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KUWAIT AMENDS CHILD LAW TO ENFORCE NATIONALITY FILING KD 3,000 for newborn lapse

Cabinet moves to protect child identity

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: The Council of Ministers has approved a draft decree-law amending certain provisions of Law No. 21/2015 regarding the rights of the child.

This amendment aims to solidify guarantees related to national identity and stop the laxity of some parents in

obtaining official documents for newborns.

First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah proposed the amendment, which stipulates the addition of articles 17bis and 81 bis to the law.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the draft decree-law, consisting of two articles. The first stipulates that two new articles, numbered 17bis and 81bis, shall be added to Law No. 21/2015 to read as follows:

Article 17bis: Every Kuwaiti father or legal guardian must apply to add the newborn to the nationality file of the father, along with the required documents, within 60 days from the date

of birth.

Article 81bis: Anyone who violates the provisions of Article 17bis of this law shall be fined not less than KD2,000 and not more than KD3,000.

The explanatory memorandum indicates that the State guarantees the rights of the child as per Law No. 21/2015, thereby, providing legal and social guarantees. The State is keen on protecting these rights, especially the right to national identity.

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HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Revenge destroys states, tolerant mindset builds nations

While we were waiting for food, I saw the prison guard in front of me.

I told my companion to ask him to come and share our food.

The man feared that I would torture him and imprison him, just as he had done to me.

After every meal of torture, I asked for water, but he would not give it to me.

One of them said, “The one who was with us was showing signs of illness.”

The villagers saw the miller’s thefts and remained silent.

He visited one of his sons in a dream and told him that he was being tortured.

If people saw justice from us, they would curse our father even more.

The people were in a state of uproar over the sons and began to pray for mercy for their father.

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Amiri Diwan Minister and Head of Crown Prince Diwan receive ambassadors of Saudi, Bahrain and Qatar.



Amiri Diwan photos

Amiri Diwan Minister receives members of the Kuwaiti Sports Club for Deaf.

Amiri Diwan Minister, Head of Crown Prince Diwan receive Saudi, Bahraini, Qatari envoys

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10, (KUNA): Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Head of the Crown Prince Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Wednesday at Bayan Palace Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Prince Sultan bin Saad Al-Saud, Ambassador of Bahrain Salah

Al-Maliki, and Ambassador of Qatar Ali Al-Mahmoud, to extend congratulations on their appointment to their new posts.

Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs also received a number of members of the Kuwaiti Sports Club for Deaf in his office at Bayan Palace.

Crown Prince arrives in Qatar

Kuwait stands with Qatar after security martyrdom

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10, (Agencies): The State of Kuwait expressed on Wednesday its sincere condolences and sympathy to the sisterly State of Qatar over the martyrdom of one of its security forces members as a result of the brutal Israeli occupation aggression to which it was subjected, renewing its full support and solidarity with the brothers in Qatar.

Kuwait offered its sincere condolences to the family of the martyr,

wishing for a speedy recovery for the injured.

Meanwhile, Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and accompanying delegation arrived in Doha International Airport

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Kuwait’s Education Ministry cracks down on IP violations

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: Minister of Education Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei issued a decision to protect the intellectual property rights of government software, applications, textbooks and publications, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This decision stems from the commitment of the Education Ministry to develop the educational process, protect its intellectual rights, and ensure that curricula and educational resources reach students and teachers

only through trusted official channels.

The ministry explained that the new decision aims to prevent any illegal exploitation of State-owned educational content.

The decision prohibits the use, copying or republishing of government textbooks, applications or publications by any means — whether in paper or electronic form, old or new.

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Kuwait Army photo

Kuwait’s Defense Minister Sheikh Abdullah bestows the General rank on Army Chief Khaled Al-Shraiaan.

Minister of Defense confers General rank to Army Chief

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10, (KUNA): Defense Minister Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah on Wednesday decorated Army General Staff Chief, Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shraiaan, with the rank of General.

This was in implementation of the Amiri Decree issued by His Highness the Amir and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In a statement released by the Ministry of Defense, Sheikh Abdullah conveyed his sincere congratulations to General Al-Shraiaan on the confidence placed in him, affirming that the promotion reflects his competence, professionalism, and extensive experience gained throughout his military service.

He expressed his wishes for continued success in serving the nation and contributing to its security, stability, and development.

The promotion ceremony was attended by Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Meshal Al-Sabah, Deputy Chief of the General Staff Major General Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, along with a number of senior military officers.

General Al-Shraiaan, born in 1968, graduated from the Royal Military College of Jordan in 1990. Over the course of his career, he took part in several major military operations, including the Liberation of Kuwait in 1991, the Iraq War in 2003, and Operation Decisive Storm in Saudi Arabia in 2015.

He also held several key military posts, most notably as Commander of the Kuwait Air Defense Force, and has been awarded numerous medals and decorations in recognition of his dedicated service.

Kuwait patrols nab 47

1,359 drug use cases reported in 8 months

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: The Ministry of Interior announced that the emergency patrols arrested 47 individuals in possession of alcohol and narcotics over the past two weeks – all of whom were referred to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD).

Security sources disclosed the emergency personnel deployed at several checkpoints apprehended the suspects of various nationalities,

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Kuwait’s Foreign Minister receives Ambassador of Egypt.



Kuwait’s Foreign Minister receives Ambassador of Lebanon.



Kuwait’s Foreign Minister receives Ambassador of Netherlands.



Kuwait’s Foreign Minister receives Ambassador of Djibouti.

Kuwait FM receives credentials of new ambassadors

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya received Wednesday credentials of Egyptian Ambassador to the country, Mohammad Abulwafa, at

the Ministry’s Diwan.

Minister Al-Yahya wished the newly appointed Ambassador success in his endeavors and the for the sturdy bilateral ties between the two nations

further progress and prosperity.

Kuwait’s Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya also received Wednesday

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8 Gulf Bank hosts awareness seminar on protecting SMEs from cyber-attacks as part of ongoing efforts to enhance cybersecurity in Kuwait



8 Weyay Bank empowers new students as strategic sponsor of PAAET orientation

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:09	Asr	15:16
Sunrise ..	05:30	Maghrib ..	18:00
Zohr	11:45	Isha	19:18

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind to northerly wind, with speeds of 08-35 km/h.

By Night: Rather hot with light

Weather

to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	48	35
Kuwait Airport	46	34
Abdaly	46	26

Bubyan	46	21
Jahra	47	34
Salmiyah	43	34
Ahmadi	46	31
Nuwaisib	46	30
Wafra	46	28
Salmy	43	26

Cabinet pledges continued reforms to boost sovereign credit and accelerate key development

Kuwait maintains strong financial standing, AA- rating stable

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10, (KUNA): The cabinet Tuesday witnessed a visual presentation by the Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait, Basel Ahmad Al-Haroun, regarding Fitch Ratings' recent announcement of Kuwait's sovereign credit rating at AA- with a stable outlook, supported by the strength of the domestic financial situation, and an exceptionally strong external balance.

After the weekly Cabinet meeting chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Abdullah Al-Mousherji said in a statement.

The presentation included the introductory framework for sovereign credit ratings and the trajectory of Kuwait's sovereign credit rating, particularly the latest sovereign credit rating, with regard to the rating results, its implications, and the main analytical pillars of the rating.

It also highlighted the factors that could raise or lower Kuwait's credit rating, as well as the current and future requirements for achieving

financial sustainability and maintaining Kuwait's credit rating.

The Council of Ministers affirms its commitment to continuing financial reforms that will raise Kuwait's sovereign credit rating on relevant global indices.

Earlier, at the start of the cabinet meeting, the ministers reviewed messages received from the Amiri Diwan and addressed to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from the heads of several countries regarding ways to strengthen bilateral relations and activate cooperation between the State of Kuwait and these countries in various fields.

On a different front, Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Mohammad Al-Mashaan briefed the ministers on the results of the coordination meeting she held yesterday with the President of the Audit Bureau, Issam Salem Al-Roumi, and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Central Agency for Public Tenders, Issam Dawood Al-Marzouq.

The meeting was also attended by officials from the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of Interior, the General Authority of Civil Aviation,



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting.

and the Fatwa and Legislation Department.

The cabinet also delved into the latest developments related to the (New Passenger Terminal T2) project at Kuwait International Airport.

Discussion aimed to enhance cooperation and coordination among

relevant entities to ensure the project's implementation is monitored according to the highest standards of quality and efficiency.

For its part, the cabinet called on the Ministry of Public Works, the General Authority of Civil Aviation, the Ministry of Interior, the Audit Bu-

reau, the Central Agency for Public Tenders, the Fatwa and Legislation Department, and all relevant government agencies to intensify efforts, continue cooperation, and coordinate among themselves to overcome any difficulties that may hinder the implementation of this project and other development projects in the country, with the aim of accelerating the pace of work according to the specified timetable for the operation of these projects.

The Council of Ministers decided to submit the draft decree-law to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may God protect him.

On the other hand, the Council of Ministers reviewed the minutes of the meeting of the Ministerial Committee for Legal Affairs, which included several provisions, most notably the draft decree regarding the controls on the ownership of real estate companies, funds, and investment portfolios, in implementation of the provisions of Decree-Law No. 74 of 1979 regulating the ownership of real estate by non-Kuwaitis.

The Council of Ministers also re-

viewed the draft decree amending some provisions of Decree No. (37) of 1994 establishing the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies.

The cabinet decided to approve the two draft decrees and submit them to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may God protect him.

The Cabinet also approved a draft decree-law issuing a unified industrial regulation law for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, in addition to a number of draft decree-laws, memoranda of understanding, and agreements between the Government of the State of Kuwait and the governments of several countries, aimed at strengthening Kuwait's position and enhancing relations with these countries in various fields.

The Cabinet decided to submit these draft decrees to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Later, the cabinet reviewed a number of topics on the agenda and approved them, including referring a number of topics to the relevant ministerial committees for scrutiny and preparation of reports.

Government moves to protect former Kuwaiti citizens' rights

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef oversees measures, urges swift action

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah on Wednesday chaired a meeting, at Al-Seif Palace, grouping ministers and leaders and officials of concerned government departments to follow up on the file of persons who had been stripped of the Kuwaiti citizenship.

Sheikh Fahad, in a statement during the session, affirmed the government keenness and full readiness to tackle the cases whose citizenship had been withdrawn to enable them to live a dignified life, emphasizing necessity to speed up the measures and find solutions to



Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior

this subject.

He declared that the following phone numbers: 97283232, 97293232, 97283535 and 97284747 would be specialized to respond to inquiries by those who had been stripped of the citizenship, during official work hours.

Those in category eight are divided into three divisions: the ones who had received their original passports, per-

sons who expressed seriousness to tackle their condition in cooperation with accredited embassies and others whose state transactions would be halted for failing to show seriousness in handling their situation, he said.

For his part, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereedah Al-Mousherji noted, during the session, that on the basis of the cabinet decision on granting prerogatives to the wife of a Kuwaiti husband whose citizenship was cancelled (category eight), the relevant government departments are ought to deal with such a case exceptionally to facilitate measures resulting from their papers' withdrawal.

Al-Mousherji spoke about the cabinet resolution to retain some rights and privileges for those whose citizenship was withdrawn in the list of great services for the country.

Meanwhile, Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadi indicated at some laws that regulate the medical profession, namely with regard of practitioners' permits whose citizenship was withdrawn, also indicating at humani-

tarian cases that were exempted to pursue treatment abroad.

Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, the Minister of Social Affairs, Family Affairs and Childhood, said her department is pursuing payments for households and social trainers whose citizenship was taken back.

She expressed desire to alter their condition (in the category eight), thus they would receive treatment equal to that given to the Kuwaiti woman. As to those tasked with care and special cases, their privileges persist.

Minister of Trade and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel expressed keenness of the government and Financial Markets Authority to guarantee funds and properties' transfer for these categories, except in the cases where there is a ban by an authoritative decision or law.

Trade accounts in Bourse Kuwait and corporate properties free of constraints are considered private properties and alienable, he added.

In his turn, Minister of State Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdulatif Al-Meshari said those in category eight are not obliged to bear damage regarding housing. As to those in the great services category, certain mechanisms have been set to pay the housing care loan.

As to the housing care for individuals who have an application in this respect, Almeshari said the application still stands for those who have been stripped of the citizenship from among those with great services' record and possess a construction permit. Those who have no permit lose their application.

Dr. Nader al-Jalal, the Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research, said the ministry and secretariat general of the private universities board will continue to cover the study expenditures for students with internal and external scholarships -- whose citizenship had been withdrawn in both categories: the eighth and the honorable services segment, based on a cabinet decision in this regard.



KUNA photo
The UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women visits the new maternity hospital.

Legal reforms earn recognition

UN Rapporteur lauds Kuwait for advancing women's rights

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls Reem Al-Salem affirmed that Kuwait has demonstrated remarkable humanitarian leadership, reflected in the significant progress the country has achieved in advancing the rights of women and girls—particularly the recent legal reforms and dedicated efforts to enhance their participation in society.

In a press conference at the UN headquarters, Al-Salem praised the initiatives of Kuwait to promote gender equality, especially its commitment to achieve New Kuwait Vision 2035 and fulfill its international human rights obligations.

She underscored the legal and institutional frameworks adopted by the State to prevent and address violence against women and girls, as well as the most recent reforms.

These include the adoption of Law No. 16/2020 on Protection from Domestic Violence, and the 2025 amendment of the Penal Code, which abolished leniency in the so-called 'honor crimes' by repealing articles 159 and 182 of Decree-Law No. 70/2025.

Al-Salem also commended the amendment of the Personal Status Law (Decree-Law No. 10/2025), which raised the minimum marriage age to eighteen for both genders. She offered her support by sharing her expertise in human rights to further strengthen these reforms.

She encouraged the government to build on the progress achieved by implementing additional reforms to combat all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual harassment and digital violence.

Al-Salem stressed that "despite the substantial legal progress achieved, it remains imperative to review and amend the current institutional architecture for the prevention of, and response to, discrimination and violence, in order to effectively address gaps in implementation and enforcement. Priority must be given to survivors of violence by creating better conditions for them to come forward and seek justice, protection and support. Survivor-focused services should be expanded, which can only be achieved through a stronger partnership between authorities and civil society."

At the same time, she expressed her deep concern about citizenship revocation measures that have affected tens of thousands of individuals. She pointed out that these measures disproportionately impact women who acquired citizenship through marriage, with far-reaching consequences for every aspect of their lives, leaving them in a state of shock and grief.

She called for the adoption of transparent grievance procedures, independent oversight mechanisms, and the expansion of timely support services for affected women and their families.

She also noticed that some non-Kuwaiti women and girls residing in the country illegally may face serious obstacles in accessing services, assistance, protection and justice.



KUNA photos
The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior chairs a meeting to follow up on facilitating procedures for those whose Kuwaiti citizenship has been revoked.

CAPT sets Sept 14 deadline

MEWRE opens bids for smart grid connectivity

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) has set Sept 14 as the deadline for submitting bids for the tender to connect the external branches of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy with the control center.

The accepted bids will be referred to the ministry for review and technical recommendations within 30 days. Based on these recommendations, a decision will be made to award the contract to the best financial and technical bidder, in accordance with the applicable regulations and laws, unless postponed for any reason.

Sources from the ministry revealed this is one of the important projects that it is keen on implementing in order to develop work mechanisms and integrate them with modern technologies that contribute to achieving digital transformation in all of its sectors.

Sources indicated that the primary

objective is to connect the external sites of the ministry with the data center in its main building and the National Control Center, in order to exchange data, provide electronic services and integrate all departments.

Sources added the Planning, Training and Information Systems Sector at the ministry is in charge of implementing the project, which is part of its plan to develop and modernize the work mechanisms.

Sources said the sector has several projects that will be tendered in the current fiscal year to keep pace with modern information technology developments and utilize them to improve the performance of employees.

In another development, the ministry confirmed the full restoration of power in Fintas on Tuesday.

It had earlier announced that four sub-feeders in Fintas B main transformer station malfunctioned, resulting in power outage in some parts of Fintas.

It added that emergency teams rushed to the site to restore power as quickly as possible.

Other Voices

Eggs and artificial intelligence article writing

By Ahmed alsarraf

I love eating eggs any time, whether boiled, prepared with olive oil or with toppings such as cheese, tomatoes, onions of various colors, eggplant, beans or any other grain.

For years, I have been accustomed to throwing away eggs that have been in the refrigerator for too long, whether after returning from a trip or when I doubt their freshness or taste.

With my wife's continued objection to my behavior, which she considered an unjustified fear of food poisoning, I hesitantly adjusted my 'historical' position after researching the shelf life of eggs.

The US Food and Drug Administration, the most accurate source worldwide, believes that eggs become unsafe to eat if left unrefrigerated for more than approximately two hours at room temperature, or just one hour if the temperature is above 32 degrees Celsius! This may be an exaggeration.

The experience of millions of people, especially in poor countries, contradict this view, as eggs



alsarraf

there are sold at temperatures above 32 degrees Celsius. However, we do not know the true effects of this on them.

Scientifically, hen eggs have a natural protective layer on them, but this layer is removed as soon as the egg is washed. Therefore, it is best either not to wash the egg before use or to refrigerate it immediately after washing.

Washing it and leaving it at room temperature for more than two hours accelerates the growth of bacteria inside, making it unsafe for human consumption. The higher the room temperature, the shorter the shelf life of the egg.

* * *

A longtime friend and reader asked me skeptically if I used artificial intelligence to write my articles. I responded with a categorical no, smiling. I asked him if he had noticed any change in my style or ideas from 10 or 20 years ago.

He denied it but wondered about the reason for this diversity in my writing. I explained that it was due to my recent exposure to new sources of knowledge on a daily basis, now that I have more time for research and reading than I did before my retirement.

I also began paying to read premium newspapers like The New York Times and Foreign Policy, which prompted me to take advantage of what I paid for.

In addition, I sometimes turn, as I did in the egg article above, to artificial intelligence sources to obtain as much information as possible on a particular topic.

This use of artificial intelligence is completely different from asking these sources to write the article for me. Consulting the information contained in GPT, Grok or Perplexity is not different from hearing it from a human source, a paper source or a book.

For me, they remain, so far, a good source, and certainly not a means of writing an article. The difference is clear.

Sometimes, I verify what is stated in these sources when the answer is ambiguous or even unavailable, especially on political or religious topics.

However, they remain, in general, good, comprehensive, and quick sources. Simply browsing them makes us feel that the more we learn, the more we become aware of the extent of our ignorance and of the unfathomable sciences and secrets of our planet, let alone the wider universe.

Therefore, what I strive to do is reduce my ignorance as much as possible and share with others the knowledge I acquire in the remaining years of my life.

□ □ □

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Telecom towers spark questions

Action urged on Table 17

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: Municipal Council member Dr. Hassan Kamal on Tuesday submitted questions to the executive body regarding the commitment to implement Table No. 17 of the Construction Regulations.



Dr. Kamal

Kamal pointed out that “the ministerial resolution regarding Table No. 17 on the regulation of construction works and the attached tables related to the special requirements and specifications was issued in January 2024, particularly the establishment of public radio communication stations in various parts of the country. The locations where telecommunications stations, towers and antennas may and may not be installed were identified, in addition to the related conditions and controls. Paragraph Three of Article Three (Sites) specifies the locations where communication stations, towers or antennas may not be installed, including plots and private and model housing buildings.”

He said Article Nine states that

“the status of existing stations, communication towers and antennas (permanent and temporary)—in violation of the provisions of the table—shall be corrected within a maximum period of one and a half years from the date of publication of the ministerial decision in the official gazette, ‘Kuwait Al-Yaum’, provided an additional period of six months is granted to companies, which demonstrated seriousness in implementing the regulations during the year and a half initial grace period... etc.”

He added “20 months have passed from the date of the publication of the ministerial decision, how committed are the Kuwait Municipality and Public Authority for Communications to implement articles Three and Nine of Table No. 17? What measures have they taken to implement Article Nine, which pertains to correcting the status of existing communication stations and towers, in violation of the provisions of the table? Please provide proof of this.”

While pointing out the installation of new communication towers on plots and model housing buildings in some areas, in contravention of the provisions of Table No. 17, he asked “how were these towers licensed by the Municipality, the Authority and the Ministry of Health? Are there any obstacles to the implementation of Table No. 17 by the Kuwait Municipality or other government agencies?”

He then stressed the need for the executive body to adhere to the deadline for responding to the questions of Municipal Council members, as per Law No. 33/2016.



Student-led event blends science outreach with community spirit.



Physics Club Unites Community Under Eclipse.



Event blends science, culture, and faith with strong public turnout.

Cosmic spectacle unites students, scholars and families

Kuwait University hosts total lunar eclipse observation

By Mai Al-Mahdi

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: The Physics Department in the College of Science at Kuwait University, in cooperation with Kuwait National Center for Space Research, organized the total lunar eclipse observation event on Sunday at Sabah Al-Salem University City.

Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) sponsored the event, with the participation of various government agencies, and organized by students from the Physics Club.

This event affirms the academic role of the University in spreading astronomical culture and providing opportunities to observe important cosmic phenomena.

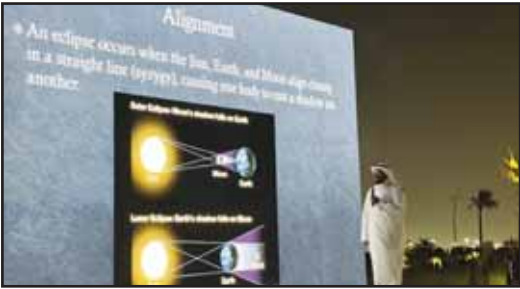
Present at the event were acting Dean of the College of Science Prof. Haider Behbehani, acting Head of the Physics Department Dr. Hala Al-Jassar, Head of the Physics Club Dr. Fahad Zaman, a number of ambassadors of neighboring countries, deans of colleges, faculty members, and a large number of students from various colleges.

