excessive borrowing for projects several years ago. Housing prices have continued to fall and the government has moved to ensure that developers deliver apartments that were paid for but not yet built.

The downturn in the property sector has rippled throughout the world's second-largest economy, hitting many other industries that depended on booming housing construction, such as appliance makers and manufacturers of building materials.





Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh, and the trainees in a group photo.











Trainees explaining the details of varous projects during the PR Academy

#### Offering hands-on experience in PR and Media for university students and fresh graduates

# Kuwait Finance House concludes first edition of PR Academy program

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) recently concluded its inaugural PR Academy program. Designed to educate undergraduate students and recent graduates, the program focused on the foundational principles of public relations and media, as well as their practical application within KFH departments. This initiative aligns with KFH's commitment to social responsibility and the development of young talent.

On this occasion, KFH held a closing ceremony to honor the trainees. During the ceremony, the participants presented their projects they developed throughout the program to the Bank's executive management represented by Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer Zeyad Abdullah AlOmar.

In his speech, AlOmar commended the trainees for the exceptional skills they acquired through the program and the distinctive practical projects they created

He emphasized that KFH is committed to offering the most advanced training programs, utilizing the latest and highest quality standards. This enables young people to develop their skills and invest their time effectively. He pointed out that the four-week program included comprehensive lectures, workshops, and seminars, as well as visits to KFH's strategic partners and several government agencies.

AlOmar stressed KFH's role in supporting students, youth and national cadres and offering the best training programs in line with its social responsibility. Ad-

ditionally, KFH continues to hone the talents and skills of young people and harness all efforts to enhance their capabilities and provide them with technical and practical expertise.

Meanwhile, KFH Deputy General Manager for Public Relations and Media, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh, commended the success of the PR Academy. This initiative, conceived and executed by the Public Relations and Media team at KFH, received further support from executive management and the relevant departments under the bank's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy and as part of its support for youth.

Al-Ruwaieh added that the program had successfully achieved its goals of training students and young people in the fundamentals of public relations and media. This was clearly demonstrated by the impressive projects presented by the trainees. He commended their innovative ideas and meticulous attention to detail, highlighting the depth of their understanding of the knowledge gained through the workshops they had attended.

He pointed out that 20 trainees were selected out of 400 applicants. The selection process was rigorous, involving careful evaluation and personal interviews with KFH representatives from the Public Relations and Media, and Human Resources departments. He also commended the trainees for their enthusiastic participation in the program and the valuable hands-on experience they gained in understanding the functions of public relations and media, both in general and specifically within the private sector.

Al-Ruwaieh explained that the program involved important aspects of PR and media (i.e. public relations, sustainability, social responsibility, media relations, journalistic writing skills, communication with various media outlets, event management, social media content management, communicating with the public, government relations and communicating with official authorities). The program also included photography and film editing, in addition to other media skills.

He went on to say that the training program focused on key aspects of a public relations and media employee's work. This included appearing on camera, interacting with the public, engaging with customers through official media platforms, and other practical exercises. These exercises offered trainees the opportunity to discover their potential in various fields.

Al-Ruwaieh revealed that KFH will continue to host similar training programs that contribute to the development and empowerment of youth in the PR and Media. He revealed that the that the upcoming editions will be developed to include

He also stressed the importance of public relations and media as a key factor of success for any institution, noting that public relations have a major role in supporting the strategic objectives of the organization.

Anil Kapoor to inaugurate expanded showroom

# 'revamped' Al Rai showroom on Oct 3rd

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the 6th largest jewellery retailer globally with over 360 showrooms across 13 countries, is gearing up for the grand inauguration of their expanded and renovated showroom at Lulu Hypermarket in Al Rai. The revamped showroom will be launched by Bollywood actor and brand ambassador of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Anil Kapoor. The grand inauguration, which is set for the 3rd October at 7.30 pm, will unveil a stunning new look of the showroom to jewellery lovers in Kuwait, with an enhance portfolio of jewellery designs and amenities. The newly revamped showroom

will showcase an extensive selection of over 20,000 exquisite designs in gold, diamonds, and precious gems curated from 20 countries. Catering to every jewellery lover's taste, the showroom features a vast array of options for daily wear, office wear, special occasions, and bridal collections. In addition to an exclusive 'Zoullifestyle jewellery' corner and dedicated Mine area, the showroom proudly showcases Malabar Gold & Diamonds' various exclusive brands such as Era-Uncut diamond jewellery, Viraaz-Royal



Anil Kapoor

Polkijewellery, Ethnix-handcrafted designer jewellery, Precia-Gem jewellery, Divine-Indian Heritage jewellery and Starlet-Kids jewellery. As part of the showroom's inaugural offers, customers shopping at the Al Rai showroom on the 3rd of October, will be eligible for assured gold coins on purchase of diamond & precious gem jewellery.

"The showroom at Al Rai, which was originally launched in 2011, marked Malabar Gold & Diamonds debut in Kuwait. Since then, we have made remarkable strides, expanding

more on the horizon, cementing our position as the leading jewellery retailer in the country. The showroom at Al Rai has undergone a tremendous transformation, in terms of both the variety of jewellery that is available and amenities, ensuring that our valued customers can indulge in a jewellery shopping experience like never before. The presence of the iconic Anil Kapoor to inaugurate this showroom makes the occasion even more special, as he has been a true ambassador for our brand on a global scale. We warmly welcome everyone to celebrate this achievement with us", commented Mr. Shamlal Ahamed, MD-International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds has an expansive presence of 8 worldclass showrooms in Kuwait, located across Al Rai, Dajeej, Mailya, Fahaheel, Mahboula, Salmiya, Jeleeb Al Shuyuoukh and Jahra.

In line with the brand's aim of expanding its retail footprint across the globe, Malabar Gold & Diamonds has charted an expansive expansion plan for the coming months, with 20 new showrooms launches planned before Diwali across the UAE, Qatar, KSA, USA & India.

# **Reinforcing customer rewards & environmental sustainability**

# Malabar Gold & Diamonds to inaugurate Gulf Bank offers free premiere of 'The Wild Robot' for 'Neo' account holders

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: As part of its efforts to reward customers, Gulf Bank, in collaboration with Vox Cinemas, is offering Neo account holders and their children a free opportunity to attend the premiere of the children's movie The Wild Robot. The film teaches children valuable skills about wildlife, including how to protect the environment, avoid risks, and communicate with animals. This initiative is one of many ongo-

ing collaborations with Vox Cinemas, giving Gulf Bank customers across different segments the chance to attend film premieres either for free or at exclusive discounts.

The event reflects Gulf Bank's ongoing commitment to offering enjoyable experiences for children and families. Neo account holders will have the chance to attend the premiere of The Wild Robot and take part in fun activities, including playing new games and face painting.

As part of its commitment to environmental sustainability and customer satisfaction, Gulf Bank regularly organizes events for different customer groups. The bank places a strong emphasis on teaching the younger generation the value of saving and the impor-

The Neo Account offers parents a simple and secure way to build their children's financial future, while teaching them the importance of saving and

tance of protecting the environment.



Mascot of the Neo Account interacts with children outside the cinema.

financial responsibility from a young age. Available for children up to 14 years old, the account can be opened by parents with no minimum balance or fees at any Gulf Bank branch.

Gulf Bank's rewards program stands out as the most efficient and rewarding in Kuwait, offering customers the ability to redeem points for airline tickets across all airlines and book stays at over 300,000 hotels around the world.

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 experi-

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.





Photos during the event.

#### Dr. Sameer Humad elected new president for 2024-2026

# Indian Doctors Forum, Kuwait conducts Annual General Meeting

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Indian Doctors Forum is one of the most reputed and elite expatriate organisations in Kuwait. It has completed two glorious decades of serving all the expatriate communities in Kuwait by conducting Health Screening Camps, Awareness Programs and Teleconsultations.

On 27th September 2024, Indian Doctors Forum conducted its Annual General Meeting at Regency Hotel. The objective of the meeting was to form a newly elected body of Office bearers. Dr Diwakara Chaluvaiah, President of the tenure of 2022 to 2024, handed over the charge to Dr Sameer Humad, the newly elected President for the tenure of 2024-2026. The other new office bearers are- Vice Presidents Dr Mohan Ram and Dr Sushovana Sujit Nair, General Secretary Dr Phillipose George, Joint General Secretary Dr Rajendra Mishra, Treasurer Dr Sunny Joseph Varghese, Joint Treasurer Dr Jibin John Thomas, Community Secretary Dr Rayavaram Raghunandan, Joint Community Secretary Dr Shriram Nathan, Membership Secretary Dr Imtiyaz Nawaz, Joint Membership Secretary Dr Mohd Umar Tak, Cultural Secretary Dr Anila Albert, Joint Cultural Secretary Dr Fibisha Nidal, Communication Secretary Dr Shahed Khan Pathan and Joint Communication Secretary Dr Rajesh Vas-

There was a huge turn up of the members and their families. The meeting was extremely well organised anchored by Dr Soumya Shetty. The outgoing team furnished their annual report in a very professional manner. Some necessary amendments of the constitution were accepted and passed.

Two eminent doctors, Dr Ramesh Pandita, consultant haematologist and Dr Abdul Mohammed Sukkur consultant cardiologist were warmly felicitated as they are leaving Kuwait after their long and illustrious careers of practice in

Some extremely talented and meritorious students of tenth and twelfth grade were felicitated by offering them Certificate of Merit.

A magic show was organised to keep the kids busy while the meeting was

The meeting was followed by a heartwarming soulful cultural event of songs and dances participated by the doctors and their families. Overall, it was an event which will be remembered for a long time.

# Features



#### Colón's new single 'La Señora' honors Guzmán's wife

# 'El Chapo' lawyer turns narco-fame into music career

MEXICO CITY, Sept 30, (AP): Riding in a black SUV with tinted windows, lawyer Mariel Colón rolls up to the gates of a remote mansion, strolling past a security guard side-by-side with Emma Coronel, the wife of notorious drug lord Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán.

Sporting suits and sunglasses, the pair stride into a dimly lit room full of slickly dressed men smoking cigars.

All to the roar of trumpets.

The scene is from "La Señora," the latest music video from Colón, who spent several years working as a defense lawyer for Guzmán while he faced trial in a US court. Now, at a time when regional Mexican music is becoming a global phenomenon, the 31-year-old is leveraging her association with the former leader of the Sinaloa Cartel to launch her music career under the stage name of "Mariel La Abogada"

(Mariel, the Lawyer).

"La Señora" features - and pays tribute to - Guzmán's wife, who was released from prison last year and has struggled to find work. It paved the way for the two to model together last weekend during Milan Fashion Week, raising eyebrows in Italy and beyond.

