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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Your Highness the Prime Minister, what is going on?

I REITERATE what I said when the former Minister of Finance issued the so-called “chalet” decision, which sparked a massive uproar and was suspended just two days after approval for further study. At that time, I emphasized that any decision must be carefully considered before issuance to avoid harming the interests of citizens and the nation.

Any action taken by the Council of Ministers should aim to develop society, not create additional obstacles, as ultimately this harms both citizens and the country.

Recently, the Public Authority for Industry issued a decision to halt the issuance of licenses for commercial, craft and other plots. The decision also restricts the activities investors can undertake on these plots, which undoubtedly stifles business, weakens economic activity, industry and crafts. These are sectors that desperately need encouragement. The region is witnessing significant investment growth in all sectors, and Kuwait must keep pace to avoid being left behind.

We see that commercial, industrial and craft activities in Kuwait are off the course due to several obstacles restricting freedom of movement, placing significant pressure on the economy.

When hundreds or even thousands of licenses are suspended or denied renewal, many investors face severe crises, primarily failing to meet banking obligations, defaults and mounting pressure to pay workers' salaries while operations come to a halt due to expired licenses.

This situation fuels further inflation and negatively impacts other sectors that support commercial, craft or industrial activities. Consequently, citizens hesitate before making any investments out of fear of the risks involved. Many beneficiaries have invested heavily in developing their plots, only to find their efforts blocked by those obstructing their progress.

It is well known that people's interests are interconnected, so any disruption creates a domino effect. This inevitably impacts credit, loans and the flow of financial liquidity, leading to economic contraction, contrary to the government's goal of increasing the gross domestic product.

Therefore, the Public Authority for Industry's decision is a step in the wrong direction.

The decision has angered and frustrated citizens, as it has negatively affected them and halted their transactions, including banking operations, which are the backbone of the financial system, as well as the flow of trade and even everyday activities like grocery shopping.

Industrial, craft, commercial and service plots are the backbone of economic activity. Governments around the world focus on them, allowing their owners to diversify their businesses, as they contribute to diversifying sources of national income.

Kuwait needs this now more than ever. Not everyone should be punished because someone made a mistake. Only those who committed a violation, such as delaying payment of plot rent, should be held accountable. The rule is that no one shall bear the burden of another, as punishment is individual, not collective. Thus, the matter should be limited to violators, rather than suspending hundreds of licenses or halting hundreds of businesses. The Public Authority for Industry should encourage the investors.

Construction gives value to the plots, not the undeveloped land. Construction on these plots has been going on for years, and various activities have been carried out on them which increased their market value and turned them into public benefit facilities.

Non-renewal of plot licenses means a death sentence for businesses and enterprises, whether big or small. Some of these plots cost millions, so what will happen to them when their operations cease?

This question leads us to another question. Who is responsible for deciding the destiny of these businesses? Is it the Kuwait Municipality, the Public Authority for Industry, the Council of Ministers or the Ministry of Commerce and Industry?

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Photos by Samer Shiqer

KRCS raises public awareness on lifesaving first aid skills at The Avenues Mall for World First Aid Day.

KRCS leads awareness push on First Aid Day

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) launched an awareness campaign at The Avenues Mall on the occasion

of World First Aid Day, which falls on the second Saturday of September each year.

The campaign aims to promote the first aid culture among community members and raise awareness on its

importance in saving lives.

In a press statement, Chairman of KRCS Board of Directors Ambassador Khaled Al-Mughamis revealed this campaign is part of the efforts to

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Kuwait visa blitz reels in 273 expat violators

Arrests send warning as crackdown intensifies

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Capital Security Directorate, in coordination with a number of operations commanders, carried out an extensive security campaign targeting various areas and markets in different governorates to apprehend violators of residency and labor laws, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The campaign led to the arrest of 269 individuals, including:

- 202 labor law violators
- 29 individuals with expired residency permits
- 2 individuals working for non-sponsoring employers
- 25 reported absconders
- 4 individuals wanted for criminal cases
- 4 individuals under judicial arrest warrants
- 2 cases of begging
- 1 individual without any identification document

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Kuwait-Saudi naval forces deepen joint operations

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Kuwait Armed Forces hosted on Saturday the second Kuwait-Saudi coordination meeting to enhance cooperation and joint coordination in naval operations.

Held at Mohammad Al-Ahmad Naval Base, Kuwait Naval Force Commander, Rear Admiral Saif Al-Hamdan received Assistant Commander of the Eastern Fleet of the Royal Saudi Naval Forces, Rear Admiral Mansour Al-Otaibi and his delegation, Chairmanship of Staff said in a press statement.

The meeting focused on sharing expertise in joint naval operations as part of the forces' annual work program.



Ministry of Defense photo

Kuwait Naval Force Commander, Rear Admiral Saif Al-Hamdan with Assistant Commander of the Eastern Fleet of the Royal Saudi Naval Forces, Rear Admiral Mansour Al-Otaibi.

Tripathi succeeds Swaika as India envoy to Kuwait

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced the appointment of Paramita Tripathi as the new Ambassador of the Republic of India to Kuwait, replacing outgoing Ambassador, Adarsh Swaika.



Paramita Tripathi

In a press statement, the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated that the new Ambassador is expected to assume her duties in Kuwait soon.

Tripathi, who joined the Indian Foreign Service in 2001, currently holds a senior position in the ministry. She has extensive diplomatic experience and a distinguished career, having held various positions in and outside India.

The ministry stated “this appointment is within the context of strengthening the growing bilateral relations between Kuwait and India, particularly in the economic and cultural fields. It is a manifestation of the commitment of the two countries to expand the scope of cooperation in various fields.”

The ministry previously announced the appointment of the current Ambassador to the country, Adarsh Swaika, who served for three years, as India's High Commissioner to Kenya, where he is scheduled to assume his new duties soon.

KPC gears up for large-scale hiring

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: In parallel with the plans of the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) to begin exploration of six offshore oil fields during the “First Phase” (2027–2028), Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) is preparing to announce recruitment opportunities for engineers, with tests scheduled for the fourth quarter of this year.

According to sources from the oil sector, KOC is also planning to open new job vacancies in various roles next year, in coordination with its subsidiary companies.

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Market jitters as MoCI halts plot transfers

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: In what has been described as a “reformist” move, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has suspended the transfer of licenses and contracts for industrial, craft, commercial, and service plots throughout Kuwait.

The decision aims to reorganize the market following years of unregulated and chaotic exploitation. It has sparked widespread debate and drawn mixed reactions from experts and business leaders.

Abdullah Waleed Al-Hamad, CEO of Construction Contracting Company, described the decision as a long-overdue reform step.

While acknowledging that the move may cause temporary setbacks for some investors, Al-Hamad emphasized that it will put an end to the misuse of designated plots for unrelated commercial activities and redirect them toward their original intended purposes.

He noted that the market has experienced an unjustified rental bubble in recent years, with some landlords paying the state around KD 6 per square meter annually and then subleasing the same space for KD 10 to KD 15 per month.

Al-Hamad recommended that the decision be further strengthened by adjusting state fees to better reflect actual market values and linking them to a regulatory mechanism that ensures plots are used strictly for their designated purposes.

He also proposed offering alternative plots through a competitive allocation system and establishing a permanent oversight unit, electronically linked to relevant authorities, to ensure ongoing compliance.

Meanwhile, economic and real estate expert Qais Al-Ghanim emphasized that the main issue with the decision lies in the lack of transparency surrounding its announcement, as it was issued without a clear explanation of its rationale or a defined time-frame.

He explained that any economic decision lacking clarity in its reasoning and details is likely to create more negative than positive outcomes, as investors rely on transparency to make informed investment and financing decisions. Banks have been affected by the ambiguity, as they require accurate information about the market value of buildings and plots to assess and determine appropriate financing for clients.

The sudden halt of sales and purchases, without adequate explanation, has created a state of uncertainty in the market, prompting some investors to delay their decisions or temporarily withdraw altogether.

Al-Ghanim stressed the importance of accompanying such decisions with a comprehensive media and awareness campaign that clearly explains the reasons behind the move, outlines its expected benefits, and specifies the intended time-frame.

Furthermore, real estate expert Ahmed Al-Duwaihees said the decision will have direct repercussions on buying and selling activity, particularly since investors require a clear vision before making any new financial commitments.

Al-Duwaihees explained that while industrial plots are state-owned and the government has every right to regulate their use and reconsider how they are allocated to serve the public interest, investors still need a clear understanding of the implementation mechanism.

Any economic decision of this scale requires a well-defined plan and gradual rollout to avoid freezing the market or discouraging investors from entering into new contracts, both of which could negatively affect industrial activity and disrupt ongoing investments.

The success of the decision hinges primarily on how quickly the relevant authorities announce its full details and implementation mechanisms, including the expected duration of the suspension and the short-term and long-term goals the policy aims to achieve.

Qatar to host preparatory meeting for Arab-Muslim summit

Kuwait welcomes ‘New York Declaration’ on Palestine

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya applauded the adoption by the UN General Assembly of a draft resolution endorsing “the New York Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution.”

“This is a very important step that reflects collective will to end the suffering of the Palestinian people and establish a fair and permanent peace in the Middle East,” the minister said in statements to KUNA on Friday.

The Declaration materializes the commitment of the international community to the principles of the international law and the UN Charter, he said.

“It affirms rejection of any unilateral attempt to establish a fait accompli or introduce any territorial or demographic changes in the occupied Palestinian territories, including the designs for forced displacement in better violation of the provisions of the International Humanitarian Law,” the minister noted.

The Declaration calls for immediate ceasefire in Gaza Strip and release of all hostages, and strongly denounces the policies of siege, starvation and attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure.

It signals an increasing awareness about the serious violations being committed by the Israeli occupation forces which led to an unprecedented humanitarian disaster,

the minister went on.

Al-Yahya expressed Kuwait's profound appreciation of the efforts made by Saudi Arabia and France - the Co-Chairs of the High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution, which led to the Declaration.

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Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:11	Asr	15:14
Sunrise ..	05:31	Maghrib ..	17:56
Zohr	11:44	Isha	19:14

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-38 km/h.
By Night: Rather hot to mild and relatively humid over coast-

Weather			
al areas with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 06-28 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	45	33	
Kuwait Airport	44	30	

Abdaly	45	25
Babyan	43	21
Jahra	45	30
Fallaka Island	43	28
Salmiyah	40	32
Ahmadi	40	30
Nuwaisib	41	28
Wafra	44	29

Kuwait Airport Terminal Four contract faces new extension

SAB reviews KD5.575 million request

By Mohammad Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has submitted a new request to extend the contract for the operation, management, maintenance, training, improvements and development of services at Terminal Four (T4) in Kuwait International Airport with the South Korean company, Incheon International.

Reliable sources told the newspaper that the new request submitted to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) is the third extension of the contract -- estimated at KD5.575 million, indicating that the second extension ended on Aug 14.

Sources said SAB is currently studying the extension from the financial, technical and legal perspectives to ensure compliance with the rules and regulations, especially since Terminal Four is one of the most important facilities serving a large segment of travelers at the airport.

They explained that the purpose of the extension is to ensure the continuous operation of the terminal and the provision of high-quality services until

the new tender procedures are completed.

Sources added the DGCA contacted the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) several weeks ago to request an extension of the tender review period for the operation, management and improvement of Terminal Four services.

"This will allow more time to review the bids submitted by competing companies and ensure their compliance with the terms and conditions," sources disclosed.

Sources confirmed that the DGCA took these measures to guarantee operational stability at the airport, maintain the level of services provided to passengers, improve operational efficiency, and train nationals working in this field.

Other Voices

The day the Elegant Bohemian and London Lover passed away

By Ahmad alsarraf

My beloved friend and partner, Yaqoub Yousef Khaled Al-Ghunaim, the brother of my dear friend Sarah and her sisters, passed away a few days ago in London. He will be laid to rest on Saturday morning at Sulaybiqhat Cemetery, at the age of 86.



A life of peace, full and content life, far away from conflict and drama. He loved everyone and chose to live far from Kuwait, though he always followed its news with interest, never allowing it to weigh on his spirit.

It was a beautiful summer day in 1985 when my lifelong friend, Yaqoub Al-Jouan, introduced me to Yaqoub Al-Ghunaim. At the time, he was a former army officer and the owner of a real estate office in London's West End. I was searching for an office for my business, and he generously offered me space in his own office, completely free of charge. He insisted on not accepting any payment, a gesture I will never forget.

One day, Al-Ghunaim invited me to join him in acquiring a vacant four-story building, including a basement. The property had once been the private residence of the Portman family, a wealthy and prominent Jewish family that later relocated outside London. The Portmans owned the entire area now known as the famous Portman Estate, including Portman Square, the Radisson SAS and Churchill hotels, the former branches of the National Bank of Kuwait and United Bank, and dozens of other elegant buildings.

Al-Ghunaim chose for himself the section located at the corner of George Street and Cloister Street, while I took the rear part of the ground floor, which had been the ballroom and family celebration hall. We rented out the remaining floors to other companies. The basement contained a safe for storing the family's valuables, secured by an iron door nearly 150 years old. Every detail of the building was part of British heritage, and no modifications could be made without approval from the relevant authorities.

Al-Ghunaim (Abu Yousef) was born in 1939 and he embraced the philosophy of Abu al-Ala al-Ma'arri, choosing a life without marriage or children. He attended the Industrial College before becoming an army officer and undergoing training in Britain. From that time on, his love for Britain and Vera became his passion. Over nearly half a century, he returned to Kuwait only three or four times, mainly to offer condolences to family and loved ones.

In the mid-1960s, he was appointed military attaché in Egypt, where he witnessed the wars of 1967 and 1973. Later, he accepted a lucrative early retirement offer, leaving Kuwait to settle in London, his lifelong passion. He never cared for the hustle and bustle of the Manakh market, the soaring land prices, or the massive business deals that held no meaning for him. I never heard him lament any loss, as the routine of his elegant bohemian lifestyle was, to him, the greatest wealth in the world.

Beyond our partnership in the office and the building, many things connected us psychologically and emotionally. Al-Ghunaim was known for his cheerful spirit, dependability in difficult times, honesty, and steadfast commitment to his promises. He was punctual, possessed great integrity, had an impeccable circle of loved ones, and had a deep understanding of the human psyche. His authenticity shone through during the Iraqi invasion and occupation, when he became a pillar of support for many citizens.

There are many amusing and beautiful experiences that we shared together. He was a horse racing enthusiast, well-versed in all types of races and their schedules, and knowledgeable about the major horse owners, as well as the history of each horse and jockey. He was a trusted reference for many who sought advice or tips on the odds of winning a particular race.

Al-Ghunaim was a distinguished and unique individual, beloved by all who knew him. I will leave many other details of our relationship to my modest, colorful autobiography.

We extend our deepest and most sincere condolences to the Al-Ghunaim, Al-Ghanim, and Al-Qatami families.

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PADA outlines care from early intervention to rehabilitation

UN official lauds Kuwait's disability services

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Disabled Affairs (PADA) Dr. Dalal Al-Othman recently met with United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls Reem Al-Salem to discuss the role of women in disability care centers and the efforts exerted by PADA in this field, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Othman told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that during the meeting, the Authority presented the most vital services it provides to people with disabilities and their caregivers throughout their lives -- from birth to old age. She affirmed the keenness of Al-Salem to learn about the mechanisms for supporting abused women and stopping such abuse in general.

She added the Authority addresses the needs of people with disabilities through the 'Friends of the Disabled' team whose members have the expertise to support this category, indicating reports are then submitted to strengthen protection for beneficiary groups.

She pointed out that the Authority provides a wide range of services, such as day care, early intervention, residential, medical, health, social and psychological services. She emphasized that the primary goal is to promote community acceptance of people with disabilities as active members of society.

She revealed the main focus now is on women with disabilities in order to protect them from violence, disclosing that Al-Salem visited the South Sabahiya Care and Rehabilitation Center for the Disabled to review the level of services it provides. She said the center offers various health,



PADA photo
United Nations Special Rapporteur Reem Al-Salem inspect the handicrafts of the care center.

psychological and social services to all age groups and all types of disabilities.

On the other hand, Al-Salem stated that the policy of Kuwait is clear in expanding services for people with disabilities, whether through day care, residential, health or social centers. She took note of the integrated and distinguished services she observed at South Sabahiya Center, and its significant role in promoting the integration of people

with disabilities into society and providing a suitable environment for them. She confirmed that this approach is in line with the commitment of Kuwait to promote their integration into society.

Al-Salem praised the activities and events organized by the Authority in cooperation with the relevant centers, as well as the direct communication with parents and the provision of family counseling and guidance to follow up their children's cases.

Citizens can apply from Sept 26 to Oct 10

CSC opens 92nd term government job registration

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) will open registration for citizens seeking government employment for the 92nd term, the third this year, starting in September for a two-week period, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to informed sources, educators, graduates of the College of Education at Kuwait University, and the College of Basic Education at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training are not exempt from the upcoming registration deadline. They are eagerly awaiting the announcement to apply for government jobs, with the Ministry of Education being one of the primary employers seeking new staff.

When asked about the expected registration dates, the sources said, "Initially, from September 26 until October 10," adding that any changes would

depend on the needs of educators.

They explained that there are no exceptions for educators when registering for employment. They must register during the four official registration periods announced by CSC, which apply to all graduates from local and international universities and institutes, as well as holders of various specializations and certificates. CSC clarified that the only exceptions to the recruitment registration period are doctors and people of determination.

In addition, sources at CSC confirmed on August 28 that graduates of education majors from Kuwait University and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training for the summer semester are exempt from the general nomination process, as CSC directly nominates them to the Ministry of Education.

Al-Maillem highlights mentorship, collaboration and lifelong learning

KU welcomes new faculty and staff for 2025/2026 academic year

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: In the presence of Kuwait University (KU) President Dr. Dina Musaed Al-Maillem, the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs organized an orientation program for new faculty members and supporting staff for the 2025/2026 academic year.

According to a press release issued by KU, the orientation program was held on Wednesday, September 10 at the KU Administration Building in Sabah Al-Salem University City. The event was attended by KU vice presidents, their assistants, and the acting Dean of Admissions and Registration.

The program reflects the university's commitment to supporting new faculty members and helping them integrate into the academic environment. It also aimed to familiarize them with university regulations and systems, introduce modern educational practices, and strengthen communication with various departments, thus contributing to the advancement of both the educational and research processes.

On this occasion, Dr. Al-Maillem welcomed the attendees and congratulated them on the start of the new academic year.

She emphasized that the new faculty members represent a valuable addition to Kuwait University, which continually strives for excellence and progress in education, scientific research, and community service.

Dr. Al-Maillem highlighted that

the role of faculty goes beyond delivering knowledge, but it involves shaping students' minds, developing critical thinking, and instilling the values of lifelong learning.

She stressed that KU's success is built on collaboration, mentorship, innovation, and academic integrity, which promote trust and uphold the university's credibility.

Dr. Al-Maillem further affirmed that KU's mission extends to community service and creating a lasting positive impact.

She reiterated the university's commitment to providing a supportive academic environment that nurtures growth and creativity, empowers faculty members to face challenges and transforms them into opportunities for advancement.

During the meeting, the acting Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Planning Professor Osama Al-Omair, Vice President for Research Professor Abdullah Jawad Ali Sultan, and Vice President for Academic Support Services Dr. Abdullah Al-Mutawa spoke about the important tasks and responsibilities related to the new faculty members.

Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Development Professor Huda Mahmoud Abdullah highlighted the promotion and sabbatical system, while the Assistant Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Cultural Relations Professor Abdulrahman Al-Sulaili delivered a



presentation on academic missions. Dr. Majid Abdulrazzaq Majeed, Assistant Vice President for KU Site



Photos during the orientation program for new faculty members and supporting staff for the 2025/2026 academic year.

Kuwait University photos

Next Iraqi parliament could be dominated by Baathists

“THE next Iraqi parliament will be Baathist par excellence - these are not my words, but those of the Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament, who is currently preparing for the high-stakes, potentially “bone-breaking” elections scheduled for November,” Kuwaiti writer **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“So, what exactly did President Mahmoud al-Mashhadani say? Here is an excerpt from his recent television interview: “The Baath Party will not die. We are providing fertile ground. We are courting them (the Baathists). All Sunnis are Baathists.” “These are among the most striking remarks from al-Mashhadani’s interview. In response, one Iraqi politician predicted that the current Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani could be the last Shiite prime minister to lead Iraq.

“Al-Mashhadani’s comments may very well signal that the future of Iraq could lie in the hands of the Baathists. If his predictions are accurate, and he stands at the head of a parliament comprising more than 350 members from all parties, blocs, sects, and denominations, then it suggests that Saddam Hussein was not hanged, but rather has risen from his grave. It would mean that Iraq’s future is not one of political, social, and civil progress and stability, but one headed toward further deterioration.

“Who is behind the Baath movement and its resurgence to the forefront? Who is shaping a political order in Iraq defined by one ideology and one color? Will the Baathists return as purified figures, having erased from themselves all the crimes and hostilities that were borne by the Iraqi people and Iraq’s neighbors, Kuwait in particular?

“Or are they returning to exact revenge on Shiite Iraqis and other ethnic groups? Or have they truly repented, washed away their sins, and atoned for the massacres and atrocities committed by Saddam’s Baath regime?

“Here in Kuwait - and I believe Iraq’s other neighbors share our concerns - we are more focused on having peaceful, respectful neighbors who seek stability and coexistence, than about who governs Iraq.

“These hopes can certainly be realized through rational and responsible Iraqis. But what is clear is that they will not be fulfilled by the Baathists, the criminal group loyal to Saddam.

“In Kuwait, we have no need to “test” the Baathists. They were the architects of the invasion, the destruction of our country, and the killing and displacement of our people.

“That alone stands as a crime of the century, a humanitarian catastrophe. Some may argue that the Baathists were not responsible for the invasion of Kuwait, that the blame lies solely with Saddam Hussein and his inner circle. In response, I say - Weren’t Saddam and his ruling clique Baathists? Or were they angels in disguise? Or was their sole objective simply power?

“Today, the Iraqi street is seething over a flimsy, fabricated issue, which is the claim that Khor Abdullah belongs to Iraq, and that Kuwait has no rightful claim to the creek.

“In Kuwait, we do not engage in refuting these baseless allegations. Instead, we say - Read the pages of history carefully.

“The tragedy is that those fueling this issue are either ignorant of history, unaware of international law, or unfamiliar with geography.

“I feel sorrow for Iraq, a country of culture and learning, a country whose great writers, intellectuals, poets, and religious authorities belong to the soil of the Euphrates.

“My regret deepens when I see pretenders and the semi-ignorant taking the lead in a great nation like Iraq.

“Iraq’s neighbors, most importantly Kuwait, care deeply about its stability and the establishment of governance that respects its neighbors, upholds the principles of good neighborliness, and honors both international and bilateral agreements and conventions. There is no doubt that Iraq today stands at a critical crossroads.

“It is surrounded by countries whose concerns about Iraq’s internal affairs stem from the reality that instability in one nation inevitably affects its neighbors. If the Baathists are making a return, that is a matter for the Iraqi voter to decide.

