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Photo by Samer Shiker

The Ministry of Defense conducts a solemn military ceremony at Sulaybikhat Cemetery for the burial of Flight Lieutenant Mohammad Mahmoud Abdul Rasoul.

## Kuwait mourns ... martyred pilot laid to rest

# Amir offers condolences to family of Air Force pilot

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a cable of condolences to the family of deceased Kuwait Air Force pilot Flight Lieutenant Mohammad Mahmoud Abdul Rasoul who recently died in a crash while on a training flight north of the country.

His Highness the Amir wished mercy on the soul of the deceased pilot and solace for the family of Abdul Rasoul.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also extended his condolences, sharing his deepest sympathy with the fam-

ily and praying for Allah's mercy upon the pilot's soul.

Similarly, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolence to the family, expressing profound sorrow and sympathy for their loss.

The Ministry of Defense on Thursday afternoon held a solemn military ceremony at Sulaybikhat Cemetery to bury the body of Flight Lieutenant Mohammad Mahmoud Abdul Rasoul, who was martyred when his F-18 plane crashed in the north of Kuwait two days ago.

The burial ceremony was held in the presence of the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense

Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mishal, Chief of Staff of Kuwait Army Lieutenant General (Staff) Bandar Al-Muzain, senior military leaders and a large number of mourners.

The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef conveyed his condolences to the family of the martyr, stating, "It is good luck for Kuwait that His Highness the Amir of the country is a military man, and knows the value of the military man and holds him in high regard.

May Almighty Allah grant you and all of us solace in the loss of this son of Kuwait. It is a tremendous honor to die as a martyr, and we offer this sacrifice under the flag of Kuwait, which is the most precious thing we offer."

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### Local

Mass resignations at MoE lead to chaos, staff deficit — See Page 2

### Business

Boursa Kuwait general index climbs slightly by 2.35 points — See Page 8

### Health



Al Mutawa embarks on a journey to transform lives through nutrition — See Page 12

### NewsWatch

**KUWAIT CITY:** Kuwait Oil Company announced on Wednesday that its ventures are floated according to accredited contractual procedures and the rules of Kuwait's program for rehabilitating the environment.

The KOC on its official X account described as "inaccurate" a report published by a foreign journal, claiming that five million tons of contaminated soil had been discovered and addressed the KOC treatment procedures. (KUNA)

**WASHINGTON:** The Kuwaiti embassy in Washington on Wednesday urged Kuwaiti citizens in the south of the USA to take precautions to cope with impact of the tropical hurricane Milton forecast to making landing in Florida Wednesday evening.

The diplomatic mission, in a statement, emphasized that the nationals heed the instructions given by the local authorities to stay safe in the face of the coming storm.

It urged the nationals to contact it and the consulates if necessary on the following phone numbers:

- Washington: 0012022620758
- The general consulate in Los Angeles: 0013102793644
- The consulate in New York: 0019172426688
- The cultural office in Washington: 0012023642106
- The health office in Washington: 0012023202415. (KUNA)

— See Also Page 6

**KUWAIT CITY:** Kuwait's Finance Minister and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Dr. Nora Al-Fassam held talks on Thursday with her visiting Turkish counterpart Mehmet Simsek, focusing on efforts to ratchet up bilateral relations.

Citing a raft of economic and investment deals signed by Kuwait and Ankara, these agreements aim to propel ties to greater levels, ahead of a joint Arab-Turkish economic forum in the Turkish city of Istanbul next week, said a finance ministry statement. (KUNA)

# Minister calls for academic fix to meet labor market demands

Dr Al-Jalal commends PAAET's innovation in programs



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

Kuwait City skyline on a hot Thursday afternoon. Temperatures reached up to 39°C with light to moderate winds along the coast.

## Kuwait braces for hot, humid weekend with chance of fog

The Meteorological Department forecasts generally hot weather during the weekend, with mild temperatures at night. Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi, the department's director, stated that Kuwait is under the influence of a weak low-pressure system, bringing a hot and relatively humid air mass with southeasterly to variable winds at light to moderate speeds. Visibility may be reduced in some areas due to fog, particularly in the evening and early morning.

On Thursday, daytime weather is expected to be

hot and humid along coastal areas, with winds between 8 and 26 kilometers per hour, and temperatures ranging from 37 to 39 degrees Celsius. The sea is forecast to be calm to moderate, with waves between 1 and 3 feet. Nighttime temperatures will cool to between 21 and 24 degrees Celsius, with a chance of light fog.

Friday will see similar conditions, with hot and humid weather, especially near the coast, and winds up to 30 kilometers per hour. Daytime highs are

forecasted between 37 and 40 degrees Celsius. Fog is again expected at night, with temperatures dipping to between 25 and 28 degrees Celsius.

Saturday's forecast calls for continued hot and humid weather, with some scattered clouds and temperatures between 37 and 39 degrees Celsius. Light to moderate winds will prevail, while the night will be warm with temperatures between 23 and 25 degrees Celsius, and a chance of fog reducing visibility in some areas. (KUNA)

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10:** The Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and Acting Minister of Education Prof. Dr. Nader Al-Jalal affirmed the importance of developing scientific programs and academic specializations in educational institutions to align with labor market needs.

The minister said this during his visit to the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) where he was welcomed by its Director General Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam, along with his deputies, deans of applied colleges and training institutes, deans of specific deanships, and several department directors. The visit by the minister was aimed to assess progress on work, development plans, and new programs in PAAET.

He highlighted the need for ongoing collaboration and strengthening of relationships with various state institutions to benefit Kuwaiti youth.

Dr. Al-Jalal explained that PAAET serves as an important institution for producing technically and professionally qualified national talent.

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## Kuwait expands housing projects, opens doors to foreign developers

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10, (KUNA):** Kuwait is currently undertaking several large-scale housing projects aimed at addressing the growing demand for residential units, and it includes Al-Mutlaa city, South Saad Al-Abdullah City, and South Sabah Al-Ahmad City.

Those major projects were set to provide housing for thousands of citizens and offer significant opportunities for foreign companies to contribute, particularly in the fields of infrastructure and construction.

Al-Mutlaa City is one of three major housing projects currently being executed by the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), with a projected population of 400,000, the pace of in-

frastructure completion was accelerating in two other major projects: South Saad Al-Abdullah City and South Sabah Al-Ahmad City.

In September, the PAHW signed a contract to install electrical substations in the South Sabah Al-Ahmad housing project, worth KD 44 million (approximately USD 145 million), this was the first contract for main substations in the city.

PAHW also signed an infrastructure contract for 6,568 housing units in South Sabah Al-Ahmad City project with an international company, totaling about KD 109 million (approximately USD 329.7 million).

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## Real estate experts call for unified authority

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10:** As the Ministry of Finance evaluates the potential merger of various governmental bodies and sectors as part of its initiative to streamline government operations, real estate experts and specialists are advocating for the consolidation of all real estate-related sectors spread across several ministries.

They suggest creating a unified legal entity to oversee the real estate sector, which is recognized as the second most crucial contributor to Kuwait's GDP after oil.

This new entity would encompass departments from the ministries of Commerce, Justice, Kuwait Municipality, the Public Authority for Housing Welfare, and the General Fire Force.

During discussions with Al-Seyassah newspaper, industry experts emphasized the need for this entity to facilitate operations for real estate specialists.

While there was some debate regarding whether the entity should be classified as an "authority" or "administration," and whether it should be independent or governmental, the consensus underscored the urgency of establishing a central body to combat

bureaucracy and inefficiencies in decision-making, streamline the processes of buying, selling, and renting properties, and address challenges facing the real estate market.

Real estate expert Abdul Rahman Al-Hamoud noted the government's ongoing efforts to merge relevant sectors to eliminate administrative redundancy.

He pointed out that past experiences have highlighted the ineffectiveness of certain bodies, which often become preoccupied with board formation rather than market regulation.

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Leadership shines as Energy Year honors her work

## KNPC CEO Al-Khatib named Personality of the Year

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10, (KUNA):** The Energy Year journal published in London has chosen the CEO of the Kuwait National Petroleum Company Wadha Al-Khatib as Personality of the Year (2024).

The KNPC said in a statement on Thursday that Al-Khatib, who received the certificate at a ceremony held in Kuwait, was honored for her unique career experience as a distinguished Kuwaiti woman in the field of oil and gas, noting that she has accumulated more than 30 years of experience in the field.

Al-Khatib, who had occupied several posts in the company, was appointed the CEO in November 2022 -- to be the first woman to occupy this position in the KNPC history. She had been named the acting CEO at the Kuwait Integrated Petroleum



KUNA photo

CEO of the Kuwait National Petroleum Company Wadha Al-Khatib delivering a speech.

Industries Company (KIPIC) in April 2024, thus leading the national oil refining industry that features three refineries with an output estimated at 1.415 million barrels per day of oil

derivatives. The statement quoted Al-Khatib as saying that her winning of the certificate is an honoring for all personnel of the KNPC and KIPIC and in appreciation for their sincere work.

She added that her honoring also symbolizes success and policies of the Kuwaiti refining sector that strives to maintain its international status through the distinguished performance and staying abreast of the latest innovations in this industry.

The London-based journal publishes detailed reports about the energy sectors worldwide.

Last year, the KNPC won the "top environmental project" award, also granted by the same magazine for the environmentally friendly fuel venture, executed by the company.

## Prayer Timings

Fajr .....	04:27	Asr .....	14:55
Sunrise ..	05:45	Maghrib ..	17:24
Zohr .....	11:35	Isha .....	18:42

# Local

## Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Hot and relatively humid especially over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.

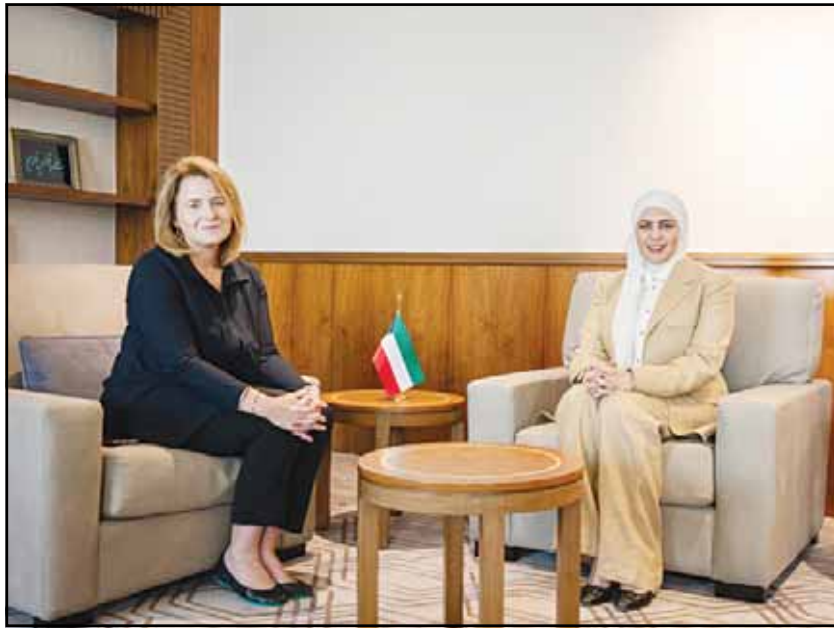
**By Night:** Rather hot to mild and relatively humid especially

## Weather

over coastal areas with light to moderate southeasterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h with a chance for fog forming over some areas.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	37	23

Kuwait Airport	37	22
Abdaly	38	21
Bubyan	34	21
Jahra	39	26
Failaka Island	35	20
Salmiyah	33	28
Ahmadi	37	20
Jal Aliyah	38	23



KUNA photo

Minister of Finance Noura Al-Fassam meets Microsoft Executive Vice President of the Global Public Sector, Angela Heise.

## Plan to digitize Ministry of Finance

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10, (KUNA): Minister of Finance, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment and the Acting Minister of Oil Dr. Nora Al-Fassam held talks on Wednesday with Microsoft Deputy CEO Angela Heise on plans to render the ministry a pioneering digital department. The ministry said in a statement that the Microsoft officer explored the conglomer-

ate's potentials to support the State of Kuwait in its efforts to accelerate digital transformation, beef up cyber security and the AI usage within its 2035 development strategy.

The two sides agreed on holding other meetings and publicizing success of the e-messaging system, recently overhauled with Microsoft high-tech and the AI applications.

## Kuwait, Azerbaijan mark 30 years of relations; boost eyed in trade

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: Azerbaijani Ambassador to Kuwait Emil Karimov affirmed that the relationship between the two countries is deeply rooted considering their strong cultural and religious ties, as well as their successful collaboration with international organizations, reports Al-Qabas daily.

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Kuwait and Azerbaijan, Karimov confirmed that "Kuwait always supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. New agreements will be signed soon to strengthen this cooperation. The high level of political relations between our countries, as well as opportunities to strengthen cooperation in the economy, energy and other fields, and

their geographical proximity, create favorable conditions for establishing closer ties."

He added that the Joint Committee for Cooperation between the governments of Azerbaijan and Kuwait, which was established on Feb 10, 2009, will hold its next meeting in Kuwait. "It is expected that new agreements for cooperation in various fields such as education, justice, agriculture, culture, sports and labor will be signed in this meeting."

He also revealed that more than 20,000 Kuwaitis visited Azerbaijan from January to September 2024.

He said the trade and investment ties between the two countries do not reflect the potential, hence, the need to increase the volume of trade exchange through the continuation of mutual visits at the commercial and business levels with the participation of Kuwaiti companies in large-scale reconstruction and construction works in the liberated territories.



Karimov



Al-Seyassah photo

Belgium's Ambassador to Kuwait, Christian Domes meets the Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi.

## Belgian envoy calls on Jahra governor

The Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi recently welcomed the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to Kuwait, Christian Domes, at the governorate's office headquarters, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the meeting, Al-Habashi engaged with his guest in friendly discussions that touched on the strong

bilateral relations between Kuwait and Belgium.

The conversation focused on the importance of enhancing these ties across various sectors and explored ways to further strengthen joint cooperation between the two nations, emphasizing the mutual benefits and common interests that both countries share.

## Iraq integration into GCC power grid to generate better business

## By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The CEO of the Gulf Electricity Interconnection Authority Eng. Ahmad Al-Ibrahim stated that the signing of the contract for the Gulf Electricity Network Interconnection Project with Iraq marks a major step towards fostering competitive electricity trade between the two parties.

During an interview held after the signing ceremony at the Gulf Electricity Interconnection Authority headquarters in Dammam, Eng. Al-Ibrahim explained that there are eight stations in the GCC countries that connect all countries through the electrical interconnection network. The Al-Zour Station in Kuwait will be replaced with the new Al-Wafra Station to strengthen connections with Kuwait and establish links to Iraq through the Al-Faw station in South Iraq.

The electrical interconnection network is a private network owned by the Electricity Interconnection Authority, span-

ning all GCC countries. The authority has planned several expansion projects, including direct connections with the Sultanate of Oman and expansions to the connection with the UAE.

The interconnection project with Iraq is expected to generate annual trade opportunities between \$300 million and \$400 million, delivering over four million megawatt-hours of energy each year. This initiative represents a significant breakthrough for the GCC in developing a competitive electricity market and supplying electricity to Iraq competitively.

Eng. Al-Ibrahim said, "This is just the first stage of expansion and interconnection with Iraq. The GCC's future vision includes reaching regional markets, with ongoing efforts to complete the interconnection between Saudi Arabia and Egypt within one to two years.

"All these projects will contribute to linking the regional electricity markets and establishing a regional electricity market that aligns with the visions of all GCC countries."

## Kuwaiti contributions highlighted

## KFAS participates in science, technology forum in Japan

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) actively participated in the 2024 Science and Technology in Society (STS) Forum, held from October 6 to 8 in Kyoto, Japan, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This prestigious international gathering brought together global leaders from science, industry, and academia to address pressing global challenges related to science and technology.

In a press release, KFAS highlighted the representation of "scientific progress" at the forum through its Director General, Dr. Amina Rajab Farhan, along with three promising young Kuwaiti researchers.

The researchers included Dr. Fawaz Al-Zaid from the Dasman Diabetes Institute, Dr. Dana Ma'arafi from the College of Medicine at Kuwait University, and Dr. Musa'ab Al-Rashed, Assistant Professor of Digitization and Future Factories at the College of Engineering and Computing at the American International University.

These researchers actively participated in key sessions focused on urgent global issues such as climate change, food and water security, and the advancements in artificial intelligence.



Al-Seyassah photo

Dr. Amina Farhan and Kuwaiti researchers in discussions at the forum.

The forum addressed a broad spectrum of topics, including energy, medicine, and sustainable education, aimed at fostering inclusive societies and tackling challenges posed by rapid population growth. A recurring theme was the critical need for enhanced cooperation among leaders across various sectors to confront these global problems.

Dr. Amina Rajab Farhan also took part in a special meeting on the side-

lines of the conference that brought together the heads of global funding institutions involved in science and technology.

This meeting sought to strengthen collaboration among funding agencies and explore strategies for financing scientific research and innovation to ensure a sustainable future.

Dr. Farhan, who also participated in the forum's main sessions, emphasized the importance of the event,

stating, "This forum is a unique opportunity to collaborate with our global counterparts to address humanity's biggest challenges, and we are eager to engage in discussions that promote scientific innovation."

KFAS expressed its commitment to making meaningful contributions to this significant global event and to helping shape future policies and strategies that will benefit societies worldwide.

# Mass resignations at MoE lead to chaos, staff deficit

Admin workers under pressure to meet deadline

## By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The Ministry of Education's administrative sector that is responsible for the supervision of termination of service has received approximately 2,500 retirement applications.**

According to educational sources, this influx of requests from educational, supervisory, and administrative bodies has placed a lot of pressure on the sector to review and finalize these applications. Meeting the one-month deadline for completing these procedures poses considerable challenges for staff involved in the process.

The high volume of retirement requests, from both supervisory and administrative personnel as well as teachers, puts a strain on those working in the administrative field. Each request must undergo several procedural steps, including verifying that all requirements are met and coordinating with the Public Institution for Social Security to ensure compliance with legal procedures.

The rising number of retirement requests poses challenges not only for processing retiree procedures but also for filling the vacancies created by these retirements.

With a significant number of employees leaving educational, administrative, and supervisory roles, the ministry faces added pressure to fill these vacant positions with qualified candidates to ensure the continuity of the educational process effectively.

To ensure retirees receive their benefits on time, administrative staff are diligently collaborating with the Public Institution for Social Security to expedite the retirement procedures. This reflects the ongoing efforts to reduce the time required to complete all necessary steps after a retirement request is submitted.

Moreover, the increasing number of retirees is putting huge pressure on employees in the departments that are responsible for overseeing retirement transactions, in addition to the challenges they face alongside their daily workloads.

These employees are tasked with managing a high volume of requests, which involve verifying data accuracy, following up necessary documentation, and ensuring compliance with all legal requirements to complete the retirement process.

To handle the growing workload, efforts are being made to streamline the documentation cycle, enhance departmental cooperation, and provide support to administrative staff.

The sources recommended that the ministry redistribute existing staff and conduct thorough interviews and assessments to select the best candidates for the open positions.

They stressed the need for a comprehensive plan to fill the vacancies, which should include expediting the hiring process and initiating training and development programs for new hires, adding that if these vacancies are not filled promptly, there could be a shortage of administrative and educational staff.

## 6 e-media outlets under probe for 'incorrect info'

## By Mohammad Al-Musleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The Assistant Undersecretary for Press, Publishing, and Publications Affairs at the Ministry of Information Lafi Al-Subaie revealed that six electronic media outlets have been referred to the Public Prosecution for publishing incorrect information about a decree to cancel the end-of-service bonus for retired officers.

In an interview with Al-Seyassah, Al-Subaie explained that these outlets violated article 17 of the electronic media regulation law, as they had hastily published inaccurate news without verifying the information from official sources.

He affirmed that the ministry will take legal action against any individuals or outlets that violate publishing laws.

Meanwhile, the Public Prosecution has summoned approximately 25 bloggers, including former MPs, for investigation this evening because they published false news, including claims that former MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri had been detained and prevented from entering the country.

According to informed sources, the bloggers were notified by the Ministry of Interior to appear before the Public Prosecution for publishing news that was not accurate, as Al-Muwaizri was neither detained nor prevented from entering Kuwait.

The Public Prosecution intends to conduct investigations with these bloggers and will subsequently issue a decision as deemed appropriate under the law.

## Other Voices

## Victim of red tape shenanigans

## By Ahmad alsarraf

Our previous governments were significantly influenced by what was posted and discussed on social media. While the absence of the National Assembly has temporarily reduced this impact, social media still holds considerable influence and importance.

It remains essential not only to pay attention to what is shared but, more importantly, to address the rumors that circulate online.

These rumors can jeopardize national or social security, especially regarding critical topics that concern the public -- issues like tax implementation, revoking citizenship, the mandatory biometric fingerprint, justifications for a third fingerprint system, rumors about salary increases or loan cancellations, and other matters citizens, especially the average person, eagerly seek news about.

Over time, these rumors, passed from one person to another, can begin to resemble truths that are difficult to refute.

Human nature tends to ignore ordinary or even good news, it rarely captures attention. Instead, it's the sensational stories -- revoked citizenships, news of executions, horrific crime details, canceled health insurance, new taxes, or the removal of government support -- that captivate people and elevate their adrenaline.

Such news spreads uncontrollably, and it's nearly impossible to track down, arrest, or prosecute those who initiate these rumors. What's required is an immediate response to quash these rumors before they take root and cause further disruption.

In every ministry and government agency, there exists a department known as the 'Public Relations Department'. Often, this department becomes a place where the undersecretary or minister sidelines individuals they wish to remove from more active roles.

As a result, it is frequently dormant

and ineffective. However, there are exceptions, such as the commendable work done by the Media Department in the Ministry of Interior, where the department's success stems from its proactive director, not merely from written directives.

In a circular issued in 2023 by the Council of Ministers, every government agency was instructed to activate the role of its media and public relations units.

They were also required to appoint an "official spokesperson" to monitor and address everything published in the media and on social platforms, particularly when it involved misinformation, abuse, or distortion of the agency's role.

The directive emphasized the need for swift, factual responses to prevent rumors from spreading and causing confusion or doubt.

Additionally, ministries and agencies were asked to assign representatives to serve as liaisons between the agency and the "Information Center," an entity many are likely unfamiliar with, to coordinate and follow up on related issues.

Despite the clear directive, very few government agencies took action. Only two or three agencies appointed official spokespersons, while the rest completely ignored the decision.

As for the appointment of liaison officers and official spokespersons for ministries and agencies under a minister's supervision -- intended to be completed within a week of the decision in November last year -- little or no action was taken.

Upon reviewing the website of the so-called "Government Communication Center," which operates under the Council of Ministers, there was little to ease my frustration. The reasons for this inaction are evident -- perhaps this center, too, has become yet another bureaucratic graveyard.

It is necessary to activate the role of these bodies, and give the official spokesperson for each government body his role and importance, to silence the voices that try to offend us as citizens and residents, and before that as a government and a state.

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

## Kuwait, India to boost solid ties

NEW DELHI, Oct 10, (KUNA): Ambassador of Kuwait to India Meshal Al-Shemali underlined the importance of taking India-Kuwait relationship to new heights after meeting Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Ambassador Al-Shemali said that during his meeting with Gujarat chief minister he discussed ways to deepen Kuwait-India relationship in areas of mutual interest especially food security, technology sector, information development and green energy.

The Ambassador stressed that there

was a long history of great momentum in Kuwait India relationship rooted in friendship and expanding cooperation.

Ambassador Al-Shemali participated in the cultural program being held in Ahmedabad in Gujarat between October 3 to 11 displaying various Indian cultural and arts events.

The Ambassador hailed the exchange in the field of arts and culture between the two countries rooted in history while he met Patel at his residence in Gandhinagar and underscored the key role arts and culture play in cementing relationship between the two friendly peoples.

# diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'When will we see our agricultural produce being sold in int'l market'

"THE Kuwaiti farmers are raising an important question, one that we echo with equal concern: when will we see Kuwaiti-grown fruits and vegetables in the markets of Gulf countries and beyond? As we stroll through our local cooperative societies, we are constantly surrounded by imported produce --fruits and vegetables from Arab and foreign countries fill the shelves," columnist **Yaqoub Youssef Al-Omar** wrote for *Al-Qabas* daily.