"(My work) opens doors for me because of the morbid, because of people's curiosity ... They want to understand this," Colón told The Associated Press. "I've always told people that Mariel is a singer who became a lawyer."

The Puerto Rican daughter of a music director grew up listening to Mexican ballads, loving the brokenhearted pas-

sion infused in the music. She always wanted to be a singer, but her family pushed her to pursue a law degree.

She began working for Guzmán's defense team in 2018 after graduating from law school in the US and stumbling upon a Craigslist ad seeking a part-time paralegal to help prepare a Spanish-speaking client for trial.

It was only later that she learned she would be working with Guzmán, taking him and Coronel as clients full time. She saw it as a "great opportunity professionally" and said she wasn't easily intimidated.

Once among the most wanted men in the world, Guzmán led his Sinaloa Cartel in a bloody war for control of the international drug trade, gaining a cinematic level of notoriety for his dramatic prison escapes before his extradition to the US in 2017. Now his sons, known as "Los Chapitos," are locked in a deadly power struggle with another faction of the cartel, leaving mutilated bodies around the state capital.

"(People ask) how I can do this job, that I'm part of the mafia, how can I sleep at night?" Colón said. "I don't care what they say about me. I sleep very well at night."

Colón is one of few people who maintain regular contact with Guzmán. She visits him three times a month in the maximum security prison in Colorado where he's serving a life sentence. She declined to discuss details of Guzmán's cases, citing attorney-client privilege.

Seeking to build a rapport, Colón sings to Guzmán and other clients, who have included other Mexican drug traf-



Mariel Colon wears a creation as part of the April Black Diamond Spring Summer 2025 collection, in Milan, Italy, Sunday, Sept. 22. (AP)

fickers and, for a brief time, Jeffrey Epstein, who killed himself in 2019 while awaiting trial on sex-trafficking charges. Colón serenades Guzmán with Mexican classics from bands including Los Alegres del Barranco and Tucanes de Tijuana. To this day, she said, he's among the first to hear her new music.

"Whatever genre, anything that was coming out that I liked, I would sing it to him because he doesn't have a radio," she said.

Her musical career began little more than a year ago, when she released her first video, "La Abogada," which features Colón dressed in a pink suit, crooning to law enforcement from a courtroom. Like much of the genre, her music is diverse, ranging from percussion-heavy banda to character-focused ballads known as corridos.

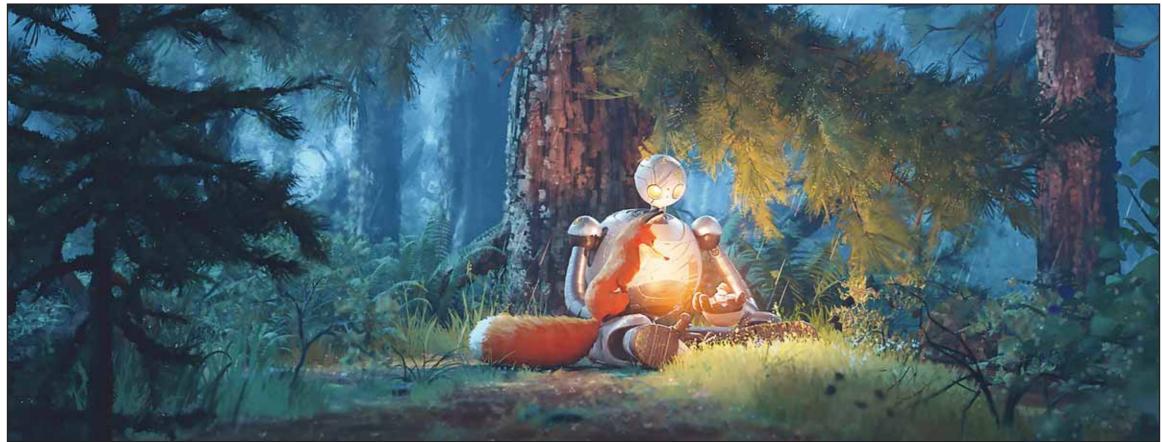
"La Señora" features a table sprinkled with diamonds, Guzmán's wife astride a trotting horse and strolling beside a pool.

Colón said the song was based on Coronel's life, sending a message of redemption and second chances. It was also a way to offer the 35-year-old work, a condition of her probation.

Coronel, a former beauty queen, was released from prison last year after completing her three-year sentence for drug trafficking and money laundering in relation to her husband's drug empire. Coronel declined to be inter-

"A small waist and beautiful eyes. A brain for business and a strong voice for the bad boys. She only shows her affectionate side to El Chaparrito," Colón belts out in her ballad. "El Chaparrito," meaning "the little shorty," plays with Guzmán's nickname.

#### Film



This image released by Universal Pictures shows a scene from DreamWorks Animation's 'Wild Robot.' (AP)

#### Variety

**NEW DELHI:** The Indian government on Monday conferred the film-industry's highest award, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, to veteran actor **Mithun Chakraborty**, 74.



The actor-turned-politician has also been a lawmaker in the Indian parliament's upper house Rajya Sabha. Currently, he is a member of the country's main ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Chakraborty made his acting debut in the mid-1970s and con-

tributed immensely to the coun-

try's film industry for over four decades by acting in more than 350 films in different languages.

He rose to fame in 1982 after

he acted in the film "Disco Dancer." His inimitable dance moves made him a household name in the country.

The actor will be given the award at the 70th National Film Awards ceremony in New Delhi next week. (Xinhua)

**LONDON:** Actor **Damian Lewis** drove a flock of sheep across the River Thames on Sunday in homage to a centuries-old tradition.

Lewis is among thousands of people granted the honorary title of Freeman of the City of London, which in medieval times came with the right to bring livestock across the river to market without paying tolls.

More than 1,000 freemen exercised that right on

More than 1,000 freemen exercised that right on Sunday in the annual London Sheep Drive, many wearing black hats and red cloaks. Lewis wore his grandfather's wool coat and carried a crook as he led the throng herding the animals over Southwark Bridge.

"It was fabulous" said Lewis, star of "Band of

"It was fabulous," said Lewis, star of "Band of Brothers," "Homeland" and "Wolf Hall." (AP)

Lewis was asked to represent the Worshipful Company of Woolmen, a trade guild dating to the 12th century. He said he was pleased to be part of "this eccentric, very British day, honoring an old tradition." (AP)

#### A soulful tale of kindness and survival

# 'Wild Robot' is stunning and moving

#### By Mark Kennedy

In the opening scenes of "The Wild Robot," a chirpy metal android with a state-of-the-art processing unit wanders around a forest asking confused animals if it can help them, offering discount codes and stickers for future customers. "Did anyone order me?" it asks.

We did, it turned out. This adaptation of Peter Brown's winning middle grade novel is an absolute movie triumph, a soulful sweet-sad animated journey that may have your kids asking why you're tearing up so much. It is destined to be ordered and reordered.

Chris Sanders, the writer-director of "How to Train Your Dragon," "The Croods" and "Lilo & Stitch," is the writer and director here. The assignment is daunting: Turn a beloved book with a few illustrations into a full-length movie without losing its tangy heart. Sanders didn't just nail it; he lasered it.

"The Wild Robot" is the fish-out-of-water tale of a futuristic helper robot who ends up marooned on an island when a storm sinks its container ship. It learns to adapt and connect with critters it has no programming for, even adopting the cutest gosling you'll ever see (sorry, Ryan).

The robot - ROZZUM unit 7134, or "Roz" for short - is voiced by Lupita Nyong'o in a spectacularly nuanced performance, sprightly robotic at first and eventually natural and wry. The other voice actors - Pedro Pascal, Catherine O'Hara, Bill Nighy, Kit Connor, Stephanie Hsu, Mark Hamill, Matt Berry and Ving Rhames - aren't just hired guns that other animated movies use to entice an audience. Each is wonderfully calibrated.

The movie keeps the basic structure of the book but ups some characters - like elevating the importance of Pascal's red fox - and has a tendency to go a little Hollywood, like sending a robot army after Roz and setting everything on fire. But it never lags, the visual effects are startling, and



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Roz, voiced by Lupita N'yongo, (background), and Brightbill, voiced by Kit Connor, in a scene from DreamWorks Animation's 'Wild Robot.' (AP)

its soul is intact.

"The Wild Robot" is often a story about programing natural and artificial - and how that can help and hinder. "I do not have the programing to be a mother," Roz tells a mother possum (a superb O'Hara). She replies: "None of us does."

Roz has ended up on an island where survival of the fittest and instinct are the rule, where animals don't sing and dance but struggle and hunt each other. "Kindness is not a survival skill," our robot is told by the fox.

"The Wild Robot" is also a celebration of adoption and found families. The push-and-pull of being a parent is there, as is the celebration of friendship. And there is death, an honest reminder of the struggle to stay alive.

Visually, it is stunning, a textured world that is almost painterly. You can see snowflakes settle on mottled fur, moss on rocks, individual leaves in a den. The images of a tree covered in butterflies is so spectacular it should be a poster we all can frame. No offense to Roz, but regular computer-generated efforts - "Transformers One," we're looking at you - look lackluster in comparison

Roz accidentally causes the death of a goose family, save for an unbroken egg. That orphan is now Roz's obligation - she must teach it to eat, swim and fly, culminating in winter migration. And she must face tough questions - about how a robot came to raise a little goose. "He found where he belongs," Roz says with cheerful sadness when her gosling swims to a group of geese.

What is home is another theme: Roz feels the pull to return to her factory but only out of obligation. Her heart is on this island and the friends she has made, especially after making a safe place for all creatures during a freezing winter. Her kindness changes the way the animals see each other, even if it cannot change their appetites.

Being a mother changes Roz, too, unmooring her from her ones and zeroes, making her improvise and even willing to break some rules, like learning to lie to create a creative bedtime story. A busted-up robot from the shipwreck is stunned by what Roz has become when she stops by to consult: "You should not feel anything at all."

As for you? You're going to have all the feels. Surrender. Is this the best animated movie of the year? Totally, so far. It might even be the best movie of the year. See you at the Oscars, Roz.

"The Wild Robot," a Universal release in theaters Friday, is rated PG for action/peril and thematic elements. Running time: 101 minutes. Four stars out of four. (AP)



# 'Megalopolis' flops, 'The Wild Robot' soars at box office



This image released by Lionsgate shows Nathalie Emmanuel in a scene from 'Megalopolis.' (AP)

NEW YORK, Sept 30, (AP): Francis Ford Coppola's decades-in-the-making, self-financed epic "Megalopolis" flopped with moviegoers, while the acclaimed Dream-Works Animation family film "The Wild Robot" soared to No. 1 at the weekend box office.