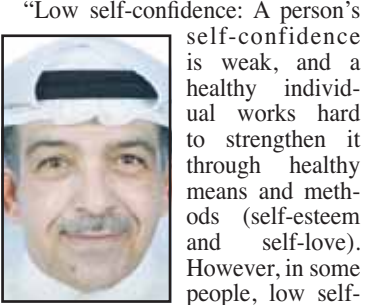
“Today it may be the Baathist model, tomorrow a nationalist one, and the next day a religious one. What matters most, however, is respect for dialogue and adherence to binding international laws and agreements.”

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“Conversations: Something is ruined when it goes bad. Emotional insecurity is one of the most common causes of poor individual and social relationships. It is also a major cause

of disputes and conflicts between people in the outside world,” Kuwaiti writer **Dr. Khaled Al-Janfawi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Emotional insecurity refers to a person’s lack of self-confidence, lack of self-esteem, and psychological instability. It is a negative emotional state that distorts many relationships at all levels of life. Among its causes and how to overcome this dilemma (feeling emotional insecurity) are the following:



Al-Janfawi

“Low self-confidence: A person’s self-confidence is weak, and a healthy individual works hard to strengthen it through healthy means and methods (self-esteem and self-love). However, in some people, low self-confidence makes them feel emotionally insecure, which sometimes prompts them to compensate for it in negative ways by creating trivial problems with those close to them or by engaging in hostility toward others in the outside world.

“Feelings of inadequacy: Someone feels intellectually, psychologically or physically inadequate. A healthy person addresses this negative feeling by replacing it with positive thinking and learning the individual and social skills they need in life. But for some people, feelings of inadequacy make them feel insecure, they may lack emotional security, and find it difficult to cope with the psychological pressures of normal life. A person can overcome their lack of competence or efficiency by training themselves in the effective life skills needed in today’s changing world, and, of course, through self-motivation to develop their personality.

“Low self-esteem: Some human relationships are distorted due to one or both parties’ low self-esteem. They do not know their personal boundaries, which they should prevent the other person from crossing. Some may enjoy making fun of themselves in public, believing that this naive behavior will make them funny or popular.

“Striving for people’s approval and acceptance: The bane of any human relationship is one party’s excessive affection for the other, especially toward someone who does not reciprocate. This is a clear indication of emotional insecurity.”

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“Zaid Al-Jalawi believes that poetry is the ‘language’ of the Arabs in any society or period. It is the media through which they communicate with others, whether they are a sect or tribe in the desert or village, or even in an empire.” **Zaid Al-Jalawi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Therefore, the administrations of gatherings and societies in the past focused on poetry to immortalize their memory, and immortalization means chronicling their lives. The Arabs of old paid attention to poets, because they were individuals who possessed the expressive skill to convey their voice to those around them and the world. They paid attention to poets just as they do to talented individuals in scientific fields today, where poetry no longer has the same importance as it did in the past as a unique means of communication, nor the poets.

“After the eradication of illiteracy, societies began to express their conditions through writers, thinkers, narrators, and media professionals. It is no longer just poets and a few philosophers who emerge only when a certain degree of freedom is available, often unavailable to their own production. If a poet is upright, he expresses the true awareness and concerns of his people, even if the falseness of his awareness deviates, thereby, exacerbating their suffering. This is because they no longer express the aspirations and hopes of their societies.

“So, being a poet is not enough to compose verses, he must be honest and trustworthy in the feelings he conveys. Poetry means expressing the feelings of all things, even inanimate objects. He attempts to express their feelings, such as a beautiful environment that, when polluted, makes himself its spokesperson.

“Psychological resilience: A poet’s auditory taste is the product of a mixture of the concerns of the environment in which he lives. Only individuals endowed with this ability can crystallize it into a collective opinion. If they distort it, they betray the message of poetry.

“Poetry is no longer poetry, because the spirit of poetry is emotion.”

— **Compiled by Simi K. Kutty**

MEW employs 1st of 161 revoked citizens

CSC reviews new contract format

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Administrative Affairs Sector at the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy recently signed its first employment contract with an individual whose citizenship was revoked.

According to informed sources from the ministry, the contract will be submitted to the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to ensure the integrity of the appointment process in accordance with the new contract format approved by the Civil Service Council.

The ministry is expected to finalize within the coming week the signing of contracts with 160 ad-

ditional individuals whose citizenship was revoked.

Meanwhile, ministry officials have finalized amendments to the new organizational structure and are preparing to present them to Minister Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem. The revised structure will then be forwarded to CSC next week for official approval.

In another development, the ministry’s monthly statistical report revealed that total electricity installations for August reached 75,882 kilowatts in all sectors of the country, covering 684 plots.

The private sector ranked first with 639 plots and a total load of 61,337 kilowatts, accounting for 80.8 percent of the total installations.

According to the report, the investment sector came second with 13 sites and a total load of 4,120 kilowatts, representing 5.4 percent of the total.

The agricultural sector ranked third with a load of 1,853 kilowatts, followed by the government sector in fourth place with 2,593 kilowatts.

The commercial sector ranked last, with a total load of 1,328 kilowatts.



The late Dr. Imad Al-Ateeqi

Kuwait mourns passing of ex-minister Al-Ateeqi

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Kuwait mourned the loss of **Dr. Imad Al-Ateeqi** on Thursday, the former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Oil, following a distinguished career marked by dedication and service to the nation, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Throughout his professional journey, the late Dr. Al-Ateeqi held several prominent positions, including:

- Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Oil (2024)
- President of the American University of the Middle East in Kuwait (2011–2018)
- Founding Secretary-General of the General Secretariat of the Council of Private Universities (2003–2010)

Google site road links top agenda

Jahra Committee set to review major infrastructure requests

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Jahra Governorate Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Abdullah Al-Hathal Al-Enezi, will hold its third meeting for the fourth session on Sunday to discuss several items on its agenda.

The agenda of the committee includes the following:

- Request of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) to create two roads (temporary and permanent) linking the Google Cloud Services site in Mutlaa to Road 80,
- Another request of PART to construct two roads (temporary and per-

- manent) linking the Google Cloud Services site in Sulaibiya Agricultural Area to the road leading to the Central Fruit and Vegetable Market,
- Request of Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) to cancel the location of Fuel Station No. 166 in Al-Oyoun - Block One,
- Request of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs to deduct a portion of Abu Salama Abdullah bin Abdul Asad Mosque in Al-Qasr - Block One for the construction of family housing for the Imam and Muezzin,
- Letter of the Central Agency for Information Technology regarding the allocation of a second site for the National Data Center for Business Continuity and Disaster Management.


Ministry of Interior photo
Seized narcotics at the headquarters of the General Department of Narcotics Control.

145 kg of hashish seized

Major drug bust uncovers prison-led trafficking ring

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Drug Control General Department (DCGD) at the Ministry of Interior on Thursday confiscated 145 kilograms of hashish and uncovered a drug trafficking network operated by an inmate at the Central Prison, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the Public Relations and Security Media General Department at the ministry disclosed that the operation was carried out based on the results of investigations by security authorities, which revealed an Asian woman was in possession of a large quantity of narcotics for the purpose of trafficking.

A search warrant was obtained from the Public Prosecution, leading to the arrest of the woman in possession of hashish which, she admitted, belonged to her and was intended for sale.

She confessed that a non-Kuwaiti inmate at the Central Prison and an Asian suspect who is currently residing outside the country are involved in managing the drug trafficking operation.

A joint team was immediately formed, comprising officers from DCGD and the Inspection and Security Support Unit at the General Directorate of Correctional Institutions.

The team raided the inmate’s cell and seized a mobile phone that he was using to manage the drug trafficking operation and communicate with his accomplices.

When questioned, the inmate confessed to the crimes, indicating he acted in coordination with the Asian suspect.

Citizen fined KD5,000 for blackmailing fashionista

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Criminal Court imposed KD5,000 fine on a citizen and referred the civil lawsuit filed by a “fashionista” to the competent civil court.

The lawsuit was filed against the citizen accused of using the internet and WhatsApp to threaten and blackmail the victim.

The complainant disclosed that he sent text and voice messages containing offensive and dishonorable phrases, using local and foreign numbers.

The defendant also sent messages to the victim’s husband, with insinuations that cast doubt on her

reputation. He demanded for money and jewelry worth KD15,000 in exchange for not defaming her in front of her brothers and husband.

Attorney Ayed Al-Rashidi, lawyer for the victim, proved the guilt of the defendant in court. He filed a civil claim for KD5,001 compensation for the damages incurred by his client. The court affirmed in its reasoning that the case file, results of investigations and the attached documents, including the text and voice messages extracted from WhatsApp, prove that the defendant committed the charges leveled against him, stressing that his actions fall within the scope of electronic blackmail and misuse of communication media.



Mol photo

The Ministry of Interior, in cooperation with the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition, seized a house in Mishref for manufacturing counterfeit food products.

Syrian, Indian arrested for counterfeit food products

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Two expatriates - a Syrian and an Indian - have been arrested for allegedly converting a residential house in Mishref into an illegal site for manufacturing and selling counterfeit food products, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that the Hawally Security Directorate arrested the two suspects with the cooperation of the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) and the Kuwait Municipality, as part of ongoing efforts to protect public health and combat commercial fraud.

Investigations had revealed that the suspects were mixing oils with various substances, packaging them, and selling them as legitimate products. They also altered labels to falsely present locally produced items as imported goods.

The items used for the process have been confiscated, and the suspects have been referred to the relevant authorities for necessary legal action.

PAFN issued the following violations:

1. Operating a food facility without obtaining the required approval or health license
2. Failing to meet health standards and adhere to hygiene regulations
3. Preparing food without a valid refill license

In addition, the ministry stated that the Kuwait Municipality issued a citation for the violation of using the property for purposes unrelated to its designated use.

Indian fugitive extradited

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Ministry of Interior, in coordination with Interpol, has extradited an Indian national wanted in a major bank fraud case. The suspect, who fled India 14 years ago, was handed over to Indian authorities at Hyderabad Airport following his arrest by Kuwaiti authorities, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to a report published by Indian daily “Times Now”, India’s Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) successfully repatriated Munavar Khan with the assistance of the Ministry of External Affairs. The suspect was wanted in connection with a complaint filed by the Bank of Baroda involving charges of criminal conspiracy, fraud, and forgery.

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Kuwait advances education for a sustainable tomorrow

KD3.5 billion allocated to reforms

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Education is considered a cornerstone for achieving sustainable development in Kuwait, where investment in human capital represents the most effective path to confront the challenges of unemployment and poverty while aligning with the ambitious national strategies of New Kuwait 2035 vision.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) stressed that inclusive and quality education is the fourth sustainable development goal, and Kuwait has allocated approximately KD 3.555 billion, around 15 percent of the national budget, to strengthen its educational system.

Kuwait's educational reforms aim to build a generation capable of innovation and competitiveness in regional and global labor markets, supported by initiatives such as digital curriculum development, technical and vocational learning, and teacher quality enhancement, aligning with sustainable development indicators.

Professor of Children's Literature and Curriculum at Kuwait University, Dr. Ali Al-Jaafar, explained to KUNA that the Arabic term "Tawer" which translates to improve or develop, conveys profound linguistic and philosophical dimensions, representing transformation from one state to another more mature and advanced form.

He emphasized that updating and developing curricula is a continuous process-keeping pace with global advances, with particular focus on technical skills, artificial intelligence, financial literacy, and vocational training, preparing youth for financial management, environmental awareness, and future societal responsibilities.

Al-Jaafar highlighted that development essentially signifies qualitative transformation, extending beyond textbooks or teaching styles, forming a holistic educational system that integrates content, teachers, and learning environments, ensuring that every component interacts to enrich students' overall educational experiences.

He added that curriculum devel-



Dr. Yousef Al-Mutairi, Professor of Administrative Sciences at Kuwait University



KUNA photos
Dr. Ali Al-Jaafar, Professor of Children's Literature and Curriculum at Kuwait University

opment enhances not only academic knowledge but also social and moral growth, where learning subjects from multiple perspectives fosters ethical awareness, civic responsibility, and a deeper understanding of interconnected societal and global issues.

Students thus develop integrative personalities capable of linking knowledge, values, critical thinking, and application, preparing them effectively for the complex challenges of modern life with enhanced awareness, creativity, and adaptability to changing realities.

Professor of Administrative Sciences at Kuwait University, Dr. Yousef Al-Mutairi, stated to KUNA that financial literacy in education plays a vital role in sustainability, equipping individuals with skills necessary for rational resource management and informed economic decision-making.

He pointed to practical examples such as integrating financial literacy

concepts into curricula, equipping youth with saving and planning abilities, supported by programs like "Ban-keec," a Kuwait National Bank initiative promoting financial awareness among school students.

Al-Mutairi stressed that Kuwait's educational infrastructure, particularly Sabah Al-Salem University City, was designed as a sustainability model with energy-efficient buildings and advanced resource management systems, supporting innovation, research, and modern learning environments across smart schools and technological laboratories.

He underlined that societal responsibility requires teaching future generations how to manage money responsibly, incorporating personal, family, and public financial management into education, which instills long-term discipline, prudence, and ethical attitudes toward economic resources.

Al-Mutairi also explained that Kuwait's curricula are increasingly aligned with labor market needs, through policies integrating fields like engineering, information technology, renewable energy, nursing, and through public-private partnerships and updated vocational education opportunities.

For instance, the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) provides programs in cybersecurity, engineering, and solar system maintenance, enabling low-income individuals to access well-paid jobs in renewable energy and emerging technology sectors.

He further noted programs such as "Injaz Kuwait" and Kuwait University's Entrepreneurship Center, which teach students how to create small businesses, providing independent income sources and reducing reliance on government support while stimulating private-sector growth.

Women's empowerment through education is also fundamental to sustainable development, exemplified by initiatives like "Tamkeen Platform" offering training in digital skills, business management, and e-commerce, enabling women from low-income families to enter the labor market and launch independent projects.

Educated women contribute significantly to policy-making, healthcare, and family welfare, raising healthier and better-educated generations, thereby creating a more inclusive and sustainable society that supports long-term national stability and economic diversification.

Move safeguards quality of higher education

MoHE cancels accreditation of UMDNJ

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal issued a ministerial decree Thursday on the removal of University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) from the list of higher education institutions in the United States of America recommended by the National Bureau for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education.

This removal applies to all un-

dergraduate and postgraduate programs offered by the university.



Dr. Al-Jalal

versities accredited by the ministry and the bureau.

The decision explained that the cancellation is due to the closure of the university, which necessitated its removal from the lists of universities accredited by the ministry and the bureau.

In his decision, the Minister emphasized that it takes effect from the date of its issuance and repeals all previous provisions that contradict it. He affirmed the ministry is keen on monitoring the status of higher education institutions abroad to make sure that Kuwaiti students complete their studies at accredited and high-quality universities.

The decision is in line with the commitment of the ministry to ensure the quality of academic outputs, while preventing students from enrolling in educational institutions which lost their accreditation or ceased operations.



KUNA photo

A group photo of the honorees at the Bahrain Sustainability Pioneers Hackathon.

KU wins 2nd place at Green Guardians Hackathon

A team from Kuwait's College of Engineering and Petroleum ranked second at the Green Guardians Hackathon competition held in Bahrain, the Kuwait University announced on Friday.

In a statement, the University added that the group took part in the contest organized by INJAZ Bahrain (achievement) at Exhibition World Bahrain on September 8 and concluded on Wednesday, with the participation of 100 male and female students from 15 Gulf

universities.

The Kuwaiti team won the second position out of 21 teams in the contest, which focused on finding practical and innovative solutions to face the challenges of environment and energy to reach Net Zero Carbon, it noted.

According to the team's paper, Kuwait could achieve full net zero carbon by 2026 through depending on 70 percent of renewable energy and 20 percent of nuclear energy, it elaborated. (KUNA)

Calls for united action on global challenge

AOU backs e-waste recycling efforts

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 11: The Arab Open University (AOU), represented by its President Dr. Salah Al-Hammadi, participated in the "Electronic Waste Recycling Initiative" conference held at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center under the patronage of Ahmad Governor Sheikh Hamoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Dr. Al-Hammadi highlighted the growing challenges of electronic waste "e-waste", stressing that it has evolved from a marginal environmental issue into a rapidly escalating global concern that demands coordinated efforts in all sectors.

He affirmed the university's commitment to supporting sustainable environmental initiatives, based on its educational and social responsibilities, and its keenness to integrate sustainability concepts into curricula, initiatives, and student projects.



Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Governor of Ahmadi and Chairman of the Green Urban Development Initiatives Committee.

Dr. Al-Hammadi stressed that e-waste, consisting of discarded electrical and electronic devices, is among the fastest-growing waste streams worldwide, with

large quantities disposed of daily.

He emphasized the university's efforts to use education as a tool for a positive environmental change by implementing practical activities such as placing recycling bins on campus, organizing awareness campaigns, and encouraging student-led initiatives focused on reducing and reusing waste to minimize environmental impact.

Dr. Al-Hammadi further stated that educational institutions play a critical role in shaping societal behaviors by serving as environmental role models, a role as vital as that of government, the private sector, and civil society.

Addressing e-waste challenges, he added, requires a combined effort involving legislation, innovative private-sector technologies, community initiatives, and academia's leadership in spreading knowledge and raising awareness.



KUNA photos

Participants of the 'Electronic Waste Recycling Initiative' conference.

MoE condemns unauthorized entry into Subhan warehouse

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Ministry of Education strongly condemned the unauthorized entry of an unidentified individual into one of its facilities, specifically, the ministry's warehouses in Subhan, without official permission, where he allegedly photographed the site while falsely claiming to be an official, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement issued on Friday, the ministry revealed that it had immediately filed an official report with the relevant security authorities.

It emphasized that it will not tolerate any attempt to tamper with or infringe upon its facilities, or to violate the law in any form.

The ministry stated that such actions constitute a clear breach of laws and regulations, and amount to tampering with state facilities.

It confirmed that the individual has been captured on the facility's surveillance cameras, and work is underway to identify him.

The ministry reaffirmed its full commitment to protecting its assets and strengthening security and safety measures at all its facilities, in coordination with the appropriate official bodies.

MoSA assigns Al-Azmi to oversee social care

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Following the issuance of Amiri Decree No. 184/2025 for appointing Dr.

Khaled Al-Ajmi as the new Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the ministry has issued a decision to assign Nadia Al-Azmi to oversee the Social Care and Development Sector, reports Aljarida daily.

Al-Azmi, who currently serves as Director of the Private Nursery Control Department, will take on the responsibilities of Assistant Undersecretary for the Social Care and Development Sector, in addition to her existing role. Dr. Al-Ajmi previously held the position before his appointment as Undersecretary.



Dr. Al-Ajmi

National Aviation Services



Job Vacancies

Announcement

National Aviation Services (NAS) announces the opening of job vacancies in Ground Handling Services in several departments as outlined below:

Field of Work	Required Experience
Handling Agent	No experience required
Equipment Operator	Minimum 1 year of experience + valid Kuwait driving license
Passenger Service Agent	Minimum 1 year of experience
Operations Agent	Minimum 1 year of experience
Cargo Agent	Minimum 1 year of experience
Aircraft Mechanic	Minimum 1 year of experience

General Terms

- Proficiency in English is required.
- Applicants must successfully pass the required tests with the specified success rate to qualify for a personal interview.
- All applicants are subject to the conditions of appointment as per NAS rules and regulations.
- Applicants must demonstrate good conduct and must not have been convicted in any case prejudicial to honor or honesty.
- Submission of an application does not imply acceptance.
- Applications that do not meet the specified conditions will not be considered. NAS reserves the right to decline or not respond to applicants.

How to Apply

Interested candidates are invited to send their applications via email to: **recruitment@nas.aero**

Required Documents

- Educational and professional certificates
- Copy of Civil ID and Passport
- Work permit
- Experience certificate(s)

Mission affirms HH Amir’s commitment to aiding vulnerable communities

KRCS concludes visit to Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society (KRCS) delegation on Saturday concluded its visit to Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, as part of Kuwait's humanitarian efforts to support refugees worldwide.

KRCS Deputy Chairman Dr. Nasser Al-Tanakh said the visit reflects Kuwait's commitment to helping those in need.

The delegation toured the 'Adaptation and Resilience Building' project, which will provide 1,520 fully equipped shelters for refugee families, funded by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, in partnership with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Bangladesh Red Crescent.

He noted that nearly one million Rohingya refugees live in difficult conditions, stressing the need for sustained international support.

The delegation also met with UN-HCR officials and Bangladeshi authorities to discuss cooperation in easing refugees' suffering.



Left: The KRCS delegation with Bangladesh Red Crescent counterparts: Right: The KRCS delegation during its visit to one of the Rohingya refugee camps.



KUNA photos

Meanwhile, since 2017, KRCS has carried out projects in food, shelter, health, water, education, and development in Bangladesh, in collaboration with local and international partners.

Kuwait Ambassador to Bangladesh Ali Hamada stressed on Thursday con-

tinued backing to Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, south of Bangladesh.

Hamada made the statement to KUNA during a visit he paid along with a delegation of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) to the shelters of refugees in Cox's Bazar to in-

spect the follow up the Kuwait-funded projects, in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross and Bangladesh Red Crescent.

The delegation paid an inspection visit to the projects related to sheltering and water, and means of enhancing

living conditions to combat fire and climate, he added.

The visit also came as part of humanitarian efforts exerted by Kuwait to assist the needy across the globe and continue these endeavors which are compatible with the wide hu-

manitarian vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Ambassador pointed out.

The tour shows solidarity and support of Kuwait to Bangladesh in the face of this crisis, he said, referring that Kuwait's continued support is widely appreciated by Bangladesh.

More than one million of Rohingya Muslims in Bangladesh have been suffering from tough humanitarian conditions when they fled Rakhine province in Myanmar in 2017 as a result of wide-scale military operations.

Kuwait among the countries that carry out much relief programs, through regional and international partnerships, to alleviate the refugees' sufferings.

The KRCS has provided USD 1.3 million to the international federation of International Committee of the Red Cross and Middle East and North Africa region, in support of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

Continued from Page 1

Your Highness

I kindly submit this question to His Highness the Prime Minister, because the situation has become uncomfortable for business owners and it harms the interests of thousands of citizens. I would like to ask where we are headed.

Do we want to increase the gross domestic product? Is there someone who unintentionally limits economic activity? Will this decision not lead to bankruptcy of many enterprises belonging to the people who worked hard but failed?

Countries tend to support businesses suffering from difficulties and oblige banks to continue providing them with financing facilities. Countries do not withdraw plots from beneficiaries or suspend their licenses if they are late in paying rent due to an emergency. Investors should not live under the threat of withdrawing their plots or stopping their businesses.

Your Highness the Prime Minister, let us enjoy the return of the government's prestige and the new era, may Allah preserve its glory.

Kuwait visa

The Ministry of Interior affirmed that such security and inspection campaigns will continue in all governorates to ensure enforcement of the law and the arrest of violators.

Meanwhile, the General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry -- in cooperation with the Technical Inspection Department, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and Kuwait Municipality -- carried out a joint traffic and security campaign targeting workshops, garages and vehicles in Fahaheel Industrial Area.

In a press statement on Saturday, the Interior Ministry revealed that the campaign is part of its ongoing efforts to maintain public order and curb violations.

The Ministry of Interior announced that the campaign resulted in the discovery of 93 traffic violations, administrative seizure of 93 vehicles due to failure to meet safety and durability standards, referral of four individuals to the concerned authorities for violating the Residency Law, six reports filed by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and removal of 14 abandoned vehicles by the Municipality.