Yaqoub Al-Omar

"We see Egyptian strawberries, Lebanese cherries, Syrian apricots and oranges, Omani rosemary, Yemeni and Indian pomegranates, Jordanian tomatoes, Saudi figs, American and Chilean apples, and bananas from the Philippines and Somalia. And yet, the irony is that all of these varieties -- and more -- are grown right here on Kuwaiti soil. "One farmer proudly shared his success, explaining that his farm produces twelve different types of high-quality bananas. He even hosted the ambassador of a nation famous for its banana production, who was astonished by the remarkable quality of the fruit.

"The farmer pointed out that Kuwait's soil is rich in iron and potassium -- nutrients that are crucial for healthy plant growth. Given this abundance and fertile land, the question remains: why are Kuwaiti agricultural products not making their way into the Gulf markets and beyond?"

"Our farms produce such a surplus that during the tomato season, vast amounts go to waste because they cannot be sold.

"Another farmer enthusiastically described how his land yields nearly every fruit imaginable, attributing this success to the fertility of Kuwait's soil. "Yet, despite producing fruits and vegetables of superior quality, our farmers are not exporting their products. Why do we continue to import produce from abroad, often of lesser quality, when our own farms are capable of supplying more than what is consumed locally?"

"Shouldn't the government work closely with these farmers to help export their surplus produce, much like how Kuwaiti shrimp finds its way into restaurants across the United States?"

"Kuwaiti farmers are eager to see their produce reach international markets, but they face significant hurdles. "Domestically, they are forced to sell their crops at unfairly low prices to a single merchant who monopolizes their output.

"One farmer illustrated this problem, explaining that he sells a box of cucumbers for just 10 fils to this merchant, only to see it resold in cooperative societies for around 750 fils. The middleman profits immensely, while the farmer sees little in return for his hard work.

"Farmers are calling on the Ministry of Commerce to intervene by allowing them to sell their produce directly to cooperative societies, cutting out the exploitative middlemen.

"Such a change would not only help farmers earn a fairer price for their crops, but it would also stabilize prices for consumers, creating a more equitable system.

"Ultimately, we stand with Kuwaiti farmers in their plea for government support to export their high-quality products to international markets, just as Kuwaiti shrimp is exported.

"Imagine the pride citizens would feel seeing Kuwaiti cucumbers on the shelves of European supermarkets -- this is a vision well within reach, and one that deserves to be pursued.

"By supporting our farmers and facilitating access to broader markets, we can showcase the strength and quality of Kuwaiti agriculture on the global stage."

Also:

"The companies that were suspended by former Minister of Public Works, Jenan Boushehri, due to issues with road construction have now returned to work on new tenders. How did this happen? What changed? After her tenure

in the Municipal Council ended, Ms. Boushehri was appointed as an advisor to the Facilities Committee in the National Assembly," columnist **Yaqoub Ahmed Baqer** wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"During her tenure, she asked for my insights on key reforms that could be introduced to improve the Municipality Law, given my experience as a former Minister of Municipality.

"I made two critical proposals. "The first was to nullify any approval or signature by municipal employees, regardless of their rank, if the approval violated Municipal Council regulations or government decisions. This measure would prevent the passage of illegal transactions or projects that bypass legal frameworks.

"The second proposal was aimed at barring companies that had failed to properly complete their projects from participating in future tenders. This would ensure accountability and dissuade companies from cutting corners, knowing that poor performance would have long-term consequences.

"Both recommendations were ultimately adopted by the committee and approved by the National Assembly. The first proposal became Law No. 33 of 2016 concerning the Kuwait Municipality, specifically in Article 49.

"This article states that any license issued in violation of existing laws and regulations is void and must be canceled. The second proposal was incorporated into Paragraph 4 of Article 85 of the Tenders Law, which prohibits contracting companies from bidding on future tenders if they fail to complete a project or do so poorly, until the issue is resolved.

"These were significant legislative victories. The first law effectively invalidated any transaction that was approved in violation of municipal regulations. The second law, however, faced challenges from the outset.

"When Jenan Boushehri took over the Ministry of Public Works, she enforced this law by suspending companies that did not comply with the required legal standards following the road crisis.

"One of the suspended companies challenged the decision in court and succeeded in obtaining a ruling that allowed them to return to work.

"After her tenure, the ministry under new leadership reinstated the remaining suspended companies without legal contest, allowing them to bid on new tenders.

"This situation highlights a critical concern: ensuring that the government upholds the laws and holds companies accountable for poor performance or violations. To achieve this, several key measures must be implemented:

"Clear Material Specifications: The Ministry of Public Works should establish clear, written standards for the materials used in road construction and paving. Every company bidding on these projects must adhere to these specifications without exception.

"Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): The Ministry must implement and enforce SOPs for all aspects of the road construction process. These guidelines would provide a consistent framework that companies must follow during each phase of the project.

"Active Oversight and In-Process Control: Ministry inspectors should oversee each stage of the road construction process, from weighing and mixing the materials to laying the asphalt on the streets.

"These inspectors should monitor key factors like temperature and timing and sign off at each stage to confirm compliance.

"This approach ensures that mistakes are caught early in the process, and any violations of the approved specifications are immediately addressed. If a company fails to meet the standards, they would be prevented from bidding on future tenders without needing to rely on court rulings.

"By adopting and enforcing these measures, the Ministry of Public Works can guarantee higher quality standards, ensure accountability, and protect public interests in future projects.

"This proactive approach would help prevent the return of substandard work and restore confidence in public infrastructure development."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



Lieutenant General Engineer Hashem Al-Rifai during his visit to the Steadfastness Camp. KUNA photo

## Lieutenant General Al-Rifai inspects Steadfastness Camp for new recruits

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: Lieutenant General Engineer Hashem Al-Rifai, Undersecretary of the National Guard, conducted a thorough inspection of the Steadfastness Camp, focusing on the dining halls and dormitories designated for the new recruits undergoing training, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

This visit was aimed at assessing the facilities' readiness and the progress of preparations for the incoming recruits.

During his visit, Lieutenant General Al-Rifai emphasized the importance of the training curricula and practical exercises provided in the course.

He encouraged the recruits to fully engage with the material and to adhere to the standards of discipline and order expected of them as members of the National Guard.

Furthermore, he conveyed the greetings of the National Guard leadership to the recruits, extending his congratulations on their decision to join the ranks of this esteemed institution.

His presence served as a reminder of the National Guard's commitment to supporting its members and ensuring they are well-prepared for their responsibilities.

# 'Interior' holds early morning joint security raids with 'Guard' in Jleeb

Ruling family member wanted to serve jail sentence arrested

By Munif Naif, Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The Ministry of Interior, represented by the General Traffic Department, General Department of Rescue Police, Public Security Sector, General Department of Special Security Forces, and General Department of Residence Affairs Investigations, conducted a joint security campaign in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh in collaboration with the National Guard on Thursday.**

According to a press statement issued by the General Department of Security Relations and Media, the campaign resulted in the issuance of 1,359 traffic citations, the arrest of four individuals without identification, and 55 violators of residence and labor laws. Also, 21 wanted vehicles and five wanted motorcycles were seized, and 74 individuals wanted for absconding charges were apprehended.

Furthermore, four individuals with expired visas were arrested, a motorcycle was impounded, 20 individuals with outstanding arrest warrants were detained, one person linked to a drug case, and six individuals who appeared intoxicated were arrested. In addition, a wanted individual was referred to the Criminal Enforcement Department.

These campaigns are part of its strategic plan to enhance security and order throughout the country.

The ministry reaffirmed its commitment to apprehending violators and wanted individuals while taking all necessary measures to achieve security objectives efficiently and effectively.

According to security sources, a surprise security operation was held early yesterday morning in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh under the supervision of the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, and led by Undersecretary of the Special Security Sector Major General Abdullah Safah.

The campaign resulted in the arrest of several wanted individuals and violators, including one individual involved in forgery of citizenship documents, who were subsequently referred to the concerned authorities for legal action.

**Court denies release of media figure:** The Criminal Court denied the release of a famous media figure, and adjourned to October 23 the case filed against him for allegedly insulting His Highness the Amir, for which he was sentenced in absentia to two-year imprisonment.

The suspect was arrested at Kuwait International Airport upon his return from abroad, and was referred to the Criminal Court to serve the prison sentence issued in absentia against him.

**Ruling family member arrested:** The Ministry of Interior announced that the security forces have taken into custody a member of the ruling family who had been evading arrest after he was sentenced in absentia on drug-related charges, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

After extensive search efforts, thorough investigations, and careful tracking of his movements, the authorities pinpointed his location and took him into custody.

The individual has since been referred to the appropriate legal authorities for further action.

The ministry emphasized that this arrest is part of its ongoing commitment to upholding the rule of law, applying it equally to all individuals, including members of the ruling family.

## 'State Security Law violated'

## Prosecution frees ex-MPs on bail amid false news charges

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The Public Prosecution has decided to release several former Members of Parliament (MPs) on bail of 500 dinars each, following allegations of disseminating false news in violation of the State Security Law, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

The charges stem from claims made about former MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri being barred from entering the country.

Among those released on bail are notable figures including Mohammed Haif, Badr Al-Dahoum, Salem Al-Namlan, Khaled Al-Munayes, Saud Al-Asfour, Mohammed Jawhar Hayat, Musaed Al-Dosari, Shuaib Shaaban, Osama Al-Zaid, Musallam Al-Barrak, Adel Al-Damkhi, and Falah Al-Hajri.

In addition to the bail conditions, the Public Prosecution has also imposed travel restrictions on the former MPs, preventing them from leaving the country while the legal proceedings are ongoing.

The case had attracted significant public attention, highlighting the implications of the State Security Law regarding the spread of misinformation.

## 3 expats held for scamming eight people

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: Three expatriates were arrested for scamming eight people in fraudulent sheep sale transactions through social media, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

A security source revealed that the Farwaniya Security Directorate formed a team to deal with the issue after a number of fraud cases were registered against a social media account for selling slaughtered animals.

The source explained the modus operandi of the scammers, indicating the person managing the account blocks the telephone number of the victim immediately after reaching an agreement to sell a sheep for about KD40.

He disclosed this process was repeated with many other people who filed cases, so the threads of discussions regarding the supposed sale were monitored until one of the accused was contacted. An entrapment was set up, leading to his arrest, and then he told investigators about his two accomplices who are his compatriots. They were arrested and the victims are being notified, the source added.

All of the accused were referred to the Public Prosecution for the necessary legal action.

## Italy offers condolences to Kuwait over Air Force aircraft crash victim

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: On behalf of the Italian Ministry of Defense, Minister, Guido Crosetto, the Embassy of Italy in Kuwait has expressed deepest condolences to the Kuwait Armed Forces and the Minister of

Defense, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, for the plane crash involving a Kuwaiti Air Force aircraft.

The embassy also offers deepest condolences to the family of the deceased pilot.

Citizen awarded KD 5,001 in compensation

## Court cancels KD 340K apartment purchase

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The Civil Court has cancelled the contract to purchase two apartments worth KD340,000 and obligated the defendant to return the full amount to a citizen; in addition to KD5,001 as temporary civil compensation.

Attorney Ali Al-Wawan filed the lawsuit in his capacity as the citizen's representative, indicating his client signed a contract to purchase two apartments worth KD340,000 that was paid in full.

However, the defendant failed to fulfill his obligation to register the two apartments under the plaintiff's name at the Real Es-

tate Registration Department. The plaintiff was surprised to find out later that the two apartments were seized and sold at a public auction.

The two parties submitted to the court a document portfolio, which included copies of the sale contract and a clearance certificate stating the defendant's acknowledgment that the plaintiff paid the full price of the two apartments, as well as the decision of the Sales Department to sell the two properties in dispute at a public auction.

Attorney Al-Wawan argued that the annulment of the contract binding on both parties due to the impossibility of its implementation does not negate the defendant's responsibility to compensate his client if such impossibility is the result of the defendant's negligence. He said the defendant must compensate his client for damages incurred as a result of not implementing the terms of the sale contract.



Al-Wawan



Al-Anba photo  
Fire broke out at a home warehouse in Taima, without causing any injuries, reports *Al-Anba* daily. A security source revealed that the Operations Unit at the Interior Ministry received information about the fire from a passerby who witnessed the incident. The source confirmed that firefighters from the Industrial Crafts Fire Center and rescue officers from the ministry were immediately dispatched to the location. He said the fire that formed a thick cloud of smoke was extinguished in record time. On the other hand, the Kuwait Fire Force team dealt with a basement fire in the Industrial Crafts Area. The fire did not cause any injuries and the losses were limited to material. A source stated that the firefighters opened an investigation to determine the cause of fire in the basement.



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### Kuwait Amir congratulates Fiji President on Nat'l Day

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a cable to the President of Fiji Ratu Wiliame Katonivere, congratulating him on the country's national day. His Highness the Amir wished President Katonivere good health, his country and people further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a congratulatory cable to the President of Fiji Ratu Wiliame Katonivere on his country's national day, wishing him good health and further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent Thursday a cable to the President of Fiji Ratu Wiliame Katonivere congratulating him on his country's national day.



Uploading the ambulance onboard the 17th relief plane of the Kuwaiti Air Bridge. KUNA photo

### Kuwait's relief efforts for Sudan continues with 17th aid flight carrying 2 ambulances

KUWAIT CTY, Oct 10, (KUNA): The 17th relief plane of the Kuwaiti Air Bridge departed on Thursday to Sudanese (Port Sudan) Airport, carrying two ambulances, organized by Kuwait Society for Relief (KSR), to support those affected by the rains and the ongoing conflict.

The Society's Director General Abdulaziz Al-Obaid told KUNA that this came at a time when the internal conflicts and natural disasters have increased in Sudan, resulting in hundreds of victims and thousands of displaced people in need of health care.

Al-Obaid stressed that KSR, with the support of the Kuwaiti government, would continue to support and provide relief to the Sudanese people.

On his part, Head of the Relief and Projects Sector at the KSR Mahmoud Al-Mesbah praised the efforts of the Kuwaiti ministries, headed by the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Social Affairs, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs for completing the needed procedures to operate the flights.

He also appreciated the role of the Ministry of Information and KUNA for following up on the Kuwaiti air bridge and highlighting the humanitarian efforts of Kuwait.

Al-Mesbah praised the role of Kuwaiti charitable associations and organizations, including the associations participating in the aid relief campaign for Sudan, official social institutions, and the efforts of the Kuwaiti people made to provide relief to the people of Sudan.

### Collaborative strategies sought

## Governor outlines vision to transform Ahmadi into a model for healthy cities

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad says all official agencies are fully committed to utilizing all resources to develop cities and residential areas in Ahmadi Governorate and provide various services, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During a meeting held by the Higher Coordination Committee for Healthy Cities, which included Head of the Healthy Cities Office at the Ministry of Health Dr. Amal Al-Yahya and representatives from various ministries, public institutions, and civil society organizations, the governor said, "Health is a fundamental pillar of sustainable development, essential for creating a

healthy society committed to improving individual well-being".

The governor highlighted the importance of establishing precise criteria for selecting healthy cities in Kuwait, adding that meeting those criteria would place those cities on the global map.

He confirmed that efforts are underway, in collaboration with different segments of society, to implement measures that will allow several areas in Ahmadi Governorate to join the Healthy Cities Network, following the recent registration of the Jaber Al-Ali suburb.

Meanwhile, Dr. Amal Al-Yahya said the Jaber Al-Ali area is currently

the only one registered in the regional health cities network system.

She indicated that work is underway in Ahmadi and Fintas areas, with consultations ongoing for the Wafra and Khairan residential areas.

Dr. Al-Yahya praised the governor's efforts and his directives to facilitate the work of the health cities team within the governorate.

She affirmed the importance of linking this team with all governmental and official institutions to support health initiatives and ensure the provision of required services, particularly in new and border residential areas.



Al-Seyassah photo

Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad with the Higher Coordination Committee for Healthy Cities.

## Desert adventure, fiber optic expansion okayed

831 waste, violation reports logged in Sept

By Inaas Awadh  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

### KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The Jahra Committee of the Municipal Council approved a number of items during its third meeting of the third session held on Wednesday, chaired by member Abdullah Al-Enezi.

The approved items were:

- The request of the Municipality Projects Sector to allocate a site for the desert adventures area project in North Mutlaa
- The request of the Ministry of Communications to allocate a site for the third phase of the major fiber optic network project in Salmi.
- The request of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) to allocate sites for open basins and water channels to collect and drain rainwater around the South Saad Al-Abdullah Residential Area.
- The request of the Ministry of Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs to deduct part of agricultural plot No. 22 in the Abdali Agricultural Area, Block 2, to expand a mosque and parking facilities.

- Cabinet's Resolution No. 269/2024 regarding the Government Performance Follow-up Agency's report on providing strategic storage areas for establishing warehouses and depots for food storage and other purposes in Oyoun.
- The committee referred four items to the executive body:
  - A letter from the Public Authority for Industry regarding the allocation of a site for establishing an industrial complex for iron and steel products.
  - Three letters from the Jahra governor concerning the allocation of public service sites on Salmi Road
  - A request for the allocation of a site for the Abdali Cooperative Society in Subbiya.
- The committee retained on its agenda a request submitted by the Public Authority for Industry for the inclusion of Plot No. 2A in Sulaibiya Industrial Area, Block 1, and a proposal submitted by member Abdullah Al-Enezi for the construction of two pedestrian bridges on Jahra Expressway 80, opposite Qairawan and Doha.
- Meanwhile, Kuwait Municipality has announced that it received 831 reports in all governorates during last September through the municipality's hotline and WhatsApp number.
- She explained that the reports related to garbage and used furniture dumped in open areas and in front of homes, bachelor housing, rubble discarded on the roads that obstructed the road, fallen trees, street vendors, abandoned cars and boats.

### Astronomical advancement

## Al-Ojairi Center and Qatar Calendar House sign cooperation agreement

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: Al-Ojairi Scientific Center and the Qatar Calendar House have signed a co-operation agreement aimed at enhancing training opportunities and organizing astronomical camps in Kuwait and Qatar, as well as exchanging expertise in this field. The partnership also focuses on advancing calendar-related developments in line with technological advancements, reports Al-Jarida daily.

During their visit to the Al-Ojairi Scientific Center, the Qatar Calendar House delegation commended Kuwait's efforts to preserve and promote astronomy, as well as integrate astronomy into educational curricula and provide related publications for children through the center.

During the visit, the delegation, led by Executive Director of the Qatar Calendar House Eng. Faisal Al-Ansari, viewed the exhi-



Al-Jarida photo  
The Qatar Calendar House delegation during their visit to the Al-Ojairi Scientific Center.

tion dedicated to the late Kuwaiti astronomer Dr. Saleh Al-Ajari, and praised the historical legacy, manuscripts, letters, and books preserved by the center.

Both the Qatar Calendar House and Al-Ojairi Scientific Center stressed the importance of enhancing cooperation in the fields of calendar science, as well as organizing courses on timing, lunar phases, astronomical research, and legal matters related to astronomy.

Director General of Al-Ojairi Scientific Center Eng. Youssef Al Ojeiri presented the center's recent publications and highlighted the latest developments, particularly those concerning the center's application.

### New 60 Hz frequency enhances reliability

## KGOC boosts WJO energy efficiency

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10, (KUNA): Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGOC) announced that the Wafra Joint Operations Department has achieved a significant milestone in the project to convert the electrical power frequency from 50 to 60 Hz, with a capacity of up to 25 megawatts, to meet the needs of vital facilities in the Wafra Joint Operations Area.

The company's Deputy CEO for Joint Operations, Bader Al-Munifi, stated in a press release on Monday that the project aims to supply vital facilities whose equipment depends on a frequency of 60 Hz. These facilities previously relied on an old power generation station owned by the company.

Al-Munifi explained that the previous reliance on the aforementioned station had several drawbacks, including high failure rates, elevated operating costs, and harmful gas emissions, such as carbon dioxide. He added that this project contributes to stabilizing and enhancing production by supplying essential facilities, including the main oil gathering center, sub-centers, and the pressure station, with electricity.

He noted that the project also utilizes the latest equipment and technology in the field of energy conversion and distribution. He expects it to achieve sustainable financial savings by reducing energy consumption and loss, as well as lowering energy costs for the company. This

will constitute a positive step, indicating the company's commitment to environmental standards.

He pointed out that the project reduces the burning and consumption of more than 8 million cubic feet of gas per day and eliminates the need for half a million liters of diesel annually.

He expressed his appreciation for the efforts made by the Electricity Distribution Team in the Al Wafra Joint Operations Department in operating the project, praising all workers involved and highlighting the safety measures implemented, which have resulted in the absence of accidents.

He emphasized that transferring high-voltage electrical loads to these sensitive facilities while they are in service, safely and without disrupting production operations, required careful planning and effective, continuous communication among various work teams. He stressed that the efforts made are valued by the company's executive management due to their contribution to achieving work plans and supporting production.



Al-Munifi



KUNA photo  
One of the power generation stations of the Kuwait Gulf Oil Company.

# October

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Oil sector shrinks by 4.3%

**Kuwait GDP forecast to contract by 3.2 percent in 2024: CBK citing IMF**

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10, (KUNA): The Central Bank of Kuwait on Thursday declared in a statement conclusion of the mission by experts of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the country, as part of regular annual consultations.

The IMF experts affirmed that pace of the economic recovery slowed down and the actual Gross Domestic Product incurred contraction estimated at 3.6 percent in 2023, forecasting an identical drawback at 3.2 percent in 2024.

The CBK statement said the IMF experts indicated that the GDP oil sector shrank by 4.3 percent, non-oil sectors one percent, due to slump of oil prices, output volume and decline of industrial activities in the refining sector.

The IMF team recorded decline of the GDP this year by 3.2 percent because of additional cut of the oil production, forecasting growth at 1.3- in the non-oil sectors this year, despite constrictions in the public financial situation.

As to local prices, the team recorded that the annual growth dropped by 3.6 percent last year due to the decrease of the benchmark growth, commodities prices, indicating at substantial decrease in the recent period by 2.9 percent (August), due to the decline of the rates in housing and transports.

The team forecast continuous decline of the annual growth rates to reach three percent this year along with drop of the demand and fall of the prices of imported food.

As to the internal and external balances, the IMF experts recorded that they fell back last year as a result of the drop in the oil prices and output, where the budget recorded transformation of a surplus of 11.7 percent of the GDP in the fiscal year 2022-2023 into a deficit at 3.1 percent in 2023-2024, along with rise of the current expenditures by 9.7 percent of the GDP.

Sivil servants' payments and subsidies accounted to 5.7 percent and 3.4 percent, respectively, of the GDP, while the surplus in the current account shrank reaching 31.4 percent of the GDP in 2023, along with fall of the surplus in the trade balance for the commodities and services, 10.3 percent of the GDP, due to fall of the prices and output of the oil -- compensated by the increase in the surplus of the income balance by 7.4 percent of the GDP.

The experts have affirmed that the Kuwaiti banking sector is solid due to sagacious supervision by the

CBK with respect of lending and allocations, as the results of the stress tests conducted by the central bank have shown that the proportions of liquidity and capitalization in the sector has exceeded the minimum required by Basel-2 terms, while the irregular loans remain low.

The experts lauded the CBK's rational policies for managing hazards, noting that the crediting slowness resulting from the epidemic started to recede gradually, for the CBK hedging measures were adequate for containing the risks.

The rating of the Kuwaiti dinar, pegged to a basket of currencies, is a sound foundation for the monetary policy, the experts recorded, opining that it contributed to stemming inflation for many years.

Moreover, the experts lauded the CBK restrictive policies at the local level, noting that the current interest rate is in harmony with the containment of inflation and stability of non-oil sectors' output.

They noted that the Kuwaiti economy is prone to be affected by various external hazards due to its dependence on the oil.

At the local level, the hazards largely emanate from drawbacks in implementing the financial and structural reforms that are necessary factors to diversify the economy and lessen dependence on the oil.

The Kuwaiti authorities are aspiring to execute reforms to back up a dynamic and diversified economy and for that sake, the general financial conditions must be kept under control, namely with respect of expenditures and non-oil proceeds.

The IMF experts recommended allocations for the public sector, gradual finish of subsidies for energy, setting up a system to back energy expenses for the limited income class. And for sake of hiking non-oil proceeds, the added tax value and the commodity fees must be enforced.

The IMF experts lauded the government plan to expand the income taxes on companies to cover all local conglomerates, also advising that the labor market needs to be reformed.

For encouraging Kuwaitis to seek jobs in the private sector, there needs to be balance of the compensations and work conditions between the private and public sectors. Moreover, improving the quality of education will lead to hiking the productivity and diversifying the economy.