"The Wild Robot," Chris Sanders' adaptation of Peter Brown's bestseller, outperformed expectations to launch with \$35 million in ticket sales in US and Canada theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday. "Wild Robot" was poised to do well after critics raved about the story of a shipwrecked robot who raises an orphan gosling. Audiences agreed, giving the film an A CinemaScore. "Wild Robot" is likely set up a long and lucrative run for the Universal Pictures release.

Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for Comscore, predicts "The Wild Robot" "may take a page from the 'Elemental' playbook by opening to respectable box office and

then looking toward long-term playability." Pixar's "Elemental," which like "The Wild Robot" wasn't a sequel, debuted with a modest \$30 million but went on to gross nearly \$500 million worldwide.

Genre (cross head)

Family movies, led by the year's biggest hit in "Inside Out 2," have particularly powered the box office this year. David A. Gross, a film consultant who publishes a newsletter for Franchise Entertainment, said the genre should reach \$6 billion worldwide in 2024 - which, he noted, "is back to pre-pandemic levels."

"Megalopolis," Coppola's vision of a Roman epic set in modern-day New York, was never expected to perform close to that level. But the film's \$4 million debut was still sobering for a movie that Coppola bankrolled himself for \$120 million. Following its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival, critics have been mixed on Coppola's first film in 13 years. Audiences gave in a D+ CinemaScore.

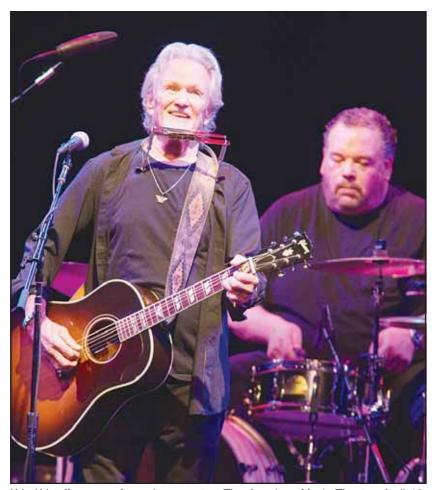
By any financial measure "Megalopolis" was

By any financial measure, "Megalopolis" was a megaflop. But from the start, the 85-year-old Coppola maintained money wasn't his concern. Coppola fashioned the film, which he first began developing in the late 1970s, as a grand personal statement about human possibility

personal statement about human possibility.

"Everyone's so worried about money," Coppola told The Associated Press in an interview ahead of the film's release. "I say: Give me less money and give me more friends."

Studios passed on "Megalopolis" after Cannes. Lionsgate ultimately stepped forward to distribute it, for a fee. Coppola also picked up the tab for most of its \$15 million in marketing costs. The film, which stars Adam Driver, Nathalie Emmanuel and Aubrey Plaza, also played in about 200 IMAX locations, which accounted for \$1.8 million of its ticket sales



Kris Kristofferson performs in concert at The American Music Theatre, April 12, 2019, in Lancaster, Pa. (AP)

#### **Obituary**

#### **Country music superstar and A-list actor**

# Kris Kristofferson, Hollywood icon, dies

LOS ANGELES, Sept 30, (AP): Kris Kristofferson, a Rhodes scholar with a deft writing style and rough charisma who became a country music superstar and an A-list Hollywood actor, has died.

Kristofferson died at his home on Maui, Hawaii

Kristofferson died at his home on Maui, Hawaii on Saturday, family spokeswoman Ebie McFarland said in an email. He was 88.

McFarland said Kristofferson died peacefully, surrounded by his family. No cause was given.

Starting in the late 1960s, the Brownsville, Texas native wrote such country and rock 'n' roll standards as "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down," "Help Me Make it Through the Night," "For the Good Times" and "Me and Bobby McGee," which became his best-known song as a posthumous hit for Janis Joplin.

He starred opposite Ellen Burstyn in director Martin Scorsese's 1974 film "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore," starred opposite Barbra Streisand in the 1976 "A Star Is Born," and acted alongside Wesley Snipes in Marvel's "Blade" in 1998.

Kristofferson, who could recite the poems of William Blake from memory, wove folk music lyrics about loneliness and tender romance into popular country music. He represented a new breed of country songwriters along with such peers as Willie Nelson, John Prine and Tom T.

"There's no better songwriter alive than Kris

Kristofferson," Nelson said at a 2009 BMI award ceremony for Kristofferson.

Kristofferson retired from performing and recording in 2021, making only occasional guest

appearances on stage.

Nelson and Kristofferson would join forces with Johnny Cash and Waylon Jennings to create the country supergroup "The Highwaymen" starting in the mid-1980s.

Kristofferson was a Golden Gloves boxer, rugby star and football player in college; received a master's degree in English from the University of Oxford; and flew helicopters as a captain in the US Army but turned down an appointment to teach at the US Military Academy at West Point, New York, to pursue songwriting in Nashville. Hoping to break into the industry, he worked as a part-time janitor at Columbia Records' Music Row studio in 1966 when Dylan recorded tracks for the seminal "Blonde on Blonde" double album.

#### Legend

At times, the legend of Kristofferson was larger than real life. Cash liked to tell a mostly exaggerated story of how Kristofferson landed a helicopter on Cash's lawn to give him a tape of "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down" with a drink in one hand. Over the years in interviews, Kristofferson said with all respect to Cash, the Man in Black

wasn't even home at the time, the demo tape was a song that no one ever actually cut and he certainly couldn't fly a helicopter holding a drink.

He later said he might not have had a career without Cash

"He kind of took me under his wing before he cut any of my songs," Kristofferson said in a 2006 interview with The Associated Press. "He cut my first record that was record of the year. He put me on stage the first time."

One of his most recorded songs, "Me and Bobby McGee," was written based on a recommendation from Monument Records founder Fred Foster. Foster had a song title in his head called "Me and Bobby McKee," named after a female secretary in his building. Kristofferson said in an interview in the magazine, "Performing Songwriter," that he was inspired to write the lyrics about a man and woman on the road together after watching the Frederico Fellini film, "La Strada."

In 1973, he married fellow songwriter Rita Coolidge and together they had a successful duet career that earned them two Grammy awards. They divorced in 1980. The formation of the Highwaymen, with Nelson, Cash and Jennings, was another pivotal point in his career as a performer. He told the AP in 2005 it was "unreal" to be a peer with men who'd been his heroes.

#### Nostalgic journey

# The Best of Bublé a tribute to his work

LOS ANGELES, Sept 30, (AP): For Michael Bublé aficionados, "The Best of Bublé" is a gift - a celebration of the Canadian singer's best work, with a couple previously unreleased songs thrown in.

Bublé rose to fame in the early '00s for his capacity to take staple songs from the worlds of jazz, blues and the Great American Songbook and make them his own, through his angelic and controlled vocal tone. He was quickly celebrated, too, for his original hits, many of which are present on this album: "Home," "Haven't Met You Yet" and "Everything."

But this greatest hits collection does more than rehash the past. "The Best of Bublé" welcomes in the new through two unreleased songs, illustrating his range and elastic approach to genre.

"Don't Blame It On Me" brings out the cheery side of Bublé. Beneath his voice are lively horns that fill a room, handclaps and acoustic guitars, a dance that makes it absolutely impossible to hear without smiling.

While "Quizás, Quizás, Quizás," a cover of a Cuban classic written by Osvaldo Farrés and made famous by Bobby Capó, allows Bublé to show off in Spanish.

Those songs placed next to his best-known material makes "The Best of Bublé" the perfect present for his diehard followers, and an accelerated crash course for any newcomers wanting to familiarize themselves with his particular talents.

"The Best of Bublé" is a beautiful and nostalgic journey, one best consumed while sipping a dirty martini in an art nouveau bar, channeling a past time. His bossa nova takes the listener on a journey.

The only thing missing for this release - the only thing that could make it a truly in-depth visitation of his career - would be the inclusion of some of his Christmas songs. After all, he's the King of Christmas - a role second only to Mariah Carey. But holiday feelings aside, "The Best of Bublé" is one to place under the tree, a delightful catalogue representing a modern classic voice.

## **Eclectic festival**

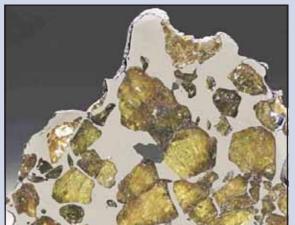
# Global talents shine at NY Fall for Dance

NEW YORK, Sept 30, (AP): The eclectic annual Fall for Dance festival is a beloved tradition among dance fans, not least for its \$30 tickets - still quite a deal in New York, even if they began at \$10 two decades ago. But the best thing about it is still the variety it brings to the stage, with 15 acts over 11 days this year from artists around the world. This year's highlights have come from as far as the Kyiv Opera House in Ukraine, and as close as a few blocks away.

You could call it a veritable United Nations of dance - which is exactly how the president of New York City Center, Michael Rosenberg, described it this week, introducing the third of five programs. He didn't explicitly refer to the ongoing UN General Assembly happening a bit further east, wreaking its usual traffic chaos.

There was a happier chaos happening onstage, a mishmash of extremely different styles of dance. As usual, the audience seemed to love it all - especially the more out-there elements, like dancers stalking the stage on stilts in the first program, courtesy of choreographer Andrea Miller and her Brooklyn-based Gallim company.

Fall for Dance has always lured a mix of known names - some of them trying out something new - with names unknown to most of the crowd. Among the familiar faces this year so far have been much-loved ballet stars Tiler Peck of New York City Ballet and Herman Cornejo of American Ballet Theatre, both choreographing this time (with Cornejo dancing, too).



KUNA photo Ancient stones on display at Erbil Museum.

### Erbil's stones, gems museum

Erbil Stones and Gems Museum is a small museum located within the Citadel of Erbil, at the heart of the city.

cated within the Citadel of Erbil, at the heart of the city.
Founder of the museum geologist Sarbast Majeed, stated to KUNA that he gathered his 40 year collection of gemstones from different parts of the world and originally displayed it in a house located in a the city of Shaqlawa in 2014, and relocated to the Citadel of Erbil in 2016.