The Ministry of Interior emphasized that such campaigns fall within its strategy to enforce the rule of law and guarantee public safety and security.

It added that traffic and inspection campaigns will continue to intensify in various industrial and residential areas in order to apprehend violators and protect lives and properties.

KPC gears

Its offshore exploration plan includes six oil fields in the first phase, followed by nine additional offshore fields in the second phase.

KOC hired 151 Kuwaiti employees last year, bringing its total workforce to 11,749 as of the first quarter of this year.

The sources highlighted KOC's commitment to digital transformation and its strong focus on developing national talent, both seen as critical components in achieving the target of producing four million barrels of oil per day by 2035 and maintaining that level until 2040.

KRCS leads

develop humanitarian skills, which are considered the first line of defense in dealing with accidents and injuries before the arrival of specialized medical personnel. He pointed out that instilling a culture of first aid in society is a fundamental pillar of public safety.

He added that this year's celebration focuses on the relationship between first aid and climate change, emphasizing the role of these skills in preventing and responding to emergencies related to climate and natural conditions to enhance preventative behavior and prepare individuals to effectively handle risks.

He explained that the awareness campaigns organized by the Society are not limited to training alone, as it is a community-based approach promoting social responsibility. He indicated that the training center of KRCS continues to offer specialized courses

in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and public safety.

He revealed that the Society recently signed a cooperation agreement with the American Institute for Safety and Health to officially accredit its first aid, CPR and public safety courses. He said this will raise the level of training outcomes and award trainees internationally accredited certificates. He affirmed that this step is in line with the strategy of KRCS to raise health awareness and spread a culture of safety among various segments of society.

Kuwait welcomes

"Those efforts reflected a true commitment to supporting the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people, notably the right to establish an independent state based on the pre-1967 borders with east Jerusalem as its capital," he noted.

The minister reaffirmed Kuwait's firm support to the Palestinian people in their legitimate struggle against the Israeli occupation until they regain their unalienable rights to live in peace and security according to the two-state vision.

In other news, Qatar will host on Sunday the foreign ministers' preparatory meeting for the Arab-Muslim emergency summit to discuss the Israeli occupation attack on Doha.

The occupation launched on Tuesday an airstrike on the Qatari capital, Doha, that targeted residential headquarters of some Palestinian Hamas political bureau leaders.

It was a hostile act, which has been widely condemned on Arab and international levels, in solidarity with Qatar, which immediately deplored, in the strongest terms, this cowardly incident.

Tweeting on his account on "X", Advisor to Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Ministry spokesman Dr. Majed Al-Ansari said it is a criminal attack and a dangerous threat to the security and safety of Qataris and residents and constituted a flagrant violation of all international laws and norms.

He noted that civil defense, and component and security bodies dealt with the incident and took required measures to contain the consequences and ensure the safety of residents and the surrounding areas.

Condemning the attack, the State of Qatar affirmed that it will not tolerate this reckless Israeli behavior and its continued tampering with regional security, as well as any action targeting its security and sovereignty, he said.

High-level investigations are ongoing and further details will be announced as soon as they are available, he stated.

Qatar's Interior Ministry declared the martyrdom of Corporal Badr Saad Mohammed Al-Humaidi Al-Dosari of the Internal Security Force (Lekh-wiya), Hammam Khalil Al-Haya - the son of a Hamas leader, Jihad Labd and Moamen Hasouna.

Qatar's Foreign Ministry denied reports claiming Doha had prior knowledge of the Israeli occupation airstrikes on the Qatari capital that targeted senior Hamas officials.

Al-Ansari tweeted that the reports were "baseless," adding the only contact from a U.S. official came during the hearing of explosions in Doha.

Meanwhile, Qatar Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad said his country condemned, in the strongest terms, the criminal reckless attack on the residential headquarters of Hamas leaders, stressing it is a blatant violation of Qatar and its security, and a clear infringement of international law.

The Amir made the statement during a telephone call he received from U.S. President Donald Trump who affirmed his solidarity with Qatar and his strong condemnation of the attack, the Qatari Amir Diwan said.

Trump extolled strenuous mediation efforts exerted by the Amir of Qatar and his country, affirming it is a key role in making peace in the region.

Trump also stressed that the State of Qatar is a reliable strategic ally to the United States, urging the Amir to continue Qatar's mediation efforts to end the war in Gaza.

Meanwhile, Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad bin Abdulrahman affirmed, during a news conference, that Qatar would not tolerate any acts undermine the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and that it would deal decisively with any attack on it.

Upon the directives of the Amir, the government gives a top priority to the security of nationals and expats and there will be a full review to deter these behaviors and ensure that they will not be repeated, the premier said.

The attack on Qatar is a "state terrorism" and an attempt to destabilize regional stability and security, he said.

He pointed out that Qatar has faced attacks by the Israeli occupation that targeted Hamas leaders' headquarters during negotiations, expressing his belief that the Israeli attack killed any hope for the hostages who are still in Gaza.

In an interview with CNN, Qatari Premier said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "killed any hope" for the release of hostages held in the Gaza Strip.

Furthermore, the State of Kuwait hastily deplored the attack on Qatar, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the brutal Israeli aggression is a "flagrant violation" of all international laws and norms, and a perilous threat to the region's stability and security.

In a statement, the ministry renewed Kuwait's position stressing that the UN Security Council must bear its responsibilities to guarantee international peace and security, and take serious and effective steps to halt the systematic Israeli aggression on the region's countries.

Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya emphasized the assault on the sisterly State of Qatar is a direct attack on the joint Gulf security and the shared fate among GCC states.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement, Al-Yahya said the Israeli aggression is a perilous escalation that threatens the region's stability and security, and undermines international community efforts aimed at stopping the circle of violence and protecting civilians.

The positions of GCC brothers show the unified Gulf rank that reject these attacks and support Qatar in the face of the Israeli occupation violations, he stated.

He elaborated that these joint stances embody the deep Gulf solidarity and GCC states commitment to protecting their stability and security.

He renewed Kuwait's full solidarity with Qatar in the face of this assault and its support to all steps and measures Doha take to maintain its security, stability and sovereignty.

He reiterated that the "security of Qatar is an integrated part of the security of Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf".

The minister called on the UN Security Council and the international community to assume their ethical and legal responsibilities toward the repeated Israeli attacks, take urgent action to halt them, hold accountable the perpetrators, and ensure the rules of international law, and the region's stability and security.

In addition, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah contacted Qatar Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, voicing Kuwait's strong denunciation of the blatant Israeli aggression.

During the call, His Highness the Amir affirmed Kuwait's full support to Qatar's leadership, government and people in all measures and decisions taken to maintain its sovereignty, security and stability.

His Highness the Amir also emphasized that Kuwait is ready to put all its potential under the disposal of Qatar, saying the "security and stability of Qatar is an integrated part of the security and stability of Kuwait".

Moreover, the 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 met the Amir of Qatar at Lusail Palace and conveyed the condolences of His Highness the Amir to Sheikh Tamim and the Qatari people over the martyrdom of Al-Dosari due to the brutal Israeli attack, praying to Allah the Almighty to bestow his mercy upon the martyr's soul and a rapid recovery to those wounded.

His Highness the Crown Prince affirmed Kuwait's unwavering stance that condemns the brutal Israeli aggression, noting that it is a blatant infringement of international laws and norms and a perilous threat to the region's security and stability.

His Highness the Crown Prince called on the international community and the Security Council to bear their responsibilities to safeguard international security and peace, and stop the Israeli occupation attacks.

GCC voices concern over child labor at UN session

Al-Hayen urges global action

GENEVA, Sept 13, (KUNA): Kuwait Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva Naser Al-Hayen expressed profound concern of the Gulf Cooperation Council member states about the continuation of child labor.



KUNA photo

Kuwait Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva Naser Al-Hayen

"Despite the global commitment to end this phenomenon by 2025, millions of children are forced to work in serious conditions or fall victim to online exploitation, particularly in areas of armed conflict," he regretted.

Ambassador Al-Hayen was speaking on behalf of the GCC ambassadors' council during interactive dialogue with UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery Tomoya Obokata,

held in Geneva on Friday as part of the 60th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council.

He reiterated the GCC call for strengthening cooperation and supporting the UN-led efforts to end such exploitative practices, which constitute one of the contemporary forms of slavery.

"The GCC member countries made major strides in protecting child rights and were among the first groups of states that joined the Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (No. 182) of the International Labor Organization, also known as the ILO Convention No 182," Ambassador Al-Hayen affirmed.

"Out of their commitment to multi-lateral cooperation, the GCC states also joined the WeProtect Global Alliance, meant to protect children from the growing threat of online sexual exploitation and abuse," he pointed out.

The GCC states attack great importance to the partnership with the ILO through the joint action plan (2025-2029) aiming to ensure decent work and sustainable development, and combat child labor, Ambassador Al-Hayen went on.

The GCC states prioritize protection of child rights to education and safe living, and work with international partners to end all forms of exploitative practices, he added.

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‘It will get worse with or without it, because Trump is lawless’

Schumer warns of shutdown if GOP don’t accept Democrats’ health care demands

WASHINGTON, Sept 13, (AP): US Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer weathered backlash from Democrats earlier this year when he voted with Republicans to keep the government open. But he’s now willing to risk a shutdown at the end of the month if Republicans don’t accede to Democratic demands.

Schumer says he and House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries are united in opposing any legislation that doesn’t include key health care provisions and a commitment not to roll them back. He argues that the country is in a different place than it was in March, when he vigorously argued against a shutdown, and he says he believes Republicans and President Donald Trump will be held responsible if they don’t negotiate a bipartisan deal.

“Things have changed” since the March vote, Schumer said in an interview with The Associated Press on Thursday. He said Republicans have since passed Trump’s massive tax breaks and spending cuts legislation, which trimmed Medicaid and other government programs, and Democrats are now unified - unlike in March, when he voted with Republicans and Jeffries voted against the legislation to fund the government.

A shutdown, Schumer said, wouldn’t necessarily worsen an environment in which Trump is already challenging the authority of Congress. “It will get worse with or without it, because Trump is lawless,” Schumer said.

Schumer’s threat comes as Republicans are considering a short-term stopgap spending measure to avoid a Sept. 30 shutdown and as Democrats face what most see as two tough choices if the parties can’t negotiate a deal - vote with Republicans to keep the government open or let it close indefinitely with no clear exit plan.

It also comes amid worsening partisan tensions in the Senate, where negotiations between the two parties over the confirmation process broke down for a second time on Thursday and Republicans are changing Senate rules to get around Democratic objections to almost all of Trump’s nominees. Democrats are also fuming over the Trump administration’s decision to unilaterally claw back \$4.9 billion in congressionally approved foreign aid just as negotiations over the spend-



US Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of NY, (right), speaks during a news conference after a policy luncheon at the Capitol on Sept 9, in Washington. (AP)

ing deadline were getting underway in late August.

Republicans say that Democrats clearly will be to blame if they don’t vote to keep the government open.

Trump said Friday to not “even bother” negotiating with Democrats. He said

Republicans will likely put together a continuing resolution to keep funding the federal government.

“If you gave them every dream, they would not vote for it,” Trump said, adding “we will get it through because the Republicans are sticking together.”

Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., said in an interview with Punchbowl News on Thursday that he believes Democrats see it as “politically advantageous” to have a shutdown.

“But they don’t have a good reason to do it,” Thune said in the interview. “And I don’t intend to give them a good reason to do it.”

Thune has repeatedly said that Schumer needs to approach Republicans with a specific proposal on health care, including an extension of expanded government tax credits for many Americans who get their health insurance through the Affordable Care Act. Some Republicans are open to extending those credits before they expire at the end of the year, but Thune has indicated that he is unlikely to add an extension to a short-term spending bill, instead favoring a “clean” stopgap for several weeks without any divisive issues while Congress finishes its budget legislation.

Schumer said he believes his caucus is ready to oppose the stopgap measure if Republicans don’t negotiate it with Democrats. “I think the overwhelming majority of our caucus, with a few exceptions, and same with the House, would vote against that,” he said.

Less realistic is Democrats’ demand that Republicans roll back Medicaid cuts enacted in their tax breaks and spending cuts legislation this summer, what Trump called his “big, beautiful bill.”

Schumer said Democrats also want Republicans to commit that the White House won’t take back money they have negotiated and Congress has approved after Republicans pushed through a \$9 billion cut requested by the White House in July and Trump blocked the additional foreign aid money in August. “How do you pass an appropriations bill and let them undo it down the road?” Schumer said.

Suspect in Kirk’s killing became more political, say authorities

ST. GEORGE, Utah, Sept 13, (AP): The family of the young Utah man accused of shooting Charlie Kirk told authorities he had recently become “more political” and recounted a dinner table conversation where they discussed whether the conservative activist was spreading hate.

Tyler James Robinson, 22, of Washington, Utah, was arrested on suspicion of aggravated murder, felony discharge of a firearm causing serious bodily harm, and obstruction of justice, all felonies, according to a probable cause statement filed in court



Robinson

and released Friday. A judge ordered that he be held without bail.

Robinson mentioned Kirk’s upcoming visit to Utah Valley University - located about 3 1/2 hours from the family’s southern Utah home - at a recent dinner, kicking off a conversation about how he didn’t like Kirk’s viewpoints, family told authorities. A full picture of his political leanings was still emerging, Utah state records show he is registered to vote, but that he is not affiliated with a political party and is listed as inactive, meaning he didn’t vote in the two most recent general elections.

His listed address in the probable cause statement is the six-bedroom home of his parents, who own a granite countertop business and are registered to vote as Republicans.

State and federal court records do not show any prior criminal cases involving him.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Sept 13, (AP): US President Donald Trump said Friday he’ll send the National Guard to address crime concerns in Memphis, Tennessee, his latest test of the limits of presidential power by using military force in American cities.

Speaking on Fox News, Trump said “the mayor is happy” and “the governor is happy” about the pending deployment. Calling the city “deeply troubled,” he said “we’re going to fix that just like we did Washington,” where he’s sent the National Guard and surged federal law enforcement.

Tennessee’s Republican governor embraced the troop deployment as part of a broader law enforcement surge in Memphis, however Trump’s assertion drew pushback from the Democratic leader of Memphis, which is majority Black.

“I did not ask for the National Guard

‘We’re going to fix that just like we did Washington’

US President Trump to send National Guard to Memphis



Members of the Louisiana National Guard patrol the grounds of the Washington Monument at the National Mall on Sept 7, in Washington. (AP)

and I don’t think it’s the way to drive down crime,” Mayor Paul Young told a news conference Friday, while acknowledging the city remained high on too many “bad lists.”

Several Memphis leaders said they welcome federal help but don’t think it needs to involve the military. Young committed to trying to help the deployment strengthen the community without distracting from ongoing law enforcement efforts. He said federal officials should aim at the “root source of violent crime” and mentioned rehabilitation and mental health services, jobs and housing needs.

Gov. Bill Lee said he planned to speak with the president on Friday to work out details of the mission. He said he’s still ironing out the best role for the National Guard alongside the FBI, state Highway Patrol, city police and other law enforcement agencies.

NATO bulks up defenses on its eastern flank to ward off Russia

WARSAW, Poland, Sept 13, (AP): NATO said Friday it’s bulking up its defensive posture on its eastern flank bordering Belarus, Russia and Ukraine with new equipment to deter potential Russian aggression following an incursion by Russian drones into Polish territory.

The alliance’s supreme commander in Europe said a new operation, dubbed Eastern Sentry, will add equipment from France, Denmark, Germany and the UK to its existing air and ground-based defenses. “The key to this is an entirely new defense design,” US Gen **Alexus Grynke** told reporters at the alliance’s Brussels headquarters.

French Rafale fighter jets, Danish F-16s, a frigate and ground-based defense systems have been pledged for the operation. Grynke said the additional resources will enable the alliance to “plug gaps in the line” and concentrate forces wherever they’re needed while improving communications across NATO’s entire eastern flank.

Poland’s Defence Minister Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz hailed the op-



Grynke

eration in a post on X as “active deterrence and readiness to defend wherever needed.”

Multiple Russian drones crossed into Poland on Wednesday, prompting NATO to send fighter jets to shoot them down and underlining long-held concerns about Russia’s three-year war in neighboring Ukraine expanding.

Russia said it did not target Poland and Moscow’s ally Belarus said the drones went astray because they were jammed, but European leaders have expressed certainty that the incursions were a deliberate provocation by Russia.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk dismissed U.S. President Donald Trump’s suggestion that the drone incursion into Poland may have been a mistake.

“We would also wish that the drone attack on Poland was a mistake,” Tusk wrote on X. “But it wasn’t. And we know it.”

His foreign minister, Radek Sikorski, said anyone suggesting the drone incursion was accidental is a “willing accomplice” to the spreading of Russian propaganda.

Earlier Friday, French President Emmanuel Macron said he would deploy three Rafale fighters to Poland, while Britain unveiled fresh sanctions on Russia’s oil revenues and war machine.



Enio Kaso, head of the Department of Artificial Intelligence and Cryptocurrency Licensing shows the AI ‘minister’ Diella, whose name means sun in Albanian, during a conference call in Tirana, Albania on Sept 12. (AP)

Albania premier appoints AI minister to fight corruption

TIRANA, Albania, Sept 13, (AP): Albania’s prime minister on Friday tapped an Artificial Intelligence-generated “minister” to tackle corruption and promote transparency and innovation in his new Cabinet.

Officially named Diella - the female form of the word for sun in the Albanian language - the new AI minister is a virtual entity.

Diella will be a “member of the Cabinet who is not present physically but has been created virtually,” Prime Minister Edi Rama said in a post on Facebook.

Rama said the AI-generated bot would help ensure that “public tenders will be 100% free of corruption” and will help the government work faster and with full transparency.

Diella uses AI’s up-to-date models and techniques to guarantee accuracy in offering the duties it is charged with, according to Albania’s National Agency for Information Society’s website.

Diella, depicted as a figure in a traditional Albanian folk costume, was created earlier this year, in cooperation with Microsoft, as a virtual assistant on the e-Albania public service platform, where she has helped users navigate the site and get access to about 1 million digital inquiries and documents.

Rama’s Socialist Party secured a fourth consecutive term after winning 83 of the 140 Assembly seats in the May 11 parliamentary elections.

SEPTEMBER

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South Korean workers return home after United States immigration raid

INCHEON, South Korea, Sept 13, (AP): More than 300 South Korean workers detained during an immigration raid in the United States returned home on a charter plane on Friday to be reunited with their loved ones.

They were among the 475 people detained during the Sept. 4 immigration raid at a battery factory under construction on the campus of Hyundai's sprawling auto plant west of Savannah, Georgia.

Their roundup and the US release of video showing some Korean workers shackled with chains around their hands, ankles and waists have caused public outrage and a sense of betrayal in South Korea, a key US ally.

After the Boeing 747-8i Korean Air plane landed at Incheon International Airport, near Seoul, the workers appeared in an arrivals hall, with senior officials including presidential chief of staff Kang Hoon-sik clapping hands.

Hundreds of journalists gathered at the airport to cover their arrival, while many ordinary citizens shouted "Welcome back!" One worker, apparently responding to the greeting, called out "I'm back! I'm free!" as he hurried toward the airport gate.

One protester unfurled a huge banner with a photo of U.S. President



South Korean workers released after days of detention in Georgia arrive at the Incheon International Airport, in Incheon, South Korea on Sept 12. (AP)

Donald Trump and a sarcastic message criticizing US immigration crack-downs, before security officials forced him to stop.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry asked the waiting media to blur the

workers' faces in videos and photos, citing requests by the workers who worried about their privacy.

The few workers who spoke to reporters described the shock of the unexpected raid, being handcuffed and chained, and the allegedly harsh conditions of their detention.

"No one would have really wanted to stay," said Jang Yeong-seon, one of the released workers, when asked about Trump's supposed last-minute offer to allow the workers to remain at the factory site if they wished.

"I don't know how the visa situation will turn out, and while there may be things that could require me to go back, for now I will think carefully about it," he told reporters.

Another worker, who wished to remain anonymous, said it was hardest to share a room with another detainee "with the toilet right next to where we ate and slept."

Friday's flight was carrying 330 people who were detained in the Georgia raid - 316 of them were South Koreans, including a pregnant woman, and the rest are Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian workers. They had been held at an immigration detention center in Folkston, 285 miles (460 kilometers) southeast of Atlanta.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, China's third conventionally powered aircraft carrier, the Fujian, conducts a maiden sea trial on May 7, 2024. (AP)

China's aircraft carrier Fujian heads to South China Sea

China's third aircraft carrier, the Fujian, recently passed through the Taiwan Strait to carry out scientific research tests and training missions in the South China Sea, a Chinese military spokesperson said on Friday.

The cross-sea tests and training for the Fujian is a regular arrangement in the aircraft carrier's construction process, and it is not aimed at any specific target, said Senior Captain Leng Guowei, a spokesperson for the Chinese navy.

The navy said the carrier's activities were not targeting anyone else. A social media account affiliated with state media quoted an expert saying the Taiwan Strait

was the normal and most reasonable and efficient route for the carrier to reach the South China Sea.

It was the first time the Fujian had passed through the strait, the post by the Yuyuquantian account said.

China's military said last week that it was on high alert after the Canadian frigate Quebec and the Australian destroyer Brisbane sailed through the strait. It accused the two warships of provocative actions that it said heightened security risks.

Japan's military said it had spotted China's latest carrier for the first time on Thursday afternoon. (Agencies)

Philippine defense and military chiefs reject call to defect from Marcos over flood control uproar

MANILA, Philippines, Sept 13, (AP): The Philippine defense and military chiefs rejected a call for the country's armed forces to withdraw support from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in response to public outrage over allegations of massive corruption in flood control projects that have implicated several congressmen and public works officials and sparked pockets of street protests.



Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. (center), tosses the ceremonial ball during the opening of the 2025 FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship in Pasay, Philippines on Sept 12. (AP)

Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro, Jr. and military chief of staff Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. issued a joint statement late Friday expressing their rejection of "all attempts to patronize the Armed Forces of the Philippines by certain groups that insinuate or suggest unconstitutional, unilateral interventions."

They did not elaborate, but underscored that the 160,000-member military was non-partisan, professional and "abides by the constitution through the chain-of-command."

The House of Representatives, the Senate and Marcos' administration have been investigating alleged substandard and non-existent flood

control projects in separate televised inquiries. Dozens of legislators, senators, construction companies and public works engineers were identified and accused of pocketing huge kickbacks that financed lavish lifestyles and high-stakes casino gambling.

The corruption scandal has been especially sensitive in a poverty-stricken Southeast country that is prone to

deadly typhoons and floodings that devastate entire towns and villages multiple times each year.

Unlike recent violent protests in Nepal and Indonesia, street rallies against alleged abuses in the Philippines have been smaller and relatively peaceful. Outrage is largely vented online, including by Catholic church leaders, business executives and retired generals.

During a recent rally, a speaker called on the military to withdraw its loyalty from Marcos and called on Filipinos to stage a non-violent "people power" revolt similar to army-backed uprisings that ousted Ferdinand Marcos, the current president's late father and namesake, in 1986 and Joseph Estrada in 2001.

"At this critical juncture for our national security in the face of threats to our peace and regional stability, politically motivated attempts to distract the Armed Forces of the Philippines from focusing on its mission are not only futile but also irresponsible," said Teodoro and Brawner, who backed the anti-corruption investigation led by Marcos.