Minister of Social Affairs during the opening of Al-Firdaws Diwaniya for the Elderly and the launch of the 'Family Gathering' initiative.

**Al-Huwailah launches initiative for linking elderly with orphaned kids**

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family Affairs and Childhood Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah launched on Thursday the initiative "Iamat al-ahel" for strengthening the bonds among generations. The minister, in a statement belatedly marking the International Day for the Older People (Oct. 1), indicated that the initiative aimed at enhancing the connections between the elderly and the orphaned children.

The initiative, she said, aims at building sustainable humanitarian bonds among the generations and providing the chance for the seniors to offer wisdom and experience to the

young orphans. The minister, who addressed the ceremony, also marking inauguration of Al-Ferdos Diwaniya for the Elderly, thanked the Society of the Revival of Islamic Heritage for its support.

Meanwhile, the acting assistant undersecretary for social care, Dr. Jassem Al-Kandari, revealed in his statement during the ceremony that 3,887 old people had benefited from the mobile social care service and 35,323 others had gotten the card "awalawiah" that renders them eligible to get various services ahead of others. Moreover, 6,446 old people have benefited from the special parking spots.

**Amir offers**

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, Chief of Staff of Kuwait Army Lieutenant General Bandar Al-Muzain affirmed that Flight Lieutenant Mohammad Mahmoud Abdul Rasoul is considered one of Kuwait's martyrs.

He expressed condolences to the martyr's family, the military community, and the people of Kuwait.

Lieutenant General Al-Muzain explained that an investigation committee was formed immediately after the accident and has been working tirelessly to gather evidence from the site.

He assured that the cause of the accident will be officially announced once the committee completes its work.

Lieutenant General Al-Muzain affirmed that Kuwait's martyrs hold a special place in the military and are forever immortalized in their hearts.

Meanwhile, the Command of Bahrain Defense Force (BDF) expressed sincere condolences to the State of Kuwait over the tragic crash of a fighter jet of the Kuwait Air Force and the martyrdom of its pilot during a training mission on Wednesday.

The BDF Command expressed, in a statement, sympathy with the Kuwaiti leadership, government and people as well as the family of the martyr, praying to Allah the Almighty to grant them patience and solace.

The UAE expressed on Wednesday its solidarity with, and heartfelt condolences to, Kuwait over the crash of the F-18 fighter jet of the Kuwait Air

Force whose pilot fell martyr. In a statement, the UAE's Ministry of Foreign Affairs voiced sincere sympathy with Kuwait, its people and the relatives of the martyr.

Jordan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs extended heartfelt condolences to Kuwait on Wednesday following the tragic crash of a Kuwait Air Force F-18 fighter jet, resulting in the pilot's martyrdom. The ministry's spokesperson, Sufian Qudah, expressed Jordan's full solidarity with Kuwait, both its government and people, during this sorrowful time. He also conveyed deep sympathy to the family of the fallen pilot.

**PAFN conducts**

Continued from Page 1

The exercise began with sirens sounding in the building to alert employees to evacuate due to an emergency.

The Engineering Services Department team worked alongside representatives from the emergency teams of relevant government agencies to guide employees to the emergency exits, and instruct them not to use the elevators, as well as direct them to the building's exit gates and the assembly point.

Eng. Al-Khayal affirmed the importance of such drills in assessing the readiness of government agencies to respond effectively to emergencies and crises, adding that such exercises also help agencies gain valuable field

experience for managing similar incidents in the future, and ensure the safety and security of both employees and properties.

**Minister calls**

Continued from Page 1

It serves as the foundation for building a knowledge-based economy. It plays a strategic role in guiding young people toward professions and jobs needed in the labor market both currently and in the future.

PAAET is dedicated to supplying the labor market with expertise and competencies that enhance the quality of services in the country, thereby narrowing the gap between educational outcomes and labor market demands.

Dr. Al-Jalal commended PAAET for its swift actions in creating many scientific and technical programs that keep pace with the current scientific and technological advancements.

He also highlighted the importance of connecting PAAET's academic offerings with employment opportunities to support New Kuwait 2035 vision. During the meeting, Director General of PAAET Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam gave a detailed presentation on PAAET's journey since its establishment, highlighting its scientific, training, and administrative achievements, which have positioned PAAET as a vital partner in cooperation and communication with various state institutions.

He said one of PAAET's most important achievements is the launch of

**Prioritizing well-being at work**

**Kuwait observes World Mental Health Day**

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10, (KUNA): Kuwait is celebrating World Mental Health Day on Thursday, as a means to raise awareness and shed light on mental illnesses that affect people's daily lives.

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced that the slogan this year will be "Mental Health at Work", to highlight the importance of a safe and healthy work environment, one that does not affect our mental health or productivity during work, but pro-

tects and supports it.

Kuwait has affirmed its commitment over the decades to improve mental health care for all of society by providing the best diagnostic, treatment and follow-up services in accordance to the latest treatment protocols and psychological tests.

Kuwait has reinforced specialized mental health services so much this year, 68 clinics were distributed across primary healthcare centers in all governorates of the country to ensure the

provision of physical and psychological treatments that also take into account the highest levels of privacy.

The Kuwait Center for Mental Health (formerly known as the new Psychiatric Hospital), opened on December 12, 2007, it provides many specialized medical services, and is keen on improving their clinical psychology services to patients.

The Health Ministry established Al-Manara Center for Mental Health for Children and Adolescents, the first in

the Gulf, Al-Manara deals with anxiety and behavioral disorders, in addition to autism cases for children and teenagers.

Kuwait enacted a Mental Health Law on March 3, 2019 that aims to protect patients and guarantees their rights to quality healthcare, the law acknowledges that mental illnesses vary from other health conditions, affecting crucial functions such as awareness, judgment, emotional state and decision making abilities.

**GCC health ministers convene in Doha to prioritize public health**

Kuwait joins efforts to strengthen healthcare

**DOHA, Oct 10, (KUNA): The 10th meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Health Ministers Committee was held in Doha on Thursday with the participation of Kuwait.**

Qatari health Minister Dr. Hanan Al-Kuwari said in her speech that Their Majesties and Highnesses GCC States Leaders prioritize the people's health, noting the efforts made under their directives to develop the health systems to make them more sustainable and boost collaboration in the field.

Al-Kuwari explained that in light of the multiple health challenges the world is facing, enhancing collaboration at a GCC, regional and international levels is of utmost importance to improve efficiency and enhance health security, as boosting the joint work would secure a healthier future for the people.

One of the topics on the agenda was healthy cities, which is a global initiative launched by the World Health Organization with the aim of placing health at the top of social and political agendas.

Another important agenda topic was following up on the implementation of the International Health Regulations by enhancing prevention of the spread of communicable diseases and international health cooperation, in addition to the committee's workplan and training.

For his part, GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi stressed that Their Majesties and Highnesses Leaders of the council states, firmly believe that the health sector is the way to achieve healthy development for societies, as health represents a strategic investment for the GCC states.

He noted that hospital beds in GCC countries reached more than 121,000 in 2022, doctors reached more than 224,000 for the same period, while pharmacists exceeded 69,000, and more than 400,000 Gulf citizens benefited from government medical services in other GCC countries during 2023.

The directives of Their Majesties and Highnesses always focus on diligent continuous work to advance the GCC and benefit from the achievements made to serve GCC countries and their citizens, added Al-Budaiwi.

He said that the Gulf countries have begun to occupy the highest ranks in many sectors, most notably the increase in human doctors, beds in hospitals, pharmaceuticals and unified standard specifications for the health sector.

Al-Budaiwi stressed that what GCC countries are doing in this sector is a basic element among many elements through which they have gained this prestigious position regionally and internationally and have become a destination for many countries and regional organizations that wish to engage in strategic partnerships.



GCC Health Ministers participating in the meeting.

**Ministers discuss strategies for a secure digital future**

**Kuwait joins GCC Telecom meeting**

DOHA, Oct 10, (KUNA): The 28th meeting of the Ministerial Committee for Post and Telecommunications of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries (GCC) held Wednesday, with the participation of Kuwait, in Doha.

Qatar's Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohammed Al-Mannai said, in his speech, that the cooperation between the GCC countries reflects the depth of the friendly and long-standing ties between the council's countries.

He highlighted the role of this cooperation in developing GCC's national economies and enhancing competitiveness at both the regional and international levels.

Al-Mannai explained that this meeting would be an important step towards building a prosperous and secure digital society by establishing a strong and advanced technology sector that creates new job opportunities and seeks to increase investments in innovative business models, in addition to localizing the latest technological advancements.

For his part, GCC Secretary-General Jassim Al-Budaiwi said that the Ministerial Committee for Post and Telecommunications has achieved many accomplishments through joint cooperation, resulting in achieving advanced global rankings in these two sectors.

He pointed out the advanced global rankings achieved by the GCC countries, with the United Arab Emirates achieving first place globally in the telecommunications infrastructure index, in addition to winning the hosting of the 28th Universal Postal Congress in Dubai in 2025.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia achieved second place among the G20 countries for the second consecutive time in the Telecommunications and Technology Development Index, in addition to its success during its hosting of the Extraordinary Congress of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in 2023.

Qatar also made significant strides by achieving fifth place in the fixed and wireless telecommunications infrastructure index, while Kuwait continued its leadership in the telecommunications and information technology

sector development index by achieving first place for the second consecutive time in this index.

He added that the committees and working groups affiliated with the Ministerial Committee have worked during the past period to accomplish many important issues.

The first steps of cooperation between the Council's countries in the field of space have recently been launched, in addition to studying the reduction of roaming prices between the GCC countries, preparing a comprehensive plan for the telecommunications sector, and launching the Gulf Research Award for Technological Foresight and the Digital Economy.

Al-Budaiwi praised the diligent efforts of the Cooperation Council's countries and their steady progress in enhancing their competitive capabilities in the fields of communications and post.

Kuwait delegation at the GCC Ministerial Committee for Post and Telecommunications was headed by Minister of State for Communication Affairs Omar Al-Omar.



Photo during the start of the 28th meeting of the Gulf Ministerial Committee for Post and Telecommunications in Qatar.

its 2023/2028 strategic plan, which aligns with the state's strategy and New Kuwait 2035 vision.

Dr. Al-Fajjam affirmed the commitment of PAAET to developing academic programs tailored to meet the evolving needs of the labor market.

He highlighted the ongoing efforts to enhance research quality, including the revision of promotion regulations in applied colleges and the formation of a central committee to determine appropriate scientific journals for publication related to promotions.

At the end of the meeting, the minister expressed his pleasure in meeting Dr. Al-Fajjam and the PAAET leadership.

He reiterated his commitment to holding regular meetings to ensure PAAET successfully fulfills its mission of building a skilled national workforce capable of driving sustainable development in the country.

**Real estate**

Continued from Page 1

Al-Hamoud criticized the current capabilities of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, particularly its "Real Estate Department," which lacks sufficient authority to enforce effective market regulations. He proposed that the Ministry must develop a robust strategy with a specialized technical team to oversee its implementation.

Suleiman Ahmed, a member of the Real Estate Brokers Union, echoed these sentiments, emphasizing that a

dedicated real estate authority could significantly enhance market organization, transparency, and support.

Ahmed outlined how such an authority could establish a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework for real estate transactions, which would ultimately build confidence among investors and buyers. He also highlighted that improved regulation and transparency could attract foreign investments, further bolstering the sector.

Ahmed advocated for an independent authority to regulate the market, arguing that such a body would be less vulnerable to political pressures, thereby ensuring neutrality and enhancing transparency in decision-making processes.

**Kuwait expands**

Continued from Page 1

Two contracts were signed to implement infrastructure for the project, covering 7,623 housing units, and the second contract focused on 6,189 housing units, serving a total of 20,380 housing units across the three contracts.

At the same time, the PAHW continues work on the main road network contract in the city, which includes construction, completion, and maintenance of the main roads and infrastructure networks, as well as Rainwater tank.

In September, the completion rate for this contract reached 26.54 percent,

surpassing the project's schedule by 14.79 percent.

As for the South Saad Al-Abdullah City project, which is the second largest after Al-Mutlaa, the completion rate by the end of September reached 7.428 percent, advancing by 5.148 percent ahead of schedule.

The project was divided into three packages for residential and investment suburbs, with tenders issued for global contractors, whether foreign or local companies specializing in roadworks and infrastructure services.

Work on the project, which includes 23,551 residential units, began in November 2023, and the contract is expected to be completed by November 2027.

PAHW tender committee approved the issuance of three tenders for the construction and completion of infrastructure works for the residential suburbs, irrigation tanks, and electrical substations in the project.

The tenders cover 1,080 days of work and include all residential suburbs in the city and four investment suburbs, they cover the construction of infrastructure for 23,551 housing units, irrigation tank buildings, and 649 electrical substations, along with rainwater and sewage networks, and the roads in the residential suburbs.

As for building permits, the total number of permits issued to citizens in August for the three housing projects reached 32,122, including 27,489 for housing units in Al-Mutlaa City, 3,237 plots in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak, and 1,396 in South Khaitan.



Democratic presidential nominee US Vice President Kamala Harris waves as she boards Air Force Two at LaGuardia International Airport on Oct 9 in New York. (AP)

## Harris faces urgency to distinguish her potential presidency from Biden

WASHINGTON, Oct 10, (AP): With less than four weeks until Election Day, Vice President Kamala Harris is facing new urgency to define how her potential presidency would be different from that of President Joe Biden.

Her struggle to present herself both as a candidate of change while demonstrating a loyalty to the politician she serves under was made clear Tuesday, when she was asked on ABC's "The View" how she would lead differently than Biden.

Harris said, "We're obviously two different people" and "I will bring those sensibilities to how I lead." But when pressed to identify a decision made by Biden that she would have taken another way, she demurred. "There is not a thing that comes to mind," she said.

She followed up later in the show by saying she would put a Republican in her Cabinet.

Two and a half months into her unexpected candidacy, Harris has so far largely relied on her age and biography to signal a break from the 82-year-old Biden and her 78-year-old Republican opponent, former President Donald Trump. Now, in a tight race against Trump, she is being forced to reassess

how she talks about her boss and how she might strike out on her own should she win the White House.

The first Black and South Asian woman to be a major party presidential nominee, Harris was 9 years old when Biden was elected to the Senate and was in law school when Trump, then a real estate heir and socialite, published "The Art of the Deal." Harris, her campaign believes, embodies change. Yet, she still may need to find a better way to talk about it.

According to aides, Harris is deeply loyal to Biden and resistant to publicly doing anything that could be construed as criticizing his presidency, though his favorability ratings remain underwater. In private, some question what she should break with Biden on - noting the popularity of some of the biggest pieces of his legislative agenda, from infrastructure to lowering the costs of some prescription drugs, and the recklessness of signaling any daylight with the president on foreign policy at a time of global crises.

Harris was a central partner to Biden throughout, and they worry a break now could be viewed as preselection opportunism.

Views of Biden are still more negative than positive, even after he with-

draw as the Democratic nominee in July. About 4 in 10 Americans had a somewhat or very favorable view of Biden in an AP-NORC poll conducted in September, and 55% had an unfavorable view, which is consistent with where his favorability ratings have stood for the past two years. Feelings toward Harris, meanwhile, were warmer -- half of Americans had a favorable opinion of her, while 44% had an unfavorable opinion.

In addition to her pledge to put a Republican in her Cabinet, Harris has introduced some policies distinct from Biden - including calling for a smaller hike to the capital gains tax than advocated for by the president. But they have been modest, and Biden's White House, in turn, has quickly signed on to her positions.

Trump seized on her comments that she couldn't think of any decision by Biden that she would change, playing a clip of "The View" appearance at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania on Wednesday to roars from the crowd.

"Her answer that she would do nothing different is disqualifying," he said in Reading.

Some Harris allies have pressed her to more forcefully signal a break from Biden.

### Storm causes a lot of damage

## Hurricane Milton plows across Florida; 4 dead

TAMPA, Fla., Oct 10, (AP): Hurricane Milton barreled into the Atlantic Ocean on Thursday after plowing across Florida, pounding cities with ferocious winds and rain, and whipping up a barrage of tornadoes. It caused at least four deaths and compounded the misery wrought by Helene while sparing Tampa a direct hit.

The storm tracked to the south in the final hours and made landfall as a Category 3 storm Wednesday night in Siesta Key, about 70 miles (112 kilometers) south of Tampa. While it caused a lot of damage and water levels may continue to rise for days, Gov Ron DeSantis said it was not "the worst case scenario."

The deadly storm surge feared for Tampa appears not to have materialized, though the situation in the area was still a major emergency. The storm brought up to 18 inches (45 centimeters) of rain to spots in the Tampa and St. Petersburg area.

DeSantis said that the worst storm surge appeared to be in Sarasota County, where it was 8 to 10 feet (2.5 to 3 meters) - less than in the worst place during Helene.

"We will better understand the extent of the damage as the day progresses," he said. "The storm was significant but thankfully, this was not the worst

case scenario."

As dawn broke Thursday, officials repeated that the danger had not passed: Storm surge warnings were issued for much of the east-central coast of Florida and northward into Georgia, and tropical storm warnings were in place along the coast into South Carolina. Officials in the hard-hit Florida counties of Hillsborough, Pinellas, Sarasota and Lee urged people to stay home, warning of downed power lines, trees in roads, blocked bridges and flooding.

"We'll let you know when it's safe to come out," Sheriff Chad Chronister of Hillsborough County, home to Tampa, said on Facebook.

The storm knocked out power across a large section of Florida, with more than 3.2 million homes and businesses without electricity, according to power-outage.us, which tracks utility reports.

The fabric that serves as the roof of Tropicana Field, home of the Tampa Bay Rays baseball team in St. Petersburg, was ripped to shreds by the fierce winds. It was not immediately clear if there was damage inside. Multiple cranes were also toppled in the storm, the weather service said.

St. Petersburg residents also could no longer get water from their household taps because a water main break

led the city to shut down service. Mayor Ken Welch had told residents to expect long power outages and the possible shutdown of the sewer system.

Just inland from Tampa, the flooding in Plant City was "absolutely staggering," according to City Manager Bill McDaniel. Emergency crews rescued 35 people overnight, said McDaniel, who estimated the city had received 13.5 inches (34 cm) of rain.

"We have flooding in places and to levels that I've never seen, and I've lived in this community for my entire life," he said in a video posted online Thursday morning.

Before Milton even made landfall, heavy rain and tornadoes lashed parts of southern Florida Wednesday morning, with conditions deteriorating throughout the day. One twister touched down in the lightly populated Everglades and crossed Interstate 75. Another apparent tornado hit in Fort Myers, snapping tree limbs and tearing a gas station's canopy to shreds.

The Spanish Lakes Country Club near Fort Pierce, on Florida's Atlantic Coast, was hit particularly hard, with homes destroyed and some residents killed.

Four people were killed in tornadoes there, the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office said.



Police respond to a traffic accident between a car and a fire truck returning from a call, on near-deserted streets in downtown Tampa, Fla., during the approach of Hurricane Milton on Oct 9. (AP)



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer, (center), NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, (right), and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy meet inside 10 Downing Street in London on Oct 10. (AP)

### Prez seeks support for Ukraine plan

## Zelenskyy meets with UK and NATO leaders

LONDON, Oct 10, (AP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy arrived at 10 Downing St. in London on Thursday for talks with the leaders of Britain and NATO on his "victory plan" for the war against Russia.

Zelenskyy is meeting Prime Minister Keir Starmer and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, before traveling to Paris for talks with President Emmanuel Macron.

Starmer said the Downing Street meetings, also attended by UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy, Defense Secretary John Healey and armed forces chief Adm. Tony Radakin, were a chance to "go through the plan, to talk in more detail."

Zelenskyy is to meet German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in Berlin on Friday and will also travel to Italy to discuss the plan.

He had been due to present his blueprint at a weekend meeting of Western leaders and defense ministers in Germany, but it has been postponed because U.S. President Joe Biden said he had to stay home to respond to Hurricane Milton's landfall in Florida.

Zelenskyy said Wednesday he hoped the meeting could be rescheduled soon.

The details of Zelenskyy's plan have been kept quiet but contours have emerged, including the need for fast action on decisions Western allies have been mulling since the full-scale invasion began in 2022.

Zelenskyy said Wednesday at a summit in Croatia with leaders of southeastern European states that the plan seeks to strengthen Ukraine "both geopolitically and on the battlefield" before any kind of dialogue with Russia.

"Weakness of any of our allies will inspire (Russian President Vladimir) Putin," he said. "That's why we're asking them to strengthen us, in terms of security guarantees, in terms of weapons, in terms of our future after this war. In my view, he (Putin) only understands force."

Kyiv is still awaiting word from Western partners on its repeated requests to use the long-range weapons they provide to hit targets deep inside Russia. While some, including the U.K., are thought to be willing, Biden has held back out of concern it could escalate the conflict.

Ukraine's leader last visited London in July, soon after Starmer's Labour Party government was elected, when he addressed a meeting of the British Cabinet.

Starmer's spokesman, Dave Pares, said Thursday's meeting would involve "broad strategic discussions" on U.K. and allied support for Ukraine during a "crucial period," rather than specific decisions.

It comes as Russia continues a slow but relentless drive deeper into Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region and

targets key infrastructure with air-strikes.

The death toll from a Russian ballistic missile strike on Ukraine's southern city of Odesa has risen to eight, regional Gov. Oleh Kiper said Thursday. It's the latest in a string of assaults on the Black Sea port.

A civilian container ship under a Panamanian flag was hit in the attack on Wednesday, Kiper said on Telegram. He said it was the third attack on a civilian vessel in the past four days.

Meanwhile, French President Emmanuel Macron inspected the training of Ukrainian troops at a military camp in eastern France on Wednesday, a show of support a day before President Volodymyr Zelenskyy travels to Paris as part of a European tour meant to encourage support for his victory plan.

It was Macron's first meeting with some of the 15,000 Ukrainian troops that France has trained since the full-scale Russian invasion in February 2022, including several thousand put through training courses in Poland.

Zelenskyy is hoping to persuade Ukraine's allies to adopt a victory plan that he hasn't publicly presented. Ukraine also hopes that Western partners will agree to its repeated requests to use the long-range weapons they provide to hit targets on Russian soil. Zelenskyy is meeting European leaders this week.

### 'Internationally recognized communicator'

## UN appoints Fletcher as humanitarian chief

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 10, (AP): UN Secretary-General António Guterres on Wednesday appointed former British diplomat **Tom Fletcher** as the new UN humanitarian chief.

Fletcher, who is currently principal of Hertford College, Oxford and vice chair of Oxford University's Conference of Colleges, succeeds fellow Briton Martin Griffiths, who stepped down for health reasons as undersecretary-general for humanitarian affairs at the end of June.

UN deputy spokesman Farhan Haq, who announced the appointment, said acting UN humanitarian chief Joyce Msuya will remain in the job until Fletcher takes over at a future date.

Haq called Fletcher "an internationally recognized communicator, through his books and media work across the fields of development, diplomacy, technology and democracy, with a blend of technocratic expertise and public diplomacy."

US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield said the United States looks forward to collaborating closely with Fletcher "to strengthen and accelerate global

efforts to address urgent humanitarian crises."

"We must do everything we can to ensure lifesaving aid reaches those most in need - from Sudan, to Gaza, Haiti, Ukraine, and beyond," she said in a statement.

Fletcher previously served as global strategy director of the Global Business Coalition for Education from 2015-2019, served as the UK's ambassador to Lebanon from 2011-2015 and as foreign and development policy adviser to three UK prime ministers from 2007-2011. He was also a mediator on Northern Ireland and held diplomatic posts in Africa, the Middle East and Europe.



Fletcher

### Europe

**'Do more to tackle migration':** The prime ministers of Czech Republic and Poland said Wednesday that the European Union has to do more to tackle unauthorized migration and condemned the practice of renewing border checks among the bloc's 27 member states.

"We have agreed that it's necessary to do more," Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala said after meeting with Polish counterpart **Donald Tusk** and other members of his government in Prague.

Fiala said that sweeping reforms to the bloc's asylum system endorsed by EU nations in May are "insufficient," and should be more strict.

Hungary and Poland, which have long opposed any obligation for countries to host migrants or pay for their care, voted against the package but were unable to block it. Czech Republic abstained from the vote.

"We also have a negative view of the reestablishing of long-term border checks at the inside borders of the European Union," Fiala said.