The museum displays a multitude of common and rare stones and gems from within Iraq and many other countries. Majeed explained that the stones are all aged millions of years, as well as meteorite fragments aged billions of years, fossils aged almost 600 million years and a variety of other items. (KUNA)

#### **Fashion**



A model wears a creation of Valentino. (AP)



Greta Gerwig, (left), and Natalie Portman attend the Stella McCartney SS 2025 collection presented in Paris. (AP)



A model presents Valentino's creation. (AP)



A model wears a creation as part of the Valentino Spring/Summer 2025 collection presented Sunday, Sept. 29, 2024 in Paris (AP)

Alexander McQueen's sophomore show shines

# Valentino's new designer shows maximalist style

PARIS, Sept 30, (AP): Alessandro Michele's eagerly awaited ready-to-wear Paris Fashion Week debut at Valentino was unveiled in a setting that hinted at a transformation- a living room in flux. Stools, ladders, and lamps shrouded beneath white blankets evoked a house renovation, signaling not just change, but a conscious revival of past glories. The scene, poetic and subdued, perfectly set the stage for a "maximalist-lite" spectacle that was equally haunted by history and illuminated by Michele's unique flair.

Meanwhile, under the soaring ceilings of the École des Beaux Arts, overlooking the Seine, Sean McGirr's sophomore ready-to-wear show for Alexander McQueen arrived with a palpable sense of relief. The shift in setting - from a bleak industrial warehouse outside Paris to this iconic venue - reflected a fresh start for McGirr, whose uncertain debut had left critics shivering, both literally and figuratively. Now, with the benefit of more time to prepare, McGirr appeared more at ease, though hints of his sometimes overly simplistic approach still lingered. Here are some highlights of spring-summer 2025

ready-to-wear shows:

The mood was set with haunting music and the steady beat of a drum, creating an ambiance charged with drama and anticipation. Michele, who made headlines earlier this year after being named the new creative director of Valentino, following his successful reign at Gucci, brought with him much of his recognizable style. Yet there was a distinctive evolution in his vision - less overt-

ly ostentatious, but still unmistakably eclectic.
Feathers floated on hats, soft and playful. Lingerie peeked through delicate layers. Flowers, fortune tellers' hats, sparkling embellishments - all coalesced into an eclectic wardrobe that carried a vintage feel. Michele, it seemed, was teasing apart the DNA of both houses he knows intimately: the exuberance of Gucci and the ethereal heritage of Valentino.

Some of the pieces felt familiar to longtime Valentino admirers: the feminine nipped-waist dress, the floppy floral gown with its tiered skirt, and the iconic Valentino red that made its dramatic entrance.

Yet in Michele's hands, these classics were playfully twisted - feathers replaced fur on a billowing stole, and the result was a softer, more modern take that eschewed excessive luxury.

Jared Leto was among the VIPs who sat in the front row, a testament to Michele's continued draw among Hollywood's elite. The designer, who had risen to international recognition by infusing Gucci with his beloved "Geek-Chic" aesthetic, seemed to bring a similar ethos to Valentino, though filtered through a more graceful, couture lens.

#### Tenure

Throughout his tenure at Gucci, Michele was celebrated for prioritizing his personal vision over the often suffocating codes of heritage houses, and Sunday's show echoed that defiant spirit.

The opening tailored suit, its lapels rolled as if to ward off an unexpected London downpour, seemed a pointed metaphor - perhaps a shield against the relentless skepticism that followed his first runway outing. This season, McGirr turned to a reference steeped in both his heritage and McQueen's early days: the dark romance of the "Banshee" show. In doing so, he anchored his own identity more deeply in the label's legacy, embracing a Gothic allure that was more commercially viable this time around.

It was a collection of contrasts. The precise tailoring echoed McQueen's subversion of British suiting, twisting and clutching fabric in ways that seemed as though it

had been caught in a sudden gust.

However, this wasn't always effective. One such example - a jagged, off-white tuxedo - felt more like a cos-

tume of restraint. This overly simplistic take on tailoring lacked the subtle layering and tension that distinguished Sarah Burton's previous work for the house.

Where McGirr truly shone, however, was in his eveningwear - an area that has become increasingly vital in the era of celebrity-driven fashion. The shimmering embroideries and featherlight silks, frayed and distressed in lilac georgette, signaled his understanding of red carpet glamour.

The brushed white chiffon minidress, paired with a gold beaded and sequined jacket, made a convincing case for the designer's growing confidence. And when the silver chains traced the body's lines, their intricate embroidery brought a level of audacity that was finally worthy of McQueen.

The night's high point was a look of pure excess: an extreme gown embroidered with glistening silver chains that seemed to catch every glimmer of light in the venue. It was an ensemble that Daphne Guinness herself - who watched approvingly from the front row - might have worn in a heartbeat. Despite his strides, McGirr's sophomore effort still carried the weight of a designer learning the ropes of a storied brand.

Akris' Sunday collection had the audience leaning in, not for any over-the-top spectacle, but for the luxurious subtleties that Albert Kriemler so masterfully crafts. The designer, true to form, took the trench coat idea - a staple of the wardrobe - and transformed it into

something distinctly Akris.

With utilitarian detailing threaded through every seam, this was an exercise in functional luxury, the kind that Kriemler has long perfected. His designs

don't shout; they whisper.

The collection opened with takes on trenches, each reimagined to fuse practicality with fashion-forward flair.

Minimalism, too, reigned supreme, with looks that kept embellishments at bay to let the craftsmanship shine.

### Smoking linked to 43 pct of cases

# 7,600 heart attack cases in Kuwait in 15 months

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: The Secretary-General of the Heart Association, Dr. Rashid Al-Awish, has announced that the Association has conducted a significant study on 'heart diseases in Kuwait' covering the period from May 15, 2023, to August 2024. The study uncovered a total of 7,600 cases of heart attacks, strokes, and angina pectoris.

In a press statement released in conjunction with World Heart Day, which is celebrated annually on September 29 in collaboration with the Sabah Al-Ahmad Cardiac Center, Dr. Al-Awish detailed the findings. He reported that of the 7,600 cases, 6,239 were male, ac-

**Dengue cases rise** 

India confirms third

case of monkeypox

NEW DELHI, Sept 30, (Agencies): One more case of monkeypox (mpox) was detected Friday in India, taking the tally

According to state-run broadcaster All India Radio (AIR), a 38-year-old man has been confirmed to be infected with the mpox virus in Kerala, the second case in the state so far.

"Sources said the man, who returned to Kochi from

abroad, has been admitted to a private hospital for treatment.

Tests of his body fluids confirmed the case to be positive,'

Kerala local health minister Veena George Friday con-

vened a high-level meeting in Thiruvananthapuram to take stock of the situation. The health department has prepared a

contact list of the infected person and strengthened preven-

tive measures. She said those with symptoms should ensure

"Those coming from foreign countries should seek treat-ment and inform the health department if they develop any

38-year-old man from Malappuram district of Kerala.

On Monday, mpox clade 1b strain was detected in a

The earlier case of mpox that emerged in Delhi was of a

India's federal health ministry on Thursday asked all

26-year-old resident of Haryana's Hisar who had tested posi-

states to identify facilities and trained human resources

for taking care of both suspected and confirmed mpox

to three in the country.

the virus is not spread to others.

tive for the West African clade 2 strain.

symptoms," George said.

the Ministry of Health.

counting for 82%, while 1,363 were female, represent-

The statistics indicated a troubling trend, with 43% of those affected being current smokers, while 13% were former smokers. The study also found that 2,206 cases, or 29%, involved Kuwaiti nationals, while approximately 5,396 cases, representing 71%, were among residents. The death rate associated with these cases stood at 1.9%, which is consistent with global averages. Notably, 70% of the patients were hospitalized for only three days, and 15% required ambulance transportation to medical facilities.

Dr. Al-Awish emphasized the concerning fact that 51% of those diagnosed with heart diseases also had diabetes, with an average age of 56 years among the patients studied. He announced that the Heart Association will continue its observance of World Heart Day from September 29 to October 26, providing free blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol tests to the public. The celebration aims to raise awareness about heart health and promote collaborative efforts to combat cardiovascular diseases while reducing health complications for individuals



In this image made from a NASA livestream, the two astronauts stuck at the International Space Station since June 2024, Butch Wilmore, (far left), and Suni Williams, (far right), welcome two new residents who flew up on SpaceX, NASA's Nick Hague, front left in blue, and the Russian Space Agency's Alexander Gorbunov, front right in blue, Sunday, Sept. 29, 2024. Behind them, from left in black, are NASA's Jeanette Epps, Russia's Alexander Grebenkin, NASA's Mike Barratt and NASA's Matthew Dominick. (From left), wearing red, are Russia's Ivan Vagner, NASA's Don Pettit and Russia's Alexei Ovchinin. (AP)

'Dragon' to remain at ISS until Feb

# **NASA** astronauts welcome **SpaceX capsule for return**

**Dengue:** A total of 1,221 people were diagnosed with dengue fever in Bangladesh in the past 24 hours on Sunday, the highest number in a single day so far this year, according to

In the same period, eight people died due to the mosquitoborne disease, raising the death toll to 158 so far this year. With the fresh infections, the number of dengue cases surged to 29,786 in Bangladesh, the ministry said.

In order to fight the rising number of dengue cases, Bangladeshi health authorities have strengthened measures to check the breeding of mosquitoes and conduct anti-larval operations.

**Cholera:** Sudan is witnessing a stifling health crisis with the widespread outbreak of cholera since August 12.

Infections exceeded 15,000 in 11 states, causing the death

of more than 500 persons. This crisis's aggravation is attributed to difficult humani-

tarian conditions, the ongoing war, and the torrents and floods that have hit the country.

Health experts have warned of a cholera outbreak in the country, stressing the importance of rapid intervention to provide the necessary treatment for those infected.

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., Sept 30, (AP): The two astronauts stuck at the International Space Station since June welcomed their new ride home with Sunday's arrival of a SpaceX capsule.

SpaceX launched the rescue mission on Saturday with a downsized crew of two astronauts and two empty seats reserved for Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams, who will return next year. The Dragon capsule docked in darkness as the two craft soared 265 miles (426 kilometers) above Botswana.

NASA switched Wilmore and Williams to SpaceX following concerns over the safety of their Boeing Starliner capsule. It was the first Starliner test flight with a crew, and NASA decided the thruster failures and helium leaks that cropped up after liftoff were too serious and poorly understood to risk the test pilots' return. So Starliner

returned to Earth empty earlier this month. The Dragon carrying NASA's Nick Hague and the Russian Space Agency's Alexander Gorbunov will remain at the space station until February, turning what should have been a weeklong

trip for Wilmore and Williams into a mission lasting more than eight months.