Behbehani explained that the total lunar eclipse is a cosmic and scientific phenomenon that occurs periodically. He said the student body at the University organized this cosmic and astronomical event in an outstanding manner, educating everyone about this phenomenon. He pointed out it is a divine phenomenon that carries warning signs for humanity, requiring everyone to adhere to the true teachings of Islam.

He praised the cooperation between government agencies and the University in covering this unique



Students, faculty, and families engage in astronomy, competitions, and reflection.



Scholar guides the public through the rare total lunar eclipse.



Photos by Ghanima Al-Enezi
KFAS backs lunar eclipse night at KU.

event, hoping that all attendees enjoyed the event, which was the result of the tremendous efforts exerted by the students.

Meanwhile, Vice President of the Physics Club Sheikh Al-Bassam, a student, revealed that the Club organized this major scientific event under the supervision of the Physics Department and sponsorship of KFAS.

She said the Club was keen to involve various colleges in observing this astronomical phenomenon

in an atmosphere of enthusiasm and engagement with everyone.

She praised the large turnout of the public and the participation of faculty and administrative staff from different colleges.

The event also featured scientific competitions with the participation of children and their families, through the coordinated efforts of supporting and sponsoring entities.

Cash prizes were awarded for photography, allowing participants in and

outside Kuwait to observe this cosmic phenomenon through field telescopes, in cooperation with the Scientific Center and Al-Ajari Center.

On the sidelines of the event, a scientific lecture about the total lunar eclipse was delivered by astronomical photographer Abdulrahman Al-Harbi, showing the phases of the lunar eclipse.

Finally, the attendees performed the eclipse prayer in a religious and faithful atmosphere.



SEPTEMBER

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Al-Mailam conducts field tour

KU prioritizes student registration needs, streamlines semester start

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: Kuwait University President Dr. Dina Al-Mailam affirmed the commitment of the University to closely monitor all stages of the registration process to ensure that students are provided with the necessary study sections as per their needs, thereby, easing their academic journey and preventing obstacles at the start of the new semester.

Al-Mailam made the statement during a field tour conducted at Sabah Al-Salem University City to look into the progress of completing student schedules through the 'Mandatory' system.

She was accompanied by Dr. Fadel Aziz, acting Dean of Admissions and Registration, in the tour that covered several colleges to review the scheduling mechanisms and ensure the smooth flow of procedures for students.

During the tour, Al-Mailam met with officials, as well as academic and administrative staff, in the colleges.

The university administration focuses on developing the academic services provided to students, particularly those related to registration, by strengthening technical readiness and offering the necessary administrative and technical support.

The University continues to harness all its resources to create a stimulating educational environment that meets students' aspirations and supports their academic success.

This tour is part of a series of regular follow-ups conducted by the university administration at the beginning of each academic year, aimed at ensuring that all academic and organizational procedures are carried out in accordance with the highest standards of quality and efficiency.



KU President Al-Mailam inspects the registration process at Sabah Al-Salem University City.

Student info strictly protected

Ministry of Education enforces data security across all schools

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei issued a ministerial decision regulating the use of student data and ensuring their protection against any form of exploitation, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Education confirmed that the decision strictly prohibits the use or sharing of student data through any external platforms or applications without its approval.

It stressed that all data storage and processing operations must be limited to its official systems and platforms, or those authorized by a ministerial decision after obtaining approval from the relevant authorities.

The ministry clarified that all school administrations and educational districts are required to fully comply with the deci-

sion, with each school principal mandated to sign a written declaration and pledge not to enter student data into unauthorized external platforms.

It added that the Information Systems Department will oversee the implementation of the decision through strict monitoring measures, periodic audits, and regular reports submitted to its senior leadership. These steps aim to ensure effective enforcement and information security.

Moreover, the ministry announced that it will organize training and awareness programs for the staff in educational institutions – including principals, teachers and administrative employees – designed to foster a culture of safe data handling, prevent human errors, improve efficiency, and strengthen cybersecurity in schools.

The decision takes effect from the date of its issuance, and all concerned authorities are obligated to comply within their respective jurisdictions, while any prior provisions conflicting with it shall be repealed.



Al-Tabtabaei

GCC audit chiefs in Kuwait forge stronger oversight frameworks

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: The 22nd meeting of the heads of financial and accounting audit bureaus in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries kicked off Wednesday in Kuwait. The heads of the audit bureaus in

the GCC countries and the GCC Secretariat General attended the event, which aimed to highlight the importance of these entities in enhancing transparency, protecting public funds, and supporting joint Gulf action.

In his opening remarks at the meeting, Chairman of Kuwait's State Audit Bureau (SAB) Essam Salem Al-Roumi disclosed that the meeting is an extension of previous efforts, which contributed to the improvement of the quality of audit work.

Al-Roumi said the agenda of the meeting includes priority topics, such as efforts to guarantee institutional efficiency and the integration of Gulf audit work.

He stressed the importance of taking practical steps to strengthen cooperation, exchange expertise, and keep pace with professional and technical changes at the regional and international levels.

He asserted that the belief in joint action is enough to produce decisions and recommendations that support the development process and enable oversight bodies to perform their roles effectively.

He also commended the unwavering support of the GCC Secretariat General, as well as the efforts of the specialized committees involved in joint oversight work.

Meanwhile, GCC Secretary General Jassem Mohammad Al-Budaiwi praised the tremendous efforts that the State of Kuwait exerted in managing and ensuring the success of joint Gulf meetings.

He said the GCC countries are making remarkable efforts to enhance the protection of public funds. He asserted that this meeting reflects the commitment of the GCC leaders to support oversight and accounting bodies, thereby, contributing to the realization of the aspirations of the citizens of GCC countries, while improving the position of these countries at the regional and international levels.

F&B VENDOR NEEDED

Opportunity to Operate our School Cafeteria


The American Baccalaureate School (ABS) in Khaitan is seeking proposals from experienced cafeteria operators to serve our 1,100 students and 300 faculty/staff across all school divisions.

- Vendors must offer a healthy menu, competitive prices, and be fully operational by January 5, 2026, with all equipment and decor installed by December 20, 2025.
- Proposals must include sample menus, pricing, food samples, hygiene certifications, and an equipment plan.


Proposal Submission Instructions and Guidelines:

- Submit by Email: cafe@abs.edu.kw
- Submit by Hand: ABS School (Reception Area), Abraq Khaitan, Block 6, Street 59, Ibn Zuhair Street.
- For Questions: WhatsApp +965 6902 4498
- Deadline: October 10, 2025** (End of Day Kuwait Time)

- Subject line format for email submissions (ABS Cafeteria RFP – <Company Name>).
- File formats allowed: PDF or DOCX for menus / credentials.
- File-naming convention: <CompanyName>_ABS_RFP_2025.



Scan to Get Application Form



Continued from Page 1

KD 3,000

It pointed out that due to the negligence of some parents or guardians in obtaining official documents for the child, specifically adding the child to the nationality file of the father, it was necessary to enact the legislation obligating the legal guardian to add the newborn to the nationality file, as stated in Article 17bis, while Article 81bis stipulates the penalty for anyone who fails to fulfill this obligation.

It added that the purpose of the amendment is to protect the rights of children and establish their national identity from the beginning of their life, indicating that the laxity of some parents in registering births in the nationality file of the father resulted in procedural and legal problems, which necessitated taking decisive legislative action.

Kuwait FM

credentials of Lebanon's Ambassador to the country, Ghada Khouri, at the Ministry's Diwan.

Minister Al-Yahya wished the newly appointed Ambassador success in her endeavors and for the sturdy bilateral ties between the two nations further progress and prosperity.

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya received Wednesday credentials of Netherlands Ambassador to the country, Wierish Ramsoekh, at the Ministry's Diwan.

Minister Al-Yahya wished the newly appointed Ambassador success in his endeavors and for the sturdy bilateral ties between the two nations further progress and prosperity.

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya received Wednesday credentials of Djiboutian Ambassador to the country, Issa Robleh, at the Ministry's Diwan.

Minister Al-Yahya wished the newly appointed Ambassador success in his endeavors and for the sturdy bilateral ties between the two nations further progress and prosperity.

1,359 drug

indicating that suspicion over their abnormal behavior was the primary reason behind their arrest.

As the ministry continues its intensified campaign to combat drugs, the statistical figures have become alarming. Sources confirmed the ministry is keen on arresting wanted individuals, drug users and traffickers, and other outlaws. Sources said these campaigns aim to pursue violators, dry up the sources of drugs, and protect society from their effects.

Furthermore, statistics from DCGD showed that 1,359 drug use cases were recorded over the past eight months, reflecting the magnitude of the challenges the security agencies are facing in combating this scourge.

Sources affirmed that DCGD is taking legal action against drug traders and users, while focusing on the pursuit of distribution networks and working hard to dry up the sources of drugs.

Kuwait's Education

The decision also prohibits the preparation of summaries, educational notes or questions, or their recirculation through other digital platforms or websites.

The ministry stressed that this ban extends to printing presses, libraries and publishing houses, in order to protect intellectual property rights and ensure the integrity of educational content.

It explained that the decision requires the inventory and registration of all government programs, applications, textbooks and publications, regardless of their nature, with the Kuwait National Library.

This necessitates the creation of an integrated electronic registry at the General Administration of Technology and Information Systems, which includes all items registered in the name of the ministry.

The ministry confirmed that the General Administration of Technology and Information Systems, through the Platforms Department, will operate and manage its electronic library, which includes technically approved textbooks and interactive educational resources, and will update them periodically to keep pace with digital developments and educational requirements.

It affirmed that this library is already available on its website <https://elibrary.moe.edu.kw>.

It asserted that all violations will be referred to the competent authorities to take the necessary legal action, while it reserves the right to take additional administrative measures, such as suspending dealings with the violating entity, or requesting the blocking of websites or the closure of platforms proven to be involved in infringing intellectual property rights.

It indicated that the decision is effective from the date of its issuance, and that all competent authorities must implement it, each in their respective capacity.

It stressed that it will not be lenient in enforcing the law and protecting its intellectual property rights, as they are an essential part of maintaining the quality of education and supporting the goal of the State to build a modern and safe educational system.

Meanwhile, the ministry revealed that it continues to conduct courses for supervisors and teachers to train them on the new curricula.

The training courses and educational workshops are part of the plan of the ministry to qualify technical supervisors and teachers, and familiarize them with the latest teaching methods and content of the developed curricula.

Acting General Technical Supervisor for Social Studies Mohammad Al-Otaibi stated that the General Technical Guidance Course for Social Studies titled, "Transitioning Towards New Curricula for Social Studies Subjects," aims to enable technical supervisors for Social Studies to understand and apply the new curricula according to the reference framework and modern standards to improve professional performance and contribute to achieving the goals and vision of the State of Kuwait.

Kuwait stands

Wednesday on a brotherly visit to Qatar.

Receiving His Highness the Crown Prince at the airport was Deputy Amir of Qatar Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Thani.

Accompanying His Highness the Crown Prince, Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs, Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Sabah and Chief of the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Sabah.

On Tuesday, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah strongly condemned the Israeli flagrant aggression on the State of Qatar Tuesday, affirming the State of Kuwait's full support for leadership, government and people of Qatar.

His Highness the Amir's condemnation came during a phone call with Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, during which he voiced support to all measures and decisions taken by the State of Qatar.

He underlined readiness of the State of Kuwait to make all of its resources available for the support of Qatar.

His Highness the Amir said the security and stability of Qatar and Kuwait were intertwined, and hoped Allah the Almighty protect Qatar and its people.

In Doha, Qatari security forces and emergency fire personnel deployed Wednesday around the site of an Israeli attack the previous day on Hamas' political leaders who had gathered in the capital of the energy-rich Middle East country to consider a U.S. proposal for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip.

Tuesday's strike on a building in Doha killed at least six people in a neighborhood that is home to foreign embassies and schools.

The strike on the territory of a U.S. ally drew widespread condemnation from countries in the Mideast and beyond. It also marked a dramatic escalation in the region and risked upending talks aimed at ending the war and freeing hostages still held by Hamas in Gaza.

Obituary Announcement

With deep sorrow and heartfelt grief

Muhmood Ebdewe Muhmood and his family

announce the passing of their beloved

The Late Mrs. Rhoda Elizabeth Muhmood MBE

Devoted mother of :

Laith – Khalid – Tareq – Ziad

She departed this life on Tuesday 9 / 9 / 2025 after a long journey marked by generosity, dedication, and humanity, leaving a lasting impact in the fields of education and teaching.

Condolences will be received at the Radisson Blu Hotel for two days (Friday 12th & Saturday 13th September, 2025)

Morning Session : 9:30 am until 12:30pm
Evening Session : 5:30 pm until 8:30pm
Contact Information
Muhmood / Abu Laith: +965 97885664
Laith Muhmood: +965 99605527

CONDOLENCES

Mohammed Jassim Al-Saddah and his family

extend their deepest condolences and heartfelt sympathy to

Mr. Muhmood Ebdewe Muhmood and his sons, Laith, Khaled, Tariq, and Ziad,

on the passing of their beloved wife and mother,

Mrs. Rhoda Elizabeth Muhmood, MBE

The co-founder and the ex director of Kuwait English School for the past 43 years she departed this life after a long and impactful journey of dedication in the fields of education and pedagogy, leaving behind a lasting legacy and touching the lives of all who had the privilege of knowing her.

We ask Almighty God to shower her with His infinite mercy, grant her eternal rest in His spacious gardens, and bestow upon her family strength, patience, and solace in this time of grief.

Judge pauses California’s request to bar WH ongoing use of National Guard troops

Chief Justice Roberts keeps in place Trump funding freeze that threatens billions in foreign aid

WASHINGTON, Sept 10, (AP): US Chief Justice John Roberts has temporarily kept in place the Trump administration’s decision to freeze nearly \$5 billion in foreign aid.

Roberts acted on the administration’s emergency appeal to the Supreme Court in a case involving billions of dollars in congressionally approved aid. President Donald Trump said last month that he would not spend the money, invoking disputed authority that was last used by a president roughly 50 years ago.

The high court order is temporary, though it suggests that the justices will reverse a lower court ruling that withholding the funding was likely illegal. US District Judge Amir Ali ruled last week that Congress would have to approve the decision to withhold the funding.

The Supreme Court case will continue unfolding, and Roberts asked the plaintiffs to respond to the Trump administration’s appeal on Friday.

Trump told House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., in a letter on Aug. 28 that he would not spend \$4.9 billion in congressionally approved foreign aid, effectively cutting the budget without going through the legislative branch.

He used what’s known as a pocket rescission. That’s when a president submits a request to Congress toward the end of a current budget year to not spend the approved money. The late notice means Congress cannot act on the request in the required 45-day window and the money goes unspent.

The Trump administration has made deep reductions to foreign aid one of its hallmark policies, despite the relatively meager savings relative to the deficit and possible damage to America’s reputation abroad as foreign populations lose access to food supplies and development programs. The administration turned to the high court after a panel of federal appellate judges declined to block Ali’s ruling.

Justice Department lawyers told a federal judge last month that another \$6.5 billion in aid that had been subject to the freeze would be spent before the end of the fiscal year on Sept 30.



US Chief Justice of the Supreme Court John Roberts arrives before President Donald Trump addresses a joint session of Congress at the Capitol in Washington on March 4. (AP)

The case has been winding its way through the courts for months, and Ali said he understood that his ruling would not be the last word on the mat-

ter.

“This case raises questions of immense legal and practical importance, including whether there is any avenue

to test the executive branch’s decision not to spend congressionally appropriated funds,” he wrote.

In August, the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit threw out an earlier injunction Ali had issued to require that the money be spent. But the three-judge panel did not shut down the lawsuit.

After Trump issued his rescission notice, the plaintiffs returned to Ali’s court and the judge issued the order that’s now being challenged.

Also:

SAN FRANCISCO: A federal judge who ruled last week that the Trump administration broke federal law by sending National Guard troops to the Los Angeles area said Tuesday he will not immediately consider a request to bar the ongoing use of 300 Guard troops.

In a court order, Senior District Judge Charles Breyer in San Francisco said he was not sure he had the authority to consider California’s motion for a preliminary injunction blocking the administration’s further deployment of

state National Guard troops. That’s because the case is on appeal before the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals, the judge said.

Breyer indefinitely paused all proceedings related to the state’s motion, though he suggested California officials could file the request with the 9th Circuit.

An email to the California attorney general’s office late Tuesday was not immediately returned.

Breyer’s Sept 2 ruling took on heightened importance amid President Donald Trump’s talk of National Guard deployments to other Democratic-led cities like Chicago, Baltimore and New York. Trump has already deployed the Guard as part of his unprecedented law enforcement takeover targeting crime, immigration and homelessness in Washington, where he has direct legal control over the District of Columbia National Guard.

The Trump administration sent troops to the Los Angeles area in early June after days of protests over immigration raids.



Several shipping containers have fallen off a cargo ship and into the water at the Port of Long Beach, Calif., on Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2025. (AP)

More than 60 containers fall off ship in Long Beach port

More than 60 containers toppled off a cargo ship Tuesday morning in the Port of Long Beach, tumbling overboard and floating in the water.

The shipping containers fell off a vessel named the Mississippi shortly before 9 am, and no injuries have been reported, according to Port of Long Beach spokesperson Art Marroquin.

About 67 containers were in the water, the US Coast Guard said on the social platform X.

Long Beach, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) south of Los Angeles, is one of the busiest seaports in the country, with 40% of all shipping containers in the United States coming through it or the Los Angeles port.

Some of the containers appeared to have fallen on the STAX

2, an anti-pollution vessel attached to the side of the Mississippi that captures emissions. When empty, a container can weigh between two to four metric tons (2.2 to 4.4 tons) depending on the size.

The Pier G container terminal, one of six at the port, temporarily stopped unloading and loading ships as authorities worked to secure the containers. (AP)

‘Violated airspace during strikes on Ukraine’

Poland shoots down Russian drones

WARSAW, Poland, Sept 10, (AP): Poland said Wednesday that multiple Russian drones entered its territory over the course of several hours and were shot down with help from NATO allies, describing the incursion as an “act of aggression” carried out during a wave of Russian strikes on Ukraine.

The Kremlin refused to comment, but its close ally, Belarus, said it tracked some drones that “lost their course” because they were jammed. However, several European leaders said they believe that the incursion amounted to an intentional escalation by Russia of its war on Ukraine.

Poland said some of the drones came from Belarus, where Russian and Belarusian troops have begun gathering for war games starting on Friday.

Polish airspace has been violated many times since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, but there has been nothing on this scale in Poland or in any other Western nation along the eastern flank of NATO and the European Union. A NATO spokesman said it was the first time the alliance has confronted a potential threat in its airspace.

NATO met to discuss the incident, which came three days after Russia’s largest aerial attack on Ukraine since the war began.

“Russia’s war is escalating, not ending,” European Union foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said. “Last night in Poland we saw the most serious European airspace violation by Russia since the war began, and indications suggest it was intentional, not accidental.”

The extent of the incursion was still



Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk holds an extraordinary government meeting at the chancellery, with military and emergency services officials, following violations of Polish airspace during a Russian attack, in Warsaw, Poland on Sept 10. (AP)

becoming clear: Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk told parliament 19 violations were recorded over seven hours, but that information was still being gathered. Eight crash sites have been found, a government spokesperson said. Dutch fighter jets came to Poland’s aid and intercepted some drones, the Netherlands’ defense minister said.

“This is an act of aggression that posed a real threat to the safety of our

citizens,” the Polish military’s operational command said on social media.

French President Emmanuel Macron called on Russia to put an end to “this reckless escalation,” while Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala called the violation “a test of NATO countries’ defense capabilities.”

Tusk told parliament that the first violation came at approximately 11:30 p.m. Tuesday and the last around 6:30 a.m. on Wednesday. He said that the 19 violations recorded so far were “not the final data.”

Earlier, Defense Minister Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz wrote on X that more than 10 objects crossed into Polish airspace, but he did not specify an exact number.

“What is new, in the worst sense of the word, is the direction from which the drones came. This is the first time in this war that they did not come from Ukraine as a result of errors or minor Russian provocations. For the first time, a significant portion of the drones came directly from Belarus,” Tusk said in parliament.

Belarusian Maj. Gen. Pavel Muraveiko, the chief of the General Staff chief and first deputy defense minister, appeared to try to put some distance between his country and the incursion.

In an online statement, he said that as Russia and Ukraine traded drone strikes overnight, Belarusian air defense forces tracked “drones that lost their course” after they were jammed, adding that Belarusian forces warned their Polish and Lithuanian counterparts about “unidentified aircraft” approaching their territory.

Explosions heard in Lithuania’s capital: Powerful explosions were heard in the suburbs of Lithuania’s capital Wednesday morning after several rail cars loaded with liquefied gas caught fire, authorities said.

One person was injured, according to the fire and rescue department. Columns of smoke were visible across Vilnius and residents in the area were warned to stay indoors.

Interior Minister Vladislavas Kondratovius told reporters initial information suggests that “the fire was most likely caused by a violation of occupational safety conditions, but all versions are being investigated.”

The carriages that caught fire belong to Polish company Orlen, police said. (AP)

3 die trying to cross English Channel: Three migrants have died after attempting to cross the English Channel from northern France, and at least three others are believed to be missing, local authorities said on Wednesday.