Tusk echoed that. Irregular migration dominated the European Parliament election in June and influenced recent state elections in eastern Germany, where a far-right party won for the first time since World War II. The German government announced in September that it was expanding border controls around its territory following recent extremist attacks. (AP)

**Lithuania votes on Sunday:** Despite economic successes, Lithuania's center-

right coalition could be replaced by the opposition Social Democrats and smaller center-left parties when voters in the Baltic country go to the polls on Sunday.

Strict COVID-19 measures and a migration influx from neighboring Belarus have cast shadows over conservative Prime Minister Ingrida Simonyte's government, which took office in 2020.

Although European Union member Lithuania has seen annual double-digit personal income growth and has one of the lowest inflation rates in the 27-nation bloc, most voters don't seem to be impressed by these factors.

"The situation in the economy is far better than for example during the hardships of 2008-2010, but people rarely attribute the gain in personal wealth to the political leadership," said Nerijus Maciulis, an economist at Swedbank. He referred to the global financial crisis, which hit the Baltic states hard and led to austerity measures.

Rima Urbonaite, a political analyst at Vilnius Mykolas Romeris University, agreed.

"There's a lot of disappointment and discontent among voters," she said. "It is related to numerous crises and shocks and cannot be compensated by economic factors like positive change in purchasing power." (AP)

**Van attack injures 3 in France:** An attack on an armored van occurred this Thursday morning in the heart of Grenoble, the capital of the Isere department in southeastern France, causing three injuries, the Prefect of Isere confirmed on its official X account.

The van, having departed from the Bank of France, was intercepted by two vehicles. Armed with automatic weapons, the attackers fired, prompting the security guards from the cash transport company to fire back. One of the suspects was injured in the exchange of fire,

according to a police source cited by local media outlet BFMTV.

The attackers managed to flee the scene in a vehicle.

"There were two minor injuries, one caused by traffic accidents related to the incident and the other by shattered glass," the Grenoble public prosecutor was quoted by BFMTV as saying.

An investigation has been launched. The case has been handed over to the Organized and Specialized Crime Division under the French Ministry of the Interior. (Xinhua)

**'Break coalition stalemate':** Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen on Wednesday urged leading parties to break a coalition "stalemate" due to the election victory of the Freedom Party, instead of tasking the far-right party with forming a government.

The Freedom Party won its first-ever election of the National Council, Austria's lower house of parliament, on September 29 by securing 28.8 percent of the vote. As it fell far short of an absolute majority, the Freedom Party needs to find a coalition partner to govern, but all other parties have so far ruled out the possibility of a coalition with its leader Herbert Kickl.

The conservative People's Party, which led the outgoing government, won 26.3 percent of the vote. The Social Democratic Party came third with 21.1 percent.

Following days of talks with the leaders of all parliamentary parties, Van der Bellen said in a national address on Wednesday that he would break with the tradition of entrusting the party that wins the general election to form a new government.

"This time, an unusual case has occurred. It is completely new that there is a winner with whom none of the other parties want to govern," Van der Bellen said. (AP)

## President Lai praises athletes

## Taiwan marks Nat'l Day holiday against background of China threats

TAIPEI, Taiwan, Oct 10, (AP): Taiwan celebrated its National Day holiday Thursday against the background of threats from China, which claims the self-governing island republic as its own territory.

The celebration marks the establishment of the Republic of China, which overthrew the Qing Dynasty in 1911 and fled to Taiwan as Mao Zedong's Communists swept to power on the mainland during a civil war in 1949. Taiwan was under martial law until transitioning to full democracy in the 1980s and 1990s but maintains the original constitution brought from China and the ROC flag.

President Lai Ching-te took office in May, continuing the rightist rule of the Democratic Progressive Party that rejects China's demand that it recognize Taiwan is a part of China. The Nationalists adhere to a unification stance that recognizes both sides of the Taiwan Strait as a single nation.

In a speech marking the holiday, Lai spoke of Taiwan's technology achievements such as those driving the computer chips industry, calling it a "global force for prosperity and development." He also praised athletes such as boxer Lin Yu-ting, who won gold at

the Paris Olympics, and young people who have won prizes in international technical competitions.

Thursday's commemorations included military displays, but no heavy military equipment as seen in years past. And it included performances with music and flag and athletic feats like flips and other stunts.

Addressing the threat from China, Lai took a firm but measured line while offering cooperation on areas from fighting infectious diseases to maintaining "regional peace and stability."

"We hope that China will live up to the expectations of the international community, that it will apply its influence and work with other countries toward ending Russia's invasion of Ukraine and end conflicts in the Middle East," Lai said.

"And we hope that (China) will take up its international responsibilities and, along with Taiwan, contribute to the peace, security and prosperity of the region and the globe," the president said.

Maintaining its military pressure on Taiwan, China's People's Liberation Army sent 15 planes across the median line in the Taiwan Strait, prompting



From left: Taiwan first lady Wu Mei-ru, Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te, Speaker of the Legislature Han Guo-yu and Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim wave during National Day celebrations in front of the Presidential Building in Taipei, Taiwan on Oct 10. (AP)

Taiwan to scramble jets, dispatch ships and activate missile systems.

In response to such threats, Taiwan has ordered billions of dollars in fighter jets, tanks, missiles and various upgrades to existing gear from the U.S., while revitalizing its own defense industry with the production of submarines and other equipment aimed at deterring or fending off a Chinese attack.

At the same time, Taiwan faces economic threats from China ranging from a possible blockade of the trade-dependent island to an undermining of its financial system. China routinely states that Taiwan independence is a "dead end" and that annexation by Beijing is a historical inevitability.

Lai appeared to address such issues in his address, saying: "Finally, we must strengthen resilience throughout Taiwan in national defense, economic livelihoods, disaster prevention and democracy."

Meanwhile, A Chinese defense spokesperson on Wednesday asked the United States to stop its "double-faced" approach toward China, change its double-dealing practice on the Taiwan question, and cease arming Taiwan.



Former Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte gestures during his speech in Davao, southern Philippines on Jan 28. (AP)

## Candidates deny wrongdoings

## Reject Duterte, Quiboloy in elections: rights groups

MANILA, Philippines, Oct 10, (AP): Human rights activists have called on Filipino voters to reject former president Rodrigo Duterte and detained televangelist Apollo Quiboloy in next year's mid-term elections, citing the criminal allegations they're facing.

Duterte registered Monday to run for mayor in the southern city of Davao. While in office, he oversaw anti-drugs crackdowns that left thousands of mostly poor suspect dead in killings, which the International Criminal Court has been investigating as a possible crime against humanity.

Quiboloy, the former president's spiritual adviser and close political ally, has been detained on allegations of sexual abuse and human trafficking in the Philippines, and is on the FBI's most-wanted list for similar charges in the United States. He filed candidacy papers for a seat in the 24-member Senate through a lawyer Tuesday.

Duterte and Quiboloy, who have backed each other for years, have separately denied any wrongdoing.

Under Philippine law, candidates facing criminal charges, including those in detention, can run for office unless they have been convicted of a crime by a Philippine court and exhausted all of their appeals.

Human Rights Watch said Duterte, now 79, can not evade justice in or out of government office.

"The thousands of victims of his brutal regime both across the Philippines and in Davao, where he had been mayor for a long time, will continue to demand accountability," Caloy Conde, the Philippines-based Human Rights Watch campaigner, said and asked Filipino voters to reject him.

"He has too much blood on his hands," Conde said.

Sen. Risa Hontiveros, who is leading a public investigation of the child

sexual abuse and human trafficking allegations against Quiboloy, expressed shock over his decision to run for the Senate.

"For somebody who is facing so many cases, including human trafficking and child abuse, and even hid from law enforcers, you even have the gall of presenting yourself to the people as a candidate to be a lawmaker," Hontiveros said in a statement.

"Let us not elect lawbreakers as lawmakers," she said.

Cristina Palabay said her human rights group Karapatan and allied nongovernment organizations would hold public rallies to oppose Duterte, Quiboloy and their allies to prevent them from using public office as a legal shield.

"More and more of the Philippine electorate are aware of who and what they are," Palabay said in a statement. More than 6,000 people were killed

during Duterte's drug crackdown, according to his administration. But human rights groups say the death toll is considerably higher, and excludes hundreds of killings of suspects in Davao, where Duterte served as mayor for years before his presidency.

Duterte has denied condoning extrajudicial killings, although he has publicly threatened suspects with death and has ordered police to shoot suspects who dangerously resist arrest.

Quiboloy, 74, a Filipino televangelist who calls himself the "anointed son of God" and once claimed to have stopped an earthquake, pleaded not guilty last month to charges of child abuse and human trafficking in two separate Philippine courts.

In his heyday, Quiboloy was one of the most influential religious leaders in the Philippines and was regarded a political kingmaker.

## Africa

**'Nearly 1m displaced in DRC':** Around 940,000 people have been displaced this year in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk said on Tuesday.

That has brought the total number of internally displaced people to more than 6.4 million, Turk said in a briefing with reporters.

The illegal exploitation and illicit trade of natural resources have fueled conflicts in eastern DRC, he warned, highlighting the involvement of both domestic and foreign companies, as well as the spread and trafficking of arms. (Xinhua)



Turk

**UN 'mission' extended:** The United Nations Human Rights Council on Wednesday extended the mandate of a mission investigating possible war crimes in Sudan for a year, after the majority of countries voted in favor of the move.

The mission was found on "reasonable grounds" to believe that war crimes have been committed by parties involved in the conflict in Sudan, according to the UN Human Rights Council Resolution, citing the killing of children and sexual violence as among these violations.

Expressing Khartoum's "opposition" to the move, Sudan's Permanent Representative to the UN Hassan Hamid underlined commitment to the principles of justice and accountability, saying an "international mechanism" to probe war crimes was unnecessary given the existence a national commission with the same objectives. (KUNA)

**Cameroon road accident kills 15:** At least 15 people were killed and 10

others injured in a collision between a passenger bus and a truck in Cameroon's South region Wednesday morning, according to a local official.

Prefect of Dja and Lobo division Damien Owono said the accident happened when the bus collided head-on with the truck coming from the opposite direction in the Kombe locality of the region.

"We woke up this early morning with this shocking news. There were 22 passengers and the driver on the bus. The 10 injured are being taken care of in the hospital. We ask the families to remain calm. It was an accident. Investigations are ongoing and will establish the responsibility. We ask road users to be more careful," Owono told reporters after visiting the scene of the tragedy. (Xinhua)

**9 civil guards dead in Nigeria:** At least nine provincial security operatives keeping guard in a local community were recently killed in an ambush by a group of gunmen in Nigeria's northwestern state of Zamfara, an official said Tuesday.

Dauda Lawal, governor of Zamfara, said in a statement that the civil guards operating under the state's Community Protection Guards scheme were gunned down by the gunmen who laid an ambush for them at a security checkpoint on the outskirts of Tsafe, a town in the Tsafe local government area, late Monday. (Xinhua)

**11 rescued in boat accident:** A total of 11 injured victims were rescued and 21 others were declared missing after two wooden boats collided in Nigeria's southwestern state of Lagos, the police said Tuesday.

Benjamin Hundeyin, the police spokesman in Lagos, told the media on Tuesday that the two ferries, each carrying 16 passengers and crew, capsized in the middle of the lagoon after colliding at Imore, a town in the Amuwo-Odofin local government area, on Monday night. (Xinhua)

## Pilot killed in Australia copter crash under influence of alcohol – probe

CANBERRA, Australia, Oct 10, (AP): A pilot killed when a helicopter crashed on the roof of an Australian hotel two months ago was affected by alcohol and was not qualified to fly at night, an investigation concluded.

Two hotel guests were briefly hospitalized for smoke inhalation and 400 people had to be evacuated from the hotel following the crash in the tropical city of Cairns on Aug. 12. The four-minute flight had not been authorized and there were no airworthiness factors that likely contributed to the Robinson R44's crash, the Australian Transport Safety Bureau said in its final report Thursday.

The pilot, Blake Wilson, a 23-year-old New Zealand citizen, had been employed by the helicopter's operator Nautilus Aviation since April. He had Australian and New Zealand commercial pilot licenses and had flown R44 helicopters before. But he was employed

by Nautilus as a ground handler and did not have qualifications to fly at night, the report said. "The flight was a purposeful act, but there was no evidence to explain the pilot's intentions," the report said.

Wilson had been due to be transferred by Nautilus on the day he died to an island 800 kilometers (500 miles) from Cairns. He had been drinking with colleagues and friends at several Cairns bars before returning to his apartment the night before his intended departure.

A toxicology report indicated he had a "significant blood-alcohol content" when he died. The report doesn't specify a level of concentration, but said he was "affected by alcohol." Wilson had traveled from his apartment to Cairns Airport, used as security code to enter a Nautilus hangar then flew a helicopter toward Cairns, a city of 150,000 people and a popular tourist gateway to the Great Barrier Reef.



Debris from a helicopter lies on the ground after it crashed into the roof of the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel, in Cairns, on Aug 12. (AP)



This is a locator map for Pakistan with its capital, Islamabad, and the Kashmir region. (AP)

## Mililitants shoot police in vehicle, 2 officers killed in NW Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Oct 10, (AP): Suspected militants riding on a motorcycle opened fire on a vehicle carrying police officers Thursday in a former stronghold of the Pakistani Taliban, killing two of them and wounding two others, police said.

The attack happened in Tank, a city in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan, local police official Sher Afzal said. No group has claimed responsibility, but suspicion is likely to fall on the Pakistani Taliban, known as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan or TTP, who often target security forces.

The TTP are outlawed in Pakistan. They are separate from but a close ally of the Afghan Taliban who control neighboring Afghanistan.

The latest violence came a day after at least three people were killed in clashes in the northwestern town of Jamrud between police and supporters of a banned right group Pashtun Protection Movement or PTM, which authorities say supports TTP.

Meanwhile, at least three people were killed in clashes Wednesday between Pakistani police and supporters of a rights group advocating for the Pashtun ethnic minority, angered by a government ban imposed on the organization this week, local officials said.

Officers fired tear gas and swung batons to disperse hundreds of protesters who had gathered in the town of Jamrud, near the city of Peshawar to denounce the ban.



Relatives carry the coffin of Jean Louis Jeune Gracien, who was killed during an attack by armed gangs, at his funeral in Pont-Sonde, Haiti on Oct 8. (AP)

## 'One of biggest massacres in history'

## Death toll in gang attack on Haiti town rises to 115

PONT-SONDÉ, Haiti, Oct 10, (AP): The death toll in a brutal gang attack last week on a small town in central Haiti has risen to 115, a local official told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The attack on residents of Pont-Sondé on Oct. 3 was one of the biggest massacres that Haiti has seen in recent history.

Myriam Fièvre, mayor of the nearby city of Saint-Marc, said Wednesday that the toll had risen to 115 and would likely keep rising because authorities are still looking for bodies and haven't been able to access certain areas of the town.

"We are working to make sure that the population is protected," she said in a phone interview.

The UN had previously said that at least 70 people were killed last week when the Gran Grif gang invaded the town in the central Artibonite region.

The victims included babies, young mothers and the elderly, with the gang approaching Pont-Sondé via canoes to catch residents by surprise, according to a local human rights group.

Survivors have questioned why authorities did not do anything to stop the attack since the gang had warned in a video posted on social media that it planned to target Pont-Sondé.

A day after the attack, officials replaced the police commissioner who oversees the Artibonite region, which has seen a surge of gang violence in recent years, with at least 20 criminal groups operating in the area, according to the UN.

More than 6,200 survivors have fled Pont-Sondé and temporarily settled in the coastal city of Saint-Marc and surrounding areas.

A majority of them are staying with relatives, but more than 750 others have nowhere to go and are sleeping

on the floors of a church, a school and a public plaza in Saint-Marc, according to the UN's International Organization for Migration.

As Saint-Marc struggles with the sudden influx of people, Fièvre warned that the Gran Grif gang is infiltrating nearby communities after attacking Pont-Sondé.

Haiti's National Human Rights Defense Network has said the gang was angry that a local self-defense group was trying to limit gang activity in Pont-Sondé and prevent it from profiting off a makeshift road toll it had recently established nearby.

Gran Grif has about 100 members and has been accused of crimes including murder, rape, robberies and kidnappings. It was formed after former legislator Prophane Victor began arming young men nearly a decade ago to secure his election and control of the area, according to the UN.

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
SAUDI	-	TASI	PHILIPPINES	-	PSEI
DUBAI	-	DFMGI	EGYPT	-	EGX 30
JAPAN	-	Nikkei 225	PAKISTAN	-	KSE 100
	+66.89	11,994.22		-13.05	7,411.47
	+15.23	4,437.56		-413.11	30,762.32
	+102.93	39,380.89		-221.91	85,516.19

# Business



Group picture of the NBK representatives during career day.

## Underscoring its dedication to attracting national talent to banking sector

### National Bank of Kuwait participates in PAM's Career Day

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: Within its consistent endeavors to nurture young national cadres, and to attract high-caliber Kuwaiti talent to the banking sector, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) participated in the Career Day organized by the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) at its headquarters, where it offered promising career opportunities for fresh graduates from various majors.

Over a long time, NBK has been consolidating its position as one of the most socially responsible financial institutions. In this context, it continues to sponsor job fairs that aim to pave the way for young national fresh graduates to navigate their way into the labor market and build their career.

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 development environment to upskill those young talents and enable them to build a sustainable professional career.

Commenting on this, Budor AlShamass Talent Acquisition Manager at Group Human Resources at National Bank of Kuwait said: "Our participation in the Career Day reflects our continuous endeavors to nurture the Kuwaiti youth and to attract high-caliber national talent, and to provide them with suitable job opportunities in the pivotal banking and financial sector."



AlShamass

#### AlShamass

- We aim to boost Kuwaitization by increasing acquisition of national talent
- NBK enjoys a professional work environment that helps Kuwaiti youth build a thriving career
- We seek to attract high-caliber national talent and offer them suitable job opportunities in the banking sector

"NBK stands out as a highly attractive employer offering equal opportunities. Our recruitment strategy is based on attracting, training and developing young national cadres through the best-in-class programs to help them build a successful career. This makes NBK widely regarded as the private sector employer of choice by Kuwaiti fresh graduates," she added.

"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 to build a promising, sustainable career, which aligns with the objectives of New Kuwait Vision 2035," she continued.

"NBK not only provides job opportunities in one of the leading financial institutions locally and regionally, but also a promising career path and prospects. This is done thanks to its world-class



NBK partakes in career day to attract young Kuwaiti talent.

professional training resources and programs, which help upskill the youth and increase their efficiency," she emphasized.

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.

The bank's endeavors to attract national talent go in line with its development and training plans to invest in national cadres and prepare a promising banking generation. It also offers a wide range of training courses and professional academic programs, standing out as one of the leading local banks in organizing training programs for the youth.

Main market index gains 3.75 points

## Boursa Kuwait general index climbs slightly by 2.35 points

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Thursday with a slight increase, as the general index rose by 2.35 points, or 0.03%, to settle at 7,048.23 points. A total of 399.6 million shares were traded across 19,798 transactions, valued at KD 64.5 million (USD 196.7 million).

The main market index gained 3.75 points, or 0.06%, reaching 6,328.80 points, with 324.3 million shares exchanged through 14,625 transactions, worth KD 41 million

(USD 125 million). The premier market index also saw a small rise of 2.10 points, or 0.03%, closing at 7,579.24 points, from 75.2 million shares traded through 5,173 transactions, valued at KD 23.4 million (USD 71.37 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 index dropped slightly by 1.37 points, or 0.02%, to settle at 6,309.69 points, with 244.5 million shares traded through 9,732 transactions, amounting to KD 29.5 million (USD 89.9 million).

### Deal aims to boost investment

## CITRA signs KD 10 million deal with stc for new HQ

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10, (KUNA): Kuwait's information technology regulator signed a rental agreement with local telecom firm stc on Wednesday for a new administrative building run by the state body in the heart of Kuwait City, which stretches over 5698.5 square meters.

The deal, worth more than KD 10 million and signed by Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) acting

chief Abdullah Al-Ajmi, alongside stc chief executive Mutaz Al-Tharab, is in line with a cabinet directive aiming to lure investment by encouraging the private sector to contribute towards state development plans, said a statement by the regulator.

The agreement was hailed as a step towards propping up the national infotech industry, leading to more economic development and growth, added the statement.

### Brent crude falls to \$78.58

## Kuwaiti oil price drops by \$1.50, settles at \$77.62 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10 (KUNA): Price of Kuwaiti oil dropped USD 1.50 to settle on USD 77.62 per barrel on Wednesday compared to USD 79.12 pb on Tuesday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation

(KPC) said on Thursday. Globally, price of Brent crude dropped by 60 cents to USD 78.58 pb, while West Texas Intermediate crude fell by 33 cents to USD 73.24 pb.

### '107% rise in bilateral trade'

## Turkey aims to boost trade with UAE to \$40 bln in 5 yrs

ANKARA, Oct 10, (KUNA): Turkish Trade Minister Omer Bolat announced that his country is aiming to increase trading with the UAE to USD 40 billion within five years.

In a post on the platform X, Bolat mentioned that he received a delegation of Emirati businessmen led by Mohammed Al Otaiba, Chairman of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce, on Wednesday.

He noted that the bilateral trade volume between Turkey and the UAE exceeded USD 20 billion last year, reflecting a 107% increase compared to the previous year.

"Our main goal under the bilateral trade agreement and comprehensive economic partnership is to raise trade volume to \$40 billion within five years," he said.

The minister emphasized that both countries have significant potential to establish new partnerships in various sectors.

Bolat stressed that enhancing cooperation between Turkey and the UAE in various fields will create new opportunities at both the bilateral and

regional levels.

In related news, the Ankara Chamber of Commerce signed a "Goodwill Protocol" with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday to develop trade relations between them.

A statement from the Ankara Chamber of Commerce indicated that the signing of the protocol took place in Ankara in the presence of its chairman, Gürsel Baran, and Mohammed Al Otaiba.

The protocol includes issues such as developing bilateral trade relations, establishing joint projects and partnerships, and providing mutual technical support.

It also covers organizing visits and holding conferences and mutual meetings between businessmen and exchanging experiences between the members of both chambers.

Baran stated that the UAE is one of Turkey's most important trading partners in the Gulf region, noting that they aim to cooperate in various fields.

For his part, Al Otaiba mentioned that trade between the two countries has seen an increase over the past five years.

# Kuwait banks boost construction financing by 61.2% in August '24

Labor shortage and rising costs hamper construction sector

By Mahmoud Shendi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: In August 2024, local banks significantly increased their financing to the construction sector, catering to both residents and non-residents.

Monthly financing rose by 107 million dinars, or an impressive 61.2 percent, reaching a total of 281.5 million dinars, compared to approximately 174.6 million dinars in July.

On an annual basis, this figure saw an increase of 87.2 million dinars, translating to a 44.8 percent rise from the 194.3 million dinars recorded in August 2023. Over the first eight months of 2024, total financing provided by banks to the construction sector reached around 2 billion dinars.

According to the Central Bank of Kuwait's monthly statistics for August, the accumulated balance of construction financing extended by local banks to both residents and non-residents saw a monthly increase of 1.8 percent, amounting to 54 million dinars.

This rise brought the balance from 2.948 billion dinars in July to 3.002 billion dinars in August. On an annual basis, the balance also grew by 479

million dinars from 2.523 billion dinars in August 2023.

For the entirety of 2023, local banks provided a total of approximately 1.754 billion dinars in construction financing, representing a 0.7 percent increase of 14 million dinars compared to 1.740 billion dinars in 2022.

The financing trends in 2024 exhibited fluctuations starting at 156.8 million dinars in January, soaring to 416.3 million dinars in February, before experiencing a decline to 313.7 million dinars in March.

The month of April saw further decreases, dropping to 137 million dinars, followed by 119.2 million dinars in May. June experienced a recovery with 405.6 million dinars, but July saw a decline back to 174.6 million dinars before rebounding significantly in August to 281.5 million dinars.

Despite these positive financing trends, the construction sector in Kuwait continues to grapple with several challenges. One of the foremost issues is the stagnation in project launches and contract awards over the past five years, coupled with delays in payments to contractors.

Moreover, escalating construction costs have emerged as a significant challenge, exacerbated by a shortage of labor, which has led to unprecedented wage increases that negatively impact both

costs and project timelines for residential developments.