Two NASA astronauts were pulled from the mission to make room for Wilmore and Williams "I just want to say welcome to our new com-

padres," Williams, the space station commander, said once Hague and Gorbunov floated inside and were embraced by the nine astronauts await-

Hague said it was a smooth flight up. "Coming through the hatch and seeing all the smiles, and as much as I've laughed and cried in the last 10 minutes, I know it's going to be an amazing expedition," he said

NASA likes to replace its station crews every six months or so. SpaceX has provided the taxi service since the company's first astronaut flight in 2020. NASA also hired Boeing for ferry flights after the space shuttles were retired, but flawed software and other Starliner issues led to years of delays and more than \$1 billion in repairs.



and Control unit wearing full protective equipment carries a meal to an isolation tent housing a man being quarantined after coming into contact in Uganda with a carrier of the Marburg Virus, at the Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya. (AP)

'Virus can be 88% fatal'

# **Rwanda confirms eight deaths** tied to Ebola-like Marburg virus

RWANDA, Sept 30, (Agencies): Rwanda says eight people have died so far from the Ebola-like and highly contagious Marburg virus, just days after the country declared an outbreak of the deadly hemorrhagic fever that has no authorized vaccine or treatment.

Like Ebola, the Marburg virus originates in fruit bats and spreads between people through close contact with the bodily fluids of infected individuals or with surfaces, such as contaminated bed sheets. Without treatment, Marburg can be fatal in up to 88% of people who fall ill with the disease.

Rwanda, a landlocked country in central Africa, declared an outbreak on Friday and a day later the first six deaths were reported.

So far 26 cases have been confirmed, and eight of the sickened people have died, Health Minister Sabin Nsanzimana said on Sunday night.

The public has been urged to avoid physical contact to help curb the spread. Some 300 people who came into contact with those confirmed to have the virus have also been identified, and an unspecified number of them have been put in isolation facilities.

Most of the affected are healthcare workers across six out of 30 districts in the country.

"Marburg is a rare disease," Nsanzimana told journalists. "We are intensifying contact tracing and testing to help stop the spread.'

The minister said the source of the disease has not been determined yet. A person infected with the virus can take between three days and three weeks to show symptoms, he added.

# Researchers discover gene linked to 'rare eye' disorder

LOS ANGELES, Sept 30, (Agencies): US researchers have identified a gene responsible for some inherited retinal diseases (IRDs), which are a group of disorders that damage the eye's light-sensing retina and threatens vision, according to a study published Thursday.

IRDs affect more than 2 million people worldwide. Each individual disease is rare, complicating efforts to identify enough people to study and conduct clinical trials to develop treatment, according to the US National Institutes of Health (NIH).

In the study sponsored by NIH, researchers linked the gene UBAP1L to different forms of retinal dystrophies, including maculopathy, cone dystrophy or cone-rod dystrophy. The findings paved the way for ge-

netic testing, clinical trials, and therapy development, according to the study published in JAMA Ophthalmology. Meanwhile, Americans can once

again order COVID-19 tests, without being charged, sent straight to their homes.

The US government reopened the program on Thursday, allowing any household to order up to four at-home COVID nasal swab kits through the website, covidtests.gov. The tests will begin shipping, via the United States Postal Service, as soon as next week.



Thursday Sept. 19, 2024. (AP)

# **Ukraine's medical facilities under pressure**

# Hospital clowns bring joy to young cancer patients

KYIV, Ukraine, Sept 30, (AP): Their costumes are put on with surgical precision: Floppy hats, foam noses, bright clothes, and a ukulele with multicolored nylon strings.

Moments later, in a beige hospital ward normally filled with the beeping sounds of medical machinery, there are bursts of gig-

gles and silly singing.

As Ukraine's medical facilities come under pressure from intensifying attacks in the war against Russia's full-scale invasion, volunteer hospital clowns are duck-footing their way in to provide some badly needed moments of joy for hospitalized children.

The "Bureau of Smiles and Support" (BUP) is a hospital clowning initiative established in 2023 by Olha Bulkina, 35, and

Maryna Berdar, 39, who already had more than five years of hospital clowning experience between them. "Our mission is to let childhood continue regardless of the circumstances," Bulkina, told The Associated

BUP took on new significance following a Russian missile strike on Okhmatdyt Children's Hospital in Kyiv in July. The attack on Ukraine's largest pediatric facility forced the evacuation of dozens of young patients, including those with cancer, to other hospitals in the capital - and the clowns did not stand aside.

Together with first responders, Berdar and Bulkina helped with clearing the rubble after the attack and attended to the children who were relocated to other medical facilities. But even for them, the real heroes there were young patients.

"When the children were evacuated from Okhmatdyt after the missile attack, many of them were in extremely difficult medical conditions, but even in this situation they tried to support the adults," said Berdar, recalling the events after the strike.

The hospital clowns, who use traditional clown noses and bright costumes, are now visiting multiple hospitals in the Ukrainian capital region, including the National Cancer Institute, where patient numbers have surged after the Okhmatdyt attack.

Tetiana Nosova, 22, and Vladyslava Kulinich, 22, are volunteer hospital clowns

who go by Zhuzha and Lala and joined BUP more than a year ago. For them, hospital clowning is as challenging as it is reward-

ing.
"I volunteer so that children don't think about their illness, even for a short moment, so that laughter replaces tears, and joy replaces fear, especially during medical procedures," Kulinich said. In her practice, she stays together with children, sharing all their

feelings, whether they are fear, pain, or joy.
For Nosova, the process itself is what made her start clowning. "I am motivated by joy. I simply enjoy it. All my life I studied to be an actress, all my life I enjoyed making people laugh. That's enough motivation for me," she said.





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#### Mabrey's six 3s lift Sun past Lynx

# Stewart, Ionescu lead Liberty to Game 1 win vs Aces

NEW YORK, Sept 30, (AP): Breanna Stewart knows she wasn't at her best last year in thet Finals when the Las Vegas Aces knocked off the New York

Liberty She made sure she that wouldn't happen in Game 1 of their semifinals series this year, scoring 34 points to help the Liberty beat the Aces 87-77.

Game 2 of the best-of-5 matchup is Tuesday night in New York. The two-time defending champions

have only trailed once in a series the last two years. That was against Seattle when they also were down 1-0. The difference was that they were at home for the first two of those games.

This was a rematch of last season's WNBA Finals that the Aces won in four games, including clinching the championship in New York. The Liberty said they've had a scar from that loss and have used it as motivation all season long. New York had the best record in the league and earned the top seed in the playoffs.

Last season the Aces were the No. 1

seed, so New York had to go there for the opening two games of the Finals. The Liberty returned home down 0-2 and never could recover.

New York came out strong behind Stewart and led 28-21 after one quarter. Las Vegas closed to 37-34 with 4:11 left in the half before New York ended the second quarter with a 11-4

run to go up 10 at the break. Stewart, who had 20 points in the opening 20 minutes, had six points in that spurt. She hit eight of her 10 shots in the first half.

The Liberty scored the first five points of the third quarter and the lead ballooned to 62-44 on a 3-pointer by Stewart. After a timeout, the Aces scored the next 12 points to get within six. Courtney Vandersloot finally ended the drought for New York with a layup that sparked a run to restore a nine-point advantage at the end of the

Las Vegas hung around and only trailed 75-67 until Sabrina Ionescu hit a 3-pointer with 7:34 left in the game and quickly turned to point to Spike Lee, who was sitting courtside wearing her jersey.

In Game 2 of the opening round series win over Atlanta, the basketball superfan gave the Liberty guard a high-five that she said felt like "New York was injected into my veins."

Ninety seconds later, she hit another 3 that whipped the sellout crowd into

a frenzy.

Las Vegas couldn't get closer than eight the rest of the way.

Marina Mabrey scored 20 points and Alyssa Thomas added 17 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists and the Connecticut Sun defeated the Minnesota Lynx 73-70in Game 1 of their semifinals series.

DiJonai Carrington had 13 points and DeWanna Bonner had 10 points and 11 boards for the Sun.

Napheesa Collier, who averaged 40 points in the first round of the playoffs, led Minnesota with 19 points and nine rebounds. Bridget Carleton scored 17 and Kayla McBride added 12.

Game 2 of the best-of-5 series will be played Tuesday in Minneapolis.

In their first-round sweep of Phoenix, the Lynx shot 50% from the floor and 40% from the arc, topping 100 points in both games.

It was a different story against the Sun, who had the stingiest defense in the league this season. Minnesota shot just 41.5% from the field and made 5 of 20 3-point attempts.

Mabrey opened the fourth with her sixth 3-pointer of the night, and Carrington scored on a putback to tie the score 62-all with seven minutes to play. Bonner hit a corner 3 and added a transition layup as the Sun crept ahead

After the Lynx were held without a basket for more than three minutes, Collier's driving layup cut the Sun's lead to 71-70 with 33.9 seconds to go.

However, Thomas hit a 15-foot jumper with 11.7 seconds left and after a disjointed final possession, Collier's desperation 3-pointer came up



New York Liberty guard Courtney Vandersloot (22) is defended by Las Vegas Aces forward Alysha Clark, left, during the first half of a WNBA basketball second-round playoff game in New York. (AP)

# **Americans win Presidents Cup** for the 10th straight time

Hidalgo outlasts Rahm in Spain



Team USA poses after winning the Presidents Cup golf tournament at Royal Montreal Golf Club in Montreal. (AP)

MONTREAL, Sept 30, (AP): Xander Schauffele ran off four straight birdies to lead an onslaught of red scores on the board Sunday and the Americans made the outcome as inevitable as it usually is, winning the Presidents Cup for the 10th straight time.

Sam Burns completed an unbeaten week, Russell Henley capped off his impressive debut in the Presidents Cup with a win and Keegan Bradley - the Ryder Cup captain next year - delivered the deciding point when Si Woo Kim missed a 10-foot putt putt on the 18th hole.

Max Homa finished the scoring with his first point of the week, a 2-and-1 victory over Mackenzie Hughes that made it 18 1/2-11 1/2, the largest margin of victory for the Americans away from home, even if was just north of

the border at Royal Montreal. thing to go right at Royal Montreal. All they could manage was a good fight,

more tight matches, but still no cup. Their only victory since these matches for players from everywhere

The Internationals needed every

Rahm birdied the final two holes at

able par-4 18th on the first extra hole.

Open titles.

the Club de Campo Villa de Madrid for They both made birdie on the reach-

but Europe came in 1998 at Royal

Melbourne, so long ago that Tiger Woods was making his Presidents Cup

debut. The U.S. winning streak dates

of captain Jim Furyk, who was at the

helm in France five years ago when

Furyk sent out Schauffele in the

they lost to Europe in the Ryder Cup.

opening match against Jason Day,

and the Californian made five birdies

in eight holes to seize control early. It

playoff hole to defeat Jon Rahm and

win the Spanish Open for his first Eu-

ropean tour victory in a battle between

a short birdie putt at the same 18th hole

for a 1-under 70. That allowed Rahm

into the playoff and gave the two-time

major champion a shot at becoming

the first player to win four Spanish

The 26-year-old Hidalgo had missed

Ángel Hidalgo birdied the second

ended on the 15th hole.