The Pas-de-Calais department’s prefecture said the three people who died overnight were trying to reach Britain through the perilous waterway.

Local authorities believe that three other migrants went missing at sea during another attempted crossing. Rescue teams managed to salvage one person during that boat accident, the prefecture said.

Attempts by migrants to cross the Channel in unseaworthy boats have multiplied in recent days due to favorable weather. (AP)

UN chief urges states to re-balance army spending, development needs

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 10, (Xinhua): UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday urged member states to re-balance military spending and development priorities.

“The evidence is clear. Excessive military spending does not guarantee peace. It often undermines it -- fueling arms races, deepening mistrust, and diverting resources from the very foundations of stability,” the UN chief said at the launch of the new report titled “The Security We Need: Re-balancing Military Spending for a Sustainable and Peaceful Future.”

“A more secure world begins by investing at least as much in fighting poverty as we do in fighting wars,” Guterres said.

Global military spending surged to a record high of 2.7 trillion US dollars in 2024, nearly 13 times the amount of official development assistance from the world’s wealthiest nations and 750 times the UN regular budget in 2024, he said.

At the same time, only one-fifth of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets are on track. The financing gap is growing, and so is the cost of inaction, he warned.

The report is a call to rethink priorities and to re-balance global investments toward the security that the world truly needs, Guterres said.

Global military spending is projected to reach 4.7-6.6 trillion dollars by 2035 if current trends persist. The massive diversion of resources toward militarization poses a serious threat to humanity’s future by undermining



United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres speaks at United Nations headquarters on Sept 9. (AP)

sustainable peace and development, according to the report.

Even a small fraction of military spending can make a big difference in people’s lives, said the report. Less than 4 percent of the 2024 global military spending is needed annually to end hunger by 2030. A little over 10 percent can fully vaccinate every child. With 5 trillion dollars, the world could fund 12 years of quality education for every child in low- and lower-middle-income countries. Reinvesting 15 percent of the 2024 global military spending is more than enough to cover the annual costs of climate change adaptation in developing countries.

UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu said the report confronts a stark reality: rising global military spending is not delivering peace and will not achieve sustainable peace, but rather undermines the shared vision for a just, sustainable and equitable future.

“The challenge before us is not to merely reverse the trend of escalating military spending and shrinking development finance, but to recommit to multilateralism and diplomacy. We must integrate peace and development agendas and recalibrate global financial priorities,” she said at the launch of the report.



Protesters march during a rally of the 'Block Everything' movement in Marseille, south of France on Sept 10. (AP)

295 arrested in France as protesters clash with police while Macron installs new PM

PARIS, Sept 10, (AP): Protesters blocked roads, lit blazes and were met with volleys of tear gas on Wednesday in Paris and elsewhere in France, heaping pressure on President Emmanuel Macron by attempting to give his new prime minister a baptism of fire.

The government’s interior ministry announced 295 arrests in the first hours of what was a planned day of nationwide demonstrations against Macron, budget cuts and other complaints.

Although falling short of its self-declared intention to “Block Everything,” the protest movement that started online over the summer caused widespread hot spots of disruption, defying an exceptional deployment of 80,000 police who broke up barricades and swiftly made arrests.

Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau said that a bus was set on fire in the western city of Rennes. In the southwest, fire damage to electrical cables stopped train services on one line and disrupted traffic on another, government transport authorities said.

The protests appeared so far to be less intense than previous bouts of unrest that have sporadically rocked Macron in both his first and ongoing second term as president. They included months of nationwide so-called yellow vest demonstrations against economic injustice in 2018-2019.

After his reelection in 2022, Macron faced firestorms of anger over unpopu-



Railway workers hold smoke bombs in the Gare de Lyon train station, during the 'Bloquons Tout' (Block Everything) protest movement in Paris, France on Sept 10. (AP)

lar pension reforms and nationwide unrest and rioting in 2023 after the deadly police shooting of a teenager on Paris’ outskirts.

Nevertheless, demonstrations and sporadic clashes with riot police in Paris and elsewhere Wednesday added to a sense of crisis that has again gripped France following its latest government collapse on Monday, when Prime Minister Francois Bayrou lost a parliamentary confidence vote.

Macron was installing a new prime minister, Sébastien Lecornu, on Tuesday, and the protests immediately presented him with a challenge.

Groups of protesters repeatedly tried to block Paris’ beltway during the morning rush hour and were dispersed by police and tear gas. Elsewhere in the capital, protesters piled up trash cans and hurled objects at police officers. Paris police reported 159 arrests through the morning.

Europe

Belgian PM, Noem meet to tackle smuggling: US Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem met Wednesday with Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever in the port of Antwerp to discuss maritime security and bilateral efforts to fight transnational drug smuggling.

Noem said during a joint appearance that various American agencies were cooperating with Belgium to increase the sharing of data and intelligence to combat drug trafficking. “Our threats will be stopped through collaboration, through sharing of information and intelligence,” she said, adding that ports are “a prime target for foreign terrorist organizations, or cartels, or transnational criminal organizations that smuggle drugs and smuggle traffic through them. And here in Antwerp, you know that all too well.”

De Wever, a former mayor of Antwerp, has traveled as far as South America in efforts to tackle surging drug trafficking through northern Europe. (AP)



De Wever

INTERNATIONAL

Asia

2 rescued, 6 trapped in China mine accident:

Six people were trapped following a mining-induced earthquake on Wednesday in northeast China's Heilongjiang Province.

The incident occurred at 1:44 a.m. at the Fuli coal mine in the city of Hegang. The tremor caused significant damage to sections of the underground tunnels.

Two miners have been rescued and transferred to a hospital for treatment, with no life-threatening injuries reported.

Rescue efforts are under way to locate the remaining six trapped individuals. (Xinhua)



Man gets 7 years of hard labor in Myanmar:

A man has been sentenced to seven years of hard labor in military-run Myanmar for criticizing the government's plans to hold elections in December, state-run media reported Wednesday.

It's the first known conviction under the new election law targeting anyone who opposes or disrupts the elections.

In the Aug. 25 Facebook post, which has since been taken down, Nay Thway posted surveillance video of a robbery and criticized the military government for prioritizing the election plan over ensuring public safety.

Nay Thway, 36, was sentenced in a Taunggyi township court in eastern Shan state to the maximum for the offense of attempting to undermine the elections, according to the Myanma Alinn newspaper. Other offenses under the new law carry sentences up to the death penalty. (AP)

Australia to spend \$1.1b on underwater attack drones

MELBOURNE, Australia, Sept 10, (AP): Australia will spend 1.7 billion Australian dollars (\$1.1 billion) on building dozens of locally developed underwater attack drones, Defense Minister Richard Marles said on Wednesday.

The first of the stealthy, long-range Ghost Sharks will be delivered to the Australian navy in January next year under a five-year contract with Sydney-based Anduril Australia, Marles said.

"Australia is leading the world in terms of autonomous, underwater military capabilities," Marles told reporters in Sydney.

The large, autonomous underwater vehicles would significantly boost Australia's undersea warfare capabilities, complementing a fleet of submarines powered with U.S. nuclear technology, Marles said.

The first of those submarines provided under the AUKUS partnership with the United States and Britain won't be delivered to Australia until 2032.

Marles would not say precisely how many Ghost Sharks would be built. But he said the Australian navy would be provided with "dozens" over the next five years.

He also wouldn't comment on the Ghost Sharks' range other than to describe it as "very long range."

As an island continent and a trading nation, Australia sees the possibility of its sea routes being blocked by an enemy as a major strategic threat.

A Chinese navy flotilla conducted a live-fire exercise in the sea between Australia and New Zealand in February in what was widely regarded as a demonstration of China's growing military reach.

The flotilla almost completely circumnavigated Australia. The Chinese navy rarely travels so far south.



An autonomous undersea vehicle known as the Ghost Shark is seen at HMAS Kuttabul naval base in Sydney on Sept 10. (AP)

7 injured in explosion at military unit

South Korea sends plane to US to bring back workers detained in immigration raid

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept 10, (Agencies): A South Korean charter plane left for the US on Wednesday to bring back Korean workers detained in an immigration raid in Georgia last week.

A total of 475 workers, more than 300 of them South Koreans, were rounded up in the Sept. 4 raid at the battery factory under construction at Hyundai's sprawling auto plant. US authorities released video showing some being shackled with chains around their hands, ankles and waists, causing shock and a sense of betrayal among many in South Korea, a key US ally.

South Korea's government later said it reached an agreement with the US for the release of the workers.

South Korean TV footage showed the charter plane, a Boeing 747-8i from Korean Air, taking off at Incheon International Airport, just west of Seoul. South Korea's Foreign Ministry said it was talking with US officials about letting the plane return home with the released workers as soon as possible. But it said the plane cannot depart from the U.S. on Wednesday as South Korea earlier wished due to an unspecified reason involving the US side.

The Korean workers are currently being held at an immigration detention center in Folkston in southeast

Georgia. South Korean media reported that they will be freed and moved to Atlanta to take the charter plane.

South Korean officials said they've been negotiating with the US to win "voluntary" departures of the workers, rather than deportations that could result in making them ineligible to return to the US for up to 10 years.

The workplace raid by the US Homeland Security agency was its largest yet as it pursues its mass deportation agenda. The Georgia battery plant, a joint venture between Hyundai and LG Energy Solution, is one of more than 20 major industrial sites that South Korean companies are currently building in the United States.

Many South Koreans view the Georgia raid as a source of national disgrace and remain stunned over it. Only 10 days earlier, South Korean President Lee Jae Myung and U.S. President Donald Trump held their first summit in Washington on Aug. 25. In late July, South Korea also promised hundreds of billions of dollars in US investments to reach a tariff deal.

Experts say South Korea won't likely take any major retaliatory steps against the US, but the Georgia raid could become a source of tensions between the allies as the Trump administration intensifies immigration raids.



A Korean Air chartered plane takes off to bring back Korean workers detained in an immigration raid in Georgia, at Incheon International Airport, South Korea on Sept 10. (AP)

U.S. authorities said some of the detained workers had illegally crossed the US border, while others had entered the country legally but had expired visas or entered on a visa waiver that prohibited them from working. But South Korean experts and officials said Washington has yet to act on Seoul's yearslong demand to ensure a visa system to accommodate skilled Korean workers needed to build facilities, though it has been pressing South

Korea to expand industrial investments in the US.

South Korean companies have been relying on short-term visitor visas or Electronic System for Travel Authorization to send workers needed to launch manufacturing sites and handle other setup tasks, a practice that had been largely tolerated for years.

LG Energy Solution, which employed most of the detained workers, instructed its South Korean employees

in the U.S. on B-1 or B-2 short-term visit visas not to report to work until further notice, and told those with E-TAs to return home immediately.

During his visit to Washington, South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun met representatives of major Korean companies operating in the US including Hyundai, LG and Samsung on Tuesday. Cho told them that South Korean officials are in active discussions with US officials and lawmakers about possible legislation to create a separate visa quota for South Korean professionals operating in the US, according to Cho's ministry.

Trump said this week the workers "were here illegally," and that the US needs to work with other countries to have their experts train US citizens to do specialized work such as battery and computer manufacturing.

Atlanta immigration attorney Charles Kuck, who represents four of the detained South Korean nationals, told The Associated Press on Monday that no company in the US makes the machines used in the Georgia battery plant. So they had to come from abroad to install or repair equipment on-site - work that would take about three to five years to train someone in the US to do, he said.

The South Korea-US military alli-

ance, forged in blood during the 1950-53 Korean War, has experienced ups and downs over the decades. But surveys have shown a majority of South Koreans support the two countries' alliance, as the US deployment of 28,500 troops in South Korea and 50,000 others in Japan has served as the backbone of the American military presence in the Asia-Pacific region.

During a Cabinet Council meeting on Tuesday, Lee said he felt "big responsibility" over the raid and expressed hopes that the operations of South Korean businesses won't be infringed upon unfairly again. He said his government will push to improve systems to prevent recurrences of similar incidents in close consultations with the US.

Also:

SEOUL: Seven people were injured Wednesday in an explosion at a military unit of South Korea, according to Yonhap news agency.

The explosion occurred at an army unit in Paju, Gyeonggi province, at about 3:30 pm local time (0630 GMT), leaving seven people wounded.

The military was investigating the cause of the accident based on reports that an educational bomb exploded.

Protest violence intensifies

Nepalese army moves to restore order

KATHMANDU, Nepal, Sept 10, (AP): Nepalese soldiers guarded the streets of the country's capital on Wednesday and ordered people to stay at home as they moved to restore order after tens of thousands of protesters stormed and set fire to government buildings and attacked politicians.

Armed troops guarding the main areas of Kathmandu appeared to give some sense of control returning to the city that was engulfed in violence and chaos in the previous days. Soldiers told residents about the curfew in place as they checked vehicles and people.

The army warned late Tuesday that security forces were committed to preserving law and order. The military is rarely mobilized in Nepal and initially stayed in the barracks as police failed to control the situation. An army statement said 27 suspected looters have been arrested.

Soldiers fired into the air on Wednesday after prisoners overpowered police guards and tried to escape from the main jail in the heart of Kathmandu.

The prisoners set fire to buildings with cells and guard houses and broke down the main entrance before pouring into the streets. The soldiers were able to block the escape attempt and transferred the prisoners to different jails. There were no injuries reported.

Earlier on Tuesday, the protests



Nepalese army personnel patrol the streets in Kathmandu, Nepal on Sept 10. (AP)

had grown increasingly violent as demonstrators set fire to government buildings and politicians' homes and attacked some leaders. As criticism of the country's political elite widened, the prime minister resigned, though it appeared to have little effect on the unrest.

Tens of thousands of protesters remained on the streets, blocking roads and storming government facilities. Army helicopters ferried some minis-

ters to safety.

Also Tuesday, hundreds of inmates escaped from prisons in Kathmandu and other cities after police there abandoned their posts as a growing number of protesters attacked the security forces.

On Monday, demonstrations led by young people angry about the blocking of several social media sites gripped Katmandu, with police opening fire on the crowds, killing 19 people.



A commuter train leaves a railway station through flooded tracks caused by heavy rains, in Hyderabad, Pakistan on Sept 9. (AP)

Rescuers in Pakistan scramble to save residents from flooded villages

Rescuers backed by the military raced Tuesday to evacuate thousands of people from flooded villages near the city of Jalalpur Pirwala in eastern Pakistan, officials said, as authorities struggled to shore up embankments against rising waters which touched the official danger mark.

The flooding has affected nearly 142,000 people in the area, Relief Commissioner Nabil Javed said.

Many displaced residents have moved in with relatives, while others are spending sleepless nights on embankments or in relief camps after their homes were submerged.

On Wednesday, rescue crews in boats were seen crisscrossing the waters, pulling people from trees and rooftops. But many stranded villagers complained that those who could afford private boats es-

caped quickly, leaving the poor to wait for rescuers.

Since Aug. 23, about 4,000 villages across Punjab have been submerged, affecting more than 4.2 million people, displacing 2.1 million and killing at least 68 after heavier-than-normal monsoon rains and repeated releases of water from overflowing Indian dams, according to the Punjab Disaster Management Authority. (AP)

Africa

Uganda begins training soldiers from CAR:

A total of 1,800 soldiers from the Central African Republic (CAR) have arrived in Uganda for military training as part of ongoing efforts to build the CAR army's capacity, a Ugandan military spokesperson said Tuesday.

Maj. Gen. Felix Kulayigye, Uganda's military spokesperson, told Xinhua by telephone that the recruits will undergo intensive basic training and intelligence-gathering exercises over a period of nine to 12 months.

He said the training program is part of a 2024 bilateral agreement aimed at professionalizing the CAR's armed forces and strengthening their ability to combat insecurity, promote peace and enhance regional stability. (Xinhua)



Guinea-Bissau, Gambia sign agreement:

Guinea-Bissau and The Gambia have signed a security agreement to deepen bilateral cooperation during the official visit of Gambian President Adama Barrow to Bissau.

The agreement was signed on Monday by the ministers responsible for security of the two countries, in the presence of Guinea-Bissau's President Umaro Sissoco Embalo and his Gambian counterpart, at a ceremony held at Guinea-Bissau's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Communities. (Xinhua)

Sri Lanka Parliament strips perks for former presidents

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Sept 10, (AP): Sri Lanka's lawmakers voted overwhelmingly to abolish perks and facilities provided to former presidents in response to a popular demand during recent public protests.

The vote passed 151-1 while other members were absent. The measure strips state funding for housing, allowances, pensions, transport facilities and an office and a staff for former presidents and their widows.

There are five living past presidents and a widow.

It was an election pledge of Marxist-leaning President **Anura Kumara Dissanayake**, who took office last year, riding on public resentment against politicians accused

of being responsible for the country's worst economic crisis in 2022, when Sri Lanka announced it cannot pay its foreign debt.

The crisis led to a severe shortage of food, medicine, fuel and electricity, and triggered protests that forced then-President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to resign.

His successor, Ranil Wickremesinghe, was granted bail Aug 27 after being arrested over allegations of misusing public funds while in office.



Dissanayake

Brazil's Supreme Court nears verdict in coup plot trial of ex-president Bolsonaro

BRASILIA, Brazil, Sept 10, (AP): Brazil's former president Jair Bolsonaro was one step away from being convicted for attempting a coup, after two Supreme Court justices voted Tuesday to find the right-wing leader guilty of trying to illegally hang onto power.

Three members of the five-judge panel trying Bolsonaro's case must support a conviction, in a process that can last several days. Two judges voted for conviction before proceedings were adjourned until Wednesday. Three more must cast their votes.

Justice Alexandre de Moraes, who is overseeing the case and is considered by Bolsonaro supporters a foe, said the far-right politician who governed Brazil between 2019 and 2022 was the leader of a coup plot and of a criminal organization, and voted in favor of convicting him.

"We can't forget that little by little Brazil almost returned to a dictatorship that lasted 20 years," de Moraes said, in a reference to the country's military rule between 1964-85. "That was because of a criminal organization built by a political group that doesn't know how to lose elections."

Justice Flávio Dino also voted to convict Bolsonaro. Proceedings were then adjourned, with court sessions scheduled every day through Friday.

As de Moraes spoke, Dino and another justice, Carmen Lucia, nodded. But Justice Luiz Fux told de Moraes that he planned to disagree with parts of his ruling.

De Moraes spoke for about five hours, listing a series of "executory acts" that he said made up the attempted coup, including casting unfounded doubts on the country's electoral



Brazil's Senator Flavio Bolsonaro, the son of former President Jair Bolsonaro, speaks during a press conference about his father's trial in Brasilia, Brazil on Sept 9. (AP)

voting system, drafting a decree to suspend the result of the election which Bolsonaro lost, and riots on Jan. 8, 2023, which de Moraes said were aimed at forcing a military takeover.

De Moraes rejected Bolsonaro's claim that when he discussed "possibilities" of staying in power, he did so within the limits of the law.

"Call it whatever you want: This was a draft decree for a coup d'état," de Moraes said. "A series of executive acts were carried out aimed at breaking the democratic rule of law and perpetuating power through a coup d'état."

Kuwait crude oil surges to \$71.89 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil rose 52 cents during Tuesday's trading to reach USD 71.89 per barrel compared with USD 71.37 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Wednesday. Benchmark Brent crude gained 37 cents to USD 66.39 pb and West Texas Intermediate was up 37 cents to USD 62.63 pb.

Business

‘We believe cybersecurity protection should also reach our SME clients, enhancing their digital security.’

Gulf Bank hosts awareness seminar on protecting SMEs from cyber-attacks as part of ongoing efforts to enhance cybersecurity in Kuwait



Faisal Al-Gharabally delivers the opening speech.



Fatemah Al-Hazeem gives a presentation.



Group photo of Gulf Bank and CrowdStrike officials.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance cybersecurity and support the sustainability of Kuwait’s business sector, in line with the Diraya campaign, Gulf Bank organized a specialized awareness seminar in collaboration with CrowdStrike, a global leader in cybersecurity, focused on protecting its small and medium-sized enterprise customers (SMEs) from cyberattacks. The seminar highlighted the growing cyber threats facing businesses and provided practical steps to strengthen their readiness in combating digital attacks. The event witnessed the participation of a large number of corporate representatives and clients from the SME sector. Through this initiative, Gulf Bank continues to advance its strategy of raising cybersecurity awareness and equipping private sector institutions in Ku-

wait, particularly SMEs, with the tools to safeguard their data and operations against digital risks. At the event, experts from Gulf Bank and CrowdStrike showcased advanced cybersecurity tools and technologies designed to help businesses anticipate, monitor, and respond to cyber threats, fostering a safer and more sustainable digital environment. In his opening remarks, Mr. Faisal Al-Gharabally, General Manager of International Banking at Gulf Bank, said: “This initiative helps our clients understand the essential steps to secure their digital safety and protect their businesses from cyber risks. Our strategic partnership with CrowdStrike is a successful model of effective collaboration that supports national development goals and shields the local economy and startups from rising digital

threats.” Concluding his speech, Mr. Al-Gharabally reaffirmed Gulf Bank’s commitment to supporting sustainability efforts in Kuwait, noting that such efforts go beyond banking products and services to include contributing to the development of a more cyber-aware and secure business community. Ross McNaughton, Chief Information Security Officer at Gulf Bank noted “We believe that cybersecurity protection should not be limited to the bank alone, it must extend to our clients. By helping them enhance their security, we protect their investments and contribute to safeguarding Kuwait’s business ecosystem from cyber threats. This is an integral part of our social responsibility.” CrowdStrike: Cybersecurity for SMB / SME : <https://cs.link/ui7iQ>

All Share Index rises 0.17%

Boursa Kuwait closes higher

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Wednesday’s session on a positive note, with the All Share Index adding 15.08 points, or 0.17 percent, to close at 8,727.26. Trading activity saw 498.5 million shares exchanged in 26,977 transactions, with a total value of KD 117.5 million (USD 358.3 million). The Main Market Index advanced 36.30 points, or 0.46 percent, finishing at 7,917.97. Trading volume in this segment reached 241.7 million shares across 14,548 transactions, worth KD 41.12 million (USD 125.4

million). The Premier Market Index also recorded gains, rising 10.53 points, or 0.11 percent, to stand at 9,360.38. It saw 256.8 million shares traded through 12,429 transactions, valued at KD 76.3 million (USD 232.7 million). Similarly, the Main 50 Index climbed 36.09 points, or 0.45 percent, closing at 8,112.86 points. Turnover reached 33.13 million dinars (USD 101 million) from 182.3 million shares traded across 9,468 cash transactions.