Real estate experts indicate that the labor shortage is not solely a matter of quantity; quality is also a pressing concern. The market has witnessed a considerable exodus of skilled workers over the past two years, particularly following the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Central Bank's data further underscores the broader lending landscape in Kuwait. Total loans granted to both residents and non-residents increased by 1.85 billion dinars during the first eight months of 2024, bringing the cumulative balance of credit facilities to 55.4 billion dinars by the end of August. This figure reflects a growth rate of 3.5 percent compared to 53.55 billion dinars at the end of December 2023.

The rise in loan volume is attributed to growth across various economic sectors, particularly in housing loans.

In summary, while the construction sector in Kuwait is experiencing a notable uptick in financing from local banks, it remains beset by several ongoing challenges, particularly concerning labor availability and project management. The positive trend in financing could play a crucial role in revitalizing the sector if these challenges are addressed effectively.

## Kuwait Casting Company owns 5% interest in Foulath Holding

### Three Kuwaiti firms consider non-binding offer for Foulath Holding

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The boards of directors of three prominent companies listed on the Boursa Kuwait are currently deliberating a non-binding offer to acquire 100 percent of the shares of Foulath Holding Company, a closed Bahraini joint-stock entity. This information was disclosed in a statement released on Wednesday, outlining the potential for a significant corporate acquisition in the region, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The companies involved in this discussion are National Industries Group Holding, Kuwait Casting Company, and Gulf Cables and Electrical Industries Group. National Industries Group

has scheduled its board meeting for October 13, 2024, while Kuwait Casting and Gulf Cables were set to convene for their respective meetings Thursday.

During these meetings, the boards will evaluate the terms of the purchase offer, which is contingent upon the successful completion of due diligence. Following this assessment, the companies will consider submitting a binding offer along with the final purchase price.

It's important to note that both Gulf Cables and National Industries Holding currently own a 10 percent stake in Foulath Holding Company, while

Kuwait Casting Company holds a 5 percent interest in the Bahraini firm. The discussions indicate a collaborative approach among the three Kuwaiti companies to strengthen their positions in the market through this potential acquisition.

In their announcements to the Boursa Kuwait, the three companies clarified that, at this time, there is no immediate financial impact resulting from this material information.

The evaluation of the acquisition offer appears to be in its preliminary stages, with further developments anticipated following the due diligence process.



A ship sails on the Gulf of Suez, Egypt, on Oct. 8, 2024. Revenues of Egypt's Suez Canal dropped by 60 percent and the number of ships passing through the waterway decreased by 49 percent since the beginning of 2024, an Egyptian official said Sunday. (Xinhua)

## Global economy still seeing a sluggish recovery

## China seeks deeper economic ties with ASEAN at summit talks

VIENTIANE, Laos, Oct 10, (AP): Chinese Premier Li Qiang called for deeper market integration with Southeast Asia on Thursday during annual summit talks, where concerns over Beijing's aggression in the disputed South China Sea was raised.

The 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations' meeting with Li followed recent violent confrontations at sea between China and ASEAN members Philippines and Vietnam, that sparked growing unease over China's increasingly assertive actions in the disputed waters.

Li didn't mention the row in his opening speech at the summit talks but said intensifying trade relations and creating an "ultra large-scale market" are keys to economic prosperity.

"The global economy is still seeing a sluggish recovery, protectionism is rising and geopolitical turbulence has brought instability and uncertainty to our development," Li

said. "Strengthening market coordination and synchronization is an important direction for our further cooperation."

ASEAN and China said they expect to conclude negotiations to upgrade their free trade pact next year. Officials said the expanded pact will cover supply chain connectivity, the digital economy and green economy. Since the two sides signed the pact covering a market of 2 billion people in 2010, ASEAN's trade with China has leaped from \$235.5 billion to \$696.7 billion last year.

China is ASEAN's No. 1 trading partner and its third-largest source of foreign investment - a key reason why the bloc has been muted in its criticisms of Chinese actions in the South China Sea.

ASEAN members Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei along with Taiwan have overlapping claims with China, which claims sovereignty over virtually all of

the South China Sea. Chinese and Philippine vessels have clashed repeatedly this year, and Vietnam said last week that Chinese forces assaulted its fishermen in the disputed sea. China has also sent patrol vessels to areas that Indonesia and Malaysia claim as exclusive economic zones.

Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. made clear to Li during talks Thursday that ASEAN-China cooperation cannot be separated from the sea dispute, according to an ASEAN official who declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the discussion. The official said Marcos wants to prioritize negotiations on a code of conduct to govern behavior in the sea to ensure peace.

Li responded by saying the South China Sea is "a shared home" and that China has an obligation to protect its sovereignty, the official said.

The Philippines, a longtime U.S. ally, has been critical of

other ASEAN countries for not doing more to get China to back away. Talks on the code of conduct have been ongoing for years, hampered by sticky issues including disagreements over whether the pact should be binding.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who arrived in Vientiane on Thursday for the meetings, is expected to raise the issue of China's aggression in the sea, officials said. The U.S. has no claims but it has deployed navy ships and fighter jets to patrol the waterway and promote freedom of navigation and overflight. China has warned the U.S. not to meddle in the disputes.

ASEAN leaders, who held a summit among themselves on Wednesday, also separately met with new Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol before convening an ASEAN Plus Three summit along with China.

## Govt forecast growth of 1.1% next year

## Germany's economy on track to shrink for a second straight year



German Economy and Climate Minister Robert Habeck shows a card board with the development of nominal wages and real wages as well as inflation during a news conference of Germany's economy development in Berlin, Germany, Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2024. (AP)

## UK's new Labour govt unveils overhaul of workers' rights

LONDON, Oct 10, (AP): Britain's new Labour government unveiled Thursday a slew of new rights for millions of workers, including more generous rules for sick pay and parental leave and major restrictions on certain employment practices such as fire and re-hire - a package of measures described by ministers as the biggest overhaul of workers' rights in a generation.

The Employment Rights Bill was published around 100 days after Labour took power for the first time in 14 years following its crushing victory over the Conservative Party in the general election.

The 28 measures have been broadly welcomed by unions and lobby groups representing businesses, though one described it as "clumsy, chaotic and poorly planned."

Business Secretary Jonathan Reynolds said the measures, which will come into effect in 2026 after more consultations with businesses and unions, will raise the minimum floor of

employment rights and provide better support for those businesses that are engaged in good practices.

"This is a comprehensive bill which, once implemented, will represent the biggest upgrade in employment rights for a generation," he said.

The government, under Prime Minister Keir Starmer, has struggled to maintain the initiative since it was elected on July 4, with critics accusing it of weeks of drift and negative headlines over a series of gifts. With lawmakers back in Parliament, Starmer will be hoping his government can get back on track in the coming weeks with a raft of policies, most notably in the budget on Oct. 30.

Among the measures announced, workers will be able to claim sick pay from the first day of absence rather than the fourth, be entitled to paternity leave and unpaid parental leave from day one of employment, and be entitled to bereavement leave. Workers will also have day-one protection against unfair dismissal.

BERLIN, Oct 10, (AP): Germany's government said Wednesday that its economy, Europe's biggest, is on track to shrink for a second consecutive year - underlining the unpopular administration's troubles as it heads into a difficult election year.

The new forecast that gross domestic product will shrink by 0.2% this year compares with the government's prediction in April of 0.3% growth and brings it into line with economists, who also have forecast a slight contraction. The German economy shrank by 0.3% in 2023.

The government forecast growth of 1.1% next year and 1.6% in 2026.

Vice Chancellor Robert Habeck, who is also the economy minister, said that the German economy hasn't seen powerful growth since 2018 as the country's structural problems have been joined by wider global challenges.

"In the middle of the crises, Germany and Europe are squeezed between China and the U.S., and must learn to assert themselves," he said in a statement.

Habeck argued that the government has tackled many of Germany's problems at home - securing its energy supply, speeding up planning procedures, trimming bureaucracy and trying to address a shortage of skilled workers.

The German Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that such measures need to be implemented quickly and more reforms are required to encourage investment. Its chief executive, Martin Wansleben, said that Germany has only once before had two successive years of recession - in 2002 and 2003, when the government launched a series of welfare state reforms - and that GDP is only half a percentage point above its level before the COVID-19 pandemic.

"There has never yet been such a prolonged phase of weakness in the German economy," he said.

Chancellor Olaf Scholz's three-party coalition government has seen its popularity plunge over nearly three years in office. It has become notorious for constant infighting, for instance over next year's budget.



People buy groceries at a Walmart Superstore in Secaucus, New Jersey, July 11, 2024. (AP)

## US inflation likely fell again in September

## Cooling latest sign of a healthy economy

WASHINGTON, Oct 10, (AP): U.S. inflation last month likely reached its lowest point since February 2021, clearing the way for another Federal Reserve rate cut and adding to the stream of encouraging economic data that has emerged in the final weeks of the presidential campaign.

The consumer price index is expected to have risen just 2.3% in September from 12 months earlier, down from the 2.5% year-over-year increase in August, according to economists surveyed by FactSet, a data provider. A reading that low, likely reflecting lower gas prices and only a slight rise in food costs, would barely exceed the Fed's 2% inflation target. A little over two years ago, inflation had reached a peak of 9.1%.

Measured month over month, consumer prices are thought to have risen a scant 0.1% from August to September, down from a 0.2% increase the previous month.

The improving inflation data follows a mostly healthy jobs report released last week, which showed that hiring accelerated in September and that the unemployment rate dropped from 4.2% to 4.1%. The government has also reported that the economy expanded at a solid 3% annual rate in the April-June quarter. And growth likely continued at roughly that pace in the just-completed

July-September quarter.

Cooling inflation, steady hiring and solid growth could erode former President Donald Trump's advantage on the economy in the presidential campaign as measured by public opinion polls. In some surveys, Vice President Kamala Harris has pulled even with Trump on the issue of who would best handle the economy, after Trump had decisively led President Joe Biden on the issue.

At the same time, most voters still give the economy relatively poor marks, mostly because of the cumulative rise in prices over the past three years.

For the Fed, last week's much-stronger-than-expected jobs report fueled some concern that the economy might not be cooling enough to slow inflation sufficiently. The central bank reduced its key rate by an outsized half-point last month, its first rate cut of any size in four years. The Fed's policymakers also signaled that they envisioned two additional quarter-point rate cuts in November and December.

In remarks this week, a slew of Fed officials have said they're still willing to keep cutting their key rate, but at a deliberate pace, a sign any further half-point cuts are unlikely.

The Fed "should not rush to reduce" its benchmark rate "but rather should proceed gradually," Lorie Logan president of the Federal Reserve's Dallas branch, said in a speech Wednesday.

Inflation in the United States and many countries in Europe and Latin America surged in the economic recovery from the pandemic, as COVID closed factories and clogged supply chains. Russia's invasion of Ukraine

worsened energy and food shortages, pushing inflation higher. It peaked at 9.1% in the U.S. in June 2022.

Excluding volatile food and energy costs, so-called core prices likely rose 0.3% from August to September, according to FactSet, and are probably 3.2% above their level a year earlier. Though such a figure would be faster than is consistent with the Fed's 2% target, economists expect core inflation to cool a bit by year's end as rental and housing prices grow more slowly.

Economists at Goldman Sachs, for example, project that core inflation will drop to 3% by December 2024. Few analysts expect inflation to surge again unless conflicts in the Middle East worsen dramatically.

Though higher prices have soured many Americans on the economy, wages and incomes are now rising faster than costs and should make it easier for households to adapt. Last month, the Census Bureau reported that inflation-adjusted median household incomes - the level at which half of households are above and half below - rose 4% in 2023, enough to return incomes back to their pre-pandemic peak.

In response to higher food prices, many consumers have shifted their spending from name brands to private labels or have started shopping more at discount stores. Those changes have put more pressure on packaged foods companies, for example, to slow their price hikes.

This week, PepsiCo reported that its sales volumes fell after it imposed steep price increases on its drinks and snacks.

## Analysts point to Hurricane Helene

## US jobless claims jump to 258,000

WASHINGTON, Oct 10, (AP): The number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits last week jumped to their highest level in a year, which analysts are saying is more likely a result of Hurricane Helene than a broader softening in the labor market.

The Labor Department reported Thursday that applications for jobless claims jumped by 33,000 to 258,000 for the week of Oct. 3. That's the most since Aug. 5, 2023 and well above the 229,000 analysts were expecting.

Analysts highlighted big jumps in jobless benefit applications across states that were most affected by Hurricane Helene last week, including Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

Applications for jobless benefits are widely considered

representative of U.S. layoffs in a given week, however they can be volatile and prone to revision.

The four-week average of claims, which evens out some of that weekly volatility, rose by 6,750 to 231,000.

The total number of Americans collecting jobless benefits rose by 42,000 to about 1.86 million for the week of Sept. 28, the most since late July.

Some recent labor market data has suggested that high interest rates may finally be taking a toll on the labor market.

In response to weakening employment data and receding consumer prices, the Federal Reserve last month cut its benchmark interest rate by a half of a percentage point as the central bank shifts its focus from taming inflation toward supporting the job market.

## Inventory for buyers boosted

## Falling mortgage rates prompting more homeowners to sell

LOS ANGELES, Oct 10, (AP): Homebuyers in Seattle, Silicon Valley and the nation's other priciest markets may soon see some relief as falling mortgage rates prompt more sellers to list their properties.

The number of newly listed homes for sale climbed 4.2% last month, according to data from Realtor.com. September's jump was the biggest annual increase since the peak of the spring homebuying season, and helped lift active listings 34% from a year earlier, according to Realtor.com.

A dearth of properties for sale is one reason keeping the median U.S. home sale price near record highs. The median U.S. home sale price hit an all-time high in June at \$426,900.

Last month, the Federal Reserve

announced its first interest rate cut in more than four years and signaled more cuts to come this year and through 2026.

While the Fed doesn't set mortgage rates, its policy pivot cleared a path for mortgage rates to generally go lower.

"Sellers, especially those who are locked into a low rate, have been waiting for market conditions to change," said Danielle Hale, chief economist at Realtor.com. "Now that we're seeing mortgage rates down to their lowest levels in two years, there are signs of movement, with more sellers putting homes on the market, even in what's typically a real estate shoulder season."

Lower mortgage rates boost home shoppers' purchasing power. They

also can make selling a home more palatable for homeowners with mortgages that have a fixed rate below current prevailing rates.

The most expensive markets in the country drove much of the increase in newly listed homes last month. That includes metropolitan areas around Seattle, San Jose and Washington D.C., Realtor.com found.

Even so, homeowners who can afford to hold off on selling are likely waiting for rates to come down a lot further than they already have.

Consider, as of the second quarter, about 84% of all outstanding mortgages had a rate below 6% and 56% had a rate below 4%, according to Realtor.com.

Hale expects the average rate on a 30-year home loan to stay around

6% through the end of this year. A year ago, the average rate hit a 23-year high of 7.79%, according to mortgage buyer Freddie Mac.

September marked the 11th month in a row with an annual increase in active listings and the highest number of properties on the market since April 2020. The pickup in home listings is good news for the housing market, which has been in a sales slump for more than two years, partly due to a shortage of homes for sale.

Despite the September surge in new listings, the inventory of homes on the market remains below pre-pandemic levels. Active listings were down 23.2% last month compared to September 2019 and new listings were off 11.8%, according to Realtor.com.

## Bid to support capital market

## China sets up monetary policy tool

BEIJING, Oct 10, (Xinhua): China's central bank announced Thursday that it has decided to set up Securities, Funds and Insurance companies Swap Facility (SFISF), with the initial scale of 500 billion yuan (about 71 billion U.S. dollars) for "the healthy and stable development of the capital market."

The SFISF, which is the first monetary policy tool created by China to support the capital market, will allow eligible securities, funds and insurance companies to use their assets including bonds, stock ETFs and holdings in constituents of the CSI 300 Index as collateral in exchange for highly liquid assets such as treasury bonds and central bank bills, the People's Bank of China said in a statement.

The scale of the SFISF could be expanded depending on the development

of the situation, according to the central bank.

Starting Thursday, applications from eligible securities, funds and insurance companies will be accepted.

As a long-term institutional arrangement, the SFISF is conducive to enhancing the resilience of China's capital market and curbing herd behavior and other pro-cyclical actions, thus helping maintain market stability, authoritative sources were quoted by Xinhua's financial newspaper, China Securities Journal, as saying.

The new tool can also boost the participation of non-bank institutions, improve the transmission efficiency of monetary policy in the capital market, and contribute to the balanced development of bond, stock and other markets, according to the sources.

## South Africa launches visa reform to lure talent, boost economy

JOHANNESBURG, Oct. 10, (Xinhua): South Africa announced a remote work visitor visa and a new points-based system for work visas on Wednesday, aiming to attract talent and investment and grow the country's tourism sector.

The remote work visitor visa seeks

to lure highly paid individuals who are employed abroad to spend their money in South Africa, eat at South African restaurants, and buy South African goods and services, said the Department of Home Affairs in a statement.

"The department's meticulous at-

tention to detail to ensure that these reforms are fit-for-purpose and market-friendly has resulted in two products that begin to reposition South Africa as a world-class destination for investment and tourism to create thousands of new jobs for South Africans," said

South African Minister of Home Affairs Leon Schreiber.

The new points-based system introduces a transparent framework to adjudicate visa applications in order to tackle corruption and cut red tape while delivering on the government's top priority to

grow the economy and create new jobs for South Africans, added Schreiber.

Research commissioned by the South African Reserve Bank and the International Food Policy Research Institute shows that increasing the share of high-end skilled workers in the

South African population by just 0.02 percent can boost annual economic growth by up to 1.2 percent. It also shows that an improved visa regime can create seven new jobs for every additional skilled worker attracted into the economy.

## Upcoming Alfouz draw scheduled for October 14, 2024

### ABK announces Zainab Khalaf as Alfouz draw winner

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is excited to announce Zainab Mubarak Khalaf as the winner of Alfouz KD 10,000 weekly draw on Monday 7 October, 2024. The draw took place in the presence of a Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative, ensuring transparency.

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

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



ABK Alfouz winners

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

ABK encourages everyone to open an Alfouz draw account or increase their balance to participate in the upcoming weekly draw, which is scheduled to take place on Monday 14 October 2024.

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

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

## Mashiyath Ali wins KD 250 cash prize

### ABK announces winner of 'Push Notifications' draw

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) has announced Mohammed Mashiyath Ali as the winner of the 'Push Notifications' draw. This campaign aims to encourage customers to enable the Bank's free service on the mobile app to receive about instant notifications on their account transactions.

Through this service, customers will be able to view the latest developments in their transactions easily and conveniently, as well as review their previous transaction history.

This initiative aims to encourage ABK customers to make the most of the banking services provided through the Bank's mobile app, which has witnessed noteworthy interaction from customers who have activated this feature.

On this occasion, Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, said, "We congratulate the draw winner of the KD 250 cash prize and encourage all customers to participate in this and future campaigns for a chance to win more prizes. I would also like to express my gratitude for



Ms. Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK.

our customers' loyalty for whom we endeavor to continue to provide distinguished banking services and innovative campaigns."

She added that the Push Notifications campaign is one of the Bank's many initiatives that fall under its efforts to constantly find new ways to engage with customers and provide them with worthwhile services.



Pictures of the 'Blood Donation Drive'



## 252 successful donations at silver jubilee event

# KPBD 'marks' 25th Blood Donation Drive at Kuwait Central Blood Bank

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The Kuwait Pakistan Blood Donors Organization (KPBD) proudly celebrated its 25th (Silver Jubilee) Blood Donation Drive today at the Kuwait Central Blood Bank - Jabriya, marking a significant milestone for the organization. The event welcomed esteemed guests, including Her Excellency Dr. Ameera AlHassan, Head of the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat GCC Kuwait Mission), and Mr. Farrukh Amir Sial, Community Welfare Attaché at the Embassy of Pakistan in Kuwait. Prominent leaders from Pakistani community organizations and digital media correspondents were also in attendance, inspiring both blood donors and organizers alike.

KPBD Chairman Mr. Hafiz Muhammad Shabbir and President Mr. Malik Sajid Ali warmly welcomed the guests, showcasing the dedication and commitment of the Pakistani community in Kuwait.

The dignitaries expressed their admiration for the community's steadfast support for blood donation initiatives, highlighting the positive impact of these efforts. The event received extensive media coverage from KTV2, local electronic outlets, and various Pakistani digital me-



Mr. Hafiz Muhammad Shabbir expressing his admiration for the community's steadfast support.

dia representatives.

Since its establishment in 2013, KPBD has tirelessly advocated for the importance of blood donation, successfully organizing numerous drives that have resulted in the collection of thousands of pints of blood. Beyond these events, KPBD is responsive to urgent donation requests via social media, providing crucial support to patients in need.

The turnout from the Pakistani community was remarkable, with 329 individuals participating from 1:30 PM to 6:00 PM. A total of 252 successful donations were recorded, with a rejection rate of 23%.

The event also highlighted solidarity from various nationalities, including Indian, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, and Filipino participants, all uniting to support this noble humanitarian cause.

KPBD extends its heartfelt gratitude to all blood donors and representatives from Pakistani community organizations in Kuwait for their unwavering support. Special thanks are also extended to the Pakistani electronic, digital, and social media channels for their comprehensive coverage, showcasing the community's positive contributions.

The event was generously sponsored by Al-Hafiz Group, Ooredoo Telecom, Al-Bahr Company, Alfaisal Bakery, and Juices & Water provided by KPBD team member Mr. Zakir Khan. The day concluded with a note of appreciation from the Chairman and organizing committee, celebrating the selfless contributions of donors and volunteers that made the event a resounding success.

## Writers' Forum Kuwait holds unforgettable poetic meeting

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: Moments of pleasure and pain become unforgettable and so becomes the hours that are spent in enriching our thoughts. One such unforgettable evening was witnessed by the members of the Writers' Forum Kuwait who gathered at the residence of their President Mrs. Maimuna Ali Chougale on the pleasant evening of Friday, 27th September 2024.

The meeting started with the general secretary Ms Nazneen Ali welcoming everyone mentioning that commitment is the key for creativity and success of any association. She appreciated the commitment of member Yajuvendra Chandrakar and Ameeruddin Ameer towards the forum and invited them as the President and Chief Guest of the evening respectively. She also discussed the plan for the Forum's next big event on the occasion of the Republic Day for which various possibilities are being worked out.

As a commitment towards the society and literature a detailed discussion was also held among the members about the ways the Forum could create a difference and groom the next generation.

The meeting then progressed into its poetry session that started with Ms. Nazneen Ali's touching Ghazal in Urdu that was well complemented by Ghazal by Dr Rajesh Gupta. The dynamics and versatility of Urdu poetry were further revealed by renditions by

Mrs. Maimuna Ali Chougale, Sayeed Nazar Kadpawi and Syed Qadir Muzammil, each of them elevating the meeting to the next level of excellence.

Dr Radhika Guleri Bhardwaj, Ms. Kalpana Shah and Dr Vinod Kumar presented captivating Hindi poeries with thought provoking subjects. Ms Kalpana Shah's couplets in Gujarati were equally mesmerizing.

In the closing session Ameeruddin Ameer's Kannada poetry on a very sensitive social issue of dowry was much appreciated. In his remarks as Chief Guest he mentioned that the articles and poetry presented in the evening were riveting and engrossing. He expressed his gratitude to the members of the Forum for recognizing his commitment and urged others to follow the same.

Yajuvendra Chandrakar, the President of the evening further added to the appreciation and admired each poet individually quoting the key couplets that served as a gist of each presentation. His emotional poem in Hindi justified his position as the President of the meeting.

The presence of Forum's patron Mr Ali Chougale and Dr Rubina Chougale made the meeting a special one to be reminisced forever.

The meeting ended with savory dishes and heartwarming gratitude towards the host Mrs Maimuna and Mr Ali Chougale.



Group photo of the meeting.

## Over 80 business professionals gather to celebrate achievements

# AmCham Kuwait hosts Back to Business AGM at Waldorf Astoria

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The American Business Council - AmCham Kuwait (AmCham Kuwait) held its Back to Business Annual General Meeting (AGM) on September 19 at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. The event welcomed over 80 attendees, including members and guests, to review the organization's accomplishments and outline upcoming initiatives for the remainder of 2024.

### Opening Remarks

The AGM began with a warm welcome from Pete Swift, Chairman of AmCham Kuwait. He greeted attendees and emphasized the importance of reconnecting as the business community returns after the summer break. Special acknowledgment was given to Melinda Crowley, Acting DCM, along with the U.S. Embassy's new section chiefs, Chairman's Club Members, and individual AmCham members.