The Americans made a winner out

and Hidalgo put it close and made the birdie for his first European title. Rahm won the LIV individual title

Returning to the 18th for the third time, Rahm hit a poor chip over the green and was back in Europe to try to reach the minimum of four European tour starts required to be considered for the Ryder Cup next year. He is being allowed to play after appealing the European tour sanctions against him for playing the LIV circuit.

Jasmine Suwannapura made a 12foot eagle putt on the second hole of a playoff with Lucy Li to win the Walmart NW Arkansas Champion-

Suwannapura - playing in the group behind Li - also eagled the par-5 18th in regulation to force the playoff at Pinnacle Country Club. They each birdied the 18th on the first extra hole.

Suwannapura shot a career-best 10-under 61, playing the back nine in 7-under 28, to match Li at 17-under 196. Tied for 25th entering the day, Li shot a tournament-record and careerbest 60, making her third eagle of the round on 18.

Suwannapura won her third LPGA Tour title, playing the last 22 holes without a bogey. The 31-year-old Thai player jumped into husband-caddie Michael Thomas' arms after the winning putt.

Li, the 21-year-old American who played in the 2014 U.S. Women's Open at age 11, missed a chance for her first LPGA Tour victory.

Sei Young Kim was a stroke back after a 63. She also eagled.

Takahiro Hataji won for the second time in four months on the Japan Golf Tour when he closed with a 6-under 65 for a one-shot victory over Takumi Kanaya in the Vantelin Tokai Classic. ... Suteepat Prateeptienchai of Thailand completed a wire-to-wire victory in the Yeangder TPC when he closed with a 3-under 69 to win by two shots over John Catlin for his second title in as many years on the Asian Tour. ... Rio Takeda closed with a 2-under 70 for a two-shot victory over Akie Iwai in the Japan Women's Open, one of the majors on the Japan LPGA.

Euan Walker of Scotland shot a bogey-free 66 for a three-shot victory in the Swiss Challenge in France. The Challenge Tour event was shortened to 36 holes because of a flooded golf course.

Chiara Tamburlini of Switzerland won her second Ladies European Tour title when she closed with an even-par 71 and beat Kirsten Rudgeley of Australia in a playoff in France.

Da Som Ma had seven birdies on the back nine for an 11-under 61 that led to a nine-shot victory over Ina Yoon in the Hana Financial Group Championship on the Korea LPGA. Minjee Lee finished third, 10 shots behind. Lydia Ko, coming off an LPGA win last week in Cincinnati, shot 67 and finished 10th.

## 'Time to make way for new generation'

# Griezmann retires from int'l soccer

MADRID, Sept 30, (AP): World Cup winner Antoine Griezmann, one of France's most influential players over the past decade, took the soccer world by surprise Monday when he announced the end of his international career with Les Bleus.

The 33-year-old Atletico Madrid forward, affectionately nicknamed "Grizou" by his supporters, has played 137 matches with France, scoring 44 goals during a successful 10-year tenure. Griezmann's decision was unexpected after he said only a few weeks ago that he was ready to carry on with the national team until the 2026 World Cup.

His exit, following in the footsteps of other World Cup winners including Olivier Giroud, Blaise Matuidi, Raphael Varane and Hugo Lloris, marks the end of an era for France.

"It's with a heart full of memories that I close this chapter of my life," Griezmann said in a message posted on Instagram. "Thank you for this wonderful tricolor adventure and see you soon.

Griezmann - Atletico's s all-time record scorer - started with France in 2014 in a friendly match against the Netherlands then quickly established himself as a stalwart of the team coached by Didier Deschamps with his versatile talent and influence as both a goalscorer and an assist provider.

Only two players, Lloris and Lilian Thuram, have played more international games with France than Griezmann.

He is fourth on France's list of all-time scorers behind Giroud. Thierry Henry and Kylian Mbappe. He played a key role in helping France to a runner-up finish at the 2016 European Championship, where he was the player of the tournament, won the 2018 World Cup and the Nations League three years later with his French teammates.

"After 10 incredible years, marked by challenges, successes and unforgettable moments, it is time for me to turn a page and make way for the new generation," he said. "I was lucky enough to experience some incredible moments alongside some exceptional teammates. We have shared victories that will remain forever engraved in our memories.'

Deschamps praised Griezmann's collective spirit and lauded a "selflessness that is rare among attacking players." In addition to his attacking skills, Griezmann is also rated for his ability to defend and sense of sacrifice.

"Even if his club career is not over. Antoine was and will remain a monument to French football, one of the greatest players in its history," Deschamps said in a message relayed by the French soccer federation. "In addition to his 44 goals and 30 assists, his contribution to the results we have achieved over the last decade is immense.

After a disappointing showing at the European Championship earlier this year, where France lost in the semifinals, Griezmann had lost some of his influence in Deschamps' team. His final appearance in the France kit was in September in a 2-0 win over Belgium in a Nations League match when he came on as a late substitute.

Although Griezmann has admitted he struggled at the Euros, he was expected to keep on playing with France until the 2026 World

In his retirement message, Griezmann thanked Deschamps for his support over the last decade despite the coach's decision to make Mbappe France captain ahead of him last year following Lloris' retirement. Griezmann had previously said Deschamps' snub had been difficult to

"It has often been said that Antoine was my darling," Deschamps said. "We had indeed forged a very strong relationship, which will remain intact. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for everything, my

Griezmann didn't say how long he'll continue with his club career. His contract with Atletico runs until



In this file photo, France's Antoine Griezmann kisses the trophy after the final match between France and Croatia at the 2018 soccer World Cup in the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow, Russia. (AP)

#### **Talleres beat River Plate to keep pressure on leader**

# Fortaleza keeps Brazilian Serie A title hopes alive

BUENOS AIRES, Sept 30, (Xinhua): Federico Girotti scored against his former club as Talleres Cordoba showed their title credentials with a 1-0 away win over River Plate in Argentina's Primera Division on Sunday.

The visitors took the lead in the 12th minute after Paulo Diaz lost his footing as he received Marcos Acuna's back-pass.

Girotti pounced on the loose ball and expertly rounded goalkeeper Franco Armani before slotting his shot into an empty net.

The result at Estadio Monumental leaves Talleres second in the 28-team Primera Division standings with 30 points from 16 outings, three points behind Velez Sarsfield. River Plate are seventh, six points further back.

"It's always special to come here," Girotti, who played for River Plate from 2018 to 2022, told reporters after

"I started my career at River Plate and I know how hard it is to win here. Today, I was able to score the winning goal, which is a nice feeling. I apologize to everyone at River Plate.' In other Primera Division fixtures on Sunday, Central Cordoba won 2-1 at home to Barracas Central and hosts Sarmiento prevailed 1-0 against Union

Midfielder Hercules struck a firsthalf winner as Fortaleza kept their title hopes alive with a 1-0 home victory over Cuiaba in Brazil's Serie A championship on Sunday.

Hercules put his side ahead on the stroke of halftime by volleying home from the edge of the six-yard box after latching onto a bungled defensive

The hosts defended solidly thereafter to secure their 16th win of the cam-

paign at Estadio Castelao. "The players can be proud of themselves because every time we receive a blow we react positively," Fortaleza manager Juan Vojvoda told a postmatch news conference.

"We have shown great resilience this season and what impresses me is not just the number of points we have accumulated but the way we have carried ourselves." The result leaves Fortaleza third in the 20-team standings with 55 points from 28 outings, two points behind leaders Botafogo.

In other Brazilian top-flight fixtures on Sunday, Juventude drew 1-1 at home to Atletico Mineiro, Sao Paulo won 3-1 at home to Corinthians, Atletico Goianiense secured a 1-0 home win over Fluminense, Vasco da Gama drew 1-1 at Cruzeiro, Internacional prevailed 3-1 at home to Vitoria, Bahia won 1-0 at home to Criciuma and Flamengo clinched a 1-0 home victory over Athletico Paranaense.

#### India's Singh, Lele capture titles at Kampala Open game with good rallies, drops, drive and occasional shots. "I am happy to come to Uganda and emerge champions in KAMPALA, Sept 30, (Xinhua): Two players from India

came top at the Kampala International Badminton Open 2024 at the Lugogo Indoor Stadium in Kampala. The world's 210th ranked player Manraj Singh was the

men's singles champion after he defeated Callum Smith from Scotland 21-10, 21-18 in a match that lasted 29 minutes. Singh, who looked very composed, played a balanced

Gold medalists Guo Xinwa (R)/Chen Fanghui of China attend the awarding ceremony after the mixed doubles final between Guo Xinwa/Chen Fanghui of China and Dejan Ferdinansyah/Gloria Emanuelle Widjaja of Indonesia at Macao Open Badminton 2024 in Macao, south China. (Xinhua)

Lele came out top after stopping Sreeyuktha Sreejith Parol from UAE 21-8, 21-8. It was a sweet win for the 280th world ranked player who defeated Parol, a player ranked above her Malaysia's pair of Ashraf Daniel Zakaria and Ariffin Nazri Zakaria struggled to defeat the Indian brothers Viplave

the men's singles. This is very important because I have now

accumulated points which will help me improve in the Inter-

In the women's singles final, another Indian player Shreya

national ranking," Singh said after the match.

Kuvale and Viraj Kuvale 26-24, 21-18 in a final that lasted

Zakaria was again a winner when he partnerned Lim Xuan to beat the Azerbaijan pair of Agil Gabilov and Era Maftuha 21-18, 21-17 in the mixed doubles final.

The Ugandan pair of Fadilah Shamika Mohamed Rafi and Tracy Naluwooza could only manage to win silver medals when they lost 21-5, 21-11 to Gayatri Rawat and Mansa Rawat (India) in the lop-sided women's doubles final.

Simon Mugabi, the Chief Executive Officer of the Uganda Badminton Association (UBA) thanked all the players who managed to grace the tournament which is sanctioned by the Badminton World Federation (BWF). "We are always very grateful when we have several foreign players coming to Uganda to play in our different tournaments because it also helps our local players improve," added Mugabi.

Australia's Steven Smith bats during the fifth one day international match at the Seat Unique Stadium, Bristol, England. (AP)

# **Australia clinches ODI series**

Rain arrives too late for England

BRISTOL, England, Sept 30, (AP): The rain arrived too late for England as Australia won the deciding fifth oneday international to clinch the series 3-2.