Military airstrike on schools in Myanmar kills at least 18 people

BANGKOK, Sept 13, (AP): An airstrike by Myanmar's military on two private schools in a village in Myanmar has killed at least 18 people, most of them students, an armed group and local media reports said Friday.

More than 20 others were injured in the nighttime attack on the Thayet Thapin village in Kyauktaw township, the area controlled by the ethnic Arakan Army in the western Rakhine state, they said. The military has not announced any attack in the area.

Khaing Thukha, a spokesperson for the Arakan Army, told The Associated Press that a jet fighter dropped two bombs on Pinyin Pan Khinn and A Myin Thit Private High Schools.

He said most of the victims were "17 to 18-years-old students from



Khaing Thukha

the private schools."

The situation in the village could not be independently confirmed, with access to the internet and cellphone service in the area mostly cut off.

Kyauktaw, 250 kilometers (150 miles) southwest of Mandalay, the country's second-largest city, was captured by the Arakan Army in February last year.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the army seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi on Feb. 1, 2021, triggering widespread popular opposition. After peaceful demonstrations were put down with lethal force, many opponents of military rule took up arms, and large parts of the country are now embroiled in conflict.

More than 7,200 people are estimated to have been killed by security forces since then, according to figures compiled by nongovernmental organizations. The military government has recently stepped up airstrikes against the armed pro-democracy People's Defense Force. The resistance forces have no effective defense against air attacks.

Curfew lifted in country's capital

Nepal gets first female prime minister

KATHMANDU, Nepal, Sept 13, (AP): Nepalese authorities lifted the curfew in the country's capital and surrounding areas on Saturday as calm returned following the appointment of the Himalayan nation's first woman prime minister in the wake of protests this week that killed at least 51 people and collapsed the government.

In the capital, Kathmandu, and neighboring Lalitpur and Bhaktapur areas, officials told people they could move around freely while markets reopened and traffic returned on the streets.

The massive demonstrations began on Monday over a social media ban and quickly turned violent, with protesters attacking government buildings and police opening fire.

Though the ban was rescinded, unrest continued over broader grievances. Tens of thousands of protesters attacked and burned the parliament, the presidential residence and businesses.

On Friday, former Supreme Court Chief Justice Sushila Karki was named interim prime minister by President Ram Chandra Poudel, who also dissolved parliament and set elections for March 5. The most recent legislative



In this photo provided by the Nepalese President House, former Supreme Court Chief Justice Sushila Karki, (right), is administered the oath of office by Nepalese President Ram Chandra Poudel, (center), in Kathmandu, Nepal on Sept 12, following protests that collapsed the previous administration. (AP)

elections were held in Nepal in 2022.

Karki, 73, was sworn later on Friday. She was a popular figure while serving as the court's only female chief justice in 2016 and 2017, and was known for her stand against corruption in the government.

On her first day at the job, Karki vis-

ited injured protesters at the Civil Hospital in Kathmandu, pledging to work for the best of the country.

"I will work with everything I have," she told an injured protester recovering from gunshot wounds. She did not speak to reporters outside the hospital.

Brazilian Supreme Court panel sentences Bolsonaro to more than 27 years in prison

BRASILIA, Brazil, Sept 13, (AP): A panel of Brazilian Supreme Court justices sentenced former president Jair Bolsonaro to 27 years and three months in prison Thursday after convicting him of attempting a coup to remain in office despite his 2022 electoral defeat.

Bolsonaro, who has always denied any wrongdoing, can try to appeal the ruling. He is currently under house arrest in Brasilia.

Four of the five justices reviewing the case in the panel found the far-right politician guilty on five counts, in a ruling that will deepen political divisions and was expected to prompt a backlash from the US government. It makes Bolsonaro is the first former Brazilian president to be convicted of attempting a coup.

The five counts are: attempting a coup after losing the 2022 race to President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in a plot that prosecutors alleged included plans to kill Lula; participating in an armed criminal organization; attempted violent abolition of the democratic rule of law; damage qualified by violence; and deterioration of listed heritage.

Bolsonaro's co-conspirators, all of them former Brazilian officials, were



Opponents of former president Jair Bolsonaro celebrate after the Supreme Court sentenced him to more than 27 years in prison for attempting a coup to remain in office despite his 2022 electoral defeat, in Sao Paulo on Sept 12. (AP)

also sentenced for their roles in the attempted coup. Gen. Braga Netto, Bolsonaro's former defense minister and running mate in 2022, received 26 years. Admiral Almir Garnier got 24 years. Gen. Augusto Heleno received 21 years and Gen. Paulo Sérgio Nogueira got 19 years. Lieutenant Colonel Mauro Cid, who cooperated

with investigations, was given two years under an open regime.

Chief Justice Luís Roberto Barroso joined the panel at the end of the session and called the trial a "watershed moment in Brazil's history."

The US government immediately criticized the ruling and warned it would respond.

Subcontinent

12 soldiers, 35 militants dead in Pakistan: Pakistani security forces raided two hideouts of the Pakistani Taliban near the Afghan border in the past two days, triggering fierce clashes that killed 12 soldiers and 35 militants, the military said Saturday.

The death toll underscores the struggles Pakistan faces as it tries to rein in resurging militant groups. The military said 22 militants were killed in the first raid in Bajaur, a district in northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Thirteen more were killed in a separate operation in South Waziristan district, the military said. The statement said that the 12 soldiers, "having fought gallantly, paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced martyrdom" in South Waziristan.

The militants are using Afghan soil to stage attacks in Pakistan, the military said, urging the Taliban government in Kabul "to uphold its responsibilities and deny use of its soil for terrorist activities against Pakistan." Pakistan's prime minister is **Shehbaz Sharif**. (AP)



Sharif

India road accident kills 8: At least eight people died and around 15 others were injured when a speeding truck rammed into a group of people carrying a religious procession on a busy highway in India's southern state of Karnataka on Friday night, confirmed a local policeman over phone.

The accident occurred in the state's Hassan district. The accident reportedly happened as the truck driver took a sharp turn to avoid a biker driving rashly on the highway. Many people who were a part of the procession were crushed in the accident.

According to the police, there were a few people with serious injuries. The death toll was feared to rise, he added. (Xinhua)

South Sudan No. 2 Riek Machar faces treason and other criminal charges

JUBA, South Sudan, Sept 13, (AP): South Sudan's First Vice President Riek Machar faces charges of treason and other serious crimes, local justice authorities said Thursday, as fears grow that the east African country could be edging toward a return to civil war.

Machar has been under house arrest since March after the transitional government he is a part of accused him of subversive activities against President Salva Kiir, who said on Thursday that he was suspending Machar as his deputy because of the criminal allegations. Pro-government troops have been fighting militias and other armed groups that they say are loyal to Machar, who has served as his country's No. 2 under the terms of a delicate peace deal signed in 2018.

That agreement has not been fully implemented, with presidential elections repeatedly postponed.

In addition to treason, Machar and seven others face charges of murder, conspiracy, terrorism, destruction of public property and military assets and crimes against humanity.

The charges stem from a violent incident in March when a militia known as the White Army overran a garrison of government troops, killing its commanding officer and others. The justice ministry said in a statement Thursday that the attack in Nasir, Upper Nile state was influenced by Machar and others via "coordinated military and political structures."

Bringing criminal charges against Machar is likely to further destabilize South Sudan, whose government faces pressure from regional leaders to reach a political agreement that prevents a return to full-blown war.

It was not immediately clear when Machar would be pre-



South Sudan's rebel leader Riek Machar speaks to the media about the situation in South Sudan following a peace agreement the week before with the government, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on Aug 31, 2015. (AP)

sent in a courtroom. His precise whereabouts in South Sudan are unknown, and his political supporters have long called for his freedom.

The statement from the justice ministry Thursday said Machar and his co-accused "have been informed of the charges against them and their constitutional rights." But a spokesman for Machar, Puok Both Baluang, said the charges "constitute a political witch hunt" and that the justice system lacks independence and can be directed politically.

Kuwait crude oil drops to \$71.70 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil went down USD 1.27 during Friday's trading to USD 71.70 per barrel compared to USD 72.97 pb on Thursday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Saturday. Benchmark Brent crude gained 62 cents to USD 66.99 pb and West Texas Intermediate was up 32 cents to USD 62.69 pb.

Other Voices

Oil prices below \$70 a barrel

OPEC+ is shifting focus to market share over prices

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

OPEC+ appears to be taking relentless action to push more oil into the market, regardless of the consequences. The organization is clearly focused on regaining its lost market share and is determined to sideline less competitive producers in the process. The message is clear - control of the oil market rests with it.

The group seems unconcerned about weakening oil prices or whether its member states are able to meet their budget targets. Many are now being forced to resort to borrowing just to finance their annual budgets.

Oil prices are still below \$70 per barrel, yet OPEC+ continues to flood the market with more supply.

Today, the organization appears more interested in boosting oil volumes to generate higher overall revenues, rather than aiming for higher prices with limited output.

As a result, the group has agreed to increase production again next month, marking six consecutive months of output hikes. This indicates a clear change in strategy - volume and revenue have become the new policy.

Eight OPEC+ members, including Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait, have decided to increase crude oil output, collectively adding around 137,000 barrels per day to the market. However, the actual increase may end up being significantly lower, possibly closer to 60,000 barrels per day.

This time, OPEC seems less concerned about the potential for further price declines and more focused on boosting overall revenues. The strategy may also be aimed at pressuring less competitive producers and discouraging further output increases from non-OPEC countries.

The priority has clearly shifted



Kamel Al-Harami

to higher production, and most importantly, higher revenues. OPEC appears to believe that now is the right moment to reclaim lost ground and maximize its earnings after years of sacrificing market share in pursuit of higher prices.

So far, OPEC+ has increased its oil production by more than 2.5 million barrels per day, with additional volumes expected to be approved for November as well. The group appears firmly committed to prioritizing production volumes and generating more cash.

It is clear that a shift in policy has taken place. OPEC+ is now discussing ramping up output and reclaiming lost market share.

Since April 2023, OPEC+ has been aiming to recover its lost volume of 1.7 million barrels per day.

The question on everyone's mind is whether OPEC+'s earlier decision to cut production in order to raise oil prices has failed. Over time, it has become increasingly clear that the policy did not deliver the desired results.

This is evident in the cartel's recent shift to set aside production quotas and allow member states more freedom to produce, seemingly waiting to see how the market responds.

The big uncertainty now is whether the market still needs more oil or not.

Today, the market is closely observing to see how long OPEC+ will remain patient, and at what price level the group might be prompted to intervene once again.

Is this a test by OPEC+ to determine the market's tolerance for increased crude oil volumes? Or perhaps a way to identify its own price floor?

There are also growing questions about leadership within the group. Has OPEC+ lost its central guiding force? Why, for example, should Saudi Arabia continue to bear the burden of production cuts alone, especially when other members reap the benefits while contributing little or nothing to the collective effort?

Saudi Arabia's sacrifices have been limited and short-term, and without proportional reward.

□ □ □

Email: naftikuwaiti@yahoo.com

Partnership targets US light industrial and student housing sectors

InvestGB and Investcorp strengthen strategic partnership to offer Shariah Compliant real estate investment opportunities

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Gulf Capital Investment Company "InvestGB", the wholly owned investment arm of Gulf Bank, and Investcorp, a leading global alternative investment manager, are furthering their strategic partnership through presenting further diversified and Shariah Compliant real estate investment opportunities to InvestGB clients.

Through its dedication to delivering innovative and diversified Shariah Compliant investment solutions that align with the needs of its clients, InvestGB continues to build strategic relationships with world-class partners to broaden its offerings and create access to unique investment opportunities across key sectors.

Since the launch of the partnership, InvestGB has successfully committed to investments across U.S. real estate market, with a strategic focus on the light industrial and student housing sectors. Alongside Investcorp, the firm has invested in a diversified portfolio of industrial assets and student housing beds in key markets across multiple offerings. These achievements underscore InvestGB's commitment to delivering



Noorah AlSane



scalable investment opportunities in resilient sectors underpinned by strong fundamentals and long-term demand.

Investcorp is among the top 5 largest cross-border buyers of US real estate over the past five years, according to Real Capital Analytics. The firm's US real estate strategy invests primarily in the industrial



Mohammed AlSada



and residential sectors, which collectively represent 98% of the firm's US real estate portfolio, making it the perfect partner for InvestGB's ambitions.

Commenting on the partnership, Noorah AlSane, Managing Director of Real Estate Investments at InvestGB, said: "This strategic partnership

provides our clients with diversified shariah compliant real estate investment solutions". AlSane added, "InvestGB and Investcorp will continue to collaborate on new opportunities, including upcoming offerings in the student housing sector, which reflect the shared commitment of both firms to expanding access to resilient and high-performing asset classes for clients".

Mohammed AlSada, Managing Director at Investcorp commented: "Over the last thirty years, Investcorp Real Estate has grown into one of the most active global real estate investment managers in the industry. Within the student housing sector alone, we have owned and managed approximately 20,000 beds across roughly 30 investments. Our strategic approach targets core-plus and light-value-add real estate investments throughout the US that generate strong cash flows while providing potential for capital appreciation through light-value-add opportunities and active management. Our partnership with InvestGB has been a fruitful one and we are delighted to build upon it further and continue to acquire such assets".

Debt reduction strengthens KIPCO's balance sheet

KIPCO completes cash tender offers for 2026 & 2027 Notes

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: KIPCO - Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) - has successfully completed cash tender offers made to purchase in cash, any and all, of the US\$500 million 4.229% notes due on 29 October 2026 (2026 Notes) and US\$500 million 4.5% notes due on 23 February 2027 (2027 Notes), representing an aggregate principal amount of US\$1.0 billion. The company had not set any caps on the bond buyback amounts and expressed its willingness to accept for repurchase in cash, any and all, of the notes validly offered.

Investors showed good interest in the bond buyback offers. At the expiration deadline of the



Sunny Bhatia

tender offers, an aggregate nominal amount of US\$ 304.1 million of bonds were validly tendered for purchase. The company accepted all the offers, and this en-

■ Tender offers were initiated to optimize the company's debt portfolio by taking out near term maturities' says company's Group CFO

abled KIPCO to reduce its debt position by US\$153.3 million in 2026 Notes and US\$150.8 million in 2027 Notes, aggregating to US\$304.1 million (30.4%) of total outstanding notes.

HSBC Bank, Kamco Invest and Standard Chartered Bank acted as the dealer managers for the offers. Sodali & Coacted as the tender and information agent.

On this occasion, Mr Sunny

Bhatia, KIPCO's Group Chief Financial Officer, said:

"The tender offers for the buyback on any and all basis, 1 to 1.5 years ahead of their maturities, reiterates the company's commitment to proactively manage its debt maturities and optimize its debt portfolio by selective deleveraging at the KIPCO parent level and taking out near term maturities."

Chairman credits staff dedication for prestigious award

Kuwait Airways earns prestigious 5-star rating for top services

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): Kuwait Airways has earned the 2026 5-Star Airline Rating for providing excellent passenger on-board services from the APEX organization, based on objective opinions from passengers all over the world.

The corporation chairman, Abdulmohsen Al-Fegaan, said in a statement to KUNA that gaining the rating was fruit of efforts and staff dedication, excellent services and comfort provided to passengers.

The rating was based on neutral views by passengers of more than one million flights from 600 airline companies throughout the world, he said, indicating that the assessment was based on passengers' experience during the flight, with visual entertainment programs, food quality and other services.

The Kuwaiti Airways, earlier this year, ranked 20th among 109 aviation companies and the fifth in the Middle East in the annual report released by Airhelp website, covering 2024, he said.



Kuwait Airways acting chief executive officer, Abdulwahab Al-Shatti, receives the 2026 5-Star Airline Rating from the APEX.

Al-Fegaan added that it earned the top rank globally for providing high quality onboard meals by MoneySuperMarket platform last year.

It also came second in the Middle East for flights' schedules punctuality, noticeable development in making achievements and recording positive results from Cirium, a leading aviation data and analytics company.

The corporation is proceeding with the efforts to overhaul its various services, upgrade operating systems and attain clients' absolute content.

Elaborating, he said the company had received an invitation from APEX to attend the honoring ceremony for aviation companies, held in California, the US. The acting chief executive officer, Abdulwahab Al-Shatti, received the award.

Kuwait Airways, founded in 1953, organized the first flight on March 16, 1954. The government acquired all its shares in 1962.

OPEC marks 65th anniversary, affirms role in market stability

VIENNA, Sept 13, (KUNA): OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al-Ghais affirmed Friday on the organization's pivotal role in stabilizing the global oil market and ensuring the rights of both producing and consuming countries.

Al-Ghais' remarks came in a press statement marking the 65th anniversary of OPEC's founding in Baghdad on September 14, 1960.

OPEC chief added that the organization's founding was the culmination of dialogue and cooperation between the leaders of the five founding countries (Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Iraq, and Iran), with the aim of achieving sovereignty over their natural resources against the control of major foreign companies.

Al-Ghais noted that OPEC has been and will remain a source of stability and a pivotal factor in the global energy landscape, reminding the world of the importance of oil and its derivatives for decades to come.

He explained that although "the founding of the organization may seem inevitable today, the reality at the time was completely different," indicating that the founders realized that common interests outweighed any differences

and that cooperation was the path to achieving sovereignty over their natural resources and oil wealth.

Al-Ghais added that OPEC, despite the challenges and criticisms it faced, has proven its importance through its role in stabilizing global markets, citing studies that confirmed that the organization's presence has prevented major supply shocks and billions of dollars in losses to global GDP.

He added that OPEC today comprises 12 member states and enjoys widespread recognition in the international community.

The Secretary-General also highlighted the "Declaration of Cooperation" that OPEC launched with Non-OPEC+ producers in 2016, which played a crucial role in addressing the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"As we celebrate the 65th anniversary of the organization's founding and review its achievements and successes, we look forward to a future in which OPEC will continue to play its critical role and remain a fundamental pillar of the global energy system, not only for the coming years but for decades to come," Al-Ghais added.

Kuwait Oil Company utilizes AI to improve operating capacity of oil sector

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13, (KUNA): The launching by Kuwait Oil Company of its Artificial Intelligence Innovation Center (AIIC) represented a milestone in the process of digital transformation in the country's oil sector.

The Center, supported by Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDI-PA), is meant to keep abreast of the world's latest technological trends through making use of AI and innovative technologies to reduce costs, ensure quality and speed up decision-making.

Under auspices and in the presence of Minister of Oil Tarek Suleiman Al-Roumi, AIIC was inaugurated on August 7, 2025, in collaboration with Microsoft, Halliburton Co, and Ghaisia.ai, KOC's CEO Ahmad Jaber Al-Eidan said in statements to KUNA on Saturday.

The Center, supervised by KOC's division of south and east Kuwait, opened a new chapter in digital transformation in Kuwait.

It is part of KOC's strategic partnership with Microsoft, one of five of the world's leading technology conglomerates, Halliburton - world's second-largest oil service provider, and Ghaisia.ai, a leading developer of autonomous artificial intelligence systems (Agentic AI), he said.

Ghaisia.ai, as strategic partner of Microsoft, is in charge of operating the AIIC on its G Agen platform.

"G Agen, the fruit of cooperation between Microsoft, Halliburton and Ghaisia.ai, deploys smart digital agents that think, act, and evolve - working for humans to unlock new levels of efficiency and innovation," Al-Eidan pointed out.

More than automation, G Agen provides a dynamic mesh for collaboration between agents and humans across departments and teams, which will help enhance the operating capacity of KOC and facilitate the decision-making process.

From oil and gas to retail and government, it delivers impactful outcomes in the most complex environments.



CEO of Kuwait Oil Company Ahmad Al-Eidan

Agentic AI, one of the pioneering projects in autonomous AI systems, is capable of setting goals, making decisions, and performing complex tasks with minimal human intervention, acting independently to achieve objectives, he affirmed.

"It will give momentum leap to the KOC in the areas of data analysis and provision of precautionary solutions and support the realization of the goals of Kuwait Vision 2035," Al-Eidan went on.

AIIC will keep abreast of the innovations and the latest changes around the globe, and give guidance relating to the development of the oil sector in Kuwait, he said.

He voiced hope that cooperation between KOC and its partners will open new horizons for digital transformation of the energy sector not only in Kuwait but in the entire region as well.



Naim Yazbeck, President of Microsoft Middle East and Africa.



Artificial Intelligence Innovation Center at Kuwait Oil Company

On his part, Naim Yazbeck, president of Microsoft Middle East and Africa (MEA), said KOC leads a bold vision for the future of the energy sector in Kuwait where AI and human innovation word towards speedier digital transformation.

Microsoft maintains firm commitment to helping Kuwait develop the skills of its national cadres and leading the transformation to a smarter and more sustainable future in the oil sector, he said in similar statement to KUNA.

Expressing Microsofts pride of its partnership with KOC, Yazbeck said the AIIC is not only a training center but also an integrated platform for joint innovation. The Center serves as a strategic mainstay in the drive to achieve distinctive operating capacity, provide smart solutions in energy and meet the unique aspirations of the State of Kuwait, he added.

Focusing on the latest tech updates with the executive management participation

NBK organizes series of AI mindset & awareness masterclasses

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: In the backdrop of an increasing growth in the use of artificial intelligence, effective understanding and employment of this technology has become imperative for financial institutions that aim to maintain their leadership. To this end, the Learning and Development Department at the National Bank of Kuwait launched a series of advanced training masterclasses as part of the AI Leadership Program on the capabilities of artificial intelligence, titled “Preparing for the Future”.

This aim of this series of intensive masterclasses is to introduce upper executive management, through interaction, to the latest developments and technologies in the field of artificial intelligence.

NBK is aware that AI is not merely a technological tool, but a key engine that can reshape and transform the banking sector. Therefore, these masterclasses strive to enable NBK employees to explore and apply the endless capabilities of AI by analyzing large data to identify new growth opportunities, enhance client attraction, and develop innovative services and products.

Moreover, AI technologies can also contribute to enhancing operational efficiency by automating routine func-



Emad Al-Ablani

tions, enhancing risk management, and supporting quick decision making.

The workshops will be presented by Mr. Warren Knight, a digital leader and AI transformation expert who worked alongside large regional and global institutions in the field of current and future AI strategies.

Knight holds wide experience in

Al-Ablani

- We strive to provide innovative training programs that adopt the latest and most advanced technologies.
- We are aware that artificial intelligence has become a key engine for achieving banking sector transformation.
- Local and Foreign Currency Counterparty Risk Rating upgraded from Baa1 to A3



Photo during the training program.

Emad Al-Ablani, Group Chief Human Resources Officer said: “We believe that human capital investment is a pillar to achieve sustainable growth and ensure the bank’s excellence and leadership. This is why we are committed to constantly providing innovative training programs that take into consideration the changing market dy-

namics and strive to keep up with the latest technological updates to build a resilient workforce capable of shaping the future.”

Al-Ablani also added: “We continue to provide carefully designed development programs to enhance the integration of technology in the work environment, as we are committed to our

strategy that aim to support continued learning and support human-led innovation across the Group’s sectors and departments.”

Furthermore, Al-Ablani said that “NBK’s learning and development strategy is inclusive and is aligned with the highest international standards to enable employees to deal efficiently with future challenges amid an accelerating pace of technology, which should consequently help NBK achieve its long-term objectives.”