Mr. Swift highlighted the significant growth in membership and the expansion of exclusive member benefits, such as discounts with hotels, retailers, and restaurants. He noted that AmCham Kuwait has participated in 57 events since January, demonstrating the organization's commitment to fostering a dynamic business environment.

### Key Initiatives

A focal point of the evening was the discussion of AmCham Kuwait's Women in Business Diwanis, which has facilitated important conversations around mentorship and empowerment. Mr. Swift announced the recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Kuwait Women's Economic Empowerment Platform (KWEPP). This collaboration aims to develop a scalable, capacity-building mentorship program for women in business, reinforcing AmCham Kuwait's dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

### Acknowledgments and Recognitions

Following Mr. Swift's address, Dr. Areezou Harraf, Vice Chair of AmCham Kuwait, expressed gratitude to the event's sponsors for their support. She underscored the essential role of partnerships in advancing



Photo during the Back to Business Annual General Meeting.

the organization's mission. Dr. Harraf presented a token of appreciation to Salma Al Hajjaj, KWEPP for her significant contributions to the Women in Business Diwanis, acknowledging her efforts in promoting inclusive practices within the business community.

Representatives from Platinum Sponsor American University of Kuwait (AUK) gave brief remarks, reaffirming their commitment to supporting AmCham Kuwait's initiatives. Kuwait Chemical House (KCH)

was also acknowledged as a valued Platinum Sponsor. Additionally, IFA-International Travel & Tourism, the event's travel and tourism partner, was recognized for its continued support and generous raffle prize of airline tickets.

### Overview of Achievements and Future Events

After a networking dinner, Ola Saab, Chair of Events at AmCham Kuwait, presented an overview of the organization's achievements in 2024. She high-

lighted the success of the 57 events held since January, which provided valuable networking and learning opportunities for members. Ms. Saab also outlined plans for 18 more events scheduled for the rest of the year, including the upcoming "The Future of AI" and "Kuwait's Investment Landscape and Financial Resilience" forums. These events aim to offer a platform to discuss emerging trends and opportunities on key economic topics.

### Raffle and Prizes

The evening featured a raffle draw with prizes provided by members and partners:

1. Best Al-Yousifi: A voucher redeemable at their stores, presented by Director Omar Massoud
2. Mezzan Pharmacy: A voucher awarded to a lucky attendee.
3. United Trading Company (UTC): Two kitchen appliances - blender and an air fryer.
4. Waldorf Astoria Hotel: A two-night stay in the Premier Double Room, including buffet breakfast at Ava, presented by General Manager Saleh Batayneh.
5. Grand Hyatt Hotel: A one-night stay in a Grand Double Room with breakfast at Istanbul Restaurant.
6. Al Wazzan Foodstuff Industries Group - Hectare's Chips: 10 boxes of Hectare's Chips awarded to 10 winners.
7. Gulf Cryo: Eco-friendly water carbonators and natural syrups from their Gulf Soda product line, awarded to two attendees.
8. IFA International Travel & Tourism: The grand prize - an economy-class ticket to the United States or Canada - announced by General Manager Ayman Sawires.

### Importance of the Event

The Back to Business AGM serves as a pivotal gathering for the business community in Kuwait. By bringing together professionals from various sectors, the event strengthens ties within the community, encourages collaboration, and fosters an environment conducive to economic growth and innovation.

## Her 'intense poetic prose' exposes fragility of human life

# South Korean author Han Kang wins Nobel Prize in literature

STOCKHOLM, Oct 10, (AP) — South Korean author Han Kang was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature Thursday for what the Nobel committee called “her intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life.”

Nobel committee chairman Anders Olsson praised Han’s “physical empathy for the vulnerable, often female lives” of her characters.

“She has a unique awareness of the connections between body and soul, the living and the dead, and in a poetic and experimental style, has become an innovator in contemporary prose,” Olsson said.

Nobel literature committee member Anna-Karin Palm said Han writes “intense lyrical prose that is both tender and brutal, and sometimes slightly surrealistic as well.”

Han becomes the first Asian woman and the first South Korean writer to win the Nobel literature prize. She also becomes the second South Korean national to win a Nobel Prize, after late former President Kim Dae-jung won the peace prize in 2000. He was honored for his efforts to restore democracy in South Korea during the country’s previous military rule and improve relations with war-divided rival North Korea.

Han wins the Nobel at a time of growing global influence of South Korean culture, which in recent years has included the success of films like director Bong Joon-ho’s Oscar-winning “Parasite,” the Netflix survival drama “Squid Game” and the worldwide fame of K-pop groups like BTS and BLACKPINK.

### Decision

Han, 53, won the International Booker Prize in 2016 for “The Vegetarian,” an unsettling novel in which a woman’s decision to stop eating meat has devastating consequences.

At the time of winning that award, Han said writing novels “is a way of questioning for me.”

“I just try to complete my questions through the process of my writing and I try to stay in the questions, sometimes painful, sometimes - well - sometimes demanding,” she said.

With “The Vegetarian,” she said, “I wanted to question about being human and I wanted to describe a woman who desperately didn’t want to belong to the human race any longer.”

Her novel “Human Acts” was an International Booker Prize finalist in 2018.

Han made her publishing debut as a poet in 1993; her first short story col-



A TV screen shows an image of the winner of the 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature, South Korean writer Han Kang, during a news program at Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, Oct. 10. (AP)

lection was published the following year and her first novel, “Black Deer,” in 1998. Works translated into English include “The Vegetarian,” “Greek Les-

sons,” “Human Acts” and “The White Book,” a poetic novel that draws on the death of Han’s older sister shortly after birth. Her most recent novel, “We

Do Not Part,” is due to be published in English next year.

Olsson, the committee chair, called “Human Acts” a work of “wit-

ness literature.” It is based on the real-life killing of pro-democracy protesters in Han’s home city of Gwangju in 1980.

The literature prize has long faced criticism that it is too focused on European and North American writers of style-heavy, story-light prose. It has also been male-dominated, with just 17 women among its 119 laureates until this year’s award. The last woman to win was Annie Ernaux of France, in 2022.

Six days of Nobel announcements opened Monday with Americans Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun winning the medicine prize. Two founding fathers of machine learning - John Hopfield and Geoffrey Hinton - won the physics prize on Tuesday. On Wednesday, three scientists who discovered powerful techniques to decode and even design novel proteins were awarded the Nobel Prize in chemistry.

The Nobel Peace Prize will be announced Friday and the economics award next Monday.

The prize carries a cash award of 11 million Swedish kronor (\$1 million) from a bequest left by the award’s creator, Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel. The laureates are invited to receive their awards at ceremonies on Dec. 10, the anniversary of Nobel’s death.

## Variety

**NEW YORK:** Stars of stage and screen - including Anne Hathaway, Kelli O'Hara, Kristin Chenoweth and Audra McDonald - are set for a campaign rally for Kamala Harris in New York City next week that will be livestreamed.

“Broadway Rallies for Kamala” will be performed in front of a live, invited audience and live streamed nationally for free on Monday via BroadwayWorld at 7:30 p.m. EDT.

The event will include appearances and performances by Whoopi Goldberg, Ana Gasteyer, Billy Porter, Wilson Cruz, Arielle Jacobs, Erika Henningsen, Isabelle McCalla, J. Harrison Ghee, Judy Kuhn,

Lilli Cooper, Rosie Perez and Shaina Taub. Chasten Buttigieg, the spouse of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, will also be on hand.

The evening event will be paired with a daytime virtual phone bank, “Kamala Dial-A-Thon,” with volunteers hoping to make 1 million phone calls alongside Broadway and Hollywood talent to help get out the vote. (AP)

**NEW YORK:** Sean “Diddy” Combs was set to make his first appearance before the judge who is expected to preside over the hip-hop powerbroker’s trial on sex trafficking charges.

Combs will be brought to Manhattan federal court from a Brooklyn jail for a Thursday afternoon appearance before Judge Arun Subramanian.

The hearing is expected to result in deadlines being set for lawyers on each side to submit arguments that will establish the boundaries for a trial that Combs’ lawyers want to start in April or May. Prosecutors have not expressed a preference for when the trial might occur.

The judge was assigned to the case after another judge recused himself based on his past associations with lawyers in the case.

Combs, 54, has pleaded not guilty to charges lodged against him last month. Those charges included racketeering conspiracy and sex trafficking based on allegations that go back to 2008.

An indictment alleges Combs coerced and abused women for years with help from a network of associates and employees while silencing victims through blackmail and violent acts including kidnapping, arson and physical beatings. (AP)

**PARIS:** French President Emmanuel Macron says he’s “super proud” of a cameo appearance by his wife, Brigitte, in the fourth season of the Netflix show “Emily in Paris” but doesn’t seem keen to make a guest appearance of his own.

“I’m less attractive than Brigitte,” the French leader said in an interview with Variety, published Wednesday, when asked if he’d been invited to make an appearance. France’s first lady plays herself in one of the new season’s episodes.

“I was super proud and she was very happy to do so,” Macron told Variety. “It’s just a few minutes, but I think it was a very good moment first for her.”

“I think it’s good for the image of France,” he said and added that the show is “super positive in terms of attractiveness for the country.”

“So for my own business, it’s a very good initiative,” Macron said. Lily Collins, who plays Emily, previously told The Associated Press that Brigitte Macron was “a big fan of the show.” The first lady invited her and Darren Star, the series’ creator, to meet a few years ago and shared her desire to appear on the show, Collins said. (AP)

## Film



This image released by A24 shows Andrew Garfield, center, and Florence Pugh, (right), in a scene from ‘We Live In Time.’ (AP)

## Pugh and Garfield shine in new romantic film

# Life flies in ‘We Live in Time’

LOS ANGELES, Oct 10, (AP) — It’s not hard to spend a few hours watching Florence Pugh and Andrew Garfield fall and be in love. In “We Live In Time,” filmmaker John Crowley puts the audience up close and personal with this photogenic British couple through the highs and lows of a relationship in their 30s.

Everyone starts to think about the idea of time, and not having enough of it to do everything they want, at some point. But it seems to hit a lot of us very acutely in that tricky, lovely third decade. There’s that cruel biological clock, of course, but also careers and homes and families getting older. Throw a cancer diagnosis in there and that timer gets ever more aggressive.

While we, and Tobias (Garfield) and Almut (Pugh), do indeed live in time, as we’re constantly reminded in big and small ways - clocks and stop-watches are ever-present, literally and metaphorically - the movie hovers above it. The storytelling jumps back and forth through time like a scattershot memory as we piece together these lives that intersect in an elaborate, mystical and darkly comedic way: Almut runs into Tobias with her car. Their first chat is in a hospital hallway, with those glaring fluorescent lights and him bruised and cut all over. But he’s so struck by this beautiful woman in front of him, he barely seems to care.

I suppose this could be considered a Lubitschian “meet-cute” even if it knowingly pushes the boundaries of our understanding of that romance trope. Before the hit, Tobias was in a hotel, attempting to sign divorce papers and his pens were out of ink and pencils kept breaking. In a fit of near-mania he leaves, wearing only his bathrobe, to go to a corner store and buy more. Walking back, he drops something in the street and bang: A new relationship is born. It’s the ultimate metaphor for the out-of-body vulnerability required to fall in love.

There are several moments of mania that await both, particularly around a baby that just isn’t ready to come out yet - until it is and they’re nowhere near the hospital. I won’t ruin it, but it is one of the funnier, more emotional and memorable birthing scenes I’ve ever seen on screen. It’s one of those scenes where you don’t expect tears, but there they

are.

Speaking of tears, there is a certain expectation, or assumption, that a movie like “We Live In Time” is going to leave you a wreck, heaving with full body sobs. This was not my experience. Tear count is not exactly a science or even a reliable metric for quality: There have been truly bad movies that have had that effect and great ones that haven’t. But it did leave me wondering why, especially considering how Crowley knocked it out of the park with “Brooklyn.”

Nick Payne’s script also leaves some things to be desired, especially in its fleshing out of Almut. By 34 she’s already a Michelin-starred chef and has a whole past life of athletic success that we learn about. And yet early in her relationship with Tobias when he asks her if she wants kids, she flips. Now, there are bad ways to approach this topic with women, but her response felt unnatural, especially considering that it’s entirely reasonable that adults who are getting serious have this conversation early. Instead, he’s the one who comes back and apologizes. Her decisions throughout are a little curious and will likely inspire some post screening chats.

The eventual child is also little more than a beautiful prop, with no spark or personality. We never see a tantrum, or a need or want from her that doesn’t keep the adult story chugging along. She is simply a shorthand for what will be left behind if Almut does not win the cancer fight.

The main reason to see “We Live In Time” is not the promise of crying or the realities of having a young kid, though, but the quietly affecting performances from Pugh and Garfield, who seems to fit right into the nice guy mold we’re all celebrating now thanks to Adam Brody’s Hot Rabbi. It is charming and silly and sometimes cringey - other people’s relationships always are - and in the end it works exceedingly well because of them and their wonderful chemistry.

“We Live in Time,” an A24 release in New York and Los Angeles Friday and nationwide Oct. 18, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for “language, sexuality and nudity.” Running time: 107 minutes. Three stars out of four.



Travis Kelce on the set of the new game show ‘Are You Smarter Than a Celebrity.’ (AP)

## Kelce balances football, Hollywood aspirations

LOS ANGELES, Oct 10, (AP) — Travis Kelce plays a flirty nurse with swagger on FX’s series “Grottesquerie,” landed a cameo in “Happy Gilmore 2,” and hosts a new game show. If Hollywood’s calling, he’ll take the meeting — with one caveat. Football comes first.

“I still love coming in to work, getting after it, and chasing championships,” said the Kansas City Chiefs tight end over Zoom. “That’s what I’ve always dreamt of doing. But in the off-season, I do like to dabble around.”

He wants to see where he’s most comfortable adding, “I think you’ll see me continue to find my lane.”

On Oct. 16, Kelce debuts as the host of “Are You Smarter than a Celebrity?” on Prime Video. Adult contestants answer elementary-level questions as celebrities like comedians Ron Funches and Nikki Glaser, “Vanderpump Rules” cast member Lala Kent, or former football player Chad “Ochocinco” Johnson help with the answer. The final question is from the 6th grade and worth \$100,000.

In an interview, Kelce spoke more about the show, his first love of football — but sorry Swifties, didn’t discuss his relationship with Taylor Swift. Answers have been edited for clarity and length.

AP: What was the hardest part about hosting a game show?

Kelce: Taking control of the atmosphere was probably the biggest challenge. You have to make sure that everybody understands the rules and where they’re at in the game.

AP: You’re used to playing high-energy football. There is a lot of waiting on sets and repetitive takes. Was the change of pace a challenge?

Kelce: It’s a completely different world, 100%. I had to pick and choose when I had caffeine. Typically, I just drink it in the morning and I keep it going but I had to space it out throughout the day so I had the same energy all day long.

AP: Have you watched any of the episodes yet? If so, what did you think?

Kelce: I’ll definitely watch but I’m actually terrified of watching myself in situations like this but I’ll turn it on to critique myself. I’m my own worst critic. I can only see the bad that I do in anything, even on the football field.

AP: Which subject on the show would you have the hardest time with?

Kelce: There’s an astronomy category. I didn’t know anything about that and I still don’t. On top of that, I didn’t even know that was taught in elementary school.



# HEALTH

From struggle to strength ...

## Al Mutawa embarks on a mission to transform lives through nutrition

By Paulo Francisco X. Fernandes  
Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

In a world increasingly captivated by the quest for wellness and healthy living, the story of Hadeel Al Mutawa, stands out as a beacon of hope and resilience. Armed with a Master's degree in Eating Disorders and Clinical Nutrition, she has not only dedicated her career to understanding the complexities of nutrition but has also transformed her own life in the process.

Her journey began during her teenage years, a period marked by the struggles of obesity and unhealthy eating habits. Like many young people, she faced the challenges of body image and self-esteem, grappling with episodes of binge eating that left her feeling trapped in a cycle of guilt and despair.

However, rather than succumbing to her circumstances, she embarked on a transformative path that would redefine her relationship with food and herself.

This personal experience ignited a profound desire to help others who were grappling with similar challenges. Motivated by her own battles, she immersed herself in the study of nutrition, determined to empower others to make positive changes in their lives.

Her journey from struggle to strength has not only equipped her with the knowledge and expertise necessary to guide others on their nutritional journeys but has also instilled in her a deep sense of empathy and understanding for those she serves.

Today, she stands as a testament to the power of personal growth, using her insights to inspire and educate individuals about the importance of healthy eating habits, self-acceptance, and resilience.

Through her work, she aims to break down the stigma surrounding eating disorders and foster a community where individuals feel supported in their quests for a healthier lifestyle.

This article delves into her incredible journey, exploring the challenges she faced, the lessons she learned, and her unwavering commitment to helping others reclaim their lives through the transformative power of nutrition.

**Arab Times:** Can you tell us about your journey in pursuing MSc in Eating Disorders and Clinical Nutrition? What motivated you to specialize in this field?

**Hadeel Al Mutawa:** During my teenage years, I faced obesity and struggled with unhealthy eating habits, including episodes of binge eating. This personal experience motivated me to change my lifestyle and inspired a desire to help others facing similar challenges. To pursue this goal, I completed a foundation in medicine followed by an undergraduate degree in Human Nutrition. I then further specialized by obtaining a Master's in Eating Disorders and Clinical Nutrition. My journey is driven by a passion to support individuals in achieving healthier relationships with food and promoting overall well-being.

**AT:** How has your educational background helped to deal with complex cases of eating disorders and clinical nutrition?

**HM:** My educational background has given me a solid foundation for addressing complex cases of eating disorders and clinical nutrition. Beginning with my foundation in medicine, I acquired essential knowledge about human physiology and the psychological aspects of health. My undergraduate degree in Human Nutrition further deepened my understanding of nutritional science, dietary patterns, and the vital role of nutrition in overall health.

Pursuing a Master's in Eating Disorders and Clinical Nutrition allowed me to specialize in this critical area where I learned about the intricate relationship between psychological factors and nutritional behaviors. This specialized training equips me with the skills to assess, diagnose, and develop tailored treatment plans for individuals struggling with eating disorders.

My personal journey has also shaped my perspective. I attended sessions with a nutritionist throughout high school and participated in a weight loss camp called WellSpring twice during my childhood. These experiences not only provided me with personal insights into the challenges of managing eating behaviors but also fueled my passion for helping others navigate similar paths.

Now, in my professional practice, I observe not only physical health changes in my clients but also significant improvements in their mental health and overall well-being. Witnessing their transformations -- especially their evolving behaviors and attitudes towards food -- motivates me to work even harder and dedicate longer hours to ensure my clients feel supported and satisfied on their journeys.

**AT:** Can you highlight any significant research or projects you were involved in during your MSc program?

**HM:** During my undergraduate studies and MSc program, I had the opportunity to engage in two significant dissertations with Dr. Charles Wells from University College London Hospital that deepened my understanding of key issues in the field of eating disorders and clinical nutrition.

The first dissertation was a qualitative study examining the eating behaviors and physical activity habits of Kuwaitis living in Kuwait compared to those living in London. This research highlighted the impact of cultural and environmental factors on dietary choices and activity levels, providing valuable insights into the unique challenges faced by individuals in different settings.

The second dissertation was a systematic review focusing on the psychological outcomes and complications associated with post-bariatric surgery. I chose this topic due to the notable lack of information in this area. Often, the emphasis was placed primarily on the physical solutions and outcomes, while the psychological aspects were overlooked. My research aimed to shed light on the importance of addressing psychological outcomes and providing comprehensive solutions to the issues faced by individuals after surgery.

Both projects reinforced my belief that a holistic approach is essential in the field of nutrition and eating disorders, integrating both physical and psychological perspectives to better support individuals in their health journeys.

**AT:** What are some of the most common misconceptions about eating disorders that you encounter in your practice?

**HM:** An unhealthy eating behavior or an incorrect theory that someone believes in is an eating disorder  
-- Eating a lot of healthy food could lead to weight loss  
-- Eating less meals will aid with weight loss  
-- Gaining weight is easier than losing weight  
-- Anorexia or bulimia nervosa is normal

**AT:** How do you approach creating nutritional plans for clients struggling with eating disorders like anorexia, bulimia, or binge-eating disorder?

**HM:** In my practice, I prioritize understanding each client's unique journey before we begin addressing their eating disorder. One of the first steps I take is to ask them how willing they are to change. Some clients arrive extremely motivated, eager to transform their lives as quickly as possible.



Hadeel Al Mutawa

However, I often work with clients suffering from anorexia who have lived with their disorder for much of their lives. For many, this disorder has become a part of their identity, often shaped by external factors such as trauma or body image issues.

These clients may feel exhausted by the cyclical thoughts and behaviors associated with their eating disorder, yet they might not be ready to let it go. For them, I emphasize the importance of change and provide clear reasons why it is necessary. I focus on guiding them to gradually shift toward a healthier lifestyle, rather than forcing abrupt changes that could feel overwhelming.

In my experience, several misconceptions about eating disorders frequently hinder understanding and effective treatment:

a. Unhealthy eating behavior equals an eating disorder: Many believe that any unhealthy eating behavior or flawed dietary theory qualifies as an eating disorder. However, eating disorders are complex mental health conditions that involve a range of psychological and physiological factors, not just unhealthy eating habits.

b. Healthy eating alone can lead to weight loss: There's a common misconception that simply consuming large amounts of healthy foods will result in weight loss. While nutrition is vital, weight management involves various factors, including overall caloric intake, metabolism, and individual health conditions.

c. Fewer meals aid weight loss: Some individuals think that eating fewer meals will automatically lead to weight loss. In reality, frequent, balanced meals can support metabolic health and help regulate hunger, making it easier to maintain a healthy weight.

d. Gaining weight is easier than losing weight: Many people believe that gaining weight is easier than losing it. However, both processes can be complex and challenging, influenced by psychological, biological, and lifestyle factors.

e. Anorexia and bulimia are normal behaviors: There is a troubling misconception that eating disorders like anorexia and bulimia are normal, particularly among certain populations. In truth, these are serious mental health conditions that require professional intervention and support.

Addressing these misconceptions is essential for fostering a better understanding of eating disorders and providing the necessary support to individuals who may be struggling with them. Through empathy, education, and gradual change, we can help clients navigate their challenges and move toward healthier relationships with food.

**AT:** What role does psychological support play in managing eating disorders, and how do you collaborate with mental health professionals?

**HM:** Psychological support is essential in managing eat-

ing disorders, as these conditions are fundamentally rooted in mental health issues and often require a multifaceted approach for effective treatment. Collaborating with a clinical dietitian and a psychologist is crucial, as a multidisciplinary team can address the various dimensions of an individual's health.

Psychologists play a vital role in this process by providing therapy that targets the underlying emotional and psychological factors contributing to the eating disorder. Issues such as anxiety, depression, and body image concerns are often at the forefront, and addressing these factors is key to helping clients develop healthier coping mechanisms. This support not only aids in improving their mental well-being but also fosters resilience as they navigate their recovery.

In my practice, I prioritize close collaboration with mental health professionals to create a cohesive treatment plan. Regular communication and joint discussions about our clients' progress enable us to share valuable insights, adjust strategies as necessary, and deliver comprehensive care. This team-based approach ensures that both the nutritional and psychological needs of the client are met, ultimately leading to more successful outcomes on their journey to recovery.

**HM:** Can you explain the role of clinical nutrition in managing chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, or gastrointestinal disorders?

a. Personalized dietary interventions: Clinical nutrition involves creating tailored meal plans that cater to each patient's unique needs. This approach takes into account factors such as medical history, lifestyle, dietary preferences, and any specific health goals, which can significantly enhance overall health outcomes.

b. Blood sugar management in diabetes: For individuals managing diabetes, clinical nutrition emphasizes carbohydrate counting and balanced meal planning. This strategy helps regulate blood sugar levels, enhances insulin sensitivity, and promotes stable energy levels throughout the day, ultimately aiding in effective diabetes management.

c. Heart health: In managing heart disease, clinical nutrition advocates for heart-healthy diets, such as the Mediterranean or DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet. These diets focus on whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats, while encouraging a reduction in unhealthy fats and sodium intake, contributing to better cardiovascular health.

d. Gastrointestinal disorders: For patients with gastrointestinal issues like Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) or celiac disease, clinical nutrition provides dietary modifications tailored to manage symptoms. This includes identifying and eliminating trigger foods, ensuring adequate fiber intake, and promoting digestive health through balanced nutrition.

e. Nutritional support and education: Nutritionists play a

critical role in educating patients about the impact of nutrition on their overall health. By empowering individuals with knowledge, they can make informed dietary choices and adhere to personalized recommendations, leading to improved health outcomes.

f. Monitoring and adjustments: Regular follow-ups are essential in clinical nutrition, allowing practitioners to track patients' progress and make necessary adjustments to their nutrition plans. This ongoing support ensures that patients stay on track with their health goals and fosters accountability throughout their journey.