Australia finished on 165-2 in 20.4 overs, appearing to be comfortably on track to reaching the original winning target of 310 before rain stopped play at Bristol's County Ground. No further play was possible and Australia won by 49 runs under the DLS method which sets revised targets for interrupted cricket matches.

Australia struggled with injuries and illness during the series, and fielded a different starting lineup in each game and a stand-in captain - Steve Smith - in the decider when Mitch Marsh withdrew because of soreness. The teams entered the game tied at 2-2 and the match would have been abandoned as a no-result, with the series ending 2-2, if Australia had not batted for 20 overs - the minimum for a win to be declared.

England could have stretched out the innings further had it not bowled four overs of spin but Harry Brook insisted his overriding ambition was on making inroads into the batting of Australia. Brook saw the positives from an entertaining series

Australia raced to 103-1 after only 10 overs, losing Travis Head to Brydon Carse for 31. Matthew Short's 58 off 30 balls got Australia ahead of the run rate and, despite apparent stalling tactics from England as the 20-over mark hovered into view, Australia eased to the series win.

Steve Smith was 36 not out, with Josh Inglis undefeated on 28 when stumps was called. Ben Duckett earlier hit 107 in 91 balls and Brook contributed a 52-ball 72 with seven sixes in England's 309 all out in 49.2 overs after losing the toss and

England was on course for a huge total before Brook holed out to Adam Zampa, after hitting him for five sixes, sparking a collapse from 202-2 in the 25th over. Liam Livingstone, who launched a brutal onslaught against Australia in England's 186-run win in the fourth ODI at Lord's, was this time caught behind off Zampa for a three-ball duck. Duckett was one of four wickets to fall to Head, the fifth pinner Australia used, on a wearing pitch. Head took 4-28 in 6.2 overs, and Aaron Hardie, Zampa and Glenn Maxwell took two wickets each.

Australia, the World Cup champion in the 50-over format, had a 14-game winning streak ended when England won the third game of this series to keep it alive.

# Pakistan captain Masood hopes to capitalize on home advantage

KARACHI, Pakistan, Sept 30, (AP): Struggling Pakistan captain Shan Masood feels the test team has an opportunity to capitalize on home advantage against strong England and end its long drought of 10 winless home matches.

England, led by Ben Stokes, will arrive on Wednesday for back-toback test matches at Multan, starting next week. Rawalpindi will host the third test from Oct. 24-28.

"We all have a huge opportunity to turn this around against England and hopefully we can take a good start in Multan," Masood told reporters in southern port city of Karachi on Monday. "We're all very excited and hope we get memorable results against Eng-

Pakistan's long winless home streak includes a 3-0 whitewash at the hands of England when it last toured to the country in 2022.

Masood's performances - both as a top-order batter and captain - are also under the scanner after suffering five successive losses since being elevated to test skipper last year.

Under his captaincy, Pakistan lost 3-0 in Australia and last month suffered a shocking 2-0 defeat against Bangladesh at home. Pakistan's last home test win came against South Africa in early 2021. Since then it has lost to England, Australia and Bangladesh, while drawing against New Zealand.

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"It's not acceptable for Pakistan to not win a home test for that long and we accept the responsibility for that," Masood said. "The players are hurt, we're all hurt. As a cricketing nation, as people that follow cricket, whether that's the media, whether that's the fans, whether that's the cricketers themselves and the cricket board, everyone's hurt right now."

The selection committee, which also includes Masood and red-ball head coach Jason Gillespie, has kept faith in the same team which had a woeful series against Bangladesh with only 37-year-old left-arm spinner Noman Ali getting recalled in the 15-member squad.

Pakistan's batting woes at the top had let the team down against Bangladesh with Babar Azam and Masood failing to convert good starts, while opening batter Abdullah Shafique also struggled upfront.

Left-handed young opener Saim Ayub showed occasional brilliance but was guilty of throwing away his wicket after scoring two half centuries against Bangladesh.



Australia's Josh Inglis in action during the fifth one day international match between England and Australia, at the Seat Unique Stadium, Bristol, Eng-

## 'He is very straightforward'

# Arteta talks up Enrique's 'unbelievable power' as Arsenal hosts PSG

LONDON, Sept 30, (AP): Days after professing his "love" and "respect" for Pep Guardiola, Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta has spoken in an equally effusive manner about another influential Spanish coach he will face in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Luis Enrique takes his Paris Saint-Germain team to Emirates Stadium for the most high-profile fixture in the second round of games in the newlook competition.

Arteta and Enrique go way back, having been together at Barcelona in the late 1990s and early 2000s when Arteta was starting out his professional career and Enrique was coming toward the end of his.

Arteta said he "learnt a lot of things" from Enrique as a player and now as a coach, saying Monday his compatriot "brings a smile on my face." "I am a huge admirer of him," Arteta said. "I remember his personality, huge character, huge energy, very supportive of his young players. What I love about him is that wherever he has been, as a player or as a manager, his fingerprints are all over place. You can see it's his team. You can see PSG is his team.



PSG's head coach Luis Enrique gives instructions during the Champions League opening phase soc-cer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Girona at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris, France. (AP)

"He has this unbelievable power ... Then there's his approach to life, his profession - it's something to really look at and I learnt a lot of things

from him." Arteta spent much of last week talking about Guardiola and Manchester City amid the fallout from Arsenal's feisty 2-2 draw at the Premier League champions that appears to have ignited a rivalry between the teams.

He has long been viewed as a protégé of Guardiola, yet it seems that Enrique has been an influence, too.

"I love his honesty - he is very straightforward, he looks you in the eyes and tells you what he thinks," Arteta said. "I think in the end, players appreciate that." Arteta described PSG, where he enjoyed a spell on loan in 2000-01 alongside players like Ronaldinho and Nicolas Anelka, as a team "probably at the highest level you can find in European football." Enrique's side leads the French league with five wins and a draw from the opening six games of its title defense and began the Champions League with a 1-0 win over Girona albeit courtesy of a 90th-minute own-

Arsenal started with a 0-0 draw at

Atalanta. Arteta said Arsenal will check on the fitness of fullbacks Ben White and Riccardo Calafiori on Monday.



Arsenal's Raheem Sterling, right, challenges for the ball with Leicester's James Justin during the English Premier League soccer match between Arsenal and Leicester City at the Emirates Stadium in London. (AP)

#### Szczesny closes in

# Big names back for Barca for vital Champions League tie



Barcelona's Ferran Torres fights for the ball against Osasuna's Juan Cruz during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Osasuna and Barcelona at El Sadar stadium in Pamplona, Spain. (AP)

# Flamengo fires ex-Brazil coach Tite

RIO DE JANEIRO, Sept 30, (AP): Former Brazil coach Tite was fired on Monday by Flamengo, his first job after taking the national team to the past two World Cups. His replacement for the rest of the year will be former Atletico Madrid defender Filipe Luis, a multi-champion at the Rio de Janeiro club and coach of one of its youth divi-

Flamengo announced the move in a statement, less than a day after its 1-0 home win over Athletico Paranaense in the Brazilian league. Tite's contract

ran until the end of the year. Last week, Flamengo was knocked out by Uruguay's Penarol in the quarterfinals of the Copa Libertadores. It is currently fourth in the Brazilian league with 48 points in 27 matches, 11 points behind leader Botafogo.

Flamengo will face Corinthians in the semifinals of the Brazilian Cup on Wednesday, in a tournament that provides its high spending squad a last chance to win a major trophy this year. MADRID, Sept 30, (Xinhua): FC Barcelona have a vital Champions League tie at home to Swiss side, Young Boys on Tuesday as they look to kickstart its European campaign and put a bad weekend behind it.

Barca coach Hansi Flick rested players such as Lamine Yamal, Inigo Martinez and Raphinha away to Osasuna on Saturday night and saw how a team with a high percentage of B-teamers was outmuscled by Osasuna in a 4-2 defeat to emphatically end their 100 percent start to the campaign.

Yamal, Martinez and Raphinha will all return to the starting 11 on Tuesday when Young Boys visit Montjuic, to give the lineup a more familiar look.

Both sides lost their opening game in the new-look Champions League, with Barcelona going down 2-1 in Monaco, while its rival was beaten 3-0 at home to Aston Villa.

Gavi, Andreas Christensen, Ronald Araujo and Marc Andre Ter Stegen are all out for Barca, while Eric Garcia is suspended after the red card he saw in the opening minutes in Monaco, that was so costly to Barcelona's hopes.

Meanwhile Inaki Pena continues in goal as he covers for Ter Stegen, who is out for the season after having a knee operation last week.

It increasingly looks as if Wojciech Szczesny will be tempted out of retirement to provide cover for Ter Stegen, but after hanging up his gloves after the European Championships, the former Arsenal, Roma and Juventus goalkeeper, will need time to get to match

Flick will face a selection dilemma when the Polish international is fully fit, as making him first choice would effectively signal to Pena that the club doesn't think he is good enough to play on a regular basis, while Szczesny is unlikely to be happy to spend his time warming the subs' bench.

With only the top eight of the 32 sides in the Champions League assured a place in the knockout stages, there isn't a lot of room for error and Barca need to win on Tuesday to help put Saturday's disappointment behind

Relief might have come at the right time for two-time German Cup winner

Following weeks of drought coming along with a series of goalless draws in the national league, the side of head coach Marco Rose enjoyed their striker's goals festival taking the East-German club to a convincing 4-0 over

Ahead of the UEFA Champions League encounter on home soil against Italian giant Juve this Wednesday evening, RB's attackers such as Dutch international Xavi Simons, Belgian international Lois Openda, and Slovenian international Benjamin Sesko gained desperately needed confidence. Only eight scored goals in five

league encounters following the narrow 2-1 defeat against Atletico in the Champions League seemed to rest like a dark shadow over the team's pro-

"The boys must get rid of that heavy burden on their shoulders. I hope, the Augsburg game is encouraging them

to continue," Rose said.

While having secured the club's Champions League participation through their goal supply in the previous season (46 of 77), easiness seems lost to some extent.

Following an energy-taking 2024 UEFA Euro tournament, a late preparation start for the club season seemed to collide with high expectations. For a reason, Leipzig was always mentioned when fans and pundits talked about possible title challengers for reigning German cuuhampions Leverkusen.



Al-Hilal players preparing for their match against Al-Shorta

# Al Hilal seeks back-to-back wins in AFC Elite Champions League

RIYADH, Sept 30: Al Hilal continues its campaign in the 2024-2025 AFC Elite Champions League as it hosts Iraq's Al-Shorta today in the second round of the tournament's newly introduced format.

After defeating Qatar's Al-Rayyan 3-1 in the previous round, Al Hilal is aiming for its first home win of the season. Both teams are part of the West Group, consisting of 12 teams, each playing four home and four away matches, with the top eight teams advancing to the round of 16.

In its opening round, Al Hilal impressed with a 3-1 victory over Al-Rayyan in Qatar, with standout performances, especially from Portuguese star João Cancelo.

The team's recent training session saw the return of midfielder Rúben Neves, who has recovered from a muscle injury. Neves, a crucial figure in Al Hilal's midfield since his 2023 move from Wolverhampton Wanderers, missed recent victories over Al-Bukayriyah and Al-Khulud due to his injury but are now fit to face Al-Shorta.

Meanwhile, Al Hilal defenders Ali Al-Bulaihi and Hassan Tambakti, both of whom sustained injuries in the match against Al-Khulud, are not expected to miss significant time. Al-Bulaihi was substituted at halftime due to a knee issue, and Tambakti left in the 74th minute after a shoulder injury. However, Saudi reports suggest their injuries are not serious, with Portuguese coach Jorge Jesus managing their fitness for upcoming

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Napoli's Khvicha Kvarat-skhelia, top, and Monza's Armando Izzo fight for the ball during the Italian Serie A soccer match between Napoli and Monza at the Diego Armando Maradona Stadium in Naples, Italy. (AP)

# borts

Al-Felakawi calls for improved qualifying system

# **Kuwait U-20 Asian Cup journey ends with UAE stalemate**

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 30: Kuwait's U-20 team secured third place in Group Three after a goalless draw against the UAE in its final match of the Asian Cup qualifiers, hosted at Abdullah Al-Khalifa Stadium, Al-Yarmouk Club.

Assistant coach Al-Felakawi acknowledged the players' visible physical fatigue, particularly in the latter stages of the tourna-

He highlighted that the intense schedule and the strength of their opponents hindered Kuwait's chances of qualifying for the finals, falling short of the team's ambitions.

Al-Felakawi called on the Asian Football Confederation to reconsider the current qualification system, noting that the existing format could result in unfair outcomes for certain teams.

He emphasized the potential of the Kuwaiti U-20 team, urging for better care and support to prepare it for future competitions, including training camps and friendly matches.

He concluded by stressing the importance of nurturing this talented squad, which boasts strong individual players across all positions and has the capability to make a significant impact in future tournaments.

South Korea topped the group with four consecutive wins, while the UAE finished second with seven points, edging Kuwait on goal difference.

Lebanon placed fourth with

three points, and Northern Mariana Islands ended the qualifiers with zero points.

According to the tournament rules, the top team from each of the ten groups qualifies, along with the five best second-placed teams. The teams qualifying for the 2025 finals are Qatar, Jordan, Syria, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Australia, North Korea. Indonesia, Yemen, Iran, Iraq, Thailand, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, with China automatically qualifying as the host nation.



Al-Felkawi gives instructions to a Kuwaiti player.

# Atletico, Real share heated derby spoils



Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior in action in front of Atletico Madrid's Rodrigo De Paul during the La Liga soccer match between Atletico Madrid and Real Madrid at the Metropolitano stadium in

# Match interrupted after objects thrown on the field

MADRID, Sept 30, (AP): **Angel Correa scored in** stoppage time and Atletico Madrid drew 1-1 with Real Madrid in a tense Spanish league derby that was interrupted for more than 15 minutes in the second half after Atletico fans threw objects onto the field.

Correa equalized for Atletico in a breakaway five minutes into added time with a goal that was initially disallowed for offside but was awarded after video review. Éder Militão had given Madrid the lead in the 64th.

The draw left Madrid in second place, three points behind leader Barcelona, which lost 4-2 to Osasuna to end its seven-game winning streak. Atletico was third, two points behind Madrid after eight rounds

"I always think positively," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "We moved closer to the leader and we have been playing well."

The derby was interrupted shortly after Madrid's goal at the Metropolitano, with the referee sending the players to the locker rooms after Atletico fans kept throwing objects onto the field.

Militão had celebrated near the sideline in front of Atletico fans, and Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois was seen appearing to provoke Atletico fans after Militão scored.

"What the fans did wasn't right but we are not helping when we provoke them," Atletico coach Diego Simeone said. "I'm not justifying what the fans did, but we need to help as well." It was Courtois who alerted the referee about the objects - including lighters -

being thrown onto the field near him. Atletico defender José María Giménez and midfielder Koke Resurrección went to talk to the fans in the section behind Courtois' goal. That section is where usually the more radical Atletico supporters are located. Atletico coach Diego Simeone also asked several times for the fans to behave.

A message over the stadium loudspeakers said the match was being interrupted for 15 minutes, and that it would be suspended if the problem

The interruption came a day after the Spanish league said it would ask police to act against the promoters of a social media campaign which the league said was aimed at promoting racist acts against Madrid star Vinícius Júnior at the derby.

The social media campaign was based on a hashtag encouraging Atletico fans to wear face masks, apparently to make it more difficult for authorities to identify individuals who participate in racist chants or insults.

Social media videos showed Atletico fans before the match chanting "Vinícius is different."

Vinícius occasionally clashed with Atletico players at the Metropolitano. Atletico's Marcos Llorente was sent off in stoppage time.

Fourth-place 10-man Athletic Bilbao conceded a stoppage-time equalizer in a 1-1 draw with Sevilla at home, while Giovani Lo Celso scored an 85thminute goal in Real Betis' 1-0 home win over Espanyol. Iago Aspas got an 81st-minute equalizer for Celta Vigo in a 1-1 draw against visiting Girona.

### **Kuwait prepares for WC** qualifiers with **Dubai training camp**

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

DUBAI, Sept 30: Kuwait kicked off its first training session at the Police Officers Club Stadium in Dubai, UAE, marking the beginning of its external training camp. The team is preparing for its upcoming matches against Oman and Palestine, scheduled for October 10 and 15 in Muscat and Doha, respectively. These matches are part of the third and fourth rounds of Group Two qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup, set to be hosted by the United States, Mexico, and Canada.

Coach Juan Pizzi has announced the national team roster for these two critical fixtures. The squad includes Suleiman Abdul Ghafoor, Saud Al-Hoshan, Abdulrahman Al-Fadhli, Mishari Ghannam, Khaled Sabah, Rashid Al-Dosari, Khaled Ibrahim, Sami Al-Sanea, Sultan Al-Enezi, Hamad Harbi, Reda Hani, Hussein Ashkanani, Mahdi Dashti, Moaz Al-Aseema, Abdul Mohsen Al-Turkmani, Faisal Zayed, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Yousef Nasser, Salman Al-Awadhi, Mohammed Daham, Eid Al-Rashidi, and Yousef Majed.

Notable in the squad is the return of goalkeeper Saud Al-Hoshan, alongside the inclusion amon, as well as the return of Mohammed Daham and Mishari Ghannam, both of whom missed the previous game against Jor-

Meanwhile, Oman's coach Rashid Jaber has also revealed his squad for the matches against Kuwait and Jordan. His roster features Ibrahim Al-Mukhaini, Faiz Al-Rashidi, Ibrahim Al-Rajhi, Mohammed Al-Musalmi. Ahmed Al-Khamis, Mohammed Ramadan, Khaled Al-Buraiki, Ghanem Al-Habshi, Ali Al-Busaidi, Ahmed Al-Kaabi, Amjad Al-Harthi, Abdul Aziz Al-Shamousi, Mulham Al-Sunaidi, Harb Al-Saadi, Abdullah Fawaz, Arshad Al-Alawi, Sultan Al-Marzouq, Jameel Al-Yahmadi, Yazid Al-Maashani, Abdul Rahman Al-Mishfri, Zaher Al-Aghbari, Ahmed Al-Riyami, Nasser Al-Rawahi, Salah Al-Yahyaei, Omar Al-Maliki, Mohsen Al-Ghassani, Essam Al-Subhi, and Hatem Al-Rushdi.

### Ravichandran Ashwin shines

# India sets new benchmark against Bangladesh in rain-hit test



India's Ravichandran Ashwin bowls a delivery on the fourth day of the second cricket test match between Bangladesh and India in Kanpur, India. (AP)

KANPUR, India, Sept 30, (AP): India launched a calculated assault on Bangladesh on day four of the rain-interrupted second test, bringing the game to life in an abrupt change of events.

The host recorded the highest run-rate ever for a test innings by clocking 200-plus runs - 8.22 per over - to finish with 285-9 declared in 34.4 overs. This was after Bangladesh was bowled out for 233 runs in 74.2 overs in its first innings.

Bangladesh then went down to 26-2 in its second innings with off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin picking 2-14 in five overs. At stumps, the Tigers were trailing by 26 runs.

Day four finished with a staggering 437 runs and 18 wickets across 85 overs. Play resumed after the past two days were abandoned without a ball bowled due to rain and a wet outfield and Mominul Haque's 107 not out, his 13th test hundred, helped Bangladesh reach 205-6 at lunch.

In the second session, India rounded off Bangladesh's lower order quickly, picking the last four wickets for 28 runs. Mominul stayed unbeaten after facing 194 deliveries, hitting 17 fours and a six. Jasprit Bumrah picked up two wickets - Mehidy Hasan Miraz was out caught for 20, while Taijul Islam (5) was bowled. The lead Indian pacer finished with 3-50.

India's reply sped off from the start and blitzed Bangladesh's bowling, recording the fastest 50 in tests off only 18 deliveries.

Openers Yashasvi Jaiswal scored 30 off 13 balls and Rohit Sharma hit 19 off six balls to liven up the game. They put on 55 runs off only 23 balls for the first wicket, before Sharma fell for 23 off 11 balls. Jaiswal carried on to score 72 off 51 balls, hitting 12 fours and two sixes, recording the fourth fastest Indian half-century in tests off only 31 balls.

The other Indian batters followed suit as India hunted for an improbable result in the game in light of its potential World Test Championship 2025 final qualification.

Shubman Gill scored 39 off 36 balls, with Rishabh Pant - promoted to number four - the sole top-order failure with nine runs. Jaiswal and Gill added 72 off 63 balls, notching up the fastest 100 in tests off only 10.1 overs. And there was more to come despite losing Jaiswal, Gill and Pant in the span of five overs, down to

Virat Kohli and Lokesh Rahul then came together to inflict further damage to Bangladesh. They put on 87 off 59 balls for the fifth wicket as India regained momentum in its first innings.

Kohli scored 47 off 35 balls, including four fours and a six, while Rahul scored 68 off 43 balls, hitting two sixes and seven fours. Bangladesh's bowlers went for plenty in a short span of time, with Mehidy Hasan the most successful bowler (4-41) going at only 6.1 runs per over.



Saud Al-Hoshan

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