3,000 buses, 30,000 jobs planned

Emirati tycoon Khalaf Al-Habtoor plans major investments in Syria

DAMASCUS, Sept 10, (AP): Emirati business magnate Khalaf al-Habtoor said Tuesday that he plans to invest in projects including car dealerships and a network of buses in Syria, as the country struggles to recover from a civil war spanning nearly 14 years. Al-Habtoor, who is the chairman of the Al Habtoor Group conglomerate based in the United Arab Emirates, led an Emirati business delegation that visited Syria to look at potential investments. He told The Associated Press that he plans to invest in a project to operate up to 3,000 buses across the country in partnership with the Syrian state, a project he said could generate around 30,000 jobs. He said he also plans to establish large car showrooms that would provide additional employment for young Syrians. During a tour of potential investment sites in Damascus and Syria’s coastal region, al-Habtoor said that he

wants to focus on initiatives that can create sustainable opportunities and help revive the war-torn economy. “We want to invest in something that will serve people,” he said. “We don’t want to just construct buildings. A building, you build it and then it’s done - we want to make a long-term investment.” Since former President Bashar Assad was ousted last December in a lightning rebel offensive, Gulf countries have signaled interest in investing in the country’s reconstruction. In July, Syria and Saudi Arabia announced 47 investment agreements, valued at over \$6 billion. On the ground, progress has been slow. The country struggles with water and electricity cuts, with about half the population facing food insecurity. In 2017, the United Nations estimated that rebuilding Syria would cost at least \$250 billion, a figure some experts now say could be as high as \$400 billion.

Students gain access to instant allowance transfers via Weyay app

Weyay Bank empowers new students as strategic sponsor of PAAET orientation

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: In the presence of Mr. Mohammed Al-Othman, the Chief Executive Officer of Consumer and Digital Banking Group at the National Bank of Kuwait, and Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam, the Director General of the Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), Weyay Bank, Kuwait’s first fully digital bank, participated as the strategic sponsor of the orientation forum for new students organized by PAAET. The event took place on September 8–9 at the Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref, drawing over 16,000 new students. It aimed to welcome and guide students as they embark on their academic journey. Weyay’s presence at the event reflects its commitment to empowering Kuwaiti youth by providing them with the tools and financial solutions they need to succeed. The Bank’s team showcased its seamless digital banking experience, allowing students to open accounts within minutes—without the need to visit a physical branch. This aligns with the fast-paced, mobile-first lifestyle of today’s youth. Students also explored the features of the Weyay app, including instant and secure money transfers within Kuwait and abroad. One of the key highlights was the ability to digitally transfer student allowances directly into their Weyay accounts and access the exclusive SELECT prepaid digital card. Designed specifically for student allowance customers, the card offers



Photos during the orientation.

up to 40% cashback on purchases and special discounts at popular youth-focused outlets such as Caribou Coffee and Flare Fitness. Throughout the two-day event, the Weyay team provided students with practical tips on managing their finances smartly using the app’s budgeting and tracking tools. Weyay Bank reaffirmed its dedication to supporting young people with innovative banking solutions that foster financial independence and confidence as they begin their university life.

Delegations from Kuwait, Qatar yield new global partnerships for Hong Kong

10th Belt and Road Summit opens in Hong Kong with global participation

HONG KONG, Sept 10, (KUNA): The 10th Road and Belt Summit kicked off on Wednesday at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center, supported by the Commissioner’s Office of China’s Foreign Ministry in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, with the participation of senior government officials and business leaders from various parts of the world. The two-day summit held on September 10-11, is jointly organized by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDCC), discusses prospects of trade and investment cooperation and the exchange of expertise in multiple fields, including infrastructure, energy, digital economy, and financial services. Delegates from more than 18 Belt and Road economies, as well as regional and international organizations, are taking part in the gathering, which features sessions focusing on strengthening economic partnerships and advancing sustainable development. Since its launch in 2016, the summit has attracted about 45,000 participants from over 120 countries worldwide, including Kuwait, underscoring its growing importance as a global platform. Chief executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the Peo-

ple’s Republic of China, John Lee Ka-chiu underlined his city’s role as a “super-connector” and “super value-adder” in driving forward the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This came in his speech in the opening session of the 10th Belt and Road Summit in Hong Kong, saying that the summit, held under the theme “Collaborate for Change - Shape a Shared Future,” brought together over 6,000 government officials, business leaders, and international organizations to mark a decade of collaboration since the first edition in 2016. He noted that more than 45,000 participants from over 120 countries and regions had attended the summit over the past nine editions, presenting more than 2,800 projects along the BRI. This, he stressed, proved that the summit had become a platform for turning opportunities into action. Lee revealed that this year’s edition will witness the exchange of nine memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and cooperation agreements in areas including dispute resolution, customs, anti-corruption, meteorology, and investment promotion. He added that 36 business-to-business deals covering finance, technology, logistics, professional services, and education would also be concluded, with a combined value close to USD one billion.

On trade and investment, Lee pointed out that Hong Kong’s external trade with Belt and Road countries exceeded USD 276 billion last year, surged up by 80 percent since 2013, while some 1,400 companies from BRI economies had set up a presence in Hong Kong. He also highlighted Hong Kong’s role as a major source of foreign direct investment into BRI countries, with outward direct investment reaching USD 133 billion in 2023. He referred to his recent visits to Belt and Road partners, including a joint delegation to Kuwait and Qatar last May, which resulted in numerous agreements, one of which saw a company establishing Hong Kong as its global hub. Lee further emphasized Hong Kong’s competitiveness, noting that the city ranked third globally in the 2025 World Competitiveness Yearbook and fourth in the latest World Talent Ranking. He also highlighted Hong Kong’s leadership in green and sustainable finance, as well as its cultural and educational exchanges with BRI countries. Concluding his remarks, Lee affirmed Hong Kong’s commitment to continue acting as the “ideal Belt and Road hub,” bridging China and the world and contributing to high-quality collaboration under the initiative.



The 10th Belt, Road Summit kicks off in Hong Kong.



Chief executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China, John Lee Ka-chiu.

Through a 3-week tailored program

Kuwait Finance House promotes business sustainability for SMEs

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) launched the Sustainable Business Program for SMEs to help small and medium-sized enterprises achieve their goals and promote sustainable growth. This initiative aligns with the bank’s vision of strengthening its partnerships with SME clients.

Speaking at the program’s opening, **KFH Group Chief Corporate Banking Officer, Yousef Almutawa**, said: “Thanks to our diverse financing solutions and strong relationships with leading local and international banks, KFH has been at the forefront of corporate and major project financing both locally and regionally. Its diversified financing portfolio covers vital sectors such as energy, water, power, infrastructure, and construction.”

He added that KFH has played a key role in supporting and financing SMEs, successfully meeting the needs of this segment through integrated, modern and efficient channels.

“At KFH, we dedicate significant attention to SMEs, viewing them as essential partners in our success. We believe they are a cornerstone of sustainable economic growth and a vital source of innovation, creativity, and new jobs,” remarked Almutawa.

He mentioned that KFH has maintained its position as the largest listed company on Boursa Kuwait, the most profitable bank in the local banking sector and the Kuwaiti market, with the highest operating profits. The Bank also ranked first as the best-performing bank in Kuwait, according to The Banker magazine’s 2025 ranking of the top 1,000 global banks.

Almutawa highlighted that with a global presence spanning 10 countries and over 650 branches, KFH Group’s strong position reinforces its commitment to SMEs and financing economic development projects that support Kuwait’s growth.

He pointed out that KFH’s endeavors in supporting SMEs have earned global recognition. KFH was awarded the Best SME Bank in Kuwait and Kuwait’s Best Bank for Sustainable Finance by Global Finance Magazine.

KFH Acting Deputy General Manager SMEs - Zein AlAbdeen Itani

Meanwhile, KFH Acting Deputy General Manager SMEs, Zein AlAbdeen Ita-



Yousef Almutawa, KFH Group Chief Corporate Banking Officer



Zein AlAbdeen Itani, KFH Acting Deputy General Manager SMEs



Mohammad Alarbeed, KFH Executive Manager Governance and Sustainability



Abdullah Al-Saif, KFH Executive Manager social media and PR center

ni, affirmed that the Sustainable Business Program reflects KFH’s pioneering role in advancing the growth and development of the SME sector in Kuwait.

He explained that KFH has a long history of supporting SMEs in Kuwait, helping many of them get their start. He emphasized that the bank remains committed to this role, with the goal of creating more inspiring success stories that foster entrepreneurship and provide hope for ambitious young entrepreneurs.

Itani also noted that KFH is the first institution in Kuwait to establish a dedicated department for financing SMEs. “Capitalizing on its extensive expertise in the Islamic

Almutawa:

- SMEs are the cornerstone of sustainable economic growth

Itani:

- Several SMEs in Kuwait started their successful journey through KFH’s support

Alarbeed:

- The program has been fully designed in-house to reflect KFH’s experience in sustainability

finance, KFH offers an integrated suite of Sharia-compliant banking and financing solutions that cater to SMEs aspirations. These include cash financing services such as Mura-baha, Tawarruq and Ijara and non-cash finance, such as various types of letters of credit and letters

of guarantee.”

He went on to say that KFH offers other services to SMEs such as Point of Sales, e-banking services that facilitate the management of the businesses’ accounts including balance inquiry, bank transfers, payroll transfer, view PoS reports and other various

online services.

Itani also said that KFH takes pride in its strong position in the banking sector, serving as a partner and advisor to SMEs. KFH supports the development of its clients through a variety of efforts, including exchanging expertise, offering financing solutions, and coordinating with clients.

KFH Executive Manager Governance and Sustainability - Mohammad Alarbeed

In his speech during the program launch, Executive Manager Governance and Sustainability at KFH, Mohammad Alarbeed said: “It pleases me to welcome our esteemed guests, our partners in success in the Sustain-

able Business Program for SMEs. This program is organized in recognition of the vital role of sustainability in businesses and the strategic importance of SMEs as key pillars of the national economy.”

He emphasized the significance of sustainability, stressing that it has become a valuable approach that directly contributes to the success of SMEs and major financial institutions. “Sustainability promotes credibility, readiness, competitiveness and performance quality, leading to positive assessment,” added Alarbeed.

Alarbeed explained that KFH seeks to empower clients and partners to adopt practical sustainability practices that strengthen their capabilities and drive long-term growth. The program aims to equip SMEs with clear strategies to achieve their objectives while providing guidance on measuring and managing impact within daily operations.

He added: “KFH has always believed that the success of its clients is part of the Bank’s success. Through this program, we share our expertise and experience in attaining Kuwait Vision 2035 and the Sustainable Development Goals. The program has been fully designed in-house to reflect KFH’s sustainability experience and to transfer that knowledge directly to our clients.”

Alarbeed emphasized some key topics of the 3-week program, which holds sessions three days a week. He explained that the program will delve into the concepts of sustainability, the pillars of ESG, and its main principles, essential practices, and practical applications. The program also includes a dedicated session on sustainable procurement, which outlines the requirements for corporations to become accredited suppliers at KFH, opening up new opportunities for collaboration and growth.

He highlighted the program’s main advantages, including a thorough, hands-on guide to ESG practices and private consultations with a sustainability expert. The program also provides ongoing support. After it concludes, clients can request additional consultations with their assigned expert. Moreover, participants who successfully implement the guidelines are eligible for an external certification that confirms their dedication to sustainability.



Part of the audience.

As part of its digital transformation strategy and commitment to enhancing banking through innovation

Burgan Bank becomes the first bank in Kuwait to roll out ‘Click to Pay’ feature for Visa cardholders

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: In line with its ongoing digital transformation strategy and its commitment to supporting New Kuwait Vision 2035 in establishing a digital economy, Burgan Bank, in partnership with Visa – a global leader in digital payments – introduced its latest digital payment solution, Click to Pay. Burgan Bank is the first in Kuwait to adopt the biometrics-powered payment service. This latest digital payment feature is designed to raise the benchmark for convenient and secure payment, aligning with Burgan Bank’s commitment to provide its customers and cardholders with an elevated and seamless banking experience that responds to their modern aspirations and lifestyles.

By activating the Click to Pay service, customers can enjoy a swift, single-tap checkout experience when using their internet-enabled devices to complete online purchases through registered merchants, without the need for inserting lengthy account information or one-time passwords (OTPs).

Commenting on the launch of the new digital payment service, Mr. Manaf Al-Menaifi, Acting General Manager – Retail Banking at Burgan Bank, said: “We are committed to offering our customers the best possible banking experience at every step of their journey. In response to the market’s growing reliance on e-commerce and digital payment solutions, Burgan Bank continues to invest in the latest financial technologies and top-tier information security solutions that guarantee a seamless and secure experience for our customers with every purchase.”

He added: “In an effort to remain a top-of-wallet card provider, Burgan Bank continues to partner with market leaders that share its vision for sustainable business growth and retaining customers’ trust in the Bank as a financial partner.”

Al-Menaifi emphasized that the Bank’s ongoing partnership with Visa and other leading service providers across the region and financial markets is at the heart of its success in promptly responding to the ever-evolving market as well as the fast advancements constantly reshaping the banking landscape and the market aspirations.

Meanwhile, Mr. Barrak Al-Mattar, General Manager – Information Technology at Burgan Bank, said: “As Kuwait continues to accelerate its transition into a cashless, digital-first economy, we remain committed to playing a leading role in the local banking sector’s digital transformation. The success we have achieved in delivering convenience and robust security in every new digital service is a direct result of our strategic investment showcased in three core pillars: continuously upgrading our digital infrastructure,



Mr. Manaf Al-Menaifi, Acting General Manager – Retail Banking at Burgan Bank



Mr. Barrak Al-Mattar, General Manager – Information Technology at Burgan Bank

adopting the latest technologies, and empowering our employees to remain proficient in the latest fintech advancements. Furthermore, collaborating with market-leading partners such as Visa is a cornerstone of our strategy and a key catalyst for our digital transformation journey.”

For her part, Diane Teulery, Visa’s Head of Digital Solutions for MENA, said: “According to Visa’s 2025 Checkout Friction Report, consumers in Kuwait want faster, easier, and safer ways to pay online. In fact, 75% of consumers we surveyed said they would shop more often if one-click checkout or biometrics were available. Click to Pay with biometrics delivers exactly that, reducing cart abandonment, thanks to the seamless, secure experience it offers, which works across multiple card brands. We’re proud to see Burgan Bank become the first bank in Kuwait to bring this game-changing solution to local consumers and businesses, in line with New Kuwait Vision 2035 and the Central Bank’s digital strategy.”

In line with Burgan Bank’s rigorous data protection practices and international standards, Click to Pay is developed in adherence to FIDO authentication standards and integrated with Visa Payment Paskey Solutions, requiring customers to register their Burgan Bank Visa card once using unique identifying information, such as a phone number or email address – with an option to register more than one card. As soon as the cards are saved to the service,



biometric authentication, using fingerprint or face identification, is deployed at every checkout to securely complete the transaction. In addition, Click to Pay uses encrypted tokens and secure digital codes to guarantee utmost protection for customers’ financial information and payment data.

Adding to its commitment to deploying the latest data security technologies, Burgan Bank also continues to share vital tips on the safest banking practices with its community, alerting them to the latest fraud and scamming techniques and the different means to identifying, blocking, and reporting them. This comes as part of the Bank’s ongoing support for the “Let’s Be Aware” (Diraya) financial literacy and banking awareness campaign, led by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), with the support of Kuwaiti banks.

Moreover, Burgan Bank remains one of the most committed Kuwaiti institutions to adopting the highest standards of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) banking practices. Through its active contribution to advancing digital transformation in Kuwait, Burgan Bank plays a vital role in championing sustainability and offering convenient, easy-to-adopt alternatives, such as digital payments, which reduce the waste generated from printing physical cards as well as reinforce financial inclusion in Kuwait.

Pro series sees \$100 price hike

Apple unveils iPhone 17 lineup with ‘Air’ model

CUPERTINO, Sept 10, (AP): Apple on Tuesday rolled out its next generation iPhones, which include a new ultra-thin model and a slight price hike for one of its high-end models, while the company feels the squeeze of a global trade war.

The iPhone 17 line-up includes a new slimmed-down model that will adopt the “Air” name that Apple already uses for its sleekest iPads and Mac computers. In what has become an annual rite for Apple, all four new iPhone 17 models will feature better cameras and longer-lasting batteries than last year’s lineup. The iPhone 17 will all boast at least 256 gigabytes of storage, doubling the minimum amount from the last generation.

“We are raising the bar again,” Apple CEO Tim Cook boasted in front of a crowd gathered in an auditorium named after the company’s late co-founder, Steve Jobs, located on its campus in Cupertino, California.

The new iPhones are the first to be released since President Donald Trump returned to the White House and unleashed a barrage of tariffs, in what his administration says is an attempt to bring overseas manufacturing back to the US - a crusade that has thrust Cook into the hot seat.

All the iPhone 17 models are still expected to be made in Apple’s manufacturing hubs in China and India, exposing them to some of Trump’s tariffs.

Analysts believe the additional fees on iPhones coming into the U.S. increase the pressure on Apple to raise prices to help protect its profit margins on its most marquee product.

Without giving a specific reason, Apple will charge \$1,100 for the iPhone 17 Pro, an increase of \$100, or 10%, from previous versions of that model. The iPhone Air will start at \$1,000 - the price of last year’s iPhone 16 Pro.

Apple is sticking with the same starting price for the basic iPhone 17 at \$800 and the iPhone 17 Pro Max at \$1,200.

All four models will be in stores Sept. 19.

Apple’s shares closed down 1.5% Tuesday amid gains in the broader stock market, an indication that investors might be worried the company didn’t do enough to prop up its profits amid the trade war.

The release of the iPhone 17 Air created the biggest buzz of the day as Apple found a way to pack in most of the punch of its Pro models while coming up with a fetching design that Forrester Research analyst Dipanjan Chatterjee will prod more trend-conscious consumers to splurge on the latest fashion in tech devices. The Air model is just 5.6 millimeters wide compared to 8 to 9 millimeters for the other iPhone 17 choices.

“There were plenty of crackles and one big pop,” Chatterjee said of Tuesday’s event.

One of the crackles came with the introduction of new features aimed at the selfie culture. The iPhone 17 models include a front camera with more megapixels for crisper photos, along with an “Center Stage” option that will take advantage of a wider field of view and a new sensor that will enable users to take landscape photos without having to rotate the iPhone.

Although most of the upgrades to the iPhone 17 are similar to the incremental improvements of recent years, Apple appears to have done enough to “bring a sense of newness to the iPhone, which has remained the same for too long,” said PP Foresight analyst Paolo Pescatore.

Apple also unveiled its latest smartwatches, including a health tool that is supposed to help detect potential hypertension, and its next generation wireless AirPods headphones.

Apple has been trying to accelerate its growth after several years of lackluster sales growth that has still been enough to maintain its status as a moneymaking machine while raising questions about its ability to innovate. Those doubts, combined with the uncertainties swirling around tariffs, are, one of the reasons the company’s market value has dropped by 6% so far this year while the tech-driven Nasdaq composite index has gained 13%.

Court blocks Trump’s attempt to fire Fed Governor Lisa Cook

Cook to participate in Sept. 16–17 Fed meeting on rate cuts

WASHINGTON, Sept 10, (AP): A federal court ruled Tuesday that embattled Federal Reserve Governor Lisa Cook can remain in her position while she fights President Donald Trump’s efforts to fire her.

The ruling, which will almost certainly be appealed, is a blow to the Trump administration’s efforts to assert more control over the traditionally independent Fed, which sets short-term interest rates to achieve its congressionally mandated goals of stable prices and maximum employment. Congress has also sought to insulate the Fed from day-to-day politics.

U.S. District Judge Jia Cobb late Tuesday granted Cook’s request for a preliminary injunction blocking her firing while the dispute makes its way through the courts. Cobb ruled that Cook would likely prevail in the lawsuit she filed late last month to overturn her firing.

Trump said he was firing Cook on Aug. 25 over allegations raised by one of his appointees that she committed mortgage fraud related to two properties she purchased in 2021, before she joined the Fed. Cook is accused of saying two properties were “primary residences,” which could have resulted in lower down payments and mortgage rates than if either was designated a second home or investment property.

Cobb ruled that the allegations likely weren’t sufficient legal cause to fire her. Under the law governing the Fed, governors can only be removed “for cause,” which Cobb said was limited to actions taken during a governor’s time in office.