**AT:** How do you assess the specific nutritional needs of your clients, and what tools or methods do you use for this evaluation?

**HM:** I conduct a 24-hour recall dietary assessment to gather detailed information about an individual's food and beverage intake over the past day. This method allows me to analyze the types of foods consumed, portion sizes, and the timing of meals. Additionally, I explore the patient's cravings, reasons behind these cravings, and potential triggers for emotional eating, providing insight into their eating behaviors and patterns.

I utilize a Food Frequency Questionnaire (FFQ) to assess the frequency and quantity of various foods consumed over a specific period, typically weeks or months. This tool helps identify dietary habits and patterns, allowing for a better understanding of the individual's nutritional intake and potential areas for improvement.

In my assessments, I refer to Dietary Reference Intakes, which are evidence-based reference values that guide nutritional adequacy based on factors such as age, gender, and life stage. These reference values are essential in evaluating whether an individual's diet meets their nutritional needs and identifying any deficiencies that may require intervention.

**AT:** In your experience, how does therapeutic nutrition help improve the recovery process for patients with malnutrition or nutrient deficiencies?

**HM:** In my experience, therapeutic nutrition plays a crucial role in enhancing the recovery process for patients grappling with malnutrition or nutrient deficiencies. My own journey as a previously obese child, combined with limited knowledge about the importance of food as medicine, exposed me to significant nutritional challenges, including pre-diabetes and related health issues.

a. Restoration of nutritional balance: Therapeutic nutrition focuses on replenishing essential nutrients that may be absent from a patient's diet. Learning to incorporate a diverse range of nutrient-dense foods was instrumental in addressing my deficiencies, leading to a substantial improvement in my overall health.

b. Education and awareness: My journey underscored the importance of understanding how food influences health. Therapeutic nutrition not only prescribes appropriate dietary interventions but also educates patients on how food can act as medicine. This knowledge empowers individuals to make healthier choices that support their well-being.

c. Improved health outcomes: Through therapeutic nutrition, I experienced firsthand the positive impact of addressing nutrient deficiencies. As I embraced healthier eating habits, my pre-diabetic condition improved, showcasing how targeted nutrition can lead to significant health advancements.

d. Behavioral change: Therapeutic nutrition fosters lasting behavioral changes. By gaining insights into balanced meals and the significance of portion control, I was able to transform my eating habits, which played a pivotal role in my recovery and ongoing weight management.

**AT:** How do you tailor your approach to meet the unique nutritional needs of individuals with different body types, lifestyles, and health conditions?

**HM:** I firmly believe that each individual is unique, and this understanding is fundamental when tailoring nutritional plans. Here are several key factors I consider to create effective and personalized nutrition strategies:

a. Individual body types: Different body types can significantly influence metabolism, nutrient requirements, and responses to various diets. I assess each client's body composition and metabolic rate to develop tailored nutrition strategies that align with their specific needs.

b. Food preferences: Understanding a client's food preferences and dietary restrictions is essential for fostering adherence to any nutrition plan. I collaborate closely with clients to incorporate foods they enjoy while ensuring they meet their nutritional goals, creating a more enjoyable and sustainable approach.

c. Medical history: A thorough review of a client's medical history is vital for successful nutritional planning. Chronic conditions, allergies, and family medical history can profoundly impact nutritional needs. This information enables me to design a plan that promotes health and avoids potential complications.

d. Lifestyle considerations: I take into account clients' lifestyles, including their activity levels, work schedules, and social commitments. This helps in creating realistic and sustainable nutrition plans that fit seamlessly into their daily routines, making it easier for clients to adhere to their goals.

e. Goals and challenges: Understanding each client's personal health goals -- whether it's weight management, muscle gain, or managing a specific health condition -- allows me to tailor recommendations accordingly. I also address any challenges they may face, providing strategies to overcome barriers to success.

f. Ongoing assessment: I believe in the importance of continuous monitoring and adjusting nutrition plans based on clients' progress and feedback. This adaptability ensures that the approach remains effective and aligned with their evolving needs.

By considering these factors, I create comprehensive and individualized nutrition plans that support the unique nutritional needs of each client. This personalized approach ultimately promotes better health outcomes and long-term success in their wellness journeys.

**AT:** With the rise of fad diets and social media trends, how do you educate clients on sustainable and evidence-based nutritional practices?

**HM:** Clear explanations: I prioritize providing clear explanations for every recommendation I make. By offering biological and scientific insights into dietary choices, I help clients understand the rationale behind their nutrition plans. This transparency fosters trust and encourages compliance, empowering clients to take ownership of their health.

a. Addressing myths and misinformation: In today's world, where myths and misinformation about nutrition are rampant, I take a proactive approach to address common misconceptions. By providing clients with factual information, I help them navigate the often confusing landscape of social media trends and dietary fads, enabling them to make informed decisions.

Continued on Page 13

## HEALTH

## Al Mutawa aims for holistic nutrition and wellness

Continued from Page 12

b. Focus on sustainability: I emphasize the importance of adopting nutritional habits that are effective and sustainable in the long term. I teach clients about balanced eating, portion control, and the significance of variety in their diets, ensuring they develop habits that can be maintained for life rather than quick fixes.

c. Practical application: I offer practical tips and strategies for implementing evidence-based practices into daily life. This includes guidance on meal planning, mindful eating, and understanding food labels, which makes it easier for clients to apply what they learn and integrate these practices into their routines.

AT: What are some of the biggest challenges you face when working with individuals with eating disorders or complex nutritional needs?

HM: One of the most significant challenges I encounter when working with individuals who have eating disorders or complex nutritional needs is addressing denial. Many clients may not fully recognize the severity of their situation or the detrimental effects their behaviors have on their health. This denial can pose substantial barriers to effective treatment.

a. Resistance to acknowledge issues: Clients in denial often struggle to accept that they have an eating disorder or that their nutritional habits are harmful. This lack of acknowledgment can hinder their willingness to engage in necessary changes, leading to resistance during the recovery process.

b. Emotional barriers: Denial frequently stems from deep-seated emotional issues, such as fear of change, anxiety about weight gain, or unresolved trauma. These factors complicate clients' ability to confront their behaviors and the underlying issues driving them.

c. Building awareness: Assisting clients in moving past denial requires a sensitive and nuanced approach. It is crucial to foster self-awareness without provoking defensiveness. I prioritize open communication and gentle questioning to encourage clients to reflect on their relationships with food and their bodies.

AT: How do you stay updated on the latest developments and research in therapeutic nutrition and eating disorders?

HM: To remain informed about the latest developments and research in therapeutic nutrition and eating disorders, I employ a multi-faceted approach:

a. By reading textbooks and scientific articles: I regularly read textbooks and peer-reviewed scientific articles to stay informed about foundational concepts as well as the latest research findings and evidence-based practices in the field.

b. Attending conferences worldwide: I actively participate in conferences and workshops globally, such as those featuring metabolic scientist Benjamin Bikman. These events provide invaluable opportunities to learn from leading experts, engage in discussions about emerging trends, and gain insights into innovative treatment strategies.

c. Collaboration with a multidisciplinary team: Working closely with a diverse team of professionals—including dietitians, psychologists, and medical doctors—allows me to benefit from their specialized knowledge and perspectives. This collaboration enriches my understanding of complex cases and enhances the care I provide.

d. Utilizing online resources and networks: I leverage online platforms, webinars, and professional networks to access the latest research and clinical guidelines. Engaging with online communities also enables me to share experiences and learn from peers in the field.

e. Continuous professional development: I prioritize ongoing education through courses and certifications that focus on therapeutic nutrition and eating disorders. This commitment to

lifelong learning ensures that I remain current with advancements and best practices.

AT: What advice would you give to someone considering a career in clinical nutrition or specializing in eating disorders?

HM: If you're considering a career in clinical nutrition or specializing in eating disorders, my advice is simple: go for it! This is a fascinating and impactful field where your work can make a significant difference in people's lives. Here are a few key points to consider:

a. Importance of nutrition: In today's world, everyone's health is closely tied to proper nutrition. By pursuing this career, you can play a crucial role in educating individuals about healthy eating habits and the importance of balanced nutrition.

b. Opportunity to make a difference: Specializing in eating disorders allows you to help individuals who are struggling with complex issues related to food and body image. Your support can be transformative, guiding them toward recovery and healthier relationships with food. I often find that the allocated time for sessions isn't always enough to ensure all nutritional aspects are covered, which is where your expertise can truly benefit clients.

c. Collaborative environment: You'll have the chance to work with a multidisciplinary team, enriching your experience and broadening your perspective on health and wellness. This collaborative approach enhances the quality of care you can provide and offers continual learning opportunities.

AT: Where do you see the future of therapeutic nutrition heading, especially with the growing interest in personalized nutrition and mental health?

HM: I see the future of therapeutic nutrition heading towards a more personalized and integrated approach, especially with the growing interest in personalized nutrition and its connection to mental health.

AT: What is your long-term vision for your practice, and how do you hope to impact the field of therapeutic nutrition?

HM: My long-term vision for my practice is to provide a holistic approach that is tailored to the individual needs of each client. I believe that nutrition is not a one-size-fits-all solution; rather, it should address the unique biological, emotional, and lifestyle factors that each person brings to the table.

a. Holistic wellness: I aim to create an environment where clients feel supported not just in their nutritional choices but also in their overall well-being. This involves integrating aspects of mental health, physical activity, and personal values into the nutrition plans I develop.

b. Empowerment through education: My goal is to empower clients by educating them about the importance of nutrition in their lives. By providing the knowledge and tools they need, I hope to inspire individuals to take charge of their health and make informed decisions that lead to lasting change.

c. Community engagement: I envision expanding my practice to include community outreach programs that raise awareness about nutrition and eating disorders. By sharing knowledge and resources, I aim to contribute to a broader understanding of these issues and promote healthier habits within the community.

d. Collaboration with other professionals: I plan to continue collaborating with other healthcare providers to ensure a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to client care. Working together allows us to provide more effective and well-rounded support for individuals facing nutritional challenges.

e. Contributing to research and advocacy: I aspire to engage in research and advocacy efforts that highlight the importance of therapeutic nutrition in healthcare. By contributing to the body of knowledge in this field, I hope to influence practices and policies that improve the quality of care for those with nutritional issues.



Participants at the 'Atrial Fibrillation' symposium.

KUNA photo

## MoH hosts symposium to raise awareness on 'Afib'

## Atrial fibrillation is one of the most common heart disorders in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The Salman Al-Dabbous Cardiac Center of the Ministry of Health recently organized a symposium titled 'Atrial Fibrillation', under the slogan 'Pace Your Heart... Save Your Heart', reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This event, was held in collaboration with medical experts from the Gulf States and the United States, to raise awareness about the symptoms, treatment methods, and the latest international guidelines related to atrial fibrillation -- Atrial fibrillation (Afib) is an irregular heart rhythm that begins in your heart's upper chambers (atria).

During the opening of the symposium, Dr. Samah Al-Kharji, head of the cardiology department at Al-Adan Hospital and a cardiac electrophysiologist, highlighted the significance of addressing specific populations affected by atrial fibrillation.

She noted that the symposium would focus on vulnerable groups, including women experiencing atrial fibrillation during and after pregnancy, the elderly, and cancer patients.

Dr. Al-Kharji explained that atrial fibrillation is one of the most prevalent electrical heart disorders in Kuwait. She emphasized the importance of intensifying awareness programs and adopting the latest treatment innovations to mitigate the condition's impact, particularly as it significantly raises the risk of strokes.

In her presentation, she discussed a recent study conducted at Al-Adan Hospital, which investigated the relationship between chronic diseases and atrial fibrillation. The study examined approximately 350 patients, revealing that more than 50 percent of individuals with atrial fibrillation also suffered from high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity. Despite having good heart muscle function, many patients exhibited weight increases ranging from 30 to 40 percent. Dr. Al-Kharji's findings underscore the critical need for ongoing education and proactive management strategies to combat atrial fibrillation and its associated health risks in Kuwait. The symposium serves as a platform for healthcare professionals to collaborate and share knowledge on enhancing patient care in this vital area of cardiac health.

Dr. Al-Kharji's findings underscore the critical need for ongoing education and proactive management strategies to combat atrial fibrillation and its associated health risks in Kuwait.

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## Preparing for disease outbreaks

## Africa CDC urges local medical supply production

KIGALI, Oct 10, (Xinhua): Jean Kasuya, director general of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), expressed frustration on Wednesday over Africa's dependence on external support for medical supplies during disease outbreaks.

Speaking at the African Continental Free Trade Area Business Forum held in the Rwandan capital of Kigali, Kasuya emphasized the need for Africa to produce its own vaccines, drugs, and diagnostics.

"We are tired. Every time there is an outbreak, we go into panic mode, and we have to start begging the world for vaccines, drugs, and diagnostics. It was the case with mpox, it was the case before with COVID-19, and it is still the case with Marburg," Kasuya said, calling for decisive action to manufacture medical countermeasures within the continent.

His remarks came amid the ongoing Marburg virus disease (MVD) outbreak in Rwanda, where 58 confirmed cases, including 13 deaths, have been reported, according to the latest data released by the Rwandan Ministry of Health on Tuesday.

Despite Rwanda's robust response to the outbreak, Kasuya criticized the recent travel advisory issued by the United States, which urges its citizens to reconsider travel to Rwanda due to the virus.

"The Level 3 status issued by the United States regarding the Marburg outbreak in Rwanda is unfair and unacceptable, especially for a country that is doing more than any of us. This decision is not evidence-based. I am impressed by Rwanda's efforts in containing the Marburg outbreak. There is nothing more that can be done that Rwanda is not already doing," he said. Kasuya praised Rwanda's management of the Marburg outbreak, saying, "Rwanda is making us proud as Africans. Rwanda is a model for all of us on how to manage these kinds of outbreaks." MVD is a highly virulent disease that causes hemorrhagic fever, with a fatality rate of up to 88 percent. It belongs to the same family of viruses that causes Ebola virus disease, according to the World Health Organization. MVD symptoms include high fever, severe headaches, and malaise, typically developing within seven days of infection.

## Medical advances cut heart disease deaths

## Dementia to become top cause of deaths in Australia

CANBERRA, Oct 10, (Xinhua): Dementia is on the brink of surpassing heart diseases as the leading cause of death in Australia for the first time, official data revealed.

According to the data, which was published on Thursday by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, ischaemic heart disease, also called coronary heart disease and coronary artery disease, was responsible for 9.2 percent of deaths in Australia in 2023 while dementia accounted for 9.1 percent.

Lauren Moran, head of mortality statistics at the bureau, said that there

has been a drop in heart disease mortality and a rise in dementia deaths over time due to improvements in medical treatments and health care for the former and an aging population.

At its peak in 1968, ischaemic heart disease accounted for 30.5 percent of Australian deaths. Over the last 50 years the bureau said that the mortality rate for ischaemic heart disease has declined 87.9 percent while that for dementia has increased 842.8 percent in the same period.

"The latest data shows that there

are now less than 250 deaths separating the top two leading causes," Moran said in a statement.

Dementia, which includes Alzheimer's disease, has been the leading cause of death for Australian women since 2016 and is the leading cause of death in the states of New South Wales and South Australia as well as the Australian Capital Territory.

"Women have longer life expectancies than men and as such are more likely to live to an age when they have a heightened risk of developing dementia," Moran said.

40% cases surge

## Cholera cases in Sudan alarm UN

CAIRO, Oct 10, (AP): Cholera cases in war-torn Sudan increased by nearly 40% in less than two weeks, according to the latest figures, alarming the UN health officials, who long warned about the outbreak and the lack of proper response since it was reported in July.

Sudan's health ministry said Monday that there were 21,288 cases across 11 of the 18 states during this period, including 626 deaths. This marks a significant increase from 15,577 cases and 506 deaths reported on September 26. The cases are primarily in the eastern states.

Most cases were reported in Kassala, where UNICEF is collaborating with the ministry and the World Health Organization (WHO) to carry out a second round of the oral cholera vaccination campaign that kicked off last month.

## Emergency

"There's no doubt that the number of cases is increasing rather rapidly. We're seeing a faster rate of spread than we did during the outbreak last year, so the number of cases is concerning," Richard Brennan, the regional emergency director at WHO, told The Associated Press on Tuesday. "That's why together with the Ministry of Health and partners like UNICEF, we're redoubling our efforts here."

Cholera was officially declared an outbreak on August 12 by the health ministry after a new wave of cases was reported starting July 22. The disease is especially spreading in areas devastated by recent heavy rainfalls and floods, especially in eastern Sudan which sheltered millions of people displaced by the conflict between the Sudanese military and the RSF.

Cholera is a highly contagious disease that causes diarrhea, leading to severe dehydration and could be fatal if not immediately treated, according to WHO. It's transmitted through the ingestion of contaminated food or water.

UNICEF delivered 404,000 doses of the vaccine to Sudan on Sep. 9. More vaccination campaigns are expected to be rolled out in other affected states. On Saturday, a UNICEF-chartered plane carrying 1.4 million doses of oral cholera vaccines arrived in Sudan. The vaccination campaign aims to reach 1.81 million people in the most affected states: Kassala, River Nile, and Gedaref, UNICEF said in a statement.

Brennan said that it's too early to determine the effectiveness of the vaccination campaign given that they are in initial phases, but health workers are expanding surveillance activities to detect more cases and there is a plan to roll out an additional 2.2 million doses in the coming weeks.

"Cholera vaccines in and of themselves are not a silver bullet for cholera. They're a very useful tool, but we still need to continue with all the other disease control measures in terms of the disease surveillance, treatment of patients once they become sick, engaging communities, and very importantly, giving people access to adequate quantities of clean water and sanitation," Brennan added.

The health system in Sudan is in "freefall" with 75% of health facilities in Khartoum non-functional, said Hanan Balkhy, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, during a media briefing on Tuesday. She added that the situation in western Darfur states is worse.

The ongoing war between the Sudanese military and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), broke out in April 2023, in the capital Khartoum and later spread across the country, with Darfur being among the regions seeing intense fighting.

The U.N. estimated that 20,000 people have been killed and thousands injured since the conflict began. The war has also displaced over 10 million people, including 2.4 million who fled to neighboring countries and other nations.

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## Chinese fail to defend table tennis title

## Japan upsets China to take women's team crown at Asian Championships

ASTANA, Oct. 10, (Xinhua): Japan defeated defending champions China 3-1 to claim the women's team title at the 27th Asian Table Tennis Championships.

Earlier in the day, Sun Yingsha, Wang Yidi, and Chen Xingtong powered China to a 3-0 win against Hong Kong, China, while Japan overpowered India 3-1 to make the final.

China dispatched the same line-up for the final. With a busy schedule shifting from the World Table Tennis (WTT) China Smash, which concluded on Sunday, the Chinese pad-

dlers were not in their prime condition.

China was dealt a blow early in the title showdown as Wang fell to Miwa Harimoto in full games. Although Sun leveled the score with a 3-0 victory over Mima Ito, China was once again in an inferior position after Chen, who had replaced Wang Manyu in the roster ahead of the tournament, lost 3-1 to Miu Hirano.

Harimoto became a major contributor to Japan's victory as the 16-year-old edged Sun 3-2 in the fourth match.

The men's team semifinals and final will be held on Thursday, as China will compete with South Korea for a final spot.

Also on Wednesday, two Chinese pairs, Lin Gaoyuan/Wang Yidi and Lin Shidong/Kuai Man, reached the mixed doubles last 16 with straight-game victories.

Running from Monday to Sunday, the 27th Asian Table Tennis Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan, feature a total of seven events, namely men's and women's team, singles and doubles events and mixed doubles event.



Ito Mima of Japan hits a return to Sun Yingsha of China during the women's teams final match between China and Japan at the 27th ITTF-Asian Table Tennis Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan. (Xinhua)

## Man City stuns Barcelona



Hammarby's Cathinka Tandberg, center, scores her side's second goal during the women's Champions League Group D soccer match between Hammarby IF and SKN St. Poelten in Stockholm, Sweden. (AP)

## Bayern's Harder downs Arsenal

**LONDON, Oct 10, (AP):** Title holder Barcelona was beaten 2-0 by Manchester City to start its defense in the Women's Champions League with a rare loss in the group stage.

Man City outplayed the two-time defending champion in the first half, taking a 36th-minute lead when Naomi Layzell was brave at a corner, and had to repel waves of Barcelona attacks before sealing the win.

Jamaica forward Bunny Shaw ran clear in the 77th and rounded goalkeeper Cata Coll, before calmly placing her shot behind a covering defender on the goalline.

Man City's performance outshined even that of Bayern Munich and Pernille Harder, who scored

a 13-minute hat trick late in a 5-2 win over Arsenal.

Hammarby beat St. Pölten 2-0 in the same group as Man City and Barcelona, and Juventus won 1-0 in Norway against Vålerenga in Group C.

Barcelona had lost just once in 18 group-stage games in three previous editions of this Women's Champions League format, which will change after this season.

The Spanish team's stellar lineup was hustled out of its rhythm early by Man City, which struck a post in the 16th from Lauren Hemp's shot at the end of a slick move.

Man City led from a corner forced by Coll's stunning save to deny Jessica Park. When the cross came in, the goalkeeper lost her

bearings and a header back into the goalmouth by Vivianne Miedema got a decisive touch from defender Layzell among a cluster of bodies.

Barcelona stepped up its game in the second half and Man City defender Laia Alexandri denied star forward Alexia Putellas with her second key block of the game.

A back-and-forth game in Munich that both teams had led was poised at 2-2 in the 73rd when Harder expertly guided in a header from a corner.

The veteran Denmark forward rose highest five minutes later to meet a cross by Klara Bühl with her head, then got her third in the 86th when bundling the ball past Arsenal goalkeeper Manuela Zinsberger at the second attempt.

The result was harsh on Arsenal,

which started strongly and deservedly led in the 30th when Spain forward Mariona guided in a left-foot volley from Katie McCabe's cross.

Another of Spain's 2023 World Cup winning-squad, defender Laia Codina, leveled the game at 2-2 in the 65th with a header from McCabe's corner.

Bayern had rallied to level in the 43rd from a looping header by captain Glóidís Perla Viggósdóttir, then led for the first time with perhaps the standout goal.

Sydney Lohmann took a pass on a fast break in the 56th and with one touch teed up her shot on the run that she fired low and hard past Zinsberger, who was beaten at her near post.

Harder has lost three finals in the Women's Champions League - twice with Wolfsburg and once with Chelsea - and Bayern looked like a team Wednesday capable of getting to its first final.

In the opening games, there were wins for record eight-time champion Lyon, Chelsea, Roma and Twente.

Lyon beat group-stage newcomers Galatasaray 3-0, Chelsea held off Real Madrid 3-2, Roma upset Wolfsburg 1-0 and Twente won 2-0 at Celtic.

The Women's Champions League is having a final season in the 16-team group-stage format before UEFA revamps it like the men's current edition.

Next season, 18 women's teams will play in a single-standings league phase before the knockout rounds. Each team will play six different opponents in the league phase, with the top four advancing straight to the quarterfinals. Teams placed from fifth to 12th will enter a playoff round.

A second women's European club competition will launch next season in a knockout format leading to a two-leg final.



Manchester City's Mary Fowler, left, and Barcelona's Patricia Guijarro, right, challenge for the ball during the women's Champions League Group D soccer match between Manchester City FC and FC Barcelona in Manchester, England. (AP)

## Southgate says he won't coach in the next year

ATHENS, Greece, Oct 10, (AP): Former England coach Gareth Southgate said Thursday he will be taking a year away from a club or national team job, after speculation he could be a target for Manchester United.

"I won't coach in the next year, for sure. I'm certain of that," Southgate said during an on-stage interview to an audience of hundreds of soccer officials at a European Club Association meeting.

Southgate stepped down from the England job in July, two days after losing in the final of the European Championship for the second

straight tournament. England lost 2-1 to Spain in Berlin, three years after losing the title match to Italy in a penalty shootout at its home Wembley Stadium in London.

His eight years in the job transformed England's record and reputation in international soccer, also reaching a semifinal and quarterfinal at back-to-back World Cups.