Finally, Al-Ablani emphasized that understanding the changes in the field of digital transformation and AI developments and their influence on the banking sector directly impacts the strategies and plans of financial institutions to keep up with the latest updates and achieve sustainable growth.

It should be noted that NBK maintains its leadership in the financial sector in Kuwait and the region by embracing a responsible digital transformation path. These initiatives reflect the bank’s unwavering commitment to empowering human talent, accelerating the pace of innovation, and setting new standards for AI-driven transformation in the banking sector, creating long-term value for customers and shareholders.

Syrian energy sector boosted

Saudi Arabia grants Syria 1.65 million barrels of oil

DAMASCUS, Sept 13, (AP): Saudi Arabia said Thursday it will supply Syria with 1.65 million barrels of crude as Damascus struggles to rebuild the country’s economy and infrastructure after a nearly 14-year civil war.

The state-run Saudi Press Agency announced that the CEO of the Saudi Fund for Development, Sultan Al-Marshad, and Syria’s Minister of Energy Mohammad al-Bashir had signed a memorandum of understanding.

The Saudi “grant aims to enhance the operations of Syrian refineries” and reflects the kingdom’s “continued efforts to improve the living conditions of the brotherly Syrian people,” the announcement said.

Syria was once an oil exporter able to meet its own energy needs but has faced an economic collapse due to

war and sanctions. The civil war that erupted in 2011 has killed nearly half a million people, displaced half the country’s prewar population of 23 million, and decimated its infrastructure. Stringent Western sanctions have exacerbated the crisis.

The civil war ended last December with the fall of former President Bashar Assad in a lightning rebel offensive, and since then, investors have flocked back to the country including in the energy sector. Earlier this month, Syrian officials announced that the country had exported 600,000 barrels of oil from the coastal city of Tartous.

However, little has changed on the ground. Syrians who are unable to afford generators or solar panels live with only a few hours of electricity a day.

Training program supports human capital development in financial sector

UIC empowers investment professionals with hands-on financial modelling training

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Union of Investment Companies (UIC), through its training arm, the Investment Studies Center (ISC), has successfully concluded an advanced training program titled “Advanced Financial Modelling & Valuation.” The program was held over four consecutive days, from 8–11 September 2025, at UIC’s premises. It witnessed strong knowledge exchange and wide engagement from participants representing a diverse segment of professionals in the investment and financial sectors, including analysts, investment bankers, portfolio managers, financial advisors, and other specialists.

The program featured dynamic, interactive sessions that combined robust academic content with practical expertise in financial modelling and forecasting, focusing on both listed and private companies across Gulf and regional markets. Participants gained an exceptional opportunity to deepen their understanding of methodologies for building professional financial models, preparing detailed financial forecasts, studying various corporate scenarios, and applying advanced tools for stock valuation and fair value assessment in line with international and local standards.

In addition to theory, the program offered participants hands-on applications through real-world case studies reflecting the actual challenges faced by investors and market participants. The positive interaction of attendees with these exercises enriched their ability to bridge theory with practice, equipping them to make more strategic and well-informed investment decisions.

Participants praised the distinguished training approach, which



Photo during the program.

emphasized open dialogue, interactive discussions, and the exchange of practical expertise. This methodology fostered deeper learning and opened new horizons for analytical thinking. They also expressed appreciation for the program’s unique balance of academic depth and practical application, describing it as a rich and rewarding experience.

Ms. Fadwa Darwish, Secretary-General of UIC, stated that the success of this program reflects its ongoing role in supporting and empowering human capital in the investment and financial sectors, by equipping professionals with cutting-edge skills and knowledge that keep pace with the fast-changing dynamics of global markets. UIC noted that ISC’s training agenda is continuously

updated, reflecting its commitment to aligning with the latest developments in investment tools, as well as regulatory and technological trends shaping the industry.

Through this program, UIC once again reaffirms the leading position of the Investment Studies Center (ISC) as a trusted source of knowledge and a key destination for those seeking high-quality training programs led by experts and specialists across a wide range of financial and investment fields.

ISC is keen on providing flexible and diverse programs that meet a wide range of needs, which include in-person training at UIC’s premises, tailored in-house corporate programs designed to meet institutional needs, and e-learning opportunities for spe-

cialized certifications such as CISI. ISC also provides group discounts to encourage institutional participation, alongside awareness seminars and public events that contribute to enhancing investment culture and financial literacy across society.

UIC continues to invite all interested parties to visit its official website to review ISC’s training agenda for the last quarter of 2025 and explore upcoming training opportunities that represent a true investment in capacity building and human capital development. Institutions seeking tailored training solutions, as well as individuals aiming to enhance their professional skills, are warmly welcome to connect with UIC in pursuit of their strategic and career objectives.

Lebanon issues 1st satellite internet license to ‘Starlink’

BEIRUT, Sept 13, (AP): Lebanon has granted a license to Elon Musk’s Starlink to provide satellite internet services in the crisis-hit country known for its crumbling infrastructure.

The announcement was made late Thursday by Information Minister Paul Morcos who said Starlink will provide internet services throughout Lebanon via satellites operated by Musk’s SpaceX.

The announcement came nearly three months after Musk spoke with Lebanon’s President Joseph Aoun by telephone and told him about his interest in working in the country’s telecommunications and internet sectors.

During the same Cabinet meeting, the government named regulatory authorities for the country’s electricity and telecommunications sectors.

Naming a regulatory authority for Lebanon’s corruption-plagued electricity sector has been a key demand by international organizations.

The naming of a regulatory authority for the electricity sector was supposed to be done more than 20 years ago but there have been repeated delays by the country’s authorities. The

move is seen as a key reform for a sector that wastes over \$1 billion a year in the small Mediterranean nation.

State-run Electricite du Liban, or EDL, is viewed as one of Lebanon’s most wasteful institutions and plagued by political interference. It has cost state coffers about \$40 billion since the 1975-90 civil war ended.

Since taking office earlier this year, Aoun and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam have vowed to work on implementing reforms and fighting corruption and decades-old mismanagement to get Lebanon out of an economic crisis that the World Bank has described as among the world’s worst since the 1850s.

Lebanon has for decades faced long hours of electricity cuts but the situation became worse following an economic meltdown that began in late 2019. The 14-month Israel-Hezbollah war that ended in late November also badly damaged electricity and other infrastructure in parts of Lebanon.

In April, the World Bank said it will grant Lebanon a \$250 million loan that will be used to help ease electricity cuts.

Industry leaders discuss liquidity strategies at Oman event

IILM hosts first Capacity Building Programme in Oman

MUSCAT, Sept 13: The International Islamic Liquidity Management Corporation (IILM), in collaboration with the Oman Banks Association (OBA) and with the support of the Central Bank of Oman, successfully organised its first-ever Capacity Building Programme in Oman, hosted by Ahli Bank in Muscat, Oman.

Themed “Unlocking Islamic Liquidity in Oman: Strategies, Innovation & Resilience”, the one-day programme held on 9 September 2025 brought together approximately 80 regulators, senior executives, and leading practitioners from the Islamic finance industry to discuss strategies, tools, and innovations in liquidity management tailored to the Omani market.

As part of the IILM’s broader mandate to support the development of Islamic financial markets globally, the programme marks a significant milestone in deepening its engagement with Oman’s financial sector, encouraging greater participation of Omani banks and financial institutions in the IILM’s Sukuk programme. The event also featured

Opening Remarks by Mrs. Asia Al Raisi, Acting Deputy Chief Economist for Investment and Market Operations, Central Bank of Oman.

Speaking at the event, Mohamad Safri Shahul Hamid, Chief Executive Officer of the IILM, said: “Today’s programme marks an important milestone in the IILM’s journey to support the development of Islamic liquidity management across borders. By engaging directly with the Omani market, we seek to raise awareness, strengthen technical capacity, and encourage greater participation from local financial institutions in the IILM Sukuk programme. Notably, Oman’s participation in the IILM’s issuances has grown remarkably from just 2% in 2023 to approximately 15% this year. This reflects the Sultanate’s rising significance in Islamic finance, and we look forward to deepening our collaboration to further enhance resilience and innovation in the market.”

Representing the OBA, Yassir Al Mawali, Acting CFO of Alizz Islamic Bank and member of the OBA CFO Committee, remarked: “We are

delighted to co-organise this landmark programme with the IILM. The discussions today have been invaluable in equipping our financial institutions with greater understanding of global best practices in liquidity management, and how these can be applied in the Omani context. The OBA remains committed to supporting initiatives that build capacity, foster innovation, and strengthen the competitiveness of Oman’s Islamic finance industry.”

The Capacity Building Programme featured high-level panels and case studies on liquidity management, risk and resilience in Islamic finance, and Oman’s role in shaping the future of the global Islamic financial market. Speakers included senior representatives from Omani financial institutions and international market experts.

The initiative reaffirms the IILM’s mission to provide Shari’ah-compliant liquidity instruments that support Islamic banks in managing their liquidity needs, while contributing to the growth and sustainability of the global Islamic finance ecosystem.

Türkiye’s Central Bank delivers fresh rate amid easing inflation

ANKARA, Sept 13, (Xinhua): Türkiye’s central bank cut interest rates on Thursday to boost investment and growth as inflation eases, but experts warn that persistent price pressures are leaving policymakers with a delicate balancing act.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the central bank lowered its one-week repo rate by 2.5 percentage points to 40.5 from 43 percent, delivering a second consecutive cut since July.

“The underlying trend of inflation slowed down in August. Recent data indicate that demand conditions are at disinflationary levels,” the MPC said in a statement.

The bank’s decision came days after fresh inflation data signaled that the path toward price stability remains challenging.

According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, the monthly rise in consumer prices in August is 2.04 percent, above expectations, while annual inflation eased modestly to 32.95 percent from 33.52 percent in July.

The recent figures raised concerns about the sustainability of the disinflation trend, with high food and housing costs, Istanbul-based economist Atilla Yesilada, told Xinhua.

“Annual inflation seems to be moving in the right direction, but the stickiness of monthly prices is concerning,” he said.

“This complicates the central bank’s task, because markets will want reassurance that cutting rates doesn’t mean abandoning the inflation fight,” Yesilada pointed out.

In its statement, the MPC acknowledged that “food prices and service items with high inertia are exerting upward pressure on inflation.” However, it also hinted that further rate cuts are possible, pledging to act “on a meeting-by-meeting basis with a focus on the inflation outlook.”

Inflation remains a highly sensitive issue for Turkish households and investors, after years of elevated price pressures have eroded purchasing power, especially for pensioners and low-income citizens.

“Lower borrowing costs are a clear incentive for businesses and households,” said Mustafa Sonmez, an Istanbul-based economist.

“But the risk is that if consumer demand rebounds too fast, it may reignite price pressures. The central bank is trying to thread a fine needle,” Sonmez noted.

Economists also underlined that Türkiye’s external vulnerabilities add to the complexity. The country relies heavily on foreign inflows to finance its current account deficit, meaning investor confidence in the central bank’s inflation strategy is crucial.



Mohamad Safri Shahul Hamid, Chief Executive Officer



Group photo at the Capacity Building Programme.

Corning plant to triple production, hire 50% more for Apple glass

Apple commits \$2.5 bln to produce all iPhone, Apple Watch glass in Kentucky

HARRODSBURG, Sept 13, (AP) Apple is putting its trust in a Kentucky plant singled out to become the exclusive producer of the cover glass meant to safeguard every iPhone and Apple Watch sold worldwide by the tech giant.

Specialty glass maker Corning Inc. said Friday it plans to triple production capacity at its plant in Harrodsburg and increase the workforce there by 50%, deepening its relationship with Apple that began when the original iPhone launched in 2007. The Harrodsburg plant made the glass for those first iPhones.

Apple has put its vast financial muscle behind the project, announcing recently it was making a \$2.5 billion commitment to enable Corning to produce all the cover glass for the iPhone and Apple Watch at Corning's plant in Harrodsburg, a central Kentucky town of more than 9,000 residents.

It is part of a massive commitment announced by the tech company last month to increase its investment in American manufacturing and which won bipartisan praise from Republican President Donald Trump and Democratic Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear.

Corning executives and selected employees spoke to reporters at the plant on Friday. Apple CEO Tim Cook visited the Harrodsburg factory earlier in the day but did not participate in the media event.

"We are transforming the plant once again, by combining Corning and Apple's expertise to enable production of 100% of the cover glass for the iPhone and the Apple Watch," Corning Chief Operating Officer Hal Nelson said Friday. "Together, we are building a next-generation U.S. manufacturing platform to deliver ... high-performance materials for Apple's iconic products."

Cook said last month in a news release that the teamwork between Apple and Corning will result in "the largest and most advanced production line ever created for smartphone glass."

"Thanks to the power of American manufacturing, any



Apple CEO Tim Cook and Corning CEO Wendell Weeks speak during a tour of Corning's iPhone glass manufacturing facility Friday, Sept. 12, 2025, in Harrodsburg, Ky. (AP)

customer anywhere in the world who buys a new iPhone or Apple Watch will be holding precision glass made right here in Kentucky," he said.

By the end of 2026, all of the cover glass for the iPhone and the Apple Watch will be manufactured at the Harrodsburg plant, Nelson said Friday. Corning's Kentucky plant will be totally devoted to manufacturing for Apple, Corning said.

Regarding Apple's \$2.5 billion commitment for the production, Corning said the details are "proprietary" to the two companies. The commitment will include revenue, technology and development teams and "new advanced manufacturing process development," Corning said.

Corning, based in Corning, New York, says its markets include optical communications, mobile consumer electronics, display, automotive, solar, semiconductors and life sciences.

As to whether it will back up Apple's financial commitment with its own investment, Corning said it continually invests in its facilities and will "continue to invest what we need to support Apple."

With an eye toward the future, the two companies will open an innovation center at the Kentucky plant, bringing together scientists and engineers for world-class research and development, Nelson said.

The Harrodsburg plant currently has nearly 350 employees, and the workforce is expected to rise to at least 500 as a result of the Apple announcement, Corning said.

Longtime plant employee Tommy Shirley said the factory had "ups and downs" through the years, but the deepening ties with Apple will be a "huge shot in the arm" for plant workers and the community.

"We've prayed for this," he told reporters. "We wanted stability for our employees. We wanted expansion."

Shirley, a maintenance worker, has deep family ties to the plant. His grandfather helped build the factory in 1952. His father started working there in 1964, and Tommy Shirley followed in his footsteps starting in 1989. He brimmed with pride Friday while talking about the Harrodsburg plant's connection to Apple.

"The products that we make, they impact people's lives all over the world," he said. "Nobody can get by without a phone anymore. ... We're going to make devices right here in my hometown that's going to affect people's lives all over the world."

Trump calls on NATO to halt Russian oil imports, threatens tariffs on China

'Tariffs on China will break its grip on Russia'

BASKING RIDGE, Sept 13, (AP): President Donald Trump said Saturday he believes the Russia-Ukraine war would end if all NATO countries stopped buying oil from Russia and placed tariffs on China of 50% to 100% for its purchases of Russian petroleum.

Trump posted on his social media site that NATO'S commitment to winning the war "has been far less than 100%" and the purchase of Russian oil by some members of the alliance is "shocking." As if speaking with NATO members, he said: "It greatly weakens your negotiating position, and bargaining power, over Russia."

Since 2023, NATO member Turkey has been the third largest buyer of Russian oil, after China and India, according to the Centre for Research on En-

ergy and Clean Air. Other members of the 32-state alliance involved in purchasing Russian oil include Hungary and Slovakia.

Trump's post arrives after the recent flight of multiple Russian drones into Poland, an escalatory move by Russia as it was entering the airspace of NATO ally. Poland shot down the drones, yet Trump played down the severity of the incident and Russia's motives by saying it "could have been a mistake."

While Trump as a candidate promised to end the war quickly, he has yet to hit the pressure points needed to end the violence and has at times been seen as reluctant to confront Russian President Vladimir Putin. Congress is currently trying to get the U.S. president to back a bill toughening sanctions, after Trump last month hosted Putin in Alaska for talks that failed to deliver on progress toward peace.

Trump in his post said that a NATO ban on Russian oil plus tariffs on China would "also be of great help in ENDING this deadly, but RIDICULOUS, WAR."

The president said that NATO members should put the 50% to 100% tariffs on China and withdraw them if the war that launched with Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine ends.

"China has a strong control, and even grip, over Russia," he posted, and powerful tariffs "will break that grip."

The U.S. president has already placed a 25% import tax on goods from India for its buying of Russian energy products.

In his post, Trump said responsibility for the war fell on his predecessor, Democrat Joe Biden, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. He did not include in that list Putin, who launched the invasion.

Trump's post builds on a call Friday with finance ministers in the Group of Seven, a forum of industrialized democracies. During the call, U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer and Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent called on their counterparts to have a "unified front" to cut off "the revenues funding Putin's war machine," according to Greer's office.

Texas enacts power curtailment law

Big Tech's data centers strain US electricity grids nationwide

HARRISBURG, Sept 13, (AP): With the explosive growth of Big Tech's data centers threatening to overload U.S. electricity grids, policymakers are taking a hard look at a tough-love solution: bumping the energy-hungry data centers off grids during power emergencies.

Texas moved first, as state lawmakers try to protect residents in the data-center hotspot from another deadly blackout, like the winter storm in 2021 when dozens died.

Now the concept is emerging in the 13-state mid-Atlantic grid and elsewhere as massive data centers are coming online faster than power plants can be built and connected to grids. That has elicited pushback from data centers and Big Tech, for whom a steady power supply is vital.

Like many other states, Texas wants to attract data centers as an economic boon, but it faces the challenge of meeting the huge volumes of electricity the centers demand. Lawmakers there passed a bill in June that, among other things, orders up standards for power emergencies when utilities must disconnect big electric users.

That, in theory, would save enough electricity to avoid a broad blackout on the handful of days during the year when it is hottest or coldest and power consumption pushes grids to their limits or beyond.

Texas was first, but it won't be the last, analysts say, now that the late 2022 debut of OpenAI's ChatGPT ignited worldwide demand for chatbots and other generative AI products that typically require large amounts of computing power to train and operate.

"We're going to see that kind of thing pop up everywhere," said Michael Weber, a University of Texas engineering professor who specializes in energy. "Data center flexibility will be expected, required, encouraged, mandated, whatever it is."

That's because grids can't keep up with the fast-growing number of data center projects unfolding in Texas and perhaps 20 other states as the U.S. competes in a race against China for artificial intelligence superiority.

Grid operators in Texas, the Great Plains states and the mid-Atlantic region have produced eye-popping projections showing that electricity demand in the coming years will spike, largely due to data centers.

A proposal similar to Texas' has emerged from the nation's biggest grid operator, PJM Interconnection, which runs the mid-Atlantic grid that serves 65 million people and data-center hotspots in Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

The CEO of the Southwest Power Pool, which operates the grid that serves 18 million people primarily in Kansas, Oklahoma and other Great Plains states, said it has no choice but to expand power-reduction programs - likely for the biggest power users - to meet growing demand.

The proposals are cropping up at a time when electricity bills nationally are rising fast - twice the rate of inflation, according to federal data - and growing evidence suggests that the bills of some regular Americans are rising to subsidize the gargantuan energy needs of Big Tech.

Analysts say power plant construction cannot keep up with the growth of data center demand, and that something must change.

"Data center load has the potential to overwhelm the grid, and I think it is on its way to doing that," said Joe Bowring, who heads Monitoring Analytics, the independent market watchdog in the mid-Atlantic grid.

Big Tech is trying to make their data centers more energy efficient. They are also installing backup generators, typically fueled by diesel, to

ensure an uninterrupted power supply if there's a power outage.

Data center operators, however, say they hadn't anticipated needing that backup power supply to help grid operators meet demand and are closely watching how utility regulators in Texas write the regulations.

The Data Center Coalition, which represents Big Tech companies and data center developers, wants the standards to be flexible, since some data centers may not be able to switch to backup power as easily or as quickly as others.

The grid operator also should balance that system with financial rewards for data centers that voluntarily shut down during emergencies, said Dan Diorio of the Data Center Coalition.

PJM's just-released proposal revolves around a concept in which proposed data centers may not be guaranteed to receive electricity during a power emergency.

That's caused a stir among power plant owners and the tech industry.

Many questioned PJM's legal authority to enforce it or warned of destabilizing energy markets and states scaring off investors and developers with uncertainty and risk.

"This is particularly concerning given that states within PJM's footprint actively compete with other U.S. regions for data center and digital infrastructure investment," the Digital Power Network, a group of Bitcoin miners and data center developers, said in written comments to PJM.

The governors of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois and Maryland said they worried that it's too unpredictable to provide a permanent solution and that it should at least be accompanied by incentives for data centers to build new power sources and voluntarily reduce electricity use.

Others, including consumer advocates, warned that it won't lower electric bills and that PJM should instead pursue a "bring your own generation" requirement for data centers to, in essence, build their own power source.

In Indiana, Google took a voluntary route.

Last month, the electric utility, Indiana & Michigan Power, and the tech giant filed a power-supply contract with Indiana regulators for a proposed \$2 billion data center planned in Fort Wayne in which Google agreed to reduce electricity use there when the grid is stressed. The data center would, it said, reduce electricity use by delaying non-urgent tasks to when the electric grid is under less stress.

However, important details are being kept from the public and Ben Inskeep of the Citizens Action Coalition, a consumer advocacy group, said that leaves it unclear how valuable the arrangement really is, if at all.

To an extent, bumping big users off the grid during high-demand periods presents a new approach to electricity.

It could save money for regular ratepayers, since power is most expensive during peak usage periods.

Abe Silverman, an energy researcher at Johns Hopkins University, said that data centers can and do use all the electricity they want on most days.

But taking data centers off the grid for those handful of hours during the most extreme heat or cold would mean not having to spend billions of dollars to build a bunch of power plants, he said.

"And the question is, is that worth it? Is it worth it for society to build those 10 new power plants just to serve the data centers for five hours a year?" Silverman said. "Or is there a better way to do it?"

Central Bank lowers rate by 1 point

Russia cuts key interest rate to 17%

MOSCOW, Sept 13, (AP): Russia's central bank cut its benchmark interest rate Friday by one percentage point to 17%, a step that could support the economy as growth slows and spending on the war against Ukraine increases the budget deficit.

The bank had raised its key rate as high as 21% to combat inflation, but has begun to retreat amid complaints from business leaders and legislators about their impact on economic activity.

The bank's inflation warnings in its policy statements underlined the stresses in the Kremlin's wartime economy.

The bank noted that inflation eased somewhat in July and August but remains elevated at 8.2%. Still, it warned that "inflation expectations have not changed considerably in recent months."

"In general, they remain elevated," the bank said. "This may impede a sustainable slowdown in inflation."

The contrast between a rate cut and continued inflation warnings reflects serious frictions in the Russian economy.

The central bank is focused on containing prices. Yet the finance ministry is pumping money into the economy in the form of defense orders and military recruitment bonuses that have fueled growth, wages and inflation over the course of

Russia's 3 1/2 year war against Ukraine.

Year over year growth slowed to 1.1% in the second quarter from 1.4% in the first quarter and from 4.5% at the end of last year. Compared to the quarter before, however, the second quarter figure was a negative 0.6%, indicating the economy has lost even more speed in recent months.

The deficit increased to 4.9 trillion rubles (\$58 billion) in the January-July period, up from 1.1 trillion rubles the year before. Spending was 129% of the planned amount, according to the Kyiv School of Economics, which tracks the Russian economy and oil revenues. Meanwhile oil and gas revenues fell 19% compared with the year earlier period, in part due to slack global oil prices.

Despite sanctions that have deprived Russia of foreign investment in some industries and the loss of most of its natural gas sales to Europe, the economy has held up better than many expected at the start of the war. Unemployment is at record lows and household incomes are rising. Recruitment bonuses have pumped cash into poorer regions. Oil shipments have remained steady even as the price has fluctuated.

Meanwhile the government is able to finance its deficit by selling ruble bonds to domestic banks, which are eager to buy the bonds because they anticipate that interest rates will continue to fall.

Boeing workers reject their latest contract offer, extending strike at 3 Midwest plants

WASHINGTON, Sept 13, (AP): Another contract proposal has been rejected by Boeing workers who now have been on strike for nearly six weeks from three Midwest plants where military aircraft and weapons are developed.

The vote on Friday refusing the latest proposal sends the workers back to the picket lines, according to the union representing the 3,200 striking workers who build fighter jets, weapons systems and the U.S. Navy's first carrier-based unmanned aircraft. Fifty-seven percent of members voted against the proposal, the union said.

"Boeing's modified offer did not include a sufficient signing bonus relative to what other Boeing workers have received, or a raise in 401(k) benefits," the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers District 837 said in a statement.

"We're disappointed our employees have rejected a 5-year offer, including 45% average wage growth," said Dan Gillian, Boeing Air Dominance vice president and general manager, in an emailed statement. "We've made clear the overall economic framework of our offer will not change, but we have consistently adjusted the offer based on employee and union feedback to better address their concerns."

Boeing said no further talks are scheduled.

"We will continue to execute our contingency plan, including hiring permanent replacement workers, as we maintain support for our customers," Gillian said.

The strike, which began Aug. 4, is far smaller in scale than a walkout last year by 33,000 Boeing workers who assemble commercial jetliners. Still, the work stoppage has threatened to complicate the aerospace company's progress in regaining its financial footing.

Boeing's Defense, Space & Security business accounts for more than one-third of the company's revenue.

Negotiations had escalated in the days leading up to last month's walkout, with the workers rejecting an earlier proposed agreement that included a 20% wage hike over the life of the contract and \$5,000 ratification bonuses.

Boeing quickly countered with a modified agree-



Christy Williams greets people at the voting check-in table where International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers union members picked up their ballot in Maryland Heights, Mo., on Friday, Sept. 12, 2025, to vote on a negotiated tentative labor agreement that would end their strike against Boeing Defense St. Louis regional operations. (AP)

ment that didn't boost the proposed pay raise but did remove a scheduling provision affecting the workers' ability to earn overtime pay. They rejected that offer, too, and went on strike the next morning.

The 2024 strike shut down Boeing's factories in Washington state for more than seven weeks at a bleak time for the company. Boeing was under several federal investigations last year after a door plug

blew off a 737 Max plane during an Alaska Airlines flight, an incident that renewed safety concerns surrounding that particular plane.

Two 737 Max jetliners crashed off the coast of Indonesia and in Ethiopia less than five months apart in 2018 and 2019, killing 346 people.

Boeing Co., based in Arlington, Virginia, employs more than 170,000 workers in the U.S. and more than 65 other countries.

From Goa to global, new album connects cultures

Ed Sheeran returns to his roots with cross-cultural ‘Play’

NEW YORK, Sept 13, (AP): Ed Sheeran has long sought to bring people together with his music, whether it be his emotionally resonant acoustic ballads or unproblematic, danceable pop hits. “Play,” his eighth studio album out Friday, stays in that familiar lane for the most part.

In his quest, Sheeran has maintained an everyman quality by carefully evolving with the status quo (while, largely, removing himself from public discourse, save his copyright court win and more recent promotional pop-ups in everyman places, like a New York City ice cream shop just this week). The aesthetic of Ed Sheeran, global star, still matches that of Ed Sheeran, up-and-coming troubadour. Most of the time, it’s still just Sheeran, his guitar and his loop pedal against the world.

Of course, Sheeran, like most pop stars, knows that as his stardom has risen and his audience widened, the meaning of that relatability has shifted. His listeners, over a

decade in, know that too. So “Play,” the first project in a new series from Sheeran named for symbols (he’s said “Rewind” will be next), uses Sheeran’s global acclaim to his advantage - without straying too far from his singer-songwriter roots.

Recorded throughout his “Mathematics World Tour” and finished in Goa, India, the project feels split. There are moments that herald the return of Sheeran the hitmaker, an exciting development after his last two albums - the final chapter of his mathematics series, “Subtract,” and the folk-pop “Autumn Variations” - were well received but failed to produce the kind of chart-toppers that created Sheeran, the



Sheeran

megastar. Most tracks, however, fall more in line with those albums, deviating little from the narrative songwriting toolkit that raised Sheeran, the artist.

Sheeran turned to new collaborators for a couple songs that are already established hits. The addictive “Sapphire” features Indian singer Arijit Singh, who ranks among Spotify’s most popular artists globally. A Farsi version of the single “Azizam,” written and produced with Ilya Salmanzadeh, Savan Kotecha and Johnny McDaid, was released in April featuring Iranian singer Googoosh. Sheeran isn’t just eyeing the U.S. and U.K. charts here - he’s playing for cross-cultural domination, and having fun while doing it.

The rest of the tracks, those that feel more classically Sheeran, see old themes recycled: “Old Phone” provides him the space to remember old friends and reminisce about his changing personal life, just as the landscape in 2017’s “Castle on the Hill” provided a

tangible marker of memory. The conceit of the sappy sweet “Camera” - “I don’t need a camera to capture this moment” - comes in conflict with that of Sheeran’s own beloved “Photograph” from 2014’s “Multiply.”

There are still moments that feel like they’ll stick: Sheeran’s ode to his daughters, “For Always,” with cooing backing vocals from co-writer Amy Allen, is sure to be a favorite father-daughter dance track, right behind the groovy “The Vow” on wedding playlists.

Sheeran flexes his pen on “Opening,” the album’s first track. Bounded by glittery verses about boundaries, he raps about his family, his mental health, that court case, fame and what comes next. “Been a long time up top but I ain’t complacent/If I look down I can see replacements,” he raps at one point. “Gotta make dreams and chase them.”

Sheeran wants to be for everyone. And to do that, he’ll still be an everyman.



A visitor to the ‘Jaws: The Exhibition’ press preview shoots a selfie underneath the sole surviving full-scale model of ‘Bruce,’ the shark from the 1975 film, on Wednesday, Sept. 10, at the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in Los Angeles. (AP)

‘Relive classic’

Spielberg cheers ‘Jaws’ 50th exhibit

LOS ANGELES, Sept 13, (AP): Why would anyone keep a prop from the set of “Jaws?”

Steven Spielberg was musing about what it felt like while making his 1975 oceanic classic, and how little he thought any of it would matter when shooting the now-legendary opening scene of a woman night-swimming past an ocean buoy. His primary concern was keeping his job as a 26-year-old director amid unfolding disasters.

“How did anybody know to take the buoy and take it home and sit on it for 50 years?” he said.

That prop is among the first things visitors will see as they enter a 50th anniversary “Jaws” exhibit opening Sunday and running through July at the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures.

The exhibition featuring more than 200 pieces from the culture-changing blockbuster is the first full show in the four-year history of the museum that is dedicated to a single film. It comes amid a bevy of celebrations of the film’s five-decade life, including a theatrical re-release last week.

Spielberg spoke to a gathering of media at the museum after touring the exhibit, which takes visitors chronologically through the film’s three acts, with some relic or recreation from virtually every scene.

“I’m just so proud of the work they’ve done,” the 78-year-old said. “What they’ve put together here at this exhibition is just awesome. Every room has the minutiae of how this picture got together.”

Museum

“Clearly this is a very historic initiative for us,” museum director Amy Homma said before introducing the director and also announced the museum plans a full Spielberg retrospective in 2028.

“Jaws” has been essential to the Academy Museum, which opened in 2021 and is operated by the organization that gives out the Oscars.

The only surviving full-scale mechanical shark from the production, 25 feet in length and nicknamed “Bruce” by Spielberg after his lawyer, has permanently hung over the escalators since it opened.

Homma said Bruce has become an “unofficial mascot” that “helped to define this museum.”

The media preview was accompanied by a 68-piece orchestra playing John Williams’ score. Two of the musicians played on the original.

The exhibit includes a keyboard with instructions on how to play Williams’ famously ominous two-note refrain that a generation of children learned to tap out on the piano.

Similar novelties include a dolly-zoom setup to which visitors can attach their phone and shoot their own face to recreate perhaps the film’s most famous shot, the zoom-in to star Roy Scheider’s frightened gaze on the beach in the fictional town of Amity.

There is also a small scale-model of the film’s mechanical sharks that patrons can manually operate as crew members did at the time. And a photo-friendly recreation of the gallery of the Orca - the vessel that prompted Scheider to say “You’re gonna need a bigger boat” - where he, Richard Dreyfuss and Robert Shaw sat, drank, sang sea-shanties and compared scars and shark tales.

But it’s the real stuff from the production that really makes the show, with relics from both sides of the camera.

There’s that buoy initially kept by Lynn Murphy, a marine mechanic who worked on the film who lived in Martha’s Vineyard where the film was shot, before selling it to a collector in 1988.

And there is a dorsal fin prop that struck terror in beachgoers in the film and moviegoers in the theater, and a real great white shark’s jaw used for reference by the filmmakers that also appeared on screen.

Fashion



A model walks the runway during the Christian Siriano Spring/Summer 2026 fashion show as part of New York Fashion Week on Friday, Sept. 12, in New York. (AP)

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Hollywood’s struggling films shine at TIFF

At TIFF, mid-sized movie strives to survive

TORONTO, Sept 13, (AP): Anyone will tell you it’s the audiences that make the Toronto International Film Festival. They aren’t purely industry folks, like they are in Cannes or Venice, but more boisterous, enthusiastic moviegoers with their own rituals, like growling like buccaneers at the piracy warning that plays before each screening.

That real-moviegoer energy has always made TIFF a good measuring stick for not just what might catch on during Hollywood’s awards season, but also what will click with audiences. Yet there might be no more endangered species in today’s film industry than the kind of crowd-pleaser that thrives in Toronto.

More than most years, this year’s festival, which wraps up this weekend, has been a veritable ark for the castaways of today’s Hollywood: star-driven dramas, big-screen comedies, adult-oriented movies without a whiff of franchise about them. All struggled to reach the screen in the first place. But for many of these movies, the fight to reach audiences is just getting started.

One of the standouts was Derek Cianfrance’s “Roofman,” a stranger-than-fiction true tale about a North Carolina man (Channing Tatum) imprisoned for robbing dozens of McDonald’s by burrowing in from their roofs. He escapes prison and, instead of trying to outrun the authorities, hides out for weeks inside a Toys “R” Us. Cianfrance, the gritty realistic filmmaker of “Blue Valentine” and “The Place Beyond the Pines,” uses the story as a funny and oddly moving examination of box-store materialism. Paramount will release it Oct. 10.

“When I was shopping it around, a lot of people were saying, ‘We don’t make movies like this anymore,’” Cianfrance said. “So it’s really hard. It’s one of the reasons why there are so many production credits on the front of

the movie. I had to get it from everywhere to be able to do it.”

The movie industry is coming off a summer that fell painfully shy of expectations. May-to-Labor Day ticket sales at the North American box office came to about \$3.67 billion, according to Comscore, well short of the \$4 billion-plus season that was once automatic. You could point to numerous reasons for that, like the diminished potency of superhero films or that Sony Pictures Animation’s “KPop Demon Hunters,” the biggest hit of the summer, launched on Netflix, not in theaters.

But it’s also true that Hollywood, mostly concerned with hitting home runs, is badly in need of some doubles, too.

This year’s TIFF was full of good candidates, though some of them will be steered toward streaming platforms. That includes Rian Johnson’s deliciously gothic, surprisingly sincere, church-set whodunit “Wake Up Dead Man: A Knives Out Mystery,” which Netflix will give a two-week theatrical release despite its director’s strong affinity for theaters.

And Paul Greengrass’ “The Lost Bus,” a disaster movie for the age of climate change, will likewise get a quick two weeks in theaters before landing on Apple TV+. Starring Matthew McConaughey as a bus driver rescuing kids during the 2018 Camp Fire, Greengrass’ film viscerally captures the swift-spreading blaze, as well as the dry, tinderbox landscape it rose out of.

But even a brief theatrical run can be hard-won. Nia DaCosta’s “Hedda,” a stylish 1950s-set Ibsen adaptation starring Tessa Thompson, will launch in theaters Oct. 22 before detouring to Prime Video a week later.

“Literally three months after it was greenlit,



Channing Tatum, (left), and Kirsten Dunst pose for a portrait to promote the film ‘Roofman’ during the Toronto International Film Festival on Sunday, Sept. 7, in Toronto. (AP)

people were like: This movie wouldn’t happen anymore,” DaCosta said. “We were with Orion Pictures, a full theatrical release, and then the strikes happened. We were holding. We had to fight for the movie to stay alive. We lived but the consequence of that was theatrical window and then Prime Video. We did feel that industry shift. But I’m really proud we got to make it.”

“People put guarantees into their contracts, like it has to be theatrical,” she adds. “Studios do not care. They did it to (Christopher) Nolan. They can do it to any of us.”

When Aziz Ansari premiered his directorial debut, “Good Fortune,” he referenced that reality in his introduction. “Original theatrical comedy,” said Ansari. “Those are three words that are scary in our industry right now.”

“Good Fortune,” which Lionsgate will release Oct. 17, is a little clunky at times, but its satire of the gig economy isn’t off target, nor is

Keanu Reeves’ performance as a sweet but mistake-prone angel. Ansari plays a man driven to homelessness whose not-official guardian angel (Reeves), overstepping his bounds, swaps his life with that of a much wealthier man (Seth Rogen).

It was one of two movies at TIFF trying for a throwback kind of high-concept comedy. The other was David Freyne’s “Eternity.” It’s set in a retro-designed afterlife way station where the dead select an eternity to live in. Joan (Elizabeth Olsen) is forced to choose between living out her afterlife with her husband of 65 years (Miles Teller) or her first husband, who died fighting in Korea (Callum Turner). Again, the (sort of) guardian angels in charge of guiding each soul - Da’Vine Joy Randolph and John Early - steal the show.

“Eternity,” inspired by “A Matter of Life and Death” and almost certainly the most traditional movie A24 has ever released, will, like “Good Fortune,” try to find a comedy audience that’s mostly been left to the streamers. But tastes are always changing. Donna Langley, chief of Universal Pictures, noted as much in her talk at the festival.

Fate, like it does in “Eternity” and “Good Fortune,” will soon have its say for this year’s crop of crowd pleasers in search of ticket-buying crowds. Some signs are ominous. Last year’s winner of the festival’s People’s Choice Award - the most watched honor of TIFF and usually a signal of a surefire best-picture nomination - went to the Stephen King adaptation “The Life of Chuck.” Mike Flanagan’s film didn’t have distribution at the time, and when Neon ultimately released it in June, “The Life of Chuck” went mostly unnoticed. It was a reminder that success in Toronto no longer guarantees anything.

Variety

NEW YORK: Singer Taylor Swift can answer questions in October - if she is forced - from attorneys involved in the sexual harassment and retaliation lawsuit actor Blake Lively brought against Justin Baldoni stemming from their roles in the movie “It Ends With Us,” but she doesn’t have much to offer, her lawyer said Friday.

Attorney J. Douglas Baldrige noted in a letter to the New York federal judge presiding over the dispute that “we have consistently maintained that my client has no material role in this action.”

“Further, my client did not agree to a deposition, but if she is forced into a deposition, we advised (after first hearing about the deposition just three days ago) that her schedule would accommodate the time required during the week of

October 20 if the parties were able to work out their disputes,” Baldrige said.

Lively sued Baldoni last December, alleging sexual harassment. Baldoni and production company Wayfarer Studios countersued Lively and her husband, “Deadpool” actor Ryan Reynolds, accusing them of defamation and extortion. A judge dismissed Baldoni’s claims in June. (AP)

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LOS ANGELES: Shaun White and Nina Dobrev have called off their engagement and brought an end to their five-year relationship, a person close to the couple told The Associated Press.

The three-time Olympic champion snowboarder and the former star of “The Vampire Diaries” made a mutual decision to part, according to the person.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation.

People magazine first reported the breakup.

White, 39, and Dobrev, 36, went public about their relationship in 2020. One of their first Instagram posts, which came toward the start of the COVID lockdown, showed Dobrev giving a “quarantine haircut” to the Olympic half-pipe rider known in his younger days as “The Flying Tomato” for his long shocks of red hair.

They shared occasional posts about their travels over the next few years, and supported each other’s careers. Dobrev followed White on his frenetic road to qualifying for his fifth and final Olympics in 2022 and White was front and



Dobrev

center in 2023 for the Los Angeles premier of Dobrev’s Netflix movie, “The Out-Laws.” (AP)

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LONDON: The Netherlands added itself Friday to a list of countries pressuring organizers of the Eurovision Song Contest to drop Israel from the contest because of its war in the Gaza Strip.

Dutch broadcaster AVROTROS, one of dozens of public broadcasters that collectively fund and broadcast the contest, said it would not take part in next year’s competition in Vienna if Israel participates “given the ongoing and severe human suffering in Gaza.”

“The broadcaster also expresses deep concern about the serious erosion of press freedom: the deliberate exclusion of independent international reporting and the many casualties among journalists,” it said in a statement.

Irish broadcaster RTE released a similar state-

ment Thursday, following a path already taken by Slovenia. Iceland said it may withdraw from the contest and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has called for Israel to be booted from the competition.

The European Broadcasting Union, which runs the contest, said it was consulting its members on how to “manage participation and geopolitical tensions” around the contest and would give them until mid-December to decide if they want to participate.

“We understand the concerns and deeply held views around the ongoing conflict in the Middle East,” said Martin Green, director of Eurovision. “It is up to each member to decide if they want to take part in the contest and we would respect any decision broadcasters make.”

The boycott threat is part of a pressure campaign by arts organizations and figures to ostracize Israel and press for peace. (AP)

‘AI should be used to save the planet ... not for art’

Former poet laureate Limón says artists must band together

NEW YORK, Sept 13, (AP): During her three years as the 24th poet laureate, Ada Limón said her travels around the United States taught her just how many poets the country has.

Limón said people would approach her during appearances to tell her they wrote poems regularly in a journal, or on a full moon or with their children.

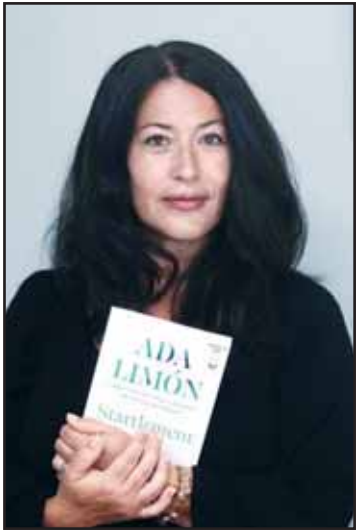
“They might not be publishing poems, they might not even be sharing poems, but there are many people that are secret poets,” Limón said.

Limón’s term, which ended in April, included writing a poem engraved on a spacecraft on its way to Jupiter’s moon Europa and spearheading a program placing poems at seven national parks. Her new book, “Startlement: New and Selected Poems” comes out Sept. 30.

Limón said selecting the works to include in her collection was difficult because she usually approaches her books as though they’re one poem. The author said she had to decide how to build a new poem out of these collected works.

“It was more difficult than I thought,” Limón said. “And once I really sat down and did it and listened to the poems and tried to figure out which poem wanted to have this new life, it shifted.”

In an interview with The Associated Press, Limón spoke about her time as poet laureate, her new book and her concerns about the current political environment’s impact on the arts. This



Ada Limón, 24th Poet Laureate of the United States, poses with a copy of her book ‘Startlement’ in Sonoma County, Calif., on Friday, Aug. 22, 2025. (AP)

interview has been edited for clarity and length.

AP: In your poetry, you seem to find wonder both in nature and seemingly trivial exchanges. I imagine that has to require a lot of focus. How do you cultivate that and how you maintain that with so much distraction right now?

Limón: I love that you bring this up because just today I was having such a difficult moment with my phone. I wanted to post something about a recent reading I did in Yosemite, and then of course because I did that, I was then bound to the phone. ... I was again in this complicated relationship with what should be a tool, and then suddenly felt like my boss.

So I think that my job as a poet is to not lose the amazement, not lose the wonderment at the world. So I find myself often having to put devices away, having to be delighted when I am out of range, if you will, and really start noticing the strangeness of the world. But it’s not just in nature. Human beings are bizarre. Our existence is bizarre. How we relate to one another provides an endless amount of terror and amusement. ... And if I’m doing my job, being in a body noticing, there is no end to poems that can be written about that.

AP: Before and after Donald Trump returned to the White House, did that have any kind of effect on your job as poet laureate, or any kind of pressures in terms of what you were able or not able to do?

Limón: I think that, like everyone I know, this new administration has shifted our moral center in a way that feels drastic and evident. The biggest thing for me personally was that the Trump administration let go of Dr. Car-

la Hayden unceremoniously. She was serving her 10-year term as the Librarian of Congress, doing a remarkable job opening the Library of Congress up to the people in a way that had never been open before. She named it “the people’s library” and her firing, I think, was really emblematic of the trouble that is here and the trouble that’s coming.

AP: Were you ever told to lay off certain topics or certain things that you speak about publicly?

Limón: The poet laureate is technically an employee of the library. We’re not funded by the US government directly. It’s through the library and it’s through a donation. So because of that, we’re asked not to speak about policy, just like anyone who worked for the federal government, whether you were a park ranger or you were a librarian. That being said, there was nothing that happened directly to me as a result of the new administration, aside from the firing of Dr. Carla Hayden.

The other thing that I will say was momentous was that my project, “You are Here: Poetry in the Parks and Poetry in the Natural World,” was meant to go into every single national park. And we began with seven, we unveiled these beautiful poems, and it was such an incredible experience. And it was meant to continue. And because of funding issues and because of the new administration’s sort of attack on national parks,

that program is now on pause.

AP: We’ve seen Smithsonian museums go through a review of language in their exhibits, National Park signs have been changed or reported for possible changes and fights over literature in libraries and public schools. What kind of impact does this have on the humanities for the long term?

Limón: I think these are dangerous times. I think that as artists we really have to hold true to what we believe in. We have to maintain our moral center even as funding resources dry up and even as we are asked to toe the line, if you will, so I think it’s really important to remember who we are and however it is that we move in the world - whether it’s the activist poets that are doing remarkable work or whether it’s someone who’s quietly writing in order to save themselves ... and I’m seeing that even in my own work, how I protect myself, how I find my courage, how I find my strength, how we rely on one another.

I think it’s really important to gather right now. I think it’s really important to remember where our power comes from and however we use our art. However we use our voices or our ears or our paintings, our bodies, whatever it is that we do to make this work, the art, the work of life, I think we need to keep doing it and we need to make sure that we aren’t losing sight of the soul.

AP: There’s a lot of attention on

people using artificial intelligence and ChatGPT for writing — not just students but also adults. As someone who has dedicated her life to writing and teaching about writing, what concerns does that raise?

Limón: I am morally opposed to the use of AI, particularly for the creation of art. I think that if we are to use artificial intelligence for anything, it should be used to address the climate crisis. I think it should be used for medicine, I think it should be used to help save the planet and I don’t think it should be used for art or for essays or for cognitive thinking.

I think we are in grave danger of losing critical thought and I know I’ve said “danger” a few times in this interview. But I feel it. And I think we should be really open to the possibility that AI has been a mistake. I also think we should be open to the fact that what is it in us that creates something and asks it to make art? I feel it’s because we’re asking it if it has a soul. I think every time we see something that is made, we know it doesn’t.

AP: What’s your next project?

Limón: I am writing prose about my life. I just moved back to my hometown, and I actually bought my childhood home. So it is really bringing up a lot of ideas about time, ideas about identity, how we find where we belong. I’m writing about that and seeing where that takes me.

Fashion

Kors’ style and wearability attract starry crowd

Siriano channels classic cinema at NY show

NEW YORK, Sept 13, (AP): Hidden behind cream curtains, designer Christian Siriano transformed the athleisure aisles of the Herald Square Macy’s department store into a cinematic universe as he ushered his New York Fashion Week runway show attendees on a journey through film from black-and-white gowns to full Technicolor looks.

Much like his inspiration for his runway show, the VIP guestlist was straight out of Hollywood. Whoopi Goldberg sat between Oprah and singer Lizzo. Front row celebrities cheered as longtime Siriano muse Coco Rocha opened the catwalk in her classic high powered supermodel strut, wearing a black-and-white stripe and polka dot organza blazer paired with a mini skirt and matching hat.

For his spring 2026 collection, Siriano said he drew inspiration from actor Marlene Dietrich and how she played with both feminine and masculine styles.

“A lot of the collection is black-and-white, but a lot of texture,” he said. “We have this beautiful plaid sequin, polka dot, stripes ... that she’s worn in her kind of repertoire of clothes and then we end in this idea of like, what if all of a sudden the film turned to color?”

Sticking with the old Hollywood glamour theme, models wore their hair in slick backed buns with one pin curl wave. In a modern twist, some models wore their structured blazers with only tights.

From tailored blazers to voluminous bubble dresses, Siriano played with patterns and structure throughout his collection.

Siriano relied on his color palette to transport attendees to the silver screen with black-and-white patterns from polka dots, stripes and plaid at the top of his show before transitioning his looks to Technicolor fabrics including a tiffany blue ball gown and a barbie pink deconstructed tuxedo dress.

The show was a first for “White Lotus” star Natasha Rothwell. “I want to spend an insane amount of money,” she said after the show. “For my first fashion show, it was everything.”

Attendees came dressed ready for the drama in their tulle and corsets. Singer Adam Lambert arrived in a bronze belted blazer coat with matching oversized bronze sunglasses shades.

On the runway, Siriano dressed models of all sizes, genders and backgrounds in his designs. The designer continues to champion inclusivity while others have pulled back.

“It’s just important to have a mix of beautiful people, he said.

Siriano accessorized his designs with an array of flat top and oversized whimsical hats. The designer himself has worn his fair share of hats.

Siriano, who won the design competition “Project Runway” in 2007, recently returned to offer his expertise as a mentor to emerging designers on the newest iteration of the show, which features image architect Law Roach and supermodel Heidi Klum.

Siriano is also serving as creative director for Macy’s ready-to-wear I.N.C. brand as it marks 40 years. Siriano said by bringing fashion week to Macy’s he hoped to bring customers back to retail shopping.

Minutes before the start of the runway show, Siriano’s backstage crew were sewing and touching up



A model walks the runway during the Christian Siriano Spring/Summer 2026 fashion show as part of New York Fashion Week on Friday, Sept. 12, in New York. (AP)

the final look of the night worn by Rocha, whose showstopping moments have become a signature element of Siriano’s shows. In a black-and-white polka dot billowing gown, Rocha elegantly posed as she sauntered in the off-the-shoulder tulle look to close the catwalk

“I love my shows to be a little bit more like a performance too,” Siriano said. “I want people to feel like when they walk in the room, they’re in a different world. We work so hard on making all these beautiful things, and I think it’s escapism. We need that so much right now.”

Michael Kors

Michael Kors was feeling loose as he brought his love of nature to urban New York City, for a celebrity-heavy Spring/Summer 2026 show at New York Fashion Week Thursday.

The iconic designer likes to make his guests comfortable in his clothes and at his shows, so he turned an empty warehouse space into a cozy room inspired by his beach house, lit by giant paper lanterns, with wood paneling and side tables filled with ceramic vases and succulent plants.

The front row was buzzing as stars like Gwyneth Paltrow, Olivia Wilde, Leslie Bibb, Ariana DeBose and Suki Waterhouse chatted before the show.

Kors called the collection “earthly elegance” and says he was inspired by recent trips to tropical destinations where they know how to deal with the weather.

“How do you take those lessons, whether it’s, you know, pareos and sarongs from Bali and Polynesia, how do you bring those to Manhat-



A model presents Michael Kors creation during fashion show in New York, Sept 11. (AP)

tan?” Kors mused to The Associated Press backstage before the show. “How do you take all these wonderful soft draped trousers you would find in Morocco and how do you make that urban and make that work in a city?”

All the clothes had a loose feel, starting with oversized button-down silk blouses paired with loose cargo, or wool crepe draped culotte pants. White linen matching sets of skirts and pants looked like aspirational yacht-wear. The fabrics were all light and often sheer, lending to the comfort and wearability.

The dominating colors were Kors’ typical black, white, and brown, but with accents of buttery yellow and pink. “There’s a lot of beautiful earth tones, so gorgeous shades of brown and branch col-



A model walks the runway during the Michael Kors SS 2026 fashion show in New York on Sept 11. (AP)



A model showcases Michael Kors' SS 2026 creation. (AP)



A model walks the runway during the Michael Kors SS 2026 fashion show. (AP)

ors, and olive and all of these colors that you would find in nature,” Kors said. “But then highlighted all of that with beautiful sunset shades of pink that you find in the desert, beautiful yellows that you would find in a gorgeous sunrise.”

Suiting is a must for Kors core, and several looks included oversized blazers in wool gaberdine or linen. Some had a softened look with no lapels - some even sleeveless - but others were more classic with a bikini top underneath for a modern touch.

Shoes were flat sandals or open-toed chunky heels, blending comfort and style. Kors also loves a coat and a brass leather trench with matching metallic purse was a standout moment.

Even the eveningwear had an easy feel, as tank dresses made of hand-embroidered paillettes



A model walks the runway during the Michael Kors SS 2026 fashion show. (AP)



A model walks the runway during the Michael Kors SS 2026 fashion show. (AP)

with sheer bottoms continued the flowy vibe. Paillette covered pants were covered in sheer draped jersey, which could be dressed up or down.

Accessories featured extra-long leather tassels dripping off earrings and handbags, and exaggerated leather belts cinching the models’ waists but dangled down.

Actor Olivia Munn said everything in the collection looked “comfortable and chic.”

Also:

MILAN: After a lifetime of spurning would-be business suitors, the late Italian designer **Giorgio Armani** instructed his heirs to sell an initial 15% minority stake in his vast fashion empire, with priority to the French conglomerate LVMH, the eyewear giant Essilor-Luxottica or the cosmetics company L’Oreal.

Armani gave control of 40% of his business empire to his longtime collaborator and head of menswear Leo Dell’Orco, and another 15% each to niece Silvana Armani, the head of womenswear, and nephew **Andrea Camerana**, according to his business will posted online Friday by the Italian daily La Repubblica.

The Armani Foundation, which he established in 2016 as a succession vehicle, will control the remaining 30%.

Armani, one of the most recognizable names and faces in Italian fashion, died on Sept. 4 at the age of 91. Two wills, one for his business empire and the other for his private property, were deposited with Italian tax authorities on Thursday, and widely reported by Italian media on Friday.

FIT exhibition

Style through Freud’s lens

NEW YORK, Sept 13, (AP): Fashion and Freud? From top hats to stilettos, bustiers to bullet dresses, what we choose to put on our backs is interpreted through the lens of psychoanalysis in a new exhibit five years in the making.

Valerie Steele, director of The Museum at FIT, curated nearly 100 designer pieces to offer a road map of sorts between fashion and such things as the unconscious mind, the need for armor and the pull of desire.

And she noted during a walk-through of the exhibit a day before last Wednesday’s opening that Freud himself was a fashionista, in rigidly conventional English-style suits made of the best materials and tailored to perfection.

While Steele, 69, has never spent time on a psychoanalyst’s couch, she’s been intrigued by the practice’s interplay with fashion for quite some time.

“Ever since I was in graduate school, when I started to focus on the history of fashion, it seemed to me that despite all of the dead ends and real problems with psychoanalysis, it did provide clues to explaining the power and allure of fashion, as well as the hostility that is addressed to fashion,” she said.

Psychology

Here are some takeaways from the exhibit, “Dress, Dreams & Desire: Fashion and Psychoanalysis,” which runs at the Fashion Institute of Technology’s museum from Sept. 10 to Jan. 4. Steele has written a companion book due out in November.

Historian Peter Gay once wrote: “We all speak Freud, whether we know it or not.” Fashion is no exception.

As the exhibit notes, Marc Jacobs put out a simple dress in 1990 called the “Freudian Slip.” It was emblazoned with the image of Freud. John Galliano created a collection for Dior called “Freud or Fetish” in 2000. It was an exploration of sexual fantasy.

“I am trying to symbolize what fetishism evokes in the psychology of clothing,” Galliano said in his show notes.

Prada, meanwhile, debuted a film at the Cannes Film Festival in 2012 titled “A Therapy.” It was directed by Roman Polanski and features Helena Bonham Carter as patient and Ben Kingsley as psychoanalyst. At one point, the analyst dons his patient’s fur coat and gazes at himself in a mirror as we hear her ask: “What does it all mean?”

The exhibit includes a cropped black velvet jacket that Elsa Schiaparelli created back in 1938. It’s called the “Hall of Mirrors,” for trompe l’oeil gold and silver mirrors at the breast with glass sequins and buttons that evoke classical busts.

It was a meditation on how women were culturally perceived.



A ‘Celestial Eye Suit’ by Larry Shox is displayed during a press preview for the exhibit ‘Dress, Dreams and Desire: Fashion and Psychoanalysis’ on Tuesday, Sept. 9, at The Museum at FIT in New York. (AP)

New vaccine reduces RSV hospitalizations by 90%

Kuwait offers ‘Nirsevimab’ vaccine for infants, first in the Middle East

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: In a remarkable medical advancement, the Ministry of Health reached a new milestone through the launch of ‘Nirsevimab’ vaccine for infants, positioning Kuwait as the first nation in the Middle East to offer this advanced vaccine.

This initiative underscores the dedication of the ministry to enhance drug safety and keep pace with the latest global medical breakthroughs in disease

control.

In an interview with Kuwait TV, pediatric consultant at Jaber Hospital Dr. Dana Al-Haqan disclosed that the vaccine is for groups most susceptible to health complications, effectively preventing respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) -- a prevalent pediatric illness during the winter season.

She elaborated that this virus is not new in Kuwait, being classified as a seasonal virus that spreads among children in the Gulf region from September until the end of March. “While its symptoms are generally mild – runny

nose, cough and fever, it could worsen in certain groups, necessitating hospitalization or intensive care,” she added.

Dr. Khalid Kalander, another pediatric consultant at Jaber Hospital, said the vaccine contains antibodies engineered to target the virus and mitigate its complications. He cited studies proving that the vaccine reduces hospital and intensive care admissions by 70 percent to 90 percent.

He confirmed that the vaccine is available in all of the facilities of the ministry and it is administered to infants below eight months of age, with priority given to those deemed at highest risk.

Beauty sleep isn’t a myth

How sleep keeps your skin healthy, youthful

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.

□ □ □

By Joanna Fong-Isariya-wongse
University of Pittsburgh

Have you ever woken up after a night of poor sleep, glanced in the mirror and thought, “I look tired?”

You’re not imagining it.

I am a neurologist who specializes in sleep medicine. And though “beauty sleep” may sound like a fairy tale, a growing body of research confirms that sleep directly shapes how our skin looks, how youthful it appears and even how attractive others perceive us to be.

Sleep is not just down time. Your body moves through distinct stages that serve different restorative functions. Deep, slow-wave sleep is the primary stage during which the body prioritizes tissue repair, muscle recovery and collagen production.

Growth hormone is released during this sleep stage, with most daily secretion occurring in the early part of the night. This hormone drives the body’s repair and rebuilding processes, helping to heal tissues, restore muscles and boost the production of collagen, the protein that keeps skin firm and elastic.

Slow-wave sleep also creates a unique hormonal environment that benefits the skin. Cortisol, the body’s main stress hormone, falls to its lowest point during this stage. Lower cortisol protects collagen, reduces inflammation and supports the skin barrier. At the same time, higher levels of growth hormone and prolactin, a hormone that helps regulate the immune system and cell growth, enhance immune function and tissue repair, helping skin recover from daily stressors.

These signals are subtle but socially significant. Observers are less inclined to interact with or approach someone who looks sleep-deprived. Sleep also affects empathy and aesthetic perception, meaning that people who are well rested not only view others more positively but are also, in turn, viewed more positively by others. This reciprocal effect may help explain why job interviewers, dates, or even friends tend to respond more favorably to a well-rested face.

Sleep even influences how we perceive ourselves. People with poor sleep often report lower satisfaction with their own appearance.

Prioritizing sleep is a powerful and accessible way to support appearance and overall health. So the next time you consider trading sleep for a few extra hours of work or entertainment, remember that your skin, your health and even your social presence will benefit from those hours of rest. (AP)

Function

The skin is your body’s largest organ, and it works hard while you sleep. Adequate sleep promotes hydration and barrier function, helping your skin maintain moisture and resist irritation. In contrast, sleep deprivation increases water loss through the skin, leaving it drier and more vulnerable to damage and visible signs of aging.

Sleep also plays a role in acne, a common skin condition that affects people of all ages. Poor sleep can raise inflammation and stress hormones such as cortisol, both of which may worsen breakouts. Consistent, restorative sleep, on the other hand, supports your skin’s ability

ity to regulate oil production and recover from irritation.

Collagen repair and elasticity also depend heavily on adequate rest. In one study, short-term sleep restriction, defined as just three hours of sleep per night for two nights in a row, reduced skin elasticity and made wrinkles more noticeable.

Chronic sleep deficiency, also known in sleep medicine as insufficient sleep syndrome, refers to getting fewer than seven hours of sleep per night for at least three months, accompanied by daytime fatigue or impaired functioning. This state disrupts collagen production, weakens the skin barrier and fuels low-grade inflammation that undermines healing.

Damage

Studies show that the hormonal disruptions that occur with sleep loss elevate cortisol and accelerate oxidative stress, an imbalance between cell-damaging molecules and the body’s defenses, while impairing the very processes that keep skin resilient. Over time, these changes accelerate biological aging and leave the body less resilient to daily stressors.

Sleep loss does not only affect how skin functions. It also changes how the face appears to others. Controlled studies show that even after a few nights of reduced sleep, others consistently rated them as less attractive, less healthy and more fatigued. Common cues include paler skin, darker under-eye circles, red or swollen eyes, drooping eyelids and downturned mouth corners.

These signals are subtle but socially significant. Observers are less inclined to interact with or approach someone who looks sleep-deprived. Sleep also affects empathy and aesthetic perception, meaning that people who are well rested not only view others more positively but are also, in turn, viewed more positively by others. This reciprocal effect may help explain why job interviewers, dates, or even friends tend to respond more favorably to a well-rested face.

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MoH adopts AI to improve diagnostics, treatment

Kuwait’s healthcare enters new era with AI-powered revolution

KUWAIT, Sept 13, (KUNA): As artificial intelligence (AI) rapidly expands worldwide across sectors, Kuwait Ministry of Health has moved to apply it in diagnosis, treatment and training of medical personnel to keep pace with advanced developments and deliver top-tier medical and health services.

The Ministry has drawn plans to integrate AI tools in hospitals to improve the speed and accuracy of diagnostics, support clinical care, enhance health research and drug development, and streamline administrative operations.

Key initiatives launched in hospitals span various specialties, particularly medical imaging, surgery and scientific research, after AI proved it contributed to reducing medical errors and easing surgical procedures in less time than conventional operations while delivering more precise outcomes.

Among these efforts, Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital employs AI in surgery and endoscopy, including ICG blood-flow technology and robotic systems, across general surgery, urology, obstetrics and gynecology.

The Ministry recently chaired a GCC workshop, “Innovation and AI in Healthcare,” focusing on deploying technology and AI to develop health systems, improve service quality and strengthen Gulf cooperation.

Kuwait is also keen to leverage AI applications to respond to patient inquiries, explain test results, discuss prescriptions and help direct patients to the appropriate specialty.

In parallel, Kuwait’s healthcare is undergoing a major transformation, with AI reshaping delivery in medicine, diagnostics and treatment.

Therapies

AI has moved from theory to a practical tool that changes healthcare contours, from high-precision early diagnosis and faster drug discovery to personalized therapies tailored to each patient.

This transformation is rooted in “augmented intelligence,” positioning AI as a partner to the physician, not a replacement, handling routine tasks and big-data analysis while doctors and researchers focus on clinical decision-making and human interaction.

Reflecting this integration are research efforts at Dasman Diabetes Institute, advances in dentistry, and contributions of nuclear medicine to improve image quality and develop targeted “theranostics,” alongside data quality and protection strategies that make care more precise and efficient.

Dr. Anwar Mohammad, a researcher at the Department of Translational Research at the Dasman Diabetes Institute, told KUNA that AI has become pivotal in advancing medical and research sciences, achieving a qualitative leap in predicting protein structures and DNA/RNA interactions thanks to tools such as AlphaFold, opening avenues to accelerate drug discovery by precisely identifying therapeutic targets and understanding disease mechanisms at the molecular level.

He added that AI shortened time and effort in drug discovery and genomics by analyzing vast biological datasets more accurately than tra-



KUNA Photo

An artistic illustration symbolizing the integration of AI and medicine.

ditional methods and mapping gene interactions critical to understanding chronic diseases such as diabetes.

He noted AI’s role in early diagnosis by enabling detection of precise genetic/protein biomarkers in blood to predict risk of conditions such as type 2 diabetes before symptoms appear.

Protein structure prediction techniques are also being adapted to interpret large patient datasets (lab results and genomics), linking molecular changes to clinical outcomes to improve diagnostic accuracy and advance personalized care.

He said challenges include the need for high-quality, diverse data, the difficulty of interpreting complex models and linking them to clinical practice, and ethical considerations including patient-data privacy.

Diseases

He affirmed that specialties expected to benefit most in coming years include endocrinology and metabolic diseases, particularly diabetes, along with genomic and personalized medicine centered on gene-based therapies, and oncology, where AI can support development of a new generation of targeted treatments.

He explained that AI strengthens precision medicine by analyzing genomic and clinical data to design individualized treatment plans that reduce side effects, citing Mayo Clinics use of ECG-based algorithms to detect left ventricular dysfunction before symptoms, and support for robotic surgery systems such as Da Vinci to increase accuracy and reduce invasiveness.

He also pointed to challenges - patient-data privacy, algorithmic bias and slow regulatory frameworks - emphasizing that the future lies in integrating AI with human expertise to reinforce critical thinking and humane patient communication.

Dr. Abdullah Maarafi, a dentist, said AI was moving dentistry into an era of predictive, personalized, precise and participatory care, acting as a “clinical co-pilot” that augments

the dentists role across all treatment stages.

He said AI helps detect early tooth decay and measure alveolar bone levels with 94.4 percent accuracy via deep-learning radiographic analysis, outperforming dentists 91.1 percent accuracy, citing the FDA-cleared Overjet platform.

He added that AI extends to diagnosing periodontal disease with accuracy exceeding 90 percent using photographic analysis; supporting implantology through 3D cone-beam CT analysis to map nerves, assess bone volume and plan optimal implant paths with robotic systems such as Yomi.

He noted AI advances orthodontics via automated analysis and tooth-movement simulation in systems like Invisalign, enabling visualization of outcomes before treatment and improving clinic administration by streamlining appointments and speeding administrative processes.

Key challenges include implementation costs and specialized training needs, he said, calling for academic curricula that prepare AI-enabled dentists.

Meanwhile, Chairwoman of the Kuwait Association of Nuclear Medicine Technologists and Practitioners Ahoud Al-Enezi told KUNA that AI is driving a revolution in nuclear medicine by improving diagnosis and enabling precise therapies for diseases such as cancer.

She said AI operates as an integrated partner with nuclear medicine by analyzing PET and SPECT images with high accuracy to reveal subtle details that expedite diagnosis, noting FDA-cleared AI devices increased from six in 2015 to 221 in 2023.

She added that AI enhances image quality with systems such as GE HealthCares Clarify DL, reducing radiation doses by up to 50 percent while automating tumor detection and activity quantification to save time and effort. She said AI also supports theranostics, combining diagnosis and therapy with the same molecular target.

16 deaths

Ebola shots hit Congo hotspot

KINSHASA, Congo, Sept 13, (AP): Limited access and scarce funds are the key challenges facing health officials trying to respond to the latest Ebola outbreak in southern Congo, the World Health Organization said Friday.

It is the first Ebola outbreak in 18 years in Kasai province, a remote part of Congo with poor road networks, which is more than 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) from the nation’s capital of Kinshasa.

A United Nations peacekeeping helicopter was used to help deliver 400 vaccine doses Friday to the outbreak’s epicenter, in the locality of Bulape, Patrick Otim, WHO’s program area manager, said at a briefing in Geneva.

An additional 1,500 doses will be sent from the capital of Kinshasa, he said.

“We have struggled in the last seven days with access but are collaborating with MONUSCO (UN peacekeeping mission in Congo) now,” Otim said.

While the WHO and Congolese authorities have “ramped up efforts to have a full scale response” on the ground, “we need to be able to pay for the operations,” he added.

Outbreak

Since the outbreak was confirmed on Sept. 4, the number of suspected cases has increased from 28 to 68, Africa’s top health agency said Thursday. The Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has so far reported 16 deaths.

Otim said the most recent confirmed case was located 70 kilometers (43 miles) from the current epicenter, though it’s still in the same province. “Our worry is if we get cases in the other health zone, we need to expand and it will be resource-intensive,” he said.

WHO’s projected cost for the current outbreak over the next three months is \$20 million, while Congo’s national response plan is estimated at \$78 million, said Otim.

A major concern for health officials has been the impact of recent US funding cuts. The US had supported the response to Congo’s past Ebola outbreaks, including in 2021 when the US Agency for International Development provided up to \$11.5 million to support efforts across Africa.

At least four health workers are among the confirmed cases, according to Mathias Mossoko, Congo’s Ebola response coordinator in Bulape.

“For now, our priority is to vaccinate health care workers. Given the number of cases and deaths among health care providers, protecting these front line workers is essential to ensure the population receives adequate care,” he said.

At least 94% of the suspected cases’ contacts - more than 600 people - have been traced with only one so far confirmed to be infected, Mossoko said, adding that there’s minimal risk of the disease spreading to other provinces.

“At this stage, it is not yet appropriate to declare a public health emergency,” he said.

‘Target cancer cells’

China creates ‘nano-tagging tool’ to boost cancer immunotherapy

SHANGHAI, Sept 13, (Xinhua): In cancer immunotherapy, immune cells inside the body need to receive strong and enough “signals” to attack cancer cells. However, cancer cells are adept at disguising themselves, with very sparse natural signals on their surfaces.

To accurately identify cancer cells, a research team led by Han Shuo from the Center for Excellence in Molecular Cell Science at the Chinese Academy of Sciences has applied proximity labeling technology from chemical biology research to disease treatment.

They have successfully constructed an engineered nanozyme that responds to deep-red light or ultrasound, which is described as a “nano-tagging robot” that can precisely identify cancer cells, according to Han.

The nanozyme can carry antibodies or ligands that recognize cancer cells, and enrich on the surface of cancer cells through blood circulation. By giving instructions through deep-red light or ultrasound, it can clearly tag cancer cells, turning them into targets.

The researchers also injected a specially-made BITE molecule into mice in experiments, which can not only

highlight the targets, but also activate immune T cells to join the fight against cancer.

“This tagging can also activate the whole-body immune system to form long-term memory, as if a ‘tumor vaccine’ has been administered in the body,” said Han.

The study has achieved good therapeutic effects in both experimental mouse tumor models and in vitro clinical tumor samples. It is expected to pave a new path for the development of smarter and more efficient next-generation immunotherapies, according to Han.

Their study was published Wednesday online in the journal Nature.

Meanwhile, Chinese State Councilor Shen Yiqin on Friday urged efforts to develop the rehabilitation and assistive device industry for people with disabilities, thus further boosting their wellbeing.

Shen, also director of the State Council’s working committee for disabled people, made the remarks while attending the 2025 Care & Rehabilitation Expo China (CR Expo), which was held in Beijing.

NEW YORK, Sept 13, (AP): Federal health officials intend to award a contract to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute to investigate whether there is a link between vaccinations and autism, according to a government procurement notice.

The Troy, New York, engineering school is getting the no-bid contract because of its “unique ability” to link data on children and mothers, according to the notice posted this week.

Officials at the Department of Health and Human Services did not immediately respond to questions about the notice, including how much the contract is for or what exactly the researchers intend to do.

US Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a leading voice in the antivaccine movement before President Donald Trump selected him to oversee federal health agencies, announced in April a “massive testing and research effort” to determine the cause of autism by this month. He has repeatedly tried to link vaccines to the condition.

An RPI biotech engineering professor, Juergen Hahn, has used arti-

ficial intelligence and machine learning techniques to look for patterns in blood samples of children with autism. Hahn “is renowned for the quality and rigor of his research,” RPI officials said in a statement acknowledging the intended grant.

“If this project is awarded, he intends to publish the results of his work at the conclusion of the project,” the statement added.

The Associated Press left messages seeking comment from Hahn.



US Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. attends a news conference, Aug. 5, 2025, in Anchorage,

Study at RPI uses AI to decode blood-based signals

US gov’t to fund research into vaccines and autism

The notice raises many questions, said Alycia Halladay, who oversees research activities and grants for the Autism Science Foundation.

RPI is not known in the field as having any special access to data on this kind of question and “wouldn’t be the obvious choice,” Halladay said.

It’s also not clear how the contract fits into other autism research that the government may be planning, she said.

But perhaps the biggest question is why money is being spent on such a study at all, she added.

Scientists have ruled out a link between vaccines and autism, finding no evidence of increased rates of autism among those who are vaccinated compared with those who are not.

“The question has been studied for 20 years, multiple times by researchers around the world using millions of people, and there has never been a credible association found between vaccines and autism,” Halladay said.

Those who have spent decades researching autism have found no single cause. Genetics play a role,

and other factors include the age of a child’s father, the mother’s weight, and whether she had diabetes or was exposed to certain chemicals.

Whatever amount is being spent on the project could instead be going to “other important research questions,” including studies of genetics and environmental factors, Halladay said.

“I think that’s the most frustrating part,” she said.

For months, HHS officials have been trying to use vaccine safety data compiled by the CDC to look for harms that might be tied to shots. Kennedy has accused CDC leaders of stonewalling those efforts, but the actual obstacle has been something else, said one former federal health official familiar with the situation, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation.

About a dozen medical research organizations collect the vaccine safety data and report it to the CDC. Contracts that stretch back nearly two decades give those entities - not the CDC - control over the data, and HHS has not yet been able to get it, the official said.

Pakistan begins Asia Cup with 93-run win over Oman



Pakistan's Mohammad Haris plays a shot during the Asia Cup Cricket match between Oman and Pakistan at Dubai International Cricket stadium in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Friday, Sept. 12, 2025. (AP)

‘Seb and Vincent achieved a magnificent victory’

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing marks 102nd WRC victory with 1-2 finish at Rally del Paraguay

ASUNCIÓN, Sept. 13: TOYOTA GAZOO Racing World Rally Team (TGR-WRT) delivered a commanding one-two finish on the FIA World Rally Championship's (WRC) debut in Rally del Paraguay, led by Sébastien Ogier and Vincent Landais in the No. 17 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1. The crew claimed their first-ever South American victory and Ogier's fourth victory of the season, finishing ahead of teammates Elfyn Evans and Scott Martin in the No. 33 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1.

The team's ninth win of the season is also Toyota's 102nd in WRC history, a total that now places it alongside the record for most victories by any manufacturer and extends its manufacturers' lead to 100 points with four rounds remaining.

Akio Toyoda, TGR-WRT Chairman, commented: "On the tough and completely new roads of Paraguay, Seb and Vincent achieved a magnificent victory. Thank you for never giving up and continuing to push through such rough conditions and bad weather! Elfyn and Scott also secured second place, and I'm really glad they were able to maintain the championship lead!"

Taking on the challenge of a rally on unfamiliar roads without even the chance for a pre-event test must have been incredibly tough, both in preparation and in the event itself. The efforts of every single team member led to this fantastic result. Thanks to that, this rally became a very meaningful one in our fight for the championship. Well done, team!

One more rally remains here in South America, and after that the fight continues in Europe, Japan, and the Middle East with big transfers in between. Please continue to put health first as we push through the last four rallies. Let's make sure this season stays a joyful one with plenty of



The drivers in action.



Sébastien Ogier and Vincent Landais display their trophies.

smiles!"

The FIA WRC's first-ever Paraguay event provided a tough new challenge

with red clay gravel roads, unpredictable grip levels, and sharp rocks testing both vehicles and tyres. Heavy

downpour in the closing stages made the finale even more demanding.

Ogier and Landais overcame an early setback to climb back through the field with nine stage wins, showing relentless speed and consistency. Their dominant drive secured victory by 26.2 seconds, marking Ogier's 65th overall WRC win as well as his first ever in South America.

Evans and Martin produced a measured performance to return to the podium, navigating slippery stages to seize second place on the rally's final test. The result extends Evans' drivers' championship lead to seven points.

Over the years, Toyota has been participating in many different forms of motorsports, including Formula One, the World Endurance Championship (WEC), and the Nürburgring 24 Hours endurance race.

Toyota's participation in these events was overseen by separate entities within the company until April 2015, when Toyota established TGR, to consolidate all of its motorsports activities under one in-house brand. Representing Toyota's belief that 'the roads build the people, and the people build the cars,' TGR highlights the role of motorsports as a fundamental pillar of Toyota's commitment to making 'ever-better' cars. Harnessing years of experience gained under the extreme conditions of various motorsports events, TGR aims to forge new technologies and solutions that bring the freedom, adventure, and joy of driving to everyone.

Round 11 of the 2025 FIA WRC is Rally Chile (September 11-14), the second consecutive event in South America. Taking place in the forests of the Biobío region overlooking the Pacific Ocean, the rally features fast and technical stages on a mix of smooth and abrasive gravel.

Mohammad Haris stars with 66

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Sept. 13, (AP): Pakistan thumped Oman by 93 runs to begin its Asia Cup campaign thanks to Mohammad Haris' 66 off 43 balls at Dubai International Stadium.

Pakistan scored 160-7 after opting to bat and Oman was bundled out for 67 in 16.4 overs.

Haris struck seven fours and three sixes on his way to 50 off 32 balls.

Pakistan takes on India in the Twenty20 tournament's most high profile clash at the same venue.

Haris crossed the 20-run mark in T20s for the first time in 12 innings. His best in 11 innings prior was 15 against Afghanistan in the preceding tri-series. He was 107 not out in June against Bangladesh at Lahore.

Opener Shahibzada Farhan (29) and Haris put on 85 off 64 balls to drive the innings.

Saim Ayub was out for a golden duck, as was skipper Salman Agha, both falling to left-arm spinner Aamir Kaleem.

Kaleem also bowled Haris in the 13th over and finished with 3-31 in four overs - his career best against a full ICC member.

Fakhar Zaman hit 23 not out off 16 balls and Mohammad Nawaz scored 19 off 10 balls to help Pakistan pass 150. It lost its last five wickets for 56 runs in seven overs.

In a chase that never got going, Hammad Mirza top-scored for Oman with 27 off 23 balls.

Oman collapsed from 41-2 to 51-9, losing seven wickets for 10 runs across 34 deliveries. The innings ended in the 17th over, with the last pair adding 16 runs.

Spinners Saim Ayub and Suyiyan Muqem, and medium pacer Faheem Ashraf shared six wickets across seven overs in the rout.

Lingard is flying the flag for FC Seoul

Former EPL players set to star in the Asian Champions League

RIYADH, Sept. 13, (AP): Former English Premier League stars could make the difference in the Asian Champions League that begins Monday. Ivan Toney, Jesse Lingard, Riyad Mahrez and Darwin Nunez all have a chance of winning Asian soccer's premier club tournament.

Saudi clubs dominated last season, providing three of the semifinalists before Al-Ahli won the final in front of 60,000 spectators at Jeddah in May. Al-Ittihad and Al-Hilal are also back and expected to challenge again for the title.

Since the country's Public Investment Fund took over the leading clubs, including Cristiano Ronaldo's Al-Nassr, in 2023, Saudi Pro League clubs have spent around \$1.5 billion on players.

Toney signed for Al-Ahli from Brentford in August 2024 and would welcome more success in Asia.

"It was great to win the Champions League in front of our fans, and they are so passionate," Toney told The Associated Press.

The England striker scored six goals in the last season's continental tournament and has forged a fruitful relationship with Riyad Mahrez, who won the UEFA Champions League with Manchester City in 2021.

"If you get into the right positions in the area, then great players like Mahrez will find you," Toney said. "The standard in Saudi Arabia is very high."

There are 24 teams in the group stage split into western and eastern zones in Asia, with the top eight from each progressing to a round of 16.

Riyadh's Al-Hilal is the most successful club in the tournament's history with four titles and was the only

Asian team to get out of the group stage at the Club World Cup in June, defeating Manchester City to reach the quarterfinals.

Al-Hilal has been bolstered by the \$70 million signing of Uruguayan striker Nunez from Liverpool.

Coach Simone Inzaghi guided Inter Milan to the final of the UEFA Champions League and a 5-0 loss to Paris Saint-Germain before quitting in June and moving to Al-Hilal.

The Italian coach will be hoping to go one better in Asia.

Two-time champion Al-Ittihad, meanwhile, is looking to Karim Benzema and N'Golo Kante who have won the European version to do the same in Asia.

Former Manchester United and England star Lingard is flying the flag for FC Seoul. The South Korean league is the most successful in Asian club competitions with 12 titles overall but has produced just one winner since 2016.

Lingard joined the K-League team in 2023 and, after a slow start, became club captain and a fan favorite.

"Now, we have to compete in the league as well as the AFC Champions League Elite," Lingard said. "As captain, I will do my best to help the team achieve good results."

Seoul FC coach Kim Ki-dong is giving the 32-year-old Lingard more responsibility.

"He has played for England and in the Premier League, but this will be his first AFC Champions League," Kim said. "I know he's really looking forward to this and he's working hard for it."

Japanese clubs have offered most of the opposition to Saudi clubs recently. Kawasaki Frontale beat Al-Nassr in the semifinals in April but didn't qualify this time.

J-League champion Vissel Kobe may present the strongest challenge but of the 12 eastern teams, only South Korea's Ulsan has been a previous champion.



Nunez

Man United staying with Bayindir in goal for derby

Guardiola ready to ‘adapt’ to Donnarumma’s strengths

MANCHESTER, England, Sept. 13, (AP): Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola is willing to adapt the team's approach following the signing of goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma and will not expect the Italian to offer the same ball-playing abilities as the departed Ederson Moraes.

Ederson, who ended his trophy-laden eight-year spell at City by joining Fenerbahce last week, revolutionized the goalkeeper position in English soccer with his distribution and technical skills.

That made him a perfect fit for Guardiola's style of play but the same cannot be said of Donnarumma, a brilliant shot-stopper whose strength isn't passing the ball out from the back.

Donnarumma is in contention to make his debut for City in the Manchester derby against United in the Premier League on Sunday following his move from Paris Saint-Germain, although Guardiola wouldn't confirm whether the Italy international will start.

"Always I try to adapt to the quality of the players," Guardiola said Friday. "I will not demand Gigi do something that is uncomfortable."

"We are talking about the best player I have ever seen in the distribution, short or long, with Ederson. We didn't take Gigi to do what Ederson has done. Gigi has another quality."

Guardiola said he wasn't trying to "undermine" Donnarumma by pointing out Ederson's qualities and spoke glowingly about his new signing's strengths.

"He's so tall. He's so huge," Guardiola said with a smile, adding: "He's a big presence on the big stages."

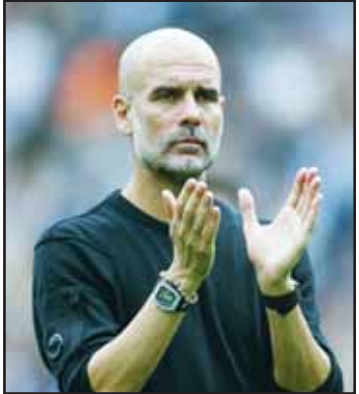
"What he has done in the Champions League last season at Villa Park, Anfield, many games, proves how good he is."

Guardiola said he met Donnarumma for the first time on Wednesday but didn't see him train on Thursday.

"We'll see," Guardiola said when asked if Donnarumma will come in for James Trafford, who has started City's first three games in the Premier League - a win at Wolverhampton before back-to-back losses to Tottenham and Brighton.

Altay Bayindir will continue in goal for Manchester United in the derby match against Manchester City on Sunday despite signing Belgium international Senne Lammens last week.

The goalkeeper position has been problematic for United manager Ruben Amorim, who sent last year's No. 1 Andre Onana on loan to Turkish club Trabzonspor on Thursday. Bayindir has made some high-profile errors,



In this file photo, Manchester City's head coach Pep Guardiola applauds supporters after the English Premier League soccer match between Brighton and Hove Albion and Manchester City at the Falmer stadium in Brighton, England. (AP)

particularly from balls into the box, on the occasions he replaced Onana but retains the faith of Amorim after Lammens - an unheralded 23-year-old from Belgium - was brought in from Royal Antwerp on Sept. 1.

"Altay is going to continue," Amorim said Friday. "Because it's a different league, it's a different country, different trainings, different ball. So we will try to maintain that."

"They will fight for the position. For this game, it's clear, Altay will start."

Lammens is largely unknown outside his native country and Amorim said he is a goalkeeper with "great potential."

"I know that we are in the moment that the goalkeeper has to be really strong and have a lot of experience," he said, "but we are also in the moment that we have to look at the present and also with a focus on the future."

Lammens, Amorim added, is a keeper who can "give us different things" and can be United's No. 1 "for a lot of years."

On the departure of Onana, Amorim added: "In this club, the pressure is sometimes so hard in every detail. Sometimes you need a change."

Martial joins Monterrey in Mexico

Solari shines as Racing ends winless run

BUENOS AIRES, Sept. 13, (Agencies): Santiago Solari scored one goal and set up another as Racing Club ended a five-game winless run with a 2-0 home victory over San Lorenzo in Argentina's Primera Division.

Nazareno Colombo gave the hosts the lead with first-time effort from the edge of the six-yard box after Solari's headed flick. Solari doubled the advantage on the counterattack by darting past onrushing goalkeeper Orlando Gill and slotting the ball into an unguarded net. It was Racing's first league win since a 1-0 away victory over Belgrano on July 20.

"We had to get our confidence back," Racing manager Gustavo Costas told reporters. "We'd lost a bit of our purpose and hunger. Today we recovered our spirit. What I liked most was the attitude and the personality the team showed." The result leaves Racing 14th in the 15-team Group A standings with seven points so far. San Lorenzo is fifth in Group B with 12 points.

In other Primera Division fixtures on Friday, Newell's Old Boys won 2-0 at home to Atletico Tucuman, Lanus clinched a 1-0 home victory over Independiente Rivadavia, Velez Sarsfield drew 0-0 at Huracan and Deportivo Riestra prevailed 2-0 at home to Central Cordoba.

Former Manchester United forward Anthony Martial has joined Monterrey in Mexico's top-tier league, the club announced.

The 29-year-old Martial, who played nine seasons for the Red Devils, arrives at Monterrey after playing one season with AEK Athens. He signed a two-year contract with a third-year option, the Mexican team announced.

In Monterrey, Martial will join Spanish internationals and former Real Madrid players Sergio Ramos and Sergio Canales.

The French player started off his career with Lyon and then transferred to Monaco before joining Manchester United for the 2015-16 season.

Martial played 317 matches and scored 90 goals with the Red Devils, winning the Europa League (2016-17), the FA Cup (2015-2016 and 2023-24), and the EFL Cup (2016-2017 and 2022-23) as well as the FA Community Shield (2016).

Martial played 31 matches with France's national team, his last one in 2021.

Singh narrowly defeats Yao to win women's 10m air pistol at ISSF World Cup in Ningbo

NINGBO, China, Sept. 13, (Xinhua): India's 20-year-old Esha Singh narrowly edged out China's Yao Qianxun by 0.1 point in the women's 10m air pistol final, capturing her first individual World Cup gold on Saturday.

In the final, Singh led the first stage with a score of 101.1 and maintained her lead throughout the elimination stage, while Yao gradually moved into second place, trailing Singh by 1.1 points after 18 shots.

On the third-to-last shot, Yao scored 10.7 to Singh's 9.5, narrowing the difference to 0.5. In the final two shots, Singh scored 10.0 and 9.7, while Yao shot 10.1 and 10.0, leaving

Singh with a 0.1-point victory.

Yao, who had previously won gold in the mixed 10m air pistol team with Hu Kai, claimed silver, marking her second medal of the event. South Korea's Oh Ye-jin took bronze, while another Chinese finalist Zeng Zhuwenxi finished in eighth place.

"I don't really look at the screen in front. I don't compete with other players," Singh said. "I just focus on what I have to do and my own process. It is a battle in my mind."

20-year-old Yao, who has won eight World Cup medals this year, said: "It is an honor for me, but everything is just begin-

ning. There is still a long way to go, and I have to keep working hard." In another final of the day, Germany's reigning European champion Florian Peter claimed the men's 25m rapid fire pistol title, with France's Jean Quiquampoix and Clement Bessaguet taking silver and bronze respectively.

The Ningbo World Cup will conclude on Sunday with the men's 50m rifle three positions and women's 10m air rifle finals.

With the 2025 ISSF World Cup's final leg ongoing in Ningbo, International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF)

president Luciano Rossi praised China's growing role in the sport, highlighting both its organizational standards and its long-term investment in young talent in an exclusive interview with Xinhua on Thursday.

"The World Cup in Ningbo is really great. The Ningbo Olympic Center and the other complexes are working very well," Rossi said. "We have the best athletes from 43 different countries (and regions). All the athletes are happy with the hospitality. This is fantastic, because the spirit of China is respect and working together." He stressed that China's contribution extends beyond staging competitions.



Sulibikhat players arrive at Kuwait Airport prior to their departure.

Career under threat

Al-Houni faces potential suspension as Al-Ahly Tripoli offers \$2 mln to Al-Qadsia

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The saga of Libyan professional Hamdou Al-Houni has intensified in recent hours. Al-Qadsia requested the player's registration card from the Libyan Football Federation to register him for the new season, but his former club, Al-Ahly Tripoli, has refused to release it.

Al-Qadsia team director, Mosaed Nada, revealed that Al-Houni signed two contracts – one with Al-Qadsia and another with Al-Ahly Tripoli – which could lead to serious complications for the player. The Kuwaiti club has stated it is prepared to take legal action if necessary.

Sources report that Al-Ahly Tripoli has tried to reach a settlement, offering \$2 million to Al-Qadsia to approve the transfer and avoid



Al-Houni and Mohamed Soula pose for a photo.

a formal complaint. Al-Qadsia is reportedly evaluating the offer carefully, especially since its foreign player quota for the new season is already full, including Mohamed Soula (Libya), Sofiane Bouchar (Algeria), Victor Lekhal (Algeria), Mahmoud Abdel-Moneim "Kahraba" (Egypt), and N'skins Kiphano (Congo).

If the dispute is not resolved, Al-Houni's career could be at risk, with possible suspension looming over the player if the matter is not settled promptly.

Al-Houni, 31, boasts an accomplished career, having played in Portugal, Tunisia's Espérance, and Morocco's Wydad, before returning to Al-Ahly Tripoli in 2024, where he led the team to a league title and CAF Champions League qualification.

Al-Hussein takes reins at Kuwait Equestrian Center

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Kuwait Equestrian Center has appointed coach Ghassan Al-Hussein to its technical staff to help prepare riders for the upcoming season. He arrived in Kuwait last Wednesday and officially began his duties on Saturday.

Widely recognized in Swedish media as a "skilled horse trainer", Al-Hussein is a Swedish national of Syrian origin. His equestrian journey began at the age of 13, and he went on to compete and achieve

success in elite show jumping events across Europe, clearing heights of up to 145 cm.

His career has also taken him to Dubai, Erbil, and China, where he worked with riders of all levels and even some of the most challenging horses.

Now in Kuwait, Al-Hussein brings his international experience, competitive background, and dedication to inspire and guide the center's riders toward future success.



Newly appointed coach Ghassan Al-Hussein.

SAfrica smashes All Blacks in record-breaking victory

Argentina snatches win from Wallabies

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, Sept 13, (AP): South Africa beat New Zealand 43-10 on Saturday, inflicting the All Blacks' heaviest-ever test loss, retaining the Freedom Cup and re-energizing its Rugby Championship campaign.

Cheslin Kolbe scored a try in each half and Damian Willemse, Kwagga Smith, R.G. Snyman and Andre Esterhuizen also touched down at the end of ambitious and clinical attacks as South Africa ran in six tries to one.

New Zealand won the first test 24-17 last weekend but the Springboks were transformed Saturday. They were more physical in defense and more decisive in attack, reviving their chances in the Rugby Championship.

Australia leads the tournament with 11 points but South Africa and New Zealand are both one point back.

New Zealand scored first through winger Leroy Carter on debut and led 10-7 at halftime. But from there, the Springboks scored five tries and 36 unanswered points.

"We had a very positive mindset. After reviewing last week's game we knew exactly where we went wrong at Eden Park," said Willemse, who was a key part of the Springboks' attack. "Tonight we were much more clinical."

Head coach Rassie Erasmus made five backline changes after the first test and the Springboks lost two backs to injury in the first half. Despite that