The “removal of a Federal Reserve Governor extends only to concerns about the Board member’s ability to effectively and faithfully execute their statutory duties, in light of events that have occurred while they are in office,” Cobb wrote. Cobb was appointed by former President Joe Biden.

“President Trump has not stated a legally permissible cause for Cook’s removal,” the ruling added.

The decision means Cook will be able to participate in the Fed’s Sept. 16-17 meeting, when it is expected to reduce its key short-term rate by



Federal Reserve Board of Governors member Lisa Cook listens during an open meeting of the Board of Governors at the Federal Reserve, June 25, 2025, in Washington. (AP)

a quarter-point to between 4% and 4.25%.

Federal Reserve governors aren’t like cabinet secretaries and the law doesn’t allow a president to fire them over policy disagreements or because he simply wants to replace them. Congress sought to insulate the Fed from political pressure, the court noted, by giving Fed governors long, staggered terms that make it unlikely a president can appoint a majority of the board in a single term.

“Allowing the President to unlawfully remove Governor Cook on unsubstantiated and vague allegations would endanger the stability of our financial system and undermine the rule of law,” Cook’s lawyer, Abbe Lowell, said in a written statement. “Governor Cook will continue to carry out her sworn duties as a Senate-confirmed Board Governor.”

The White House did not immediately comment.

The court also directed the Fed’s board of governors and its chair, Jerome Powell, “to allow Cook to continue to operate as a member of the Board for the pendency of this litigation.”

Lowell had argued in court filings that Cook was entitled to a hearing and a chance to respond to the charges before being fired, but was not provided either. The court agreed that she was not provided due process by the administration. Her lawsuit denied the charges but did not provide more details.

The case could become a turning point for the 112-year-old Federal Reserve. No president has sought to fire a Fed governor before. Economists prefer independent central banks because they can do unpopular things like lifting interest rates to combat inflation more easily than elected officials.

Many economists worry that if the Fed falls under the control of the White House, it will keep its key interest rate lower than justified by economic fundamentals to satisfy Trump’s demands for cheaper borrowing. That could accelerate inflation and could also push up longer-term interest rates, such as those on mortgages and car loans. Investors may demand a higher yield to own bonds to offset greater inflation in the future, lifting borrowing costs for the U.S. government, and the entire economy.

If Trump can replace Cook, he may be able to gain a 4-3 majority on the Fed’s governing board. Trump appointed two board members during his first term and has nominated a key White House economic adviser, Stephen Miran, to replace Adriana Kugler, another Fed governor who stepped down unexpectedly Aug. 1. The Senate Banking Committee is scheduled to vote Wednesday on Miran’s nomination.

Trump has said he will only appoint people to the Fed who will support lower rates.

Trump has repeatedly attacked Powell and the other members of the Fed’s interest-rate setting committee for not cutting the short-term interest rate they control more quickly. It currently stands at 4.3%, after Fed policymakers reduced it by a full percentage point late last year. Trump has said he thinks it should be as low as 1.3%, a level that no Fed official and few economists support.

Powell recently signaled that the central bank was leaning toward cutting its rate at its meeting next week.

Cook is the first Black woman to serve as a governor. She was a Marshall Scholar and received degrees from Oxford University and Spelman College, and prior to joining the board she taught at Michigan State University and Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government.

Miran to replace former Fed Governor Adriana Kugler for remainder of term

Senate panel approves Trump nominee Stephen Miran for Fed board

WASHINGTON, Sept 10, (AP): A Senate committee on Wednesday approved the nomination of White House economic adviser Stephen Miran to the Fed’s board of governors, setting up a likely approval by the full Senate, which would make Miran the third Trump appointee to the seven-member board.

The White House has pushed for an expedited Senate approval of Miran, who was nominated by President Donald Trump to replace former Fed governor Adriana Kugler, who stepped down Aug. 1. Miran would, if approved, simply finish her term, which expires in January. He may be approved in time for the Fed’s meeting next week, when it is widely expected to reduce its key short-term interest rate.

The committee voted to approve Miran on

partisan lines, 13-11, with all Democrats voting against confirmation.

Miran’s nomination has raised concerns about the Fed’s independence from day-to-day politics, particularly since he said during a hearing last week that he would keep his job as head of the White House’s Council of Economic Advisers while on the Fed’s board, a historically unusual arrangement. Presidents have nominated members of their staffs to the Fed’s board before, but the nominees have always given up their White House jobs.

The vote comes a day after a federal court blocked Trump’s effort to fire Fed governor Lisa Cook, who he has accused of mortgage fraud.

“The Federal Reserve was designed to make

decisions free from political interference, guided by data and the long-term stability of our economy, not the political agenda of any one president,” Sen. Mark Warner, a Democrat from Virginia, said in a statement before the vote. “Donald Trump has made clear he wants to tear down that independence, just as he has with so many of the institutions that have kept our democracy and our economy strong.”

Miran said he would step down from his White House position if he is chosen for a longer term. Yet he can remain on the board after Kugler’s term ends in January, if no replacement is named. He has said in that case he would consider keeping his White House job even if he remains on the board after January, sparking fresh criticism from Democrats.



The iPhone 17 Pro and iPhone Air are displayed during an announcement of new products at Apple Park on Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2025, in Cupertino, Calif. (AP)

‘Our initiative is rooted in historic struggles’

Top Hollywood names sign pledge to boycott Israeli films

NEW YORK, Sept 10, (AP): Some prominent Hollywood names are among the filmmakers and industry figures who’ve signed a pledge to boycott Israeli film institutions - including festivals, broadcasters and production companies - that are “implicated in genocide and apartheid against the Palestinian people,” organizers said Tuesday.

The group Film Workers for Palestine posted an open letter on Monday including signatures from Hollywood luminaries like Emma Stone, Ayo Edebiri, Ava DuVernay, Olivia Colman, Yorgos Lanthimos, Riz Ahmed, Rob Delaney, Javier Bardem, Tilda Swinton and Cynthia Nixon among many others. The group said it had collected more than 3,000 industry signatures since the pledge was made public.

“As filmmakers, actors, film industry workers, and institutions, we recognize the power of cinema to shape perceptions,” the open letter says. “In this urgent moment of crisis, where many of our governments are enabling the carnage in Gaza, we must do everything we can to address complicity in that unrelenting horror.”

Film Workers for Palestine - a group of film professionals based in various countries formed in early 2024 - said their pledge was inspired by Filmmakers United Against Apartheid, who refused to screen their films in apartheid South Africa.

“We pledge not to screen films, appear at or otherwise work with Israeli film institutions - including festivals, cinemas, broadcasters and production companies - that are implicated in genocide and apartheid against the Palestinian people,” the letter says.

The group has not called for a boycott on all Israeli film institutions. It claims on its website that Israel’s public and private broadcasters “have decades-old and ongoing involvement in whitewashing, denying and justifying Israel’s war crimes” and also says Israel’s major film festivals - including the Jerusalem Film Festival, Haifa International Film Festival and others - “continue to partner with the Israeli government while it carries out what leading experts have defined as genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.”

But it says that it does not consider all film institutions in Israel complicit, and



Pro Palestine demonstrators hold a press conference in front of the red carpet to announce a demonstration on Saturday, Aug. 30 during the 82nd edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Wednesday, Aug. 27, 2025. (AP)

advises people to ask questions and “seek guidelines set by Palestinian civil society.”

The Jerusalem Film Festival did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

The pledge also specifies that it is targeting institutions and not individuals: “The call is for film workers to refuse to work with Israeli institutions that are complicit in Israel’s human rights abuses against the Palestinian people. This refusal takes aim at institutional complicity, not identity.”

A representative of the Israeli film and television industry called the boycott “misguided.”

“We are the industry that (has been) struggling for years, making efforts for decades to promote discussion,” working with Palestinians and Israelis to tell the story of the conflict from all sides, said Tzvika Gottlieb, CEO of the Israeli Film & TV Producers Association, in an interview.

Gottlieb said his industry “has consistently maintained a critical stance toward government policies, and is very vocal in criticism of this administration’s current actions. We urgently call for an immediate end to the violence, an end to the suffering, and the release of all hostages right now.”

His group added in official remarks that “this call for a boycott is profoundly misguided. By targeting us - the creators who give voice to diverse narratives and foster dialogue - these signatories are undermining their own cause and attempting to silence us.”

In response, Film Workers for Palestine issued a statement to The Associated Press, saying their initiative is “rooted in historic struggles,” in particular “the successful international movement to end the apartheid regime of South Africa.”

“Should Israeli film institutions wish to continue working with pledge signatories, their choice is clear: end complicity in Israel’s genocide and apartheid, and endorse the full rights of the Palestinian people under international law, in line with Palestinian civil society guidelines,” the statement said. “To date, almost none has.”

The pledge comes after a pro-Palestinian demonstration at the recent Venice International Film Festival drew an estimated 10,000 participants. That followed a call by a group called Venice4Palestine for the festival to condemn the destruction in Gaza.

Variety

BELGRADE: Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic announced Tuesday that martial arts film star **Jackie Chan** has been appointed as a brand ambassador for Expo 2027 in Belgrade.

Vucic shared photos of their meeting on Instagram, showing the two posing with panda dolls. He hailed Chan as “a global film star and one of the world’s greatest cultural ambassadors,” saying his charisma and energy would help present Serbia to the world.

“It is a great honor that he will represent Expo in Serbia. I am convinced that, as a promoter of Expo 2027, he will provide strong support in presenting an event that will put our country at the center of global attention,” Vucic wrote.

Serbia won the bid to host Expo 2027 under the theme “Play for Humanity: Sport and Music for All.” The event is expected to attract millions of visitors and broad international attention.

Earlier this year, Olympic sprint champion Usain Bolt was also named an ambassador, underscoring organizers’ efforts to link the exhibition with globally recognized figures from sports and entertainment. (Xinhua)

NEW YORK: CBS News has a new ombudsman assigned to look into public complaints, but the job being assumed by Kenneth Weinstein bears little resemblance to how this watchdog role has traditionally operated in journalism.

Weinstein, appointed Monday by CBS’ parent company Paramount, has little background in journalism and his duties include no public role. He’s the former head of a conservative think tank and has made several donations to Republican causes, including President Donald Trump’s 2024 campaign.

The company agreed to hire a person to investigate complaints about political bias this summer, days before the Federal Communications Commission approved the merger of Paramount with Skydance Corp.

“I am honored to serve as ombudsman for CBS News, one of the most respected journalistic institutions in the world,” Weinstein said in a statement. “I look forward to supporting the talented team behind its reporting and to stewarding public trust in this critical institution.”

He’s assigned to review complaints from consumers and employees and, if he determines action is required, raise it with Paramount president Jeff Shell and George Cheeks, the company’s head of TV Media. Only then will they bring it to the CBS News president.

In news organizations that employ ombudsmen - and the number who do has been shrinking - the job effectively reports to the public, said Kelly McBride, expert in media ethics at the Poynter Institute and NPR’s public editor. But Paramount said it does not envision Weinstein having any public-facing role. (AP)

Film



This image released by Focus Features shows Jessie Buckley, (left), and Paul Mescal in a scene from ‘Hamnet.’ (AP)

Shakespeare drama leaves audience in tears

Zhao’s ‘Hamnet’ strikes emotional chord

TORONTO, Sept 10, (AP): “Why are you making me cry?”

It’s an ironic question for Chloé Zhao, of all people, to be asking the morning after premiering “Hamnet” at the Toronto International Film Festival. On the festival circuit this fall, no film has spawned more of an outpouring of emotion than “Hamnet,” a speculative drama about William Shakespeare, his wife, Agnes, and the death of their 11-year-old son.

Since first playing at the Telluride Festival, Zhao’s adaptation of Maggie O’Farrell’s acclaimed 2020 novel has left a trail of weeping moviegoers, moved to tears by its tale of love, grief and art. The fall festivals bring all sorts of harbingers for the movie season to come, but one of the clearest portents this year is that “Hamnet” will wreck you.

“When you love something so much - I’m not a mother, I haven’t had children, I’d like to - but I imagine when you love something so much, the greatest love you can give is to let go,” Zhao says. “I got a glimpse of what that feels like.”

It’s probably a sign of the power of “Hamnet” that, even for its director, it quickly stirs up the threat of tears. At its TIFF premiere, Zhao led the audience in a breathing exercise (“completely optional,” she announced) to honor everyone’s collective presence.

“I haven’t really felt this way about any of my other films,” says Zhao, the Oscar-winning director of “Nomadland,” “The Rider” and “Eternals.” “But I am older now. I’m in my 40s. The other films came out in my 30s.”

“Hamnet,” which Focus Features will release in theaters Nov. 27, stars Paul Mescal as “Will” Shakespeare and Jessie Buckley as Agnes. The majority of the film, which Zhao wrote with O’Farrell, is set far away from London, the Globe Theatre and the world of Shakespeare’s plays. In a rugged countryside - this is a deeply woody and earthy movie - we see the two meet, fall in love and begin a family with three children, including the twins Judith (Olivia Lynes) and Hamnet (Jacobi Jupe).

An opening caption informs us that, in 17th century England, the names Hamnet and Hamlet were interchangeable. When tragedy befalls the Shakespeares, they handle their grief in separate and increasingly divided ways. “Hamnet,” leading up to the first performance of “Hamlet,” reaches toward a climax of overwhelming intensity, where art - and not just any art but the finest play ever



Director Chloé Zhao is photographed on the red carpet for the film ‘Hamnet’ during the Toronto International Film Festival in Toronto, on Sunday, Sept. 7. (AP)

written - opens a pathway for understanding between not just two souls in anguish, but many others, too.

“When your actors and cast and crew are allowed to express and be in their full range of emotion, the camera does something miraculous,” Zhao says. “Whatever this invention is, maybe it does capture the soul, maybe Indigenous people should be afraid of it. And it transmits energy to the audience. It’s impossible for me not to be present and record what is happening at that time for this group of people swimming in the river together.”

“It’s never my vision,” she adds. “Something is trying to speak through us. How we can know? We’re only 30, 40, 50 years old. What do we know? But we can become a conduit for something much older to come through.”

Mescal and Buckley co-starred in Maggie Gyllenhaal’s “The Lost Daughter” but didn’t share scenes in it. Each gives a performance

in “Hamnet” likely to stand as among their most impassioned. Their experience filming with Zhao, they said, was one of the most invigorating of their careers.

“I think she’s somebody, when we’re all dead, will go: This was a pillar of culture at that time,” says Buckley. “She’s not trying to make every perfect decision. She’s so instinctual and sensitive. I think she’s one of the great, great filmmakers. She belongs with, like, Visconti and Wong Kar-wai.”

Zhao’s earlier films have been characterized by their naturalism. That comes through not just with the wide-open, rural landscapes she’s been drawn to but the non-professional actors who have populated her films. In “Hamnet” a sea of extras contributes mightily to a moment of communal catharsis.

As powerful as that concluding scene is, it wasn’t the scripted ending until a week before shooting. Zhao suspected their original plans weren’t quite right, were too ambiguous. “As we were filming,” she says, “we started to see how big the emotions had gotten.”

As Zhao searched for her ending, a few inspirations helped. One was a black-and-white photograph producer Nicolas Gonda had taken of Jupe. The other was a song Buckley sent her: Max Richter’s “This Bitter Earth/On the Nature of Daylight.” Zhao, nursing her own heartache from a personal loss, felt transformed.

“On my way to work, I listened to the song,” she says. “And my own pain and exhaustion lifted. I found myself reaching my hand out toward the window. I think I was trying to touch the rain.”

“Hamnet” could have been a movie about Shakespeare’s genius talent, one that we’d watch with awe and admiration. Instead, it’s a movie filled with misjudgments and unarticulated pains, where a play becomes an outreached arm, and a bridge between trauma and survival.

Late in filming, a then-distraught Zhao, looking for a quiet space to let it out, wandered for the first time onto the set for Shakespeare’s attic in London, where he goes to write in the film. It’s a small, disheveled space with not much more than a desk by the window and a bed.

“I got into the bed and lied there. It reminded me of my own life, living by yourself in hotel rooms, like a traveling circus. I just lost it,” Zhao says. “But I also felt how lucky I am. If I didn’t have those tools to tell a story, I wouldn’t have survived.”

Winfrey picks Elizabeth Gilbert’s new memoir for her book club

NEW YORK, Sept 10, (AP): Elizabeth Gilbert’s “All the Way to the River,” a memoir that has already stirred up an online conversation, is Oprah Winfrey’s new book club pick.

In Gilbert’s book, published this week, the author writes of a consuming love affair with the self-destructive and terminally ill Rayya Elias, a onetime friend for whom the author left her husband. Gilbert already has an influential and well-chronicled history of transformation and telling all - starting with her million-selling phenomenon, “Eat, Pray, Love,” a spiritual journey that ends with Gilbert marrying the man (Jose Nunes) she will divorce to be with Elias.

“With ‘Eat, Pray, Love,’ Elizabeth Gilbert started a movement,” Winfrey, who interviewed Gilbert in 2012 about “Eat, Pray, Love,” said in a statement Tuesday.

“This new memoir is just as powerful - raw, unflinching, and deeply healing. She bares her soul, sharing her truth so openly, she offers readers the courage to face their own.”

Winfrey recently interviewed Gilbert at a Starbucks in Seattle; the Starbucks chain is the current presenter of her club. Their conversation can be seen on Winfrey’s YouTube channel and other video outlets.

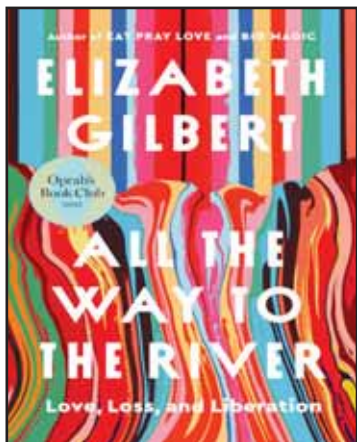
Gilbert’s book was well publicized before Winfrey’s endorsement. Last week, New York magazine’s The Cut ran an excerpt and The New Yorker released a review by staff critic Jia Tolentino that led to widespread comments on social media, notably about Gilbert’s confiding that she thought of killing Elias, whose addictions the author feared would destroy them both. (Elias died in 2018.)

“Gilbert frames her journey with Rayya as a sort of test strip for the universe: take a love affair for the ages, dip it in an unbelievable amount of mutual suffering, and see what color everything turns,” Tolentino wrote.

Like dozens of book club choices before her, Gilbert learned of the news through an unexpected call from Winfrey.

“I’d been told by my publisher to expect a phone call at a certain time and date that week, but I thought I was going to be talking to my editor about book business,” Gilbert said in a statement.

“There is nothing in the world that can prepare you to receive such a call. I instantly felt like a teenager all over again, watching ‘The Oprah Winfrey Show’ after school, and learning that there is a much, much bigger world out there than I knew.”



This cover image released by Riverhead Books shows ‘All the Way to the River’ by Elizabeth Gilbert. (AP)

Historic Christian organ reawakens

Oldest pipe organ sounds again after 800 years

JERUSALEM, Sept 10, (AP): After 800 years of silence, a pipe organ that researchers say is the oldest in the Christian world roared back to life Tuesday, its ancient sound echoing through a monastery in Jerusalem’s Old City.

Composed of original pipes from the 11th century, the instrument emitted a full, hearty sound as musician David Catalunya played a liturgical chant called Benedicamus Domino Flos Filius. The swell of music inside Saint Saviour’s Monastery mingled with church bells tolling in the distance.

Before unveiling the instrument Monday, Catalunya told a news conference that attendees were witnessing a grand development in the history of music.

“This organ was buried with the hope that one day it would play again,” he said. “And the day has arrived, nearly eight centuries later.”

From now on, the organ will be housed at the Terra Sancta museum in Jerusalem’s Old City - just kilometers (miles) from the Bethlehem church where it originally sounded.

Researchers believe the Crusaders brought the or-

gan to Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus, in the 11th century during their period of rule over Jerusalem. After a century of use, the Crusaders buried it to protect it from invading Muslim armies.

There it stayed until 1906, when workers building a Franciscan hospice for pilgrims in Bethlehem discovered it in an ancient cemetery.

Once full excavations were conducted, archaeologists had uncovered 222 bronze pipes, a set of bells and other objects hidden by the Crusaders.

“It was extremely moving to hear how some of these pipes came to life again after about 700 years under the earth and 800 years of silence,” said Koos van de Linde, organ expert who participated in the restoration. “The hope of the Crusaders who buried them -- that the moment would come when they would sound again - was not in vain.”

A team of four researchers, directed by Catalunya, set out in 2019 to create a replica of the organ. But along the way, said Catalunya, they discovered that some of the pipes still function as they did hundreds of years ago.

Organ builder Winold van der Putten placed those original pipes alongside replicas he created based on ancient organ-making methods, some of which were illuminated by close study of the original pipes. The originals, making up about half of the organ, still bear guiding lines made by the original Ottoman craftsmen and engraved scrawls indicating musical notes.

Alvaro Torrente, director of the Instituto Complutense De Ciencias Musicales in Madrid - where Catalunya undertook the project - compared the discovery to “finding a living dinosaur, something that we never imagined we could encounter, suddenly made real before our eyes and ears.”

Researchers hope to finish restoring the entire organ and then create copies to be placed in churches across Europe and the world so its music is accessible to all.

“This is an amazing set of information that allows us to reconstruct the manufacturing process so that we can build pipes exactly as they were made,” about a thousand years ago, said Catalunya.



David Catalunya, a Valencian musician and musicologist displays an 11th-century organ that researchers say is the oldest in the Christian world was played for the first time in 800 years after restoration, in Saint Savior’s Monastery of Jerusalem’s Old City, Tuesday, Sept. 9. (AP)

Music

Pop group’s Gap ad hit 400m views in 3 days

Katseye, the global girl group taking over

NEW YORK, Sept 10, (AP): The experiment was a remarkable success. In 2023, the Hybe Corporation and Geffen Records set out on a quest to create a massively popular global girl group. The following year, their process was documented on the Netflix series “Popstar Academy: Katseye.” That June, the sextet Katseye debuted.

But this was no ordinary pop act. Members of the multilingual, multinational group - Daniela Avanzini, Lara Raj, Manon Bannerman, Megan Skiendiel, Sophia Laforteza and Yoonchae Jeung, each known by their first names - have backgrounds in South Korea, the Philippines, Cuba, India, the United States and beyond. In the year since their first song, “Debut,” dropped, they’ve reached huge heights: performing at Lollapalooza; an EP, “Beautiful Chaos,” peaking at No. 4 on the Billboard 200; going super viral for their new Gap campaign and winning an MTV Video Music Award. In November, they’ll embark on their first tour. It’s sold out.

“Things have happened very fast recently, but it’s an amazing feeling,” said Lara recently. “When things get wild, we have each other to lean on, which is awesome. And we’re very grateful for that.”

The group talked to The Associated Press about their whirlwind year, representing their home countries, their super viral Gap ad and more. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

AP: You debuted last summer and a lot has happened in the time since. Do you feel like veterans?

Sophia: We’re very lucky to experience so much in such a short amount of time in our career. It’s only been a year. And everything is so fast-paced and moving so quickly. But I feel like we’re still very new to this and we’re so very fresh and learning so much. Still have a lot of room to learn about different things.

AP: Your Gap ad went super viral — it’s all over my TikTok “For You” page. It feels more like a music video than an advertisement.

Manon: That’s what I loved so much about the Gap campaigns. ... Even way back in the days, they used to have those dancing commercials. And I was so excited when our team told us we would do it, because I was like, “Oh this is about to hit.”

Sophia: The Gap campaign truly is something that us, as Katseye, truly align with. It’s all about the confidence and inclusivity and expression. And to see its impact, and to see our pure intentions as a group and what we stand for and what we want to give out to the world, like really happen, it’s really beautiful to see.

AP: In the first three days, 400 million total views, 8 billion total impressions (according to Gap) ...

Megan: Isn’t there only 7 billion people in the world?

Sophia: Aliens are watching our Gap campaign, everybody! Animals, or pets ... my dog watched it.

AP: When something like that happens, does it change the way you think of your next steps?

Sophia: It motivates us more to continue to do what we want to do, because it’s the proof of our impact, you know what I mean? It’s proof that we can make something out of what we love to do, and what our purpose is as musicians and as artists with an



Manon Bannerman, (clockwise from left), Yoonchae, Sophia Laforteza, Lara Raj, Megan Skiendiel and Daniela Avanzini, of Katseye pose for a portrait on Wednesday, Sept. 3, in Los Angeles. (AP)

influence.

Manon: People want to see diversity. People want see themselves represented on the TV, on billboards. And I really hope that people high up see that and see that it works, and implement that.

Lara: We’ve all, growing up, had to tell ourselves, “OK, if we’re not going to see that, if other people aren’t going to do it for us, and represent us, we have to be the ones to do it.”

Sophia: Our goal is to truly break barriers for those who look like us, those who have the same personality, the same upbringing.

AP: Are there inherent pressures in doing that?

Lara: Totally. 100%. I feel like it’s an honor more than anything else: “Wow, I get to be the one.”

AP: I want to talk about “Gnarly.” You must’ve known that song was going to polarize.

Manon: The very first day it dropped, I’m not even going to lie, I was texting the group chat and I was like, “Is it over? Are we over?” Because no one liked it. But then a week later...

Daniela: A couple days later! Literally like two days...

AP: It changed and everyone loved it. And then you hit them with “Gabriela” and “Gameboy.” Something completely different.

Manon: We want to keep doing that. We don’t want to give our fans the same song we imagine over and over.

AP: What’s your relationship with “Popstar Academy” like, now that it has been over a year?

Sophia: Watching it, I felt I transported to that moment and relived the moments, but also saw it in a different perspective, so it kind of brought different feelings to the surface. And it was a very interesting experience. It was our experience curated in a way that wasn’t controlled by us. ... It took time for us to accept that that’s what is brought into the world.

Lara: There is a lot of beauty to the documentary. ... Every time I see that I’m like, wow, here’s this version of myself before our lives blew up. ... That’s beautiful and also really sad and intense to look at, like, it’s just a very nuanced, very gray-area feeling surrounding that documentary.

Manon: What I’m grateful for is that it toughened us up a bit and gave us thick skin.

AP: So, what’s next for Katseye? What are you hungry for?

Lara: I’m hungry for a world tour in our countries. Like seriously, I want to perform in India so, so bad. ... I really want to take the girls to where my family’s from in India. I’m hungry for that. And obviously headlining Coachella.

Megan: I’m hungry for awards.

Lara: You know what else I’m hungry for is a vision, some sort of creative direction where we can get like really weird and ugly in a way. ... As women, we always have to be so pretty. ... I really want us to get ugly, nitty-gritty.

Daniela, Sophia, Lara, Manon (in unison): Raw.

Lara: My favorite artists are like so raw at the camera ... I see their true emotions.

Sophia: Rage.

Lara: I see their rage, and like, when they’re not so done up. I really want us to show that, and I think we’ll show that when the time is right.

schools and enforcing civil rights protections of students will only deepen the achievement gaps identified by this assessment,” Scott said.

The test scores show more students are not reaching what would be considered “basic” achievement across subject areas, said Lesley Muldoon, executive director of the National Assessment Governing Board. While NAEP’s definition of “proficient” is a high bar, Muldoon said, it is not an unreasonable one, and it is based on what researchers believe students should be able to achieve by the end of high school.

“These students are taking their next steps in life with fewer skills and less knowledge in core academics than their predecessors a decade ago,” she said. “This is happening at a time when rapid advancements in technology and society demands more of future workers and citizens, not less.”

Assessment

In reading, the average score in 2024 was the lowest score in the history of the assessment, which began in 1992. Thirty-two percent of high school seniors scored below “basic,” meaning they were not able to find details in a text to help them understand its meaning.

In math, the average score in 2024 was the lowest since 2005, when the assessment framework changed significantly. On the test, 45% of high school seniors scored below “basic” achievement, the highest percentage since 2005. Only 33% of high school seniors were considered academically prepared for college-level math courses, a decline from 37% in 2019.

The dip in reading scores appeared alongside a shift in how English and language arts are taught in schools, with an emphasis on short texts and book excerpts, said Carol Jago, associate director of the California Reading and Literature Project at UCLA. As a high school English teacher 20 years ago, Jago said it was common for her high school students to read 20 books over the course of a year. Now, some English classes are assigning just three books a year.

Scores

“To be a good reader, you have to have the stamina to stay on the page, even when the going gets tough,” Jago said. “You have to build those muscles, and we’re not building those muscles in kids.”

Education Secretary Linda McMahon said the scores show why the Trump administration wants to give states more control of education spending.

“Despite spending billions annually on numerous K-12 programs, the achievement gap is widening, and more high school seniors are performing below the basic benchmark in math and reading than ever before,” McMahon said.

House Democrats said the Trump administration’s efforts to dismantle the Education Department will only hurt students. The declines show a need for federal investment in academic recovery and educational equity, said Democratic Rep. Bobby Scott of Virginia, ranking member of the House Committee on Education and Workforce.

“Eliminating the very agency responsible for supporting public

Education

Academic gaps persist

US teens fall behind in math and reading

WASHINGTON, Sept 10, (AP): A decade-long slide in high schoolers’ reading and math performance persisted during the COVID-19 pandemic, with 12th graders’ scores dropping to their lowest level in more than 20 years, according to results released Tuesday from an exam known as the nation’s report card.

Eighth-grade students also lost significant ground in science skills, according to the results from the National Assessment of Education Progress.

The assessments were the first since the pandemic for eighth graders in science and 12th graders in reading and math. They reflect a downward drift across grade levels and subject areas in previous releases from NAEP, which is considered one of the best gauges of the academic progress of US schools.

“Scores for our lowest-performing students are at historic lows,” said Matthew Soldner, the acting commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics. “These results should galvanize all of us to take concerted and focused action to accelerate student learning.”

While the pandemic had an outsize impact on student achievement, experts said falling scores are part of a longer arc in education that cannot be attributed solely to COVID-19, school closures and related issues such as heightened absenteeism. Educators said potential underlying factors include children’s increased screen time, shortened attention spans and a decline in reading longer-form writing both in and out of school.

The dip in reading scores appeared alongside a shift in how English and language arts are taught in schools, with an emphasis on short texts and book excerpts, said Carol Jago, associate director of the California Reading and Literature Project at UCLA. As a high school English teacher 20 years ago, Jago said it was common for her high school students to read 20 books over the course of a year. Now, some English classes are assigning just three books a year.

Scores

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Students work in a classroom at Benjamin O. Davis Middle School in Compton, Calif., Feb. 6, 2025. (AP)



Students work in a classroom at Benjamin O. Davis Middle School in Compton, Calif., Feb. 6, 2025. (AP)

King Princess scoffs at heartbreak on ‘Girl Violence’

LOS ANGELES, Sept 10, (AP): It’s impossible to hear King Princess groan “I’m a loser” on their ambitious third album and not think of Beck singing the same line in his canonical slacker anthem released more than three decades ago.

Although “Alone Again” is more of an angsty breakup song than an ode to sloth, the evocation of Beck’s “Loser” is fitting for the 26-year-old born Mikaela Straus. In both Straus’ guitar-driven pop music and her public persona, the singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist exemplifies an offhanded irreverence that artists who aren’t men rarely afford.

Unlike their previous album, “Hold On Baby,” which veered into a solemnity so full of ballads that it sometimes felt in conflict with Straus’ playfulness and snark, “Girl Violence” is a return to form. (Her 2018 debut EP, “Make

My Bed.” artfully balances sincerity with sass.)

“I’m sorry my love/You’re (expletive) insane,” she sneers on the album’s ambient opening title track.

In “Jaime,” Straus seeks to play coy and appear unflappable toward the object of her desire. That concerted effort eventually belies a desperation.

“You’re just a fly in my glass,” Straus sings coolly at the beginning of the track. But by the end, they surrender - accompanied by a cacophony of shoegaze-y synths, guitars, percussion and a Mellotron. “I’ve been secretly wishing you’d date me/Despite all the times you were wack/If you told me I’m cool, I’d collapse.”

That sonic and lyrical contrast exists throughout “Girl Violence.” Scoffs mask tears. Tenderness glimmers beneath declarations of violence.



This cover image released by section 1 shows ‘Girl Violence’ by King Princess. (AP)

“You prep my despair/You know I like it,” she croons on “Girls,” a torch song about self-destructive queer lust. Sultry instrumentation and doo-wop-

esque background vocals evoke both melancholic longing and excitement.

Even as Straus sings about heartbreak and insecurity, the album remains mostly tonally upbeat. “Everybody wants me/Just ask your man, babe,” she taunts on “Cry Cry Cry” over punchy drums and her warm electric guitar.

However, a couple songs struggle to find their place on this record. “Origin Story” and “Say What You Will” come to mind. Those moments would have fit better on Straus’ mostly moody, mid-tempo first album.

By large, that Straus is a bona fide rock star is more apparent when she plays live than on their restrained recorded pop songs. But she occasionally shows off her virtuosic skill on her records, like with the crunchy guitar solo at the end of the otherwise laid back “I Feel Pretty.”

Studies enlist parents, coaches to raise concussion awareness

Researchers probe long-term impact of brain injuries in youth

BRISBANE, Australia, Sept 10, (AP): With concussion-related injuries among professional athletes often taking an unwanted spotlight, researchers in Australia are asking for help to study the impacts of potential long-term brain injuries to the younger generation - one contact sport at a time.

High-profile news about concussions is almost a weekly occurrence Down Under. Among those is 22-year-old rugby flyhalf Tom Lynagh, whose third concussion of the year resulted in him missing several games for Australia's national team. Or outside of the main contact sports, 27-year-old Australian cricketer Will Pucovski, who retired in April after sustaining an estimated 13 concussions in his first-class career due to blows to his head from fast bowling.

While those players among the pro ranks have dedicated medical professionals to assess their head injuries, researchers at Australian universities are seeking grass-roots help among parents and coaches to help identify concussion symptoms in players who don't have the luxury of those kind of resources.

This week, the University of South Australia announced a study that will ask parents, coaches and volunteers from community Australian rules football clubs to take part part in a survey.

And the Queensland Brain Institute, which is part of the University of Queensland, is conducting a concussion study with World Rugby involving high school-age players.

"Do you play rugby? Maybe basketball? The Queensland Brain Institute is looking for athletes to help us learn more about how sports concussions affect the brain," an institute statement says. "Working with World Rugby and Rugby Australia, QBI is trying to make contact sports safer, so you can play longer and smarter."

Eligible to take part in the survey are those players aged from 14 to 19 and



Dan Sheehan of the British & Irish Lions, (second right), runs past Australia's Tom Lynagh, (third left), during their first rugby union test in Brisbane, Australia, on July 19, 2025. (AP)

play rugby, basketball, or swim competitively at a school in southeast Queensland state.

And, most importantly, to have no history of neurological symptoms.

The University of South Australia study will attempt to determine how well parents and staff of junior community Australian rules football players understand

head injuries, and what more can be done to protect young players.

In Australia, about 300,000 young people under the age of 16 play in community Aussie rules football clubs, and hundreds of thousands of others participate in other sports. One in five hospitalized concussions involves sport, according to Australia's Institute of Health and Welfare.

The University of South Australia study's lead researcher, Hunter Bennett, says while community football clubs are aware of concussion risks, more needs to be done to protect young players at local levels.

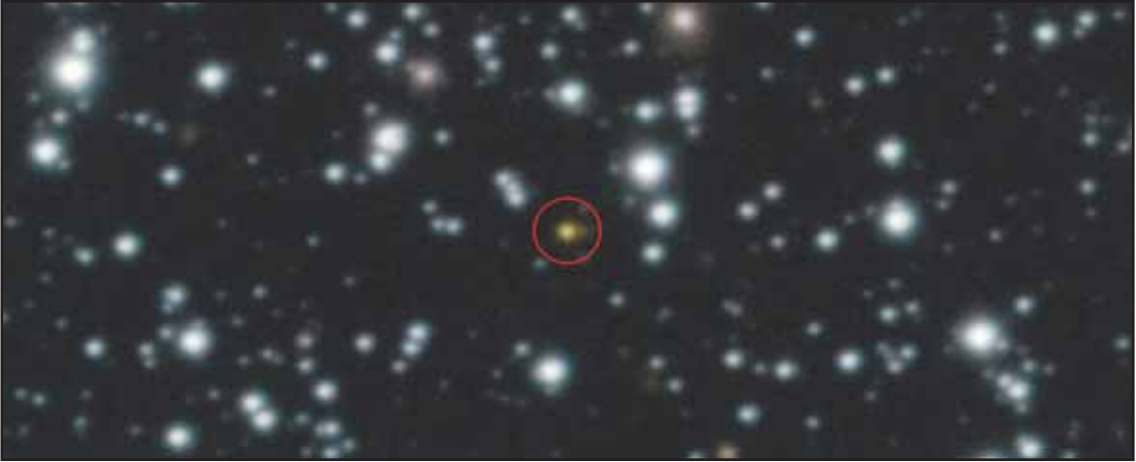
"Our purpose is to capture what people know about concussions, and to facilitate their management of head injuries, particularly among our youth," Bennett told The Associated Press in a telephone interview. "Improved awareness is what we are after.

"Often football clubs rely on parents or volunteers. That means a child might be treated on game day, but what happens in the days and weeks after is more or less unknown. Our concern is that many young players could be returning to the game too soon, without the rest and recovery they need."

The study will also identify current concussion management practices, including adherence to return-to-play protocols. The Australian Football League and the Australian Sports Commission have established a minimum 21-day absence for players following a concussion. The rugby codes have their own concussion protocols.

Bennett said minimum requirements may not always allow for a full recovery. Parents, coaches and volunteers from community football clubs are invited to take part in the survey.

"By upskilling clubs, schools and community sports groups to better recognize the signs of concussion, follow proper protocols and prioritize player well-being, we can create a safer sporting culture at every level." Bennett said.



This image provided by the European Southern Observatory shows a powerful explosion, orange dot at the center of the image, that repeated several times over the course of a day, The image, taken with ESO's Very Large Telescope (VLT), allowed astronomers to determine that the explosion didn't take place in the Milky Way but in another galaxy. (AP)

Astronomers puzzle over day-long gamma ray bursts

Scientists have discovered a gamma ray explosion outside our galaxy that's not only exceptionally powerful, but also long-lasting.

Telescopes on Earth and in space - including Hubble - have teamed up to study the unique explosion of high-energy radiation first observed in July. Astronomers reported Tuesday it's unlike anything they've witnessed before.

The repeated bursts of gamma rays were detected over the course of a day, according to scientists. That's highly

unusual since these kinds of bursts normally last just minutes or even milliseconds - rarely no more than a few hours - as dying stars collapse or are torn apart by black holes.

Scientists said such a long and recurrent gamma ray explosion is puzzling - a cosmic whodunit, at least for now. More observations are needed to confirm its precise whereabouts.

The European-led team announced its findings in the Astrophysical Journal Letters in August. (AP)

Cancerguard may lower cancer mortality by 18%

First-of-its-kind blood test detects ‘multiple cancers’ in early stages

MADISON, Wis., Sept 10, (AP): Exact Sciences Corp., a leader in cancer diagnostics, has announced the launch of the Cancerguard test, a new multi-cancer early detection (MCED) blood test that is now available as a laboratory-developed test (LDT) in the United States. Cancerguard is the first MCED test commercially available that analyzes multiple biomarker classes to help detect a wide range of cancers, including those that often go undiagnosed until later stages when treatment options are limited.

Nearly 70 percent of annual cancer cases and deaths in the US occur in cancers with no recommended screening. The Cancerguard test can help address the unmet need by complementing existing routine screening and extending the reach of early detection. With a simple blood draw, the Cancerguard test can detect signals from cancer types responsible for more than 80 percent of annual US cancer diagnoses, including some with the highest mortality rates, such as pancreatic, ovarian, liver, esophageal, lung, and stomach cancers. Overall, the Cancerguard test can detect more than 50 cancer types and subtypes.

The Cancerguard test delivered 68 percent sensitivity across six of the deadliest cancers and 64 percent overall sensitivity across a broader range of cancers, excluding breast and prostate, in test-development studies. It also found more than a third of stage I or II cancers, demonstrating its ability to detect disease when it's most treatable.



The Cancerguard test kit. (AP)

Additionally, the test achieved high specificity of 97.4 percent, helping to minimize false positives and avoid unnecessary procedures. Modeling shows that over a 10-year period, use of Exact Sciences' MCED technology alongside current screening methods could reduce stage IV cancer diagnoses by 42 percent and lower overall cancer-related mortality by 18 percent. Together, these findings underscore the Cancerguard test's potential to meaningfully improve outcomes and elevate the standard of cancer detection.

The Cancerguard test will be delivered through Exact Sciences' expansive commercial and operational infrastructure, including a national sales force that engages primary care physicians, oncologists, and leading health systems. To support patient access, Exact Sciences has entered into an agreement with Quest Diagnostics to enable blood collection at the company's approximately 7,000 patient

access sites across the US, including through its patient service centers and in-office phlebotomists in provider offices, as well as mobile phlebotomy services for at-home collections.

"Cancerguard builds on the legacy of Cologuard, which has delivered more than 20 million test results and transformed colorectal cancer screening," said Kevin Conroy, chairman and CEO of Exact Sciences. "Backed by strong science and developed to screen for many of the deadliest cancers, the Cancerguard test represents the next bold step in our mission to detect cancer earlier. With deep, trusted relationships across the health care system, Exact Sciences has the reach, credibility, and commitment to bring earlier answers to more people. This is the moment where we begin to change the course of cancer forever and give people power over their futures."

The Cancerguard test is the culmination of nearly a decade of development and is backed by rigorous science in partnership with top academic institutions. The test is supported by data from robust test-development studies, such as DETECT-A and ASCEND 2, involving more than 20,000 participants, including the first-ever prospective interventional MCED trial. To further validate clinical utility and support broad adoption, Exact Sciences is actively enrolling up to 25,000 participants in the Falcon registry, a real-world evidence study conducted under a US FDA-reviewed Investigational Device Exemption (IDE).

Experts breed rare animals in China’s river

WUHAN, China, Sept 10, (AP): A dozen sleek grey Yangtze finless porpoises glide inside a vast pool at the Institute of Hydrobiology in Wuhan as scientists find ways to protect and breed the rare mammals in China's longest river.

The Yangtze River is one of the busiest inland waterways in the world with 16 major ports. Cargo shipping volume along the river topped 4 billion metric tons (4.4 billion U.S. tons) in 2024, according to state media.

The finless porpoise has become a barometer of the river's health. The population of the critically endangered species plunged from over 2,500 in the 1990s to just 1,012 in 2017 due to pollution, boat traffic and illegal fishing that depleted food supplies, researchers said.

The change alarmed the scientific community, including veteran researcher Wang Ding. He led an international team on a 2006 search for Baiji dolphins, another species that was nearing extinction. Despite a nine-day search, not a single dolphin was found and the Baiji was declared functionally extinct. The last captive Baiji dolphin hangs at a museum along with other

rare aquatic species.

"We feared that if this animal cannot survive in the Yangtze, the other species will, like dominoes, disappear one by one from the river," Wang said.

Conservation efforts sprung into place. The Yangtze River Protection Law was enacted in 2021, banning fishing for 10 years, relocating facto-

ries and prohibiting sewage and chemical runoffs into the river. Today, the population of Yangtze finless porpoises is edging upward at around 1,300.

To protect the Chinese sturgeon, also a critically endangered species, scientists began artificially breeding and releasing thousands of the fish into the Yangtze with the hope of restoring the wild population.



Captive endangered Yangtze finless porpoises are seen at the Institute of Hydrobiology under the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Wuhan in central China's Hubei province on June 16, 2025. (AP)

Report promises healthier kids

RFK Jr.’s latest MAHA report calls for scrutiny of vaccines and autism

WASHINGTON, Sept 10, (AP): The Trump administration directed the nation's public health and environmental agencies to prioritize investigations into vaccine injuries, prescription drug use and autism's causes in its latest "Make America Healthy Again" report released Tuesday.

The 20-page report, overseen by Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., echoes many of the talking points Kennedy and those in his wide-ranging and politically diverse "MAHA" movement have united around. The document promises to put an end to childhood diseases and to make children healthier, but does not lay out regulatory changes to ensure an overhaul of Americans' health.

Among the report's recommendations is a call for more rigorous government investigations into vaccine injuries, a move that could stir more uproar as lawmakers raise alarm over how the health secretary's anti-vaccine policies have thrown the nation's public health agency into weeks of tumult.

Kennedy promised to "recast the entire program" for investigating vaccine injuries as he joined administration officials to unveil the MAHA report. Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention investigates injuries that are reported by individuals or providers.

"They will be welcomed and we will learn everything we can about them so we can improve the safety of these products," Kennedy said of people who report vaccine injuries. He added that doctors are not currently compensated for filing complaints for vaccine injuries.

A bipartisan group of senators has



Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr., appears before the Senate Finance Committee, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Sept. 4. (AP)

raised alarm over Kennedy's actions at the CDC, which was thrown into chaos last month when Kennedy abruptly fired his hand-picked director and other top leaders walked out on the job, citing disagreements over immunization recommendations. Last week, senators grilled Kennedy over his anti-vaccine agenda and leadership of the public health agencies.

The Trump administration's cuts to federal health programs, including Medicaid, as well as Kennedy's anti-vaccine rhetoric, could ultimately lead to worse health outcomes for children, Dr. Susan J. Kressly, the president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, said in a statement.

"It lacks details on how the Admin-

istration plans to address those issues and omits key drivers that harm children's health, including gun violence and environmental hazards," Kressly said of the report. "We also cannot ignore the fact that this report is being published in the context of other recent harmful actions by the Administration and Congress that undermine many of the report's recommendations."

An earlier version of the report was first leaked and publicized in August. Slight changes have been made to the final draft, which was developed by a "MAHA" commission that included Kennedy and other members of the president's cabinet. Despite pledging "radical transparency," the commission never held a public meeting ahead of the report's release.

Mobile tools guide greener habits

Climate apps help measure and reduce your carbon footprints

NEW YORK, Sept 10, (AP): This idea of a carbon footprint comes up a lot in news coverage about personal climate impact.

The concept is simple: It includes anything that you add to planet-warming emissions, ranging from the gas consumed by your car to the energy required to produce the food you eat. Reducing your carbon footprint means contributing less of these gases to the atmosphere.

But figuring out how to lower your carbon footprint is more complicated. That's why several mobile tracking apps help people figure out which actions create the most emissions and how to avoid them.

Researchers have found that people often misjudge how their actions contribute to climate change, but can do better with more information. Apps are one way to learn more about emissions and build better habits.

So, I downloaded three popular ones. Here's how it went.

Two of the apps started by calculating my personal footprint. And I'll be honest, I thought I was going to look pretty good. I was wrong.

I take my climate impact seriously. I only eat meat on weekends, and it's almost always low-impact options like chicken and turkey. I share my car (a plug-in hybrid) with my spouse, and we both work from home. I compost, I buy in bulk and I bring plastic containers to the restaurant for leftovers, so I produce very little trash. I mean, that's a pretty standout environmental citizen, right?

Earth Hero and Pawprint both told me I emit around 17 tons (15 metric tons) of pollution every year. Earth Hero estimates the average American emits nearly 22 tons (20 metric tons), so I was below that. But my footprint is still three times higher than the average person globally.

The biggest culprits were the energy spent heating and cooling my old house along with twice-yearly flights I take to see my family 2,000 miles (3,200 kilometers) away.

So, armed with guilt and panic-induced enthusiasm, I set out to reduce my impact, with the help of the apps.

Earth Hero and Pawprint both start-



A woman looks at her phone while watching the sunset in Kansas City, Mo., on Aug. 20, 2023. (AP)

ed with a survey about eating, travel and spending that yielded the carbon footprint calculation. (I compared it with the EPA's calculator, and the results lined up.)

Then I scrolled through actions that could reduce my footprint. Pawprint assigns values to each action with the help of a climate impact consulting group. Earth Hero says it relies on volunteer scientists to research values for each action based on scientific data. Most of Earth Hero's actions came with points to "level up," but actions that can't be easily quantified (like, "join a green team at work,") didn't impact my score.

Some were easy (wash clothes in cold water) and some were ambitious (install rooftop solar energy). Earth Hero allowed me to mark ones that went on my list of goals. Pawprint incentivized doing small actions repeatedly to build my list of habits, which reduced my calculated footprint.

Pawprint gave me "Pawpoints" that I could redeem for investments into climate causes. Earth Hero's actions reduced my emissions score and leveled up my profile, which appealed to my competitive nature.

Earth Hero CEO Ben Gerhold said

the average person who signs up for the app - which has 150,000 users - reduces their calculated annual emissions score by one ton.

I kept this up for two weeks. As my enthusiasm waned, so did my participation. The self-reporting made for a personalized experience and set of goals, but I didn't want to keep opening Pawprint every time I skipped a shower or ate a vegan meal. I stopped opening Earth Hero too, because after the easy stuff, I was left with pretty lofty goals, such as installing a water heater. That is on my list, but it's not a quick task.

The third app I downloaded, called Commons, didn't require the same daily commitment. The app, which monitors credit cards, generated weekly reports on what I'm buying. It didn't require ongoing inputs.

After getting over nervousness about sharing credit card data, I was flooded with insights. It listed every purchase in reverse chronological order and provided a rough estimate of its carbon impact, encouraging less spending in general and more sustainable purchases.

I got rewards when I bought from a sustainable brand, which I could then redeem for gift cards. The weekly report gave me kudos for spending less on gas and for no-purchase streaks for brands that it has given poor climate ratings.

It also encourages spending goals. This month's challenge, for example, is to buy secondhand, and I get extra rewards if I, with the 1,800 others who accepted the challenge, collectively reach our target.

Their calculations can be based on broad formulas. For example, my grocery bill is based how much I bought and not what I bought, so the \$10 I spent on tofu counted the same as if I'd bought beef. Commons' founder, Sanchali Pal, acknowledged the carbon footprint measurements are blunt. She said monitoring purchases is meant to get users to vote with their dollars and have a larger collective impact.

"A few individuals offsetting their footprint is great, but it's not going to shift systems," she said. "This idea of being able to send the signal to companies to shift their behavior was a lot more powerful."

Afghanistan thumps Hong Kong in Asia Cup opener

Omarzai smashes fastest T20 half-century

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates, Sept 10, (AP): All-rounder Azmatullah Omarzai's record-breaking T20 half-century highlighted Afghanistan's confident start to the Asia Cup in a 94-run win over Hong Kong in Group B.

Omarzai (53) smacked five sixes to register Afghanistan's fastest T20 half-century - off 20 balls - and opening batter Sediqullah Atal cashed in on three dropped catches to score an unbeaten 73 off 52 balls in Afghanistan's total of 188-6.

An inexperienced Hong Kong got squeezed against both pace and the three Afghan spinners before it struggled to reach 94-9 with Babar Hayat (39) and captain Yasim



Afghanistan's Karim Janat bowls a delivery during the Asia Cup Cricket match between Afghanistan and Hong Kong at Zayed Cricket Stadium in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. (AP)

Murtaza (16) the only two batters to breach the double-figure mark.

Afghanistan fielders too were scratchy on the field, dropping three catches, but still brought up two close run-outs, and Karim Janat made up for dropping a sitter at third with a brilliant diving catch in the outfield.

Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are the other teams in Group B, from which two teams qualify for the Super 4 stage of the tournament.

Afghanistan had the game closed out inside the eventful batting powerplay that saw a bizarre caught behind of Anshy Rath, two run-outs, and two dropped catches.

Rath surprisingly didn't go for a television referral when replays showed there was a huge gap between bat and ball as he tried to drive Fazalhaq Farooqi's (2-16) first ball he faced.

Rashid Khan had Nizakat Khan run out of a direct throw, and Omarzai hit the stumps in his follow-through to run out Kalhan Challu as Hong Kong couldn't recover after crashing to 22-4 inside the first five overs.

In between a flurry of wickets, both Challu and Hayat got reprieves when Afghanistan fielders missed out on sitters.

However, the three spinners - Khan, Noor Ahmad, and AM Ghazanfar - choked Hong Kong further by conceding just 44 runs in 10 overs between them, with Khan and Ahmad grabbing one wicket each.

Hayat showed a brief spark by smacking three sixes in his 43-ball knock, but his vigil ended in the 13th over when he spliced a catch of fast bowler Gulbadin Naib (2-8) as Hong Kong's innings never got going.

Hong Kong spinners were tidy on the slow wicket before Omarzai teed



Afghanistan's Mohammad Nabi plays a shot during the Asia Cup Cricket match between Afghanistan and Hong Kong at Zayed Cricket Stadium in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. (AP)

off with a blistering fifth-wicket partnership of 82 runs with Atal off just 35 balls.

Afghanistan, which was bowled out for 66 in the tri-series final against Pakistan on Sunday, had a frustrating start when Atal got his first life in the very first over before Rahmanullah Gurbaz's poor batting form in the UAE continued, and the opener was dismissed for 8 in the third over.

Atal hit his third half-century in his last four T20s and profited from Hong Kong's lapses in the field. Murtaza featured in all three chances against Atal as he twice dropped the batter.

Afghanistan was 119-4 in 16 overs before Omarzai's onslaught against pace fetched his team 69 runs off the final four overs.

Omarzai played some impressive ramp shots over the head of the wicketkeeper and raised his half-century by smashing three successive sixes and a four in fast bowler Ayush Sukla's (2-54) penultimate over of the Afghan innings before he holed out in the outfield while going for another big shot against the pace bowler.

'He can reach the 200-meter final'

Australia's Gout, 17, 'tipped' as next Bolt ahead of worlds



In this file photo, Gout Gout of Australia, celebrates after winning the men 200 meters during the Ostrava Golden Spike athletics meet in Ostrava, Czech Republic. (AP)

BRISBANE, Australia, Sept 10, (AP): Gout Gout will try to catch up again with world champion Noah Lyles, deal with those inevitable comparisons with Usain Bolt, and then race back to school in Australia.

The track and field world championships will be a short, sharp learning curve for the 17-year-old high school senior who has taken track and field by storm Down Under.

Gout will contest the 200 meters in a big field that includes U.S. star Lyles at Tokyo's Olympic Stadium, where he's hoping to lower the Australian record again. He made headlines in December when he ran 20.04 seconds to shatter the national mark that had stood since 1968, making him the fastest 16-year-old ever over the distance. He lowered that to 20.02 at the Ostrava Golden Spike meet in June.

Gout will enter the worlds, which start Saturday, ranked 16th internationally in the 200 - he didn't enter the 100 or the 4x100 relay - but his ranking belies the promise. He's almost four years younger than the next-youngest runner in the World Athletics' top 16. He was born a decade after Lyles, who has won the 200 at the last three worlds and who won the Olympic gold in the 100 at Paris last year.

"He may be 17, but I think he can reach the 200-meter final in Tokyo, which would be an extraordinary achievement at his age - even Usain Bolt couldn't do that," long-time sports commentator Bruce McAvaney said in his preview for Australia's SBS TV. "It's going to be fascinating to watch his journey."

He certainly has the attention of sports fans everywhere in Australia, where Gout is already being tipped to win gold at the 2032 Olympics in Brisbane.

Gout has posted two wind-assisted times under 20 seconds, clocking 19.84 and 19.98 in April, but neither was considered legal because the wind was above allowable thresholds.

Even without those two sub-20 times, he's still in the top seven all-time for Under-20s in the half-lap sprint, a list that includes Bolt.

"My top-end speed is my secret, so I've just got to focus on the first 100, first 50, and once I get out of that bend, I know I can run people down," Gout said. "So stay relaxed, stay focused, and just power through."

Australian TV audiences have seen plenty of vision of Gout running - and some have compared the upright technique, high knee lift, and dramatic acceleration with the style made famous by Bolt, the greatest sprinter of all time.

"In the moment, it feels great because everyone wants to be compared to Usain, but at times it does get a bit overwhelming," Gout said on his Australian Athletics profile. "Now that I've grown up and I'm a bit mature, my circle really helps me stay level, and I'm just basically trying to make a name for myself. Although I do run like Usain Bolt, I do maybe look like him in a couple of ways. I'm just trying to be myself."

His father Bona and mother Monica moved from South Sudan via Egypt to Australia and arrived in 2006. Gout Gout was born in December 2007 in Ipswich, a one-hour bus ride from 2032 Olympics host city Brisbane.

He caught the attention of coaches at an Ipswich Grammar School athletics carnival in 2020 and soon after, with his first pair of spikes, competed at a prestigious meet for mostly private schools at the age of 12. The following year, he joined long-time coach Di Sheppard's training squad and things really took off.

"She basically told me I could be great," Gout reflected, "and that was the first time anyone ever told me something like that."

Sheppard has declared to Australian media that Gout can win a gold medal in 2032, and the young sprinter is happy to run with that.

He won a silver medal at the 2024 world junior championships in Lima, Peru and signed with Adidas last October. He was back to racing at high school meets in November and December, caught up with Lyles in the U.S., and then returned to Australia to pull crowds for the open track season.

In a television interview last December, Gout's father said the young athlete's name had long been misspelled and should be Guot - pronounced Guot, not like the painful inflammatory joint ailment gout.

But James Templeton, the young sprinter's manager and agent who has worked previously with the likes of David Rudisha and Bernard Lagat, later told Australian radio station SEN that for now, "Categorically, it's Gout Gout ... it's how it's going to be."

Templeton said he has been basically giving a "blanket no" to every media request for Gout for 18 months because of his young age.

Aces extend winning streak to 15

Storm pips Valkyries to secure final playoff spot, Sparks knocked from race despite win

SEATTLE, Sept 10, (AP): Erica Wheeler scored 17 points, including a go-ahead shot with 18.5 seconds left, and the Seattle Storm beat the Golden State Valkyries 74-73 on Tuesday night to secure the final WNBA playoff spot.

Seattle (23-21) clinched the 20th postseason appearance in franchise history.

After Wheeler's pull-up jumper from the free-throw line, Janelle Salaun missed a shot in the lane but she got another chance following an offensive rebound. Salaun missed a corner 3-pointer and Wheeler secured the loose ball.

Nneka Ogumike finished with 16 points and eight rebounds, Brittney Sykes scored 14 and Skylar Diggins had 10 points and six assists for Seattle. Wheeler was 5 of 7 on 3-pointers.

Salaun had 22 points and five 3-pointers for Golden State (23-20), which became the first expansion franchise to reach the playoffs in its inaugural season on Thursday. Temi Fagbenle scored 14 points and Veronica Burton had 14 points and 11 assists. Kaila Charles added 12 points and nine rebounds.

Golden State went on a 13-0 run - started by three straight 3-pointers by Salaun and Monique Billings - to take a 60-50 lead late in the third quarter. The Valkyries were 4 of 4 from distance in the third before missing their first six of the fourth.

Sparks 88, Mercury 83

In Phoenix, Dearica Hamby scored 16 of her 25 points in the fourth quarter, Rae Burrell had a career-high 20 points off the bench and Los Angeles beat the Phoenix Mercury but the Sparks were eliminated from the playoff race.

The Sparks needed a win and a Seattle loss to send the chase for the last playoff spot to the last day of the season on Thursday, but the Storm pulled



Las Vegas Aces center A'ja Wilson (22) loses control of the ball after being fouled by Chicago Sky forward Maddy Westbeld (21) during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Las Vegas. (AP)

out a 74-73 win over Golden State.

Phoenix, the No. 4 seed, will host fifth-seeded New York, the defending champion, in the best-of-three series when the playoffs open on Sunday.

Hamby's layup put the Sparks on top for good at 76-74 with 4:16 to play. She followed that with a three-point play. She added a three-point play with 1:01 to go for an 86-81 lead. There were 17 lead changes.

Aces 92, Sky 61

In Las Vegas, Jewell Loyd became the 16th player to reach 6,000 points, scoring 15 to help extend the Aces' winning streak to 15 games with victory over the Chicago Sky that put Las Vegas in contention for the second seed in the WNBA playoffs.

The Aces (29-14) will clinch that seed and home-court advantage through at least the semifinals if they win at Los Angeles on Thursday or Atlanta (29-14) loses at Connecticut on Wednesday. Las Vegas owns the tie-breaker over the Dream.

Las Vegas' franchise-record winning streak tied the 1998 Houston Comets for third longest. The 2001 Los Angeles Sparks own the record at 18 games and the 2014 Phoenix Mercury won 16 in a row.

Fever 83, Lynx 72

In Indianapolis, Kelsey Mitchell

scored 18 points and the Indiana Fever wrapped up the regular season with win over the league-leading Minnesota Lynx, who were resting MVP candidate Napheesa Collier.

Indiana (24-20) scored the first 10 points of the game and led by as many as 24, an impressive performance without star Caitlin Clark, who has only played 13 games this season and will not play in the playoffs that begin Sunday.

Odyssey Sims scored 15 points for the Fever, who set a franchise record for most wins in a season. Aliyah Boston had 12 points and eight rebounds, breaking her own club record for rebounds in a season with 361.

Spain coach De la Fuente: No egos in my team

Neuer is ready for national team return, says his agent

BERLIN, Sept 10, (Xinhua): Manuel Neuer's recent form has reignited speculation about a potential return of the 2014 World Cup winner to the German national team.

The 39-year-old Bayern Munich goalkeeper remains in peak condition, according to his agent Thomas Kroth.

"If national coach Julian Nagelsmann sees a problem in this position, and Manuel is healthy and would be asked, he wouldn't say no," Kroth told German television in a recent interview, noting the close relationship and regular communication between the coach and the player.

With current first-choice Marc-Andre ter Stegen sidelined following back surgery, calls for Neuer's return have intensified. Several former internationals, including Lothar Matthaeus, Bastian Schweinsteiger and Sepp Maier, have publicly urged Nagelsmann to bring him back.

"He is still our best," said Schweinsteiger, while Matthaeus highlighted Neuer's unparalleled experience. "It might help the struggling team gain

stability. No other keeper can rely on similar experience when it comes to major tournaments," the German record international added.

Nagelsmann has so far remained optimistic about Ter Stegen's recovery, saying, "Marc is returning in December, plays the last pre-World Cup games in March and June, and is in our goal for the tournament." But doubts persist. Ter Stegen has also lost his starting role at Barcelona, raising questions about his ability to regain form and match fitness in time for the 2026 World Cup.

Neuer stepped away from the national team after Euro 2024, ending a 124-cap career to focus fully on Bayern. Since then, Hoffenheim's Oliver Baumann has deputized, performing solidly but lacking international pedigree.

"Club games on national and international stages are one thing, but a major tournament is another challenge," Matthaeus observed.

To compete at the highest level after 12 years, Matthaeus stressed, requires

"a vigorous pursuit of the goal."

□ □ □

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente says

Spain's coach Luis De La Fuente gives instructions during a World Cup qualifying round Group E soccer match between Turkey and Spain at Konya Buyuksehir stadium, in Konya, Turkey. (AP)

teamwork and unity are the foundation of the exceptional football his side is playing.

Speaking to Spanish radio station Cadena Ser after the European champions' 6-0 victory away to Türkiye on Sunday, which put Spain firmly on course for the 2026 World Cup finals, De la Fuente said he believed it was the best performance since he succeeded Luis Enrique following the 2022 World Cup.

"This group of players doesn't tire, they always accept that tomorrow we have to do even better," he said.

While players such as Lamine Yamal often draw the headlines, De la Fuente stressed there is "no ego struggle in the national team because everyone is a good person; I know them very well." "I select the people I know will fit into a project," he explained.

The coach also praised Yamal, saying the 18-year-old has "shown impressive maturity, and it's not easy. He's a kid and he's learning," adding that the public image of the teenager differs from the reality.

Tokyo stadium back in action

From quiet Olympic Games to roaring crowds at worlds

TOKYO, Sept 10, (AP): Japan’s National Stadium was fan-less four years ago during the pandemic-delayed Tokyo Olympics; zero atmosphere in the \$1.4 billion, 60,000-seat venue for the globe’s greatest track and field athletes. Many recall the sterility of the opening and closing ceremonies, the quiet as Japanese Emperor Naruhito addressed thousands of empty seats to officially begin the Games of the XXXII Olympiad. The most hyped event of the Olympics is often the men’s 100-meter final. But only silence and a small throng of media serenaded winner Marcel Jacobs - a Texas-born Italian - as he posed at the finish line to celebrate with an Italian flag stretched across his shoulders. The stadium designed by Japanese architect Kengo Kuma in central Tokyo is about to get the attention it missed when the nine-day track and field world championships open Saturday. The championships are sure to enliven a venue with stars like American sprinter Noah Lyles, whose struggles with depression tainted his trip to Tokyo, and pole vault world-record holder Mondo Duplantis. The venue has awaited this kind of event ever since it

was completed in 2019. This is good news for fans hoping to experience an atmosphere that was lacking in 2021. But the focus on the stadium will again raise questions about government spending on a stadium that has struggled to find uses following the Olympics. The Olympics have a long history of producing white-elephant venues created with public money: Athens in 2004, Beijing in 2008, and Rio de Janeiro in 2016. Plans for a new stadium by Zaha Hadid were scrapped in 2015 when costs soared to over \$2 billion. That stadium had a futuristic look, some comparing it with a bicycle helmet. Kuma won a second bidding contest, designing a stadium that fit into the existing urban landscape with more Japanese elements including wood, gardens and flowing water. The new venue replaced the stadium used for the 1964 Olympics, which was razed and was never regarded as an architectural gem. However, Tokyo’s ‘64 Games did generate iconic architecture including the Yoyogi National Stadium, the jewel of those Olympics and a symbol of Japan’s rise following World War II.



The National Stadium, a venue for the opening and closing ceremonies for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, is seen from an observation deck, on March 25, 2020, in Tokyo. (AP)

It’s a smaller indoor arena, the host for swimming in the ‘64 Olympics. The National Stadium, built with taxpayer money for the Tokyo Olympics, appears to be a money loser. At least for taxpayers. Victor Matheson, who studies the economics of sports at College of the Holy Cross, said a stadium like Japan’s National Stadium has too few uses, no permanent tenant, ongoing maintenance and operation expenses and possible payments on debt service. “There are simply not that many

events that require a 60,000-plus capacity,” Matheson wrote in an email to The Associated Press. “There are not many music concerts that can fill a stadium that size. And things like a soccer or rugby World Cup or track and field championships only come around rarely.” The National Stadium was reported to be losing about 1 billion yen annually (about \$7 million) as late as fiscal 2024. It has since been privatized to reduce public-sector expenses. A private consortium is managing the stadium although the national government still owns it and is picking up some of the bills. Matheson cited a study that showed large stadiums in the United States, home to NFL teams, typically hosted fewer than 10 major entertainment or sports events per year outside of NFL games. “So, most of the time you end up spending \$1 billion-plus on a facility that sits empty 350 days a year,” Matheson said. The National Stadium sits adjacent to an area known as Jingu Gaien, a park-like space that includes a famous baseball and rugby stadium and a cherished avenue lined by more than 100

ginkgo trees. There are plans approved by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to raze the baseball and rugby stadiums. They are to be rebuilt in the same area, but in reconfigured space. This will allow developer Mitsui Fudosan and others to build three skyscrapers in what was essentially a park area, some of the most valued real estate in Tokyo. The zoning changes to allow this high-rise development - it won’t be finished for a decade - were pushed through by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government when the Olympics were on the horizon and the new National Stadium was seen as an urgent priority. Not only were the 2020 Olympics very costly for taxpayers, they also provided an opening for private developers to encroach on what has traditionally been park-like space. “When someone else is footing the bill, we tend to build Rolls-Royces and not Toyota Corollas,” Matheson, the economist, said. “At a price of \$1.4 billion, Tokyo’s Olympic stadium costs roughly the same amount as the entire 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, even after accounting for inflation.”

Bolivia keeps WC dream alive with historic win over Brazil

Terceros’ penalty downs five-time champion

LA PAZ, Sept 10, (Xinhua): Miguel Terceros converted a first-half penalty as Bolivia secured a World Cup playoff spot with a 1-0 home win over Brazil on Tuesday.

On the final day of South American qualifiers, Venezuela - which needed a win to keep alive its hopes of reaching a maiden World Cup - suffered a 6-3 home defeat to Colombia. Bolivia will now compete in a six-team intercontinental playoff tournament next March, which will decide the last two World Cup places. The Verde will aim to join Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia, Uruguay, Brazil and Paraguay as South America’s representatives at the 2026 tournament in the United States, Mexico and Canada. In Tuesday’s other fixtures, Ecuador beat Argentina 1-0 in Guayaquil, Uruguay drew 0-0 away to Chile and Paraguay clinched a 1-0 victory over Peru in Lima. The day’s decisive result came in El Alto, more than 4,000 meters above sea level, where Terceros sealed Bolivia’s victory with his seventh goal of these qualifiers. The 21-year-old sent his spot-kick past goalkeeper Alisson after Bruno Guimaraes was penalized for a foul on Roberto Fernandez. Brazil had Alisson to thank for not falling further behind as Bolivia registered 10 shots on target while the five-time world champions managed only three. The win means Bolivia will vie for a berth in its first World Cup finals since the 1994 tournament in the United States. “This group of players deserves this,” Terceros said after the match at the Estadio Municipal. “We’ve been working hard for a long time and this is a reflection of that.” While Bolivia celebrated, Venezuela was left to lament as four goals from Luis Diaz gave Colombia victory in Maturin. Telasco Segovia handed the hosts



Brazil’s Lucas Paqueta, right, and Bolivia’s Robson Tome De Araujo battle for the ball during a World Cup 2026 qualifying soccer match at Villa Ingenio stadium in El Alto, Bolivia, Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2025. (AP)

the lead by firing into the far corner after Salomon Rondon’s layoff. Former Barcelona defender Yerry Mina equalized with a header after a James Rodriguez corner. The game was played at a frantic pace and Venezuela restored its advantage two minutes later through Josef Martinez, who bundled home from point-blank range after goalkeeper Kevin Mier failed to deal with Segovia’s cross. Colombia was level again just before halftime as Diaz pounced on a loose ball to score from the edge of the six-yard box. The urgency continued after the restart and Diaz put his side ahead by combining with Rodriguez before sending a low drive into the far corner. Diaz completed his hat-trick just before the hour, firing an 18-yard shot that beat goalkeeper Rafael Romo at his near post. The 27-year-old Sporting Lisbon

forward was irrepressible, making it 5-2 with a 67th-minute tap-in following Richard Rios’ cross. Venezuela pulled one back through Rondon, who finished from close range after Jefferson Savarino’s shot from distance was parried away by Mier. But Colombia put the result beyond doubt as Juan Fernando Quintero set up Jhon Cordoba, whose first-time finish left Romo with no chance. The result meant Colombia finished the CONMEBOL qualifying tournament in third place, behind Argentina and Ecuador. Elsewhere, Enner Valencia scored in the first half to give Ecuador victory over Argentina in Guayaquil, where both teams finished with 10 men. The reigning World Cup and Copa America champions suffered a setback in the 31st minute when Nicolas Otamendi was shown a straight red card for bringing down

Valencia as the forward broke clear. The Ecuador captain broke the deadlock from the penalty spot on the stroke of halftime after Angelo Preciado was fouled by Nicolas Tagliafico. The hosts were also reduced to 10 men shortly after the restart after Moises Caicedo received a second yellow card for a late challenge on Nico Gonzalez. Argentina, which rested captain Lionel Messi for the clash at Estadio Monumental, finished top of the 10-team group, nine points ahead of second-placed Ecuador. In Lima, a 78th-minute strike from River Plate midfielder Matias Galarza gave Paraguay a 1-0 win over Peru. The result left Paraguay sixth in the standings with 28 points, 16 clear of ninth-placed Peru. In Santiago, Uruguay secured fourth place with a goalless stalemate that left Chile bottom with two wins from 18 games.

Qadsia signs Kipano as fifth foreign player ahead of Zain Premier League

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: Qadsia Club has completed its foreign player roster for the new season by signing Congolese international N’Skins Kipano on a one-year deal. He joins Egyptians Mahmoud Abdelmonem “Kahraba,” Libyan Mohamed Sula, and Algerians Victor Lekhal and Sofiane Bouchar. Kipano was signed to replace Libyan Mohamed Al-Houni, who joined Qadsia in August but later signed another contract with Al-Ahli Tripoli. Qadsia plans to file an official complaint with FIFA over Al-Houni’s breach of contract. The 33-year-old midfielder began his career with Paris Saint-Germain in 2013-2014, and then moved to Belgian sides Charleroi and Genk. He later played in England with Fulham and Middlesbrough, before spending the past two seasons with UAE’s Al-

Jazira, where he scored 12 goals in 53 appearances. Kipano has also represented France at various youth levels. Qadsia will face Al-Nasr this Saturday in the first round of the Zain Premier League but will be without several key players. Algerian Sofiane Bouchar is serving a suspension carried over from last season with Al-Arabi, while Libyan Mohamed Sula is sidelined with an injury sustained during national team duty. New signing Talal Al-Fadel and rising talent Jassim Al-Matar are also out due to injuries. Midfielder Abdulaziz Wadi is unavailable following a traffic accident. On a positive note, Qadsia has regained young midfielder Abdulwahab Al-Shallal (20), who spent last season on loan at Yarmouk. Coach Nabil Maaloul has emphasized integrating young talent, with several prospects taking part in the club’s training camp in Turkey to prepare for the new season with the first team.



In this file photo, N’Skins Kipano (right) vies for the ball with Ngolo Kante during a Premier League match.

Zendejas, Balogun shine

US edges Japan to halt 7-game skid

COLUMBUS, Ohio, Sept 10, (AP): Alejandro Zendejas scored in the 30th minute, Folarin Balogun added a goal in the 64th and the United States stopped a seven-game winless streak against top 25 opponents by beating a Japan team of mostly second-string players 2-0 in a friendly on Tuesday night. The 15th-ranked U.S. was coming off a 2-0 loss to South Korea on Saturday in the first of eight friendlies before coach Mauricio Pochettino calls in players for training ahead of the World Cup. No. 17 Japan used essentially a B team, changing all 11 starters from Saturday’s 0-0 draw against Mexico and starting eight players who entered with 10 or fewer international appearances. There were no starters from the group that began the March match against Bahrain when Samurai Blue clinched their eighth straight World Cup berth, though



United States’ Alejandro Zendejas (17) reacts after scoring during the first half of a friendly soccer match against Japan in Columbus, Ohio. (AP)

some regulars entered in the 62nd minute. The U.S. had not beaten a top 25 team since the CONCACAF Nations League final against Mex-

ico in March 2024, including five straight defeats. The Americans dominated throughout with a 19-11 in advantage in shots before a pro-American sellout crowd of

20,192 at Lower.com Field, winning 2-0 for the sixth time in Columbus. Zendejas took a long cross from left back Max Arfsten and volleyed with his left foot from near the penalty spot for his second goal in 13 international appearances. Balogun scored his sixth international goal after Christian Pulisic’s through pass, beating goalkeeper Keisuke Osako with an angled shot inside the far post. Chris Richards, Alex Freeman, Cristian Roldan, Zendejas and Balogun joined the starting lineup in place of Sergino Dest, Diego Luna, Sebastian Berhalter, Tim Weah and Josh Sargent. Richards, Tim Ream and Tristan Blackmon started as a three-man back line, with Arfsten and Freeman as wingbacks, a formation coach Pochettino switched to in the second half Saturday.

Hu claims fourth gold in men’s 10m air pistol

NINGBO, China, Sept 10, (Xinhua): Chinese shooter Hu Kai extended his unbeaten streak in the men’s 10m air pistol on Tuesday, winning his 4th consecutive ISSF World Cup gold medal of the season after a tense final on home soil. Team-

mate You Changjie, making his World Cup debut, claimed silver to secure a Chinese one-two finish. Hu topped qualification with 589 points, but the final was filled with drama. After the opening

stage, he trailed in second place by 0.5 points before surging ahead with a series of 10.8 and 10.4. The world No. 1 then held his lead through the middle stages, as the order behind him shifted repeatedly.

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NEWS



Finland's Olivier Nkamhoua, right, in action against Georgia's Tornike Shengelia during the Eurobasket, European Basketball Championship quarter final match between Finland and Georgia at the Riga Arena in Riga, Latvia. Finland won 93-79. (AP)

Sports

Tournament to start on Saturday

Kuwait's 'top' squash players ready for the 17th National Championship

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: The 17th edition of the National Individual Squash Championship for men and women, across all age categories, will begin next Saturday. The tournament draw was held recently at the federation's headquarters in South Surra, attended by Federation President Waleed Al-Sumai'i, Secretary General and Head of the Competitions Committee Hamed Al-Omran, committee member Abdulhadi Al-Aryan, and representatives from 12 of the 14 participating clubs.

Al-Omran welcomed the attendees, wishing players and clubs a successful start to the new season and strong results. He also greeted Mishaal Anad, the representative of Al-Fahaheel Club, congratulating him on the club's official entry into squash. On this occasion, Anad presented a commemorative shield to Federation President Al-Sumai'i on behalf of Al-Fahaheel President Hamad Al-Dabbous, extending his greetings to the federation and the squash community.

The championship will open with competitions in the Under-11, Under-15, and Under-19 categories, as well as the women's open category, running for five days. It will then continue with the Under-13, Under-17, and men's open categories, concluding on the 24th of this month.

Meanwhile, the Referees' Training and Promotion Course will start on Sunday at the Abdullah Al-Salem Leadership Preparation Center in Khaldiya. The course, aimed at referees in the first, second, and third divisions, will be led by Abdulrahman Al-Owaish, Abdulhadi Al-Aryan, and Tareq Al-Owaish, and will run for 10 days.



Al-Sumai'i and Al-Omran attend meeting with club officials.

England sends message; France, Portugal avoid upsets

Haaland scores five as Norway demolishes Moldova 11-1

BELGRADE, Serbia, Sept 10, (AP): Kylian Mbappé got France out of trouble, Cristiano Ronaldo helped Portugal do the same, and England finally got its Thomas Tuchel era into gear.

Three of Europe's soccer powerhouses took big steps closer to the 2026 World Cup, all while Erling Haaland scored five goals in an 11-1 win with fresh stitches in his face.

Noni Madueke, Ezri Konsa, and Marc Guehi all scored their first goals for England, which beat Serbia 5-0 for a win that could be a turning point in Tuchel's tenure.

Despite Tuchel's recent talk of being prepared to win ugly with long passing, this win was more about managing the game and shutting down Serbia, which had made England fight hard for a 1-0 win at Euro 2024. Harry Kane was crucial, finding space to score the opening goal with a header from Declan Rice's corner.

The captain cemented England's advantage late on with smart movement to get in behind the defense on a move that ended with a red card for Nikola Milenkovic, who denied a clear scoring chance by Kane. Guehi scored England's fourth from the resulting free kick.

"The energy has been higher and the level has been higher," Kane told BBC radio. "Serbia is a good team, and we made them look average tonight."

England is seven points clear at the top of Group K, ahead of Albania, which beat Latvia 1-0. A win and two draws in its last three group games would be enough for Tuchel's team to

qualify for the World Cup.

Goalkeeper Jordan Pickford didn't have to make a save as Serbia didn't manage a shot on target. England had 12.

"We were very strong," Tuchel said. "I think it was teamwork in its purest form. We helped each other out, we had the right intensity in the right moments."

France held on with 10 men to beat Iceland 2-1 after coming from behind, thanks to a goal and assist from Mbappé.

Iceland took a surprise lead when Michael Olise gave away the ball in his own penalty area and Andri Gudjohnsen pounced on it to score. Mbappé finally got France into the game when he converted a penalty just before half-time after being shoved by Mikael Anderson.

Mbappé led a break for the second goal and set up Bradley Barcola to score in the 62nd, but France's task got harder when Aurélien Tchouaméni was sent off soon after for a reckless lunging tackle.

France leads Group D after winning its first two games, with Iceland in second place. Oleksandr Zinchenko conceded a penalty for handball as third-place Ukraine's chances of qualifying plunged in a 1-1 draw with Azerbaijan, which had fired ex-Portugal coach Fernando Santos following its 5-0 loss to Iceland last week.

Joao Cancelo scored the winning goal in the 86th minute to give Portugal a 3-2 victory over Hungary, its second win to start the qualifying campaign, after two goals from Barnabás Varga had given Hungary hope of an upset.

Ronaldo scored a penalty to give Portugal a 2-1 lead earlier after winning a penalty by flicking the ball into Loïc Nego's outstretched arm. Also in Group F, Ireland's hopes of a first



Ireland's Dara O'Shea, left, Armenia's Georgii Arutiunian, centre, and Kamo Hovhannisyán head the ball during a World Cup 2026 Group F qualifying soccer match between Armenia and Ireland at the Vazgen Sargsyan stadium in Yerevan, Armenia. (AP)

World Cup appearance since 2002 took a heavy blow with a 2-1 loss to Armenia.

Playing with stitches in his face following an accident with a bus door,

Erling Haaland scored five goals, including a first-half hat trick, as Norway demolished Moldova 11-1 to extend its lead over Italy at the top of Group I to six points. Norway has played one

more game.

Konrad Laimer and Marcel Sabitzer scored to lift Austria to a 2-1 win over Bosnia-Herzegovina, which brings it closer to a first World Cup

qualification since 1998. Austria is level with Bosnia-Herzegovina on 12 points in Group H, but has an extra game to play. Cyprus and Romania drew 2-2.

'Deregistered' players get a 10-day window to join new clubs in Kuwait

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: The Kuwait Handball Federation has opened a 10-day registration period for players who were deregistered by their clubs on the final day of the summer registration period. The decision, effective since last Monday, aims to ensure that these players are not left without a club for six months, which would prevent them from participating in the sport.



Mohammed Al-Sanea

Federation Secretary-General Qaid Al-Adwani explained that some clubs remove extra players from their rosters at the end of the registration period, leaving them without the opportunity to join other teams.

"We opened this registration window to allow deregistered players to continue their careers and join new clubs," he said.

The initiative allowed Kazma Club to register new talents. The club announced on its X account that both players had joined the first team and participated in Kazma's 26-22 victory over Qadsia in the third round of the Premier League. This marked Qadsia's third consecutive defeat, leaving it in seventh place with no points, while Kazma moved up to second with five points.

Kuwait Club also maintained its strong start, recording a 40-24 win over Salamiya for its third consecutive victory, taking six points at the top of the league standings. Salamiya remains fifth with two points.

All matches were held at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Hall. Today, the First Division League will feature three matches: Khaitan vs. Yarmouk, Qurain vs. Al-Sahel, and the Youth National Team vs. Al-Fahaheel.

Anizan highlights importance of referee development in volleyball

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 10: Ahmed Anizan, international referee and rapporteur of the Referees Committee at the Kuwait Volleyball Federation, underlined the significance of organizing training and promotion programs for referees ahead of the new season.

The refresher and promotion course, which began on the 7th of this month and runs until the 18th, was inaugurated by the Federation's Assistant Secretary Nayef Al-Khumaili at the Abdullah Al-Salem Center for Leadership Preparation in Khaldiya. International referees Ahmed Anizan and Adel Bounashi are leading the sessions.

Anizan explained that the program is designed for all referees, with ten of them advancing from the second to the first category. The course features theoretical lectures that cover in detail the latest amendments introduced by the International Volleyball Federation, ensuring referees remain up to date with global regulations. This, he noted, will enhance refereeing standards in local competitions and prepare officials for international assignments.

He added that the initiative reflects the Federation's and the Referees



Ahmed Anizan

Committee's commitment to developing referees and strengthening the overall framework of the sport in Kuwait.

Anizan expressed his appreciation to the Federation's Board of Directors and the Public Authority for Sport for supporting such programs, which he said contribute to raising the quality of volleyball competitions.

He also wished the participants success, encouraging them to gain maximum benefit from the course.

Nigeria in trouble

Egypt made to wait for World Cup spot after draw with Burkina Faso

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 10, (Agencies): Egypt missed a chance to qualify for the 2026 World Cup with two games to spare by settling for a 0-0 draw with Burkina Faso.

Morocco and Tunisia are the only African teams so far that have secured their place in next summer's tournament as the continent wrapped up its latest round of qualifying.

Group C leader South Africa also hoped to qualify but was made to wait after a 1-1 draw with Nigeria.

Cape Verde upset Cameroon with a 1-0 victory that sparked celebrations and a pitch invasion. It was the fifth straight World Cup qualifying win for the archipelago nation, which ended this round atop Group D with 19 points, four ahead of the Indomitable Lions.

Nigeria, which has played at the World Cup six times, risks missing out on the tournament for the second straight edition. The Super Eagles trail South Africa by six points.

It has been a frustrating campaign for Nigeria despite having a team full of European-based players like Victor Osimhen and current African player of the year Ademola Lookman.

Senegal staged a comeback against the Democratic Republic of Congo to win 3-2 and remains on top of Group B.

Ivory Coast remains atop Group F after a 0-0 draw with Gabon, but the two are separated by a single point.

The latest round of qualifiers sees Gabon's US-based Denis Bouanga leading the goalscoring charts with eight goals, one ahead of Egypt's Mohamed Salah.

Kenya thrashed Seychelles 5-0 in a 2026 FIFA World Cup African qualifier Group F match in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, on Tuesday.

Although Kenya have already been eliminated from the race for a World Cup spot in the group, the emphatic victory provided a morale boost for head coach Benni McCarthy, who is focusing on building a competitive team for future campaigns.

The Harambee Stars moved above Gambia into fourth place with nine points from eight matches.

African champion Cote d'Ivoire, on 19 points, and Gabon, on 18, who are scheduled to play later, are competing for the group's sole ticket to the World Cup.