Criticized by some fans for being too cautious, Southgate won praise for restoring his players' enjoyment of being with the national team, protecting them from criticism, and being a thoughtful commentator on so-

cial issues during a polarizing period in British society.

"I need to give myself time to make good decisions," Southgate said. "I'm fortunate that there are lots of opportunities presenting themselves."

Southgate distanced himself even before Euro 2024 from speculation he could be a target for Man United, which has made a poor start to the season under coach Erik ten Hag.

"Clubs can only be successful if everything is aligned right the way through the club," said Southgate, whose previous experience of club management was with Middles-

brough, for three years after he finished playing there in 2006.

"And I also know that maybe the smarter people sit in the boardrooms and the coaches are a little bit more dispensable than you think when you're there," he said.

The 54-year-old former England defender said he was "at an age where I want to work with good people" and was interested by the business side of soccer.

"I am not just set on being a coach moving forward," Southgate said, adding he had been asked to speak at Harvard.

## Seven vie for position

## IOC sets January date for candidates to woo voters

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, Oct 10, (AP): The International Olympic Committee has set a Jan. 30 date for the key presidential election meeting where seven candidates will meet with voters ahead of their ballot in March.

The closed-doors meeting at IOC headquarters is the only set-piece campaign event in perhaps the most discreet and secretive election in world sports. IOC rules prohibit candidates from publishing videos, organizing public meetings or taking part in public debates.

"This in-camera meeting will give the IOC members the opportunity to hear from the seven candidates about their programs," the Olympic body said in a statement on Thursday.

The candidates to replace outgoing IOC president Thomas Bach include three members of the executive board he chairs: vice president Juan Antonio Samaranch Jr. of Spain, Prince Feisal al Hussein of Jordan and Kirsty Coventry of Zimbabwe.

The other four are presidents of Olympic sports governing bodies: track and field's Sebastian Coe of Britain; cycling's David Lappartient from France; gymnastics leader Morinari Watanabe of Japan; and skiing's Johan Eliasch, a Swedish-British citizen.

The vote by about 100 of their fel-

low IOC members - including European and Middle East royalty, sports officials, former and current Olympic athletes, politicians and billionaire industrialists - is at a March 18-21 meeting near Ancient Olympia in Greece.

Bach is reaching his statutory maximum of 12 years in office and confirmed in August at the Paris Olympics that he will leave. His scheduled exit is in June after a three-month transition period with his successor.

He has long been viewed as favoring Coventry, the sports minister in Zimbabwe, who would be the first woman president in the IOC's 130-year history and the first from Africa. A two-time Olympic gold medalist in swimming, Coventry was surprisingly the only woman candidate to enter the contest.

The IOC top job ideally calls for deep knowledge of managing sports, understanding athletes' needs and nimble skills in global politics.

Key questions for the next IOC leader include picking a host for the 2036 Olympics - which has India and Qatar among the contenders - assessing the impact of climate change on the global sports calendar and the Winter Games, gender issues, and renewing the United States broadcast deal that has been a foundation of Olympic finances.

## Paul makes debut with Spurs

SAN ANTONIO, Oct 10, (AP): Chris Paul and Victor Wembanyama seem to already be clicking.

Paul - a 12-time All-Star entering his 20th season in the NBA - made his preseason debut with San Antonio on Wednesday night, getting a loud ovation from his new home crowd when he was the final player announced as part of the Spurs' starting lineup against the Orlando Magic.

And his first assist in his new uniform was fitting - an alley-oop lob that set Wembanyama up for a dunk late in the first quarter. Paul finished with five points and three assists, two of them to Wembanyama, in 23 minutes.

"Felt very natural. Felt like it was the good play," Wembanyama said of that first lob from Paul. "And he's making a lot of good plays."

The Spurs are Paul's seventh NBA franchise and when he makes his regular-season debut - preseason games don't count for anything official - the 6-foot guard will become the 11th player to appear in 20 NBA seasons.

"He's so wise and he's got so much experience," Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said of Paul after San Antonio's 107-97 win. "Sometimes I get mesmerized just listening to him say things to players. 'I should have thought of that,' that kind of thing. He mentors them well and he does it the right way."

Vince Carter played in 22 seasons, a record that LeBron James will tie when he makes his first ap-

pearance this season. Robert Parish, Kevin Willis, Kevin Garnett and Dirk Nowitzki all played 21 seasons, and four other players - Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Kobe Bryant, Jamal Crawford and Udonis Haslem - reached the 20-season mark.

Paul is also third on the NBA's all-time assist list with 11,894. He's 197 shy of Jason Kidd (12,097) for No. 2 on that list, and John Stockton holds the record with 15,806.

"Being on the court with him certainly feels like he's got things in control," Wembanyama said. "It's reassuring, a little bit. It's one more teammate I can rely on in tough moments or doubt moments. It's only positive."

Paul's first game with the Spurs was one of many notable debuts that will occur throughout the preseason by top players who'll be in new uniforms this season. Among them: Russell Westbrook debuted with Denver in Abu Dhabi last week, Karl-Anthony Towns had 10 points in 15 minutes Sunday in his first exhibition as part of the New York Knicks, and DeMar DeRozan appeared in a preseason game with Sacramento for the first time Wednesday against Golden State.

Evidently, DeRozan is still learning his way around. "Which way do I go?" DeRozan asked as he walked into the arena. But on the court, he was a quick study - the first points of Sacramento's preseason came on DeRozan's trademark midrange jumper.



Sacramento Kings center Skal Labissiere (8) guards Golden State Warriors guard De'Anthony Melton (8) during the second half of a preseason NBA basketball game in Sacramento, Calif. (AP)

## SPORTS

## England declares massive innings at 823-7

Brook, Root set batting records

MULTAN, Pakistan, Oct 10, (AP): England is on the verge of a famous cricket victory after Harry Brook smashed the second-fastest triple century in test history, Joe Root scored a career-best 262 and the tourists declared their first innings at an enormous 823-7 against Pakistan in

the first test on Thursday.

Pakistan, which scored 556 in its first innings, collapsed second time round to reach stumps on Day 4 at 152-6, needing another 115 runs to avoid an innings defeat.

It was the fourth time a test team scored more than 800 runs - and the first time this century - as Yorkshire pair Brook and Root showed plenty of resilience and stamina to rewrite the record books in the heat of Multan.

"It was an unreal wicket to bat on

and I'll probably roll it (the wicket) open and take it with me," Brook said after his marathon seven-hour innings of 317 runs off 322 balls that featured 29 fours and three sixes.

Brook raised his triple hundred off 310 balls, which was the second-fastest in test history after Virender Sehwag of India achieved the feat in 268 balls against South Africa in 2008.

"Me and Rooty both were just trying to cash in on what was a good pitch," Brook said. "We were both struggling with the heat for a while, (but) it makes you feel so comfortable when you

watch him at the other end, he makes the game look so easy."

Brook was one of England's key batsmen during its 3-0 sweep in Pakistan two years ago when he scored centuries at Rawalpindi, Multan and Karachi.

Brook shared England's highest-ever partnership of 454 runs with Root for the fourth wicket, taking the team from 249-3 to 703-4 in a marathon stand.

Root was the first of the pair to be out - leg before wicket on the back foot to Salman Agha - and Brook top-edged a sweep and was caught at fine leg to

give Saim Ayub one of his two wickets.

Brook became England's sixth test triple century-maker and first since Graham Gooch's 333 against India in 1990 as Pakistan's bowlers toiled for 150 overs before Ollie Pope declared the innings half an hour before tea.

Pakistan then crumbled with its top-order stumbling against the pace of Gus Atkinson (2-28) and Brydon Carse (2-39) after Chris Woakes had uprooted the off stump of Abdullah Shafique on the first ball of the innings.



England's Joe Root celebrates after scoring double century during the fourth day of the first test cricket match between Pakistan and England, in Multan, Pakistan. (AP)



England's Gus Atkinson bowls during the fourth day of the first test cricket match between Pakistan and England, in Multan, Pakistan. (AP)

## Karim confirms end of Al-Jahra Club crisis

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: Youssef Karim announced on his personal account on the social media platform "X" that the long-standing crisis at Al-Jahra Club has come to an end. This resolution follows the approval from the Public Authority for Sports and the Kuwait Olympic Committee to implement the decision made by the National Arbitration Authority, which involved transferring the club's presidency.



Youssef Karim

The club had been grappling with an administrative crisis after the dissolution of its board of directors, led by lawyer Khaled Al-Jarallah. This resulted in a three-way conflict involving Al-Jarallah, Youssef Karim, and Khalaf Al-Sahou, which escalated to local courts and the International Court of Arbitration.

Karim expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Sports Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, Chairman of the Kuwait Olym-

pic Committee Sheikh Fahad Al-Nasser, and Director of the Sports Authority Bashar Abdullah for their efforts in resolving the club's year-long issue. He emphasized the importance of respecting sports institutions and the decisions of the Sports Arbitration Authority.

Karim reiterated that the club's doors are open to all, viewing disagreements regarding its management as differences in opinion. He noted the strong social bonds among the people of Jahra.

## Gauff building momentum in Wuhan

## Sinner through to Shanghai semis, Alcaraz upset

SHANGHAI, Oct 10, (AP): Top-ranked Jannik Sinner advanced to his fifth ATP Masters semifinal of the season as the Italian swept aside fifth-ranked Daniil Medvedev in straight sets at the Shanghai Masters on Thursday.

Sinner started strongly and only faced one break point in his 6-1, 6-4 masterclass over the Russian, who needed treatment on his shoulder from the physio during the second set.

"Obviously I'm very happy how I handled today and this match," Sinner said. "It felt like he had a bit of shoulder pain and couldn't hit his forehand as well as he wished to. Hopefully he can recover as fast as possible, but from my side it was a great match, a great battle, and let's see what I can do now in the semifinals."

With Thursday's win, the two-time

major winner has leveled his head-to-head series against Medvedev at 7-7, but has won seven of the last eight meetings with the Russian.

It moved Sinner to his first semifinal in Shanghai and he will play Tomas Machac who stunned second-ranked Carlos Alcaraz 7-6, 7-5.

Coco Gauff advanced to the quarterfinals of the Wuhan Open with a 6-4, 6-1 rout of 17th-ranked Marta Kostyuk in just over an hour.

It was the fourth-ranked Gauff's eighth consecutive win on the WTA Tour's Asian swing after the American won the China Open last week which moved her back into the top five in the rankings.

Gauff fired two aces and broke the Ukrainian's serve five times - for the loss of one of her own - as she clinched

a one-sided match and extended her lead in their head-to-head series to 3-1.

Next for Gauff is No. 45-ranked Magda Linette, who continued her impressive form this week by beating eighth-seeded Daria Kasatkina 6-2, 6-3.

"Yeah, so she's a tough opponent," Gauff said of Linette. "We haven't played since (the U.S. Open in 2021). I really don't know what to expect. But just from watching her play, she's been playing a great couple of matches here in Wuhan.

"I expect it to be a tough match. She's not an easy opponent to play."

Gauff will be the only American left in the draw after third-ranked Jessica Pegula and tour rookie Hailey Baptiste both lost.

Pegula, the U.S. Open finalist, had a tough afternoon against the 51st-

ranked Wang Xinyu of China, who was dominant on serve throughout and clinched a 6-3, 7-5 win to make her first WTA 1000 quarterfinal.

Wang had won their only previous meeting in three sets in the second round at Wimbledon earlier this year and got off to a fast start here by breaking Pegula twice in the opening set to take the lead.

After her first win over a top 10 player in the previous round, Baptiste was routed 6-1, 6-1 by Ekaterina Alexandrova.

Paris Olympics gold medalist Zheng Qinwen rallied to beat Leylah Fernandez 5-7, 6-3, 6-0 and sixth-ranked Jasmine Paolini defeated Erika Andreeva 6-3, 6-2.

Later, second-ranked Aryna Sabalenka looked to maintain her undefeated record at the Wuhan Open when she plays Yulia Putintseva of Kazakhstan in her third-round match.

## Kazma signs Lahtimi to boost team performance, parts ways with Dodo

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: Kazma Club has announced the signing of Moroccan professional Montaser Lahtimi, replacing Brazilian Rafael Guimaraes, known as Dodo, following the latter's underperformance in the recent rounds of the Zain Premier League.

Lahtimi, 23, has previously played for Moroccan clubs Fath Union Sportive and Wydad, as well as Turkey's Trabzonspor. The club took advantage of its right to sign players who are currently without contracts.

Kazma aims to enhance the team's performance, which has struggled in the first six rounds of the league, scoring only five goals in six matches. This poor showing has left the



Montaser Lahtimi

team in eighth place with just four points, one point above last-place Yarmouk.

'This is the best time for me to do it'

## Gasquet to retire after French Open

PARIS, Oct 10, (AP): Once known as the "little Mozart of French tennis," Richard Gasquet is set to end his career without a major to his name.

At 38, the French player renowned for his exceptional one-handed backhand told L'Equipe newspaper Thursday that he will end his career after the French Open in front of his home fans.

"I'll be stopping at Roland Garros next year," Gasquet said. "I think this is the best time for me to do it. It's the best tournament to do it. It's wonderful, and we're lucky as Frenchmen to be able to retire in such unbelievable places. The end is always complicated, as all the former great players have often told me. You never know when, how, where. As far as I'm concerned, it was obvious." Gasquet, who reached a career-best ranking of No. 7 back in 2007, was once regarded as a potential Grand Slam winner but could never get past the semifinals at any major.

Gasquet reached the Wimbledon semifinals twice and was also a semifinalist at the U.S. Open. He claimed 16 Tour titles, most recently last year in Auckland, and was a member of the France team that won the 2017 Davis Cup.

Following in the footsteps of Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and Gilles Simon, he is the third member of a gifted generation of French players that emerged nearly 20 years ago - which also includes Gaël Monfils - to call it

quits. Gasquet, who has dropped to the No. 133 spot, said he would never have imagined playing for so long after starting when he was 3 years old with his father, Francis, who ran a tennis club.

"I play against 18-19 year olds, which is weird," he said. "Nineteen years younger sounds crazy. Very few players make it to 38." Gasquet, who has played 1,005 matches since he turned professional, won his Tour debut match at 16 at the Monte-Carlo Masters back in 2002. A few years earlier, when he was just nine years old, Gasquet was on the cover of Tennis Magazine, which asked in a headline: "The champion that France is waiting for?" When he turned pro, Gasquet was compared to another emerging player, Rafael Nadal.

But as his Spanish rival established himself as one of the all-time greats, Gasquet, who never beat Nadal in 18 matches on the main tour, could not live up to the great expectations that had been placed on his shoulders.

"It's wonderful to have been compared, for a little while, to Rafael Nadal, one of the greatest sportsmen in history," Gasquet wrote in his memoirs. "Deep down, I take it as a huge compliment. But how much it hurt me!" Nadal's shadow remained to the end. A few hours after Gasquet announced his retirement, it was Nadal's turn to announce his departure from tennis.



In this file photo, Richard Gasquet of France plays a backhand return to Carlos Alcaraz of Spain (unseen) during their first round match at the Australian Open tennis championships at Melbourne Park, Melbourne, Australia. (AP)

## Best of the Rest

**Baldock found dead:** Panathinaikos defender George Baldock, a former Greece international who also played for Sheffield United for seven seasons, has been found dead in his Athens home, Greek media reported. He was 31.

State-run ERT television said the body of Baldock was found late Wednesday in his swimming pool in the southern suburb of Glyfada. The cause of death was not immediately clear.

Britain-born Baldock was called up for Greece in 2022 and played 12 matches, the last in March in Greece's loss on penalties to Georgia in the Euro 2024 playoffs.

He was not in Greece's squad for Thursday's UEFA Nations League game against England.

Baldock joined Sheffield United in 2017 and helped the club earn promotion to the Premier League twice, in 2019 and 2023. He joined

Panathinaikos in May, on a three-year contract, after Sheffield United was again relegated to England's second division.

"Sheffield United Football Club is shocked and extremely saddened to learn of the passing of former player, George Baldock," the English club said on social media. "The defender left the club in the summer after seven years at Bramall Lane and was extremely popular with supporters, staff and team-mates who pulled on a red and white shirt alongside him." (AP)

☐ ☐ ☐

**Gago close to Boca return:** Former Boca Juniors midfielder Fernando Gago is close to rejoining his former club as manager, according to widespread media reports in Argentina.

The 38-year-old is currently in charge of Guadalajara but has told the

Mexican top-flight side of his intention to leave, according to news portal TNT Sports.

It added that Boca had agreed to pay two million U.S. dollars to activate a release clause in Gago's contract.

The Buenos Aires giants have been searching for a manager since parting ways with Diego Martinez on September 29 amid a poor run of results.

Boca are currently 10th in Argentina's Primera Division standings with just six wins from 17 games, 12 points behind leaders Velez Sarsfield.

Gago, who represented Boca Juniors, Real Madrid, Valencia, Roma, Velez Sarsfield and Argentina's national team during a 16-year playing career, turned to management in 2021.

He had spells in charge of Aldosivi and Racing Club before joining Guadalajara in December 2023. (Xinhua)



Daniil Medvedev of Russia watches the ball as he plays against Jannik Sinner of Italy during the men's singles quarterfinals match in the Shanghai Masters tennis tournament at Qizhong Forest Sports City Tennis Center in Shanghai, China. (AP)



England's Harry Brook celebrates after scoring double century during the fourth day of the first test cricket match between Pakistan and England, in Multan, Pakistan. (AP) — See Page 15

# Sports

## Kuwait junior team honored for top performance at European Karate Championship

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Governor of the Capital, honored the Kuwait youth team who secured first place in the European Open Championship for "Kyokushin Karate" held recently in Romania. The ceremony took place at the Governor's Diwan.

Among those attending the event were Team Captain Abdullah Al-Mutawa, Member of the Board of Directors of the Suburb and Mansouriya Association Mishaal Al-Kulaib, along with the players: Nasser Al-Nasser, Abdullah Al-Khamis, Abdullah Al-Sarraf, Abdulrahman Al-Nibari, Bader Al-Shatti, Issa Al-Balushi, Hamad Al-Abdali,

Khaled Al-Shaleh, Ahmed Bouqmaz, Hussein Al-Balushi, Abdul Latif Al-Saeed, Abdulaziz Ghuloum, Ali Bouqmaz, Abdulaziz Al-Saeed, and Abbas Al-Kaid.

His Excellency commended the remarkable achievements of the team in elevating the country's name on international platforms. He also recognized the significant efforts that led to its

top-ranking performance in this prestigious competition.

He expressed Kuwait's pride in its young athletes, who have begun to excel on Gulf, Arab, and international stages. The Governor emphasized that these champions set a fine example for Kuwaiti sports youth, wishing them continued success and hoping for more achievements in the future across all fields.



Governor of the Capital honoring the young athletes.

## Australia gets off the mark in qualifiers

Socceroos rally past China

**ADELAIDE, Australia, Oct 10, (Xinhua): Australia's Socceroos came from behind to beat China 3-1 in its crucial Asian AFC World Cup qualifier in Adelaide.**

Adelaide-born winger Craig Goodwin proved the hometown hero for the Socceroos, assisting the equalizer and scoring the second goal from long range as Australia got its first win in the third round of AFC qualifying for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

China stunned the host in the 20th minute when a long free kick taken by goalkeeper Wang Dalei was headed on by Zhang Yuning to Xie Wenng who controlled the ball and beat two Australian defenders to fire his shot into the bottom right corner of the goal from inside the box.

Australia had 80 percent of possession in the first half but struggled to create clear chances in the first match under new head coach Tony Popovic, with defender Jiang Guangtai successfully shutting down the Socceroos' central attack.

The breakthrough for the Socceroos came in first half extra time when a

free kick from Goodwin was headed into goal under the outstretched hand of Wang by defender Lewis Miller in the 47th minute.

Goodwin's brilliance was again on display early in the second half when he received a pass from Jackson Irvine and took two touches before shooting from outside the box into the far left corner of the goal in the 50th minute.

China pushed hard for an equalizer but could not again break through the Australian defense in front of a record Adelaide crowd for a Socceroos match of 46,291 people, including a large and boisterous group of Chinese supporters.

Winger Nishan Velupillay sealed victory for the Australians with the third goal in the 93rd minute - 10 minutes after he was substituted on for his international debut.

The match marks the third consecutive defeat for China and leaves China last in Group C in the third round of AFC qualifying. Socceroos aim to qualify for a sixth straight FIFA World Cup.

China will next play Indonesia in Qingdao on Tuesday, with Australia to face Japan in Saitama on the same day.



Australia's Thomas Deng, left, China's Zhang Yuning during the World Cup 2026 Group C qualifying soccer match between Australia and China at Adelaide Oval, Adelaide, Australia. (AP)

## Kuwaiti school athletes set to participate in Bahrain International School Sports Games

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 10: The Kuwait School Sports Federation and Higher Education have announced their readiness to compete in the International School Sports Games, which will be held in Manama, Bahrain, under the patronage of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa from October 24 to 31. The event will bring together over 5,000 participants from more than 70 countries, competing in 26 different sports. This broad participation highlights Bahrain's status as a prominent global sports destination.

The Kuwaiti delegation, led by Faisal Abdullah Al-Maqseed, Chairman of the Kuwait School Sports Federation and Higher Education, will compete in four sports: Athletics, Judo, Gymnastics, and Archery. The delegation comprises 45 members, including 28 male and female athletes, alongside 17 technical, administrative, and medical staff, as well as referees. The participants, all born between 2006 and

2009, are school students carefully selected based on their skills.

Dr. Mutab Al-Mutairi, General Supervisor of Physical Education at the Ministry of Education and Vice President of the Federation, emphasized the delegation's readiness for the games. He noted that this is the first time the Federation is participating in a global event, following a successful participation in the Arab Championship held in Cairo last November. Dr. Al-Mutairi expressed optimism about achieving positive results in the World School Games, marking Kuwait's entry onto the global stage and reinforcing the nation's school sports program. He added that the players and technical staff were chosen for their high level of skill, and he has full confidence in their ability to perform well, reflecting the Federation's strategy, "Our Talents in Our Schools 2021-2026," and its positive outcomes.



Kuwait School Sports Federation delegation.

'A difficult decision'

## Rafael Nadal to retire from tennis after next month's Davis Cup finals

MADRID, Oct 10, (AP): Tennis great Rafael Nadal announced his impending retirement from the sport on Thursday at age 38 after winning 22 Grand Slam singles titles during an unprecedented era he shared with his rivals in the so-called Big Three, Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic.

Nadal said he will retire after next month's Davis Cup finals that will be played in Malaga, Spain.

The Spaniard indicated his decision was related to persistent injury problems.

"The reality is that it has been some difficult years, these last two especially. I don't think I have been able to play without limitations. It is obviously a difficult decision, one that has taken me some time to make. But in this life, everything has a beginning and an end," Nadal said.

Nadal's unrelenting, physical style of play - every point pursued as though it were his last, sprinting and sliding into place for that high-bouncing bull-whip of a lefty forehand - made him one of the greats of the game and the unquestioned King of Clay, the slow, red surface on which he claimed his record 14 French Open championships. That's more than anyone, man or



In this file photo, Rafael Nadal of Spain follows his shot to Andrey Rublev of Russia during their quarterfinal match of the Monte Carlo Tennis Masters tournament in Monaco. (AP)

woman, won at any one of the sport's four major tournaments, a dominance celebrated by a statue of Nadal that stands near the main entrance to the grounds of Roland Garros and in the shadow of its main stadium, Court Philippe Chatrier.

Nadal also won four trophies at the U.S. Open and two apiece at Wimbledon and the Australian Open, giving him a career Grand Slam. His last pair arrived in 2022, at Melbourne in January and at Paris in June, pushing him ahead of Federer for the men's record of 20 Grand Slam titles. Federer announced his retirement when he was 41 the end of the 2022 season, shortly before bidding adieu by teaming with Nadal in a doubles match at the Laver Cup.

Both have since been surpassed by Djokovic, who is up to 24. So much of Nadal's success was seen, fairly or not, through the prism of his encounters with Federer and Djokovic. The tennis world, and plenty outside of it, were consumed with the debate over which was most deserving of the "GOAT" - "Greatest Of All-Time" - moniker.

The world, tennis or otherwise, was fascinated by their matchups, their differing styles and personalities. Who among those who witnessed it could possibly forget Nadal vs. Federer in the 2008 Wimbledon final? Or Nadal vs. Djokovic in the 2022 French Open quarterfinals? Or Nadal vs. Djokovic in the 2012 Australian Open final? And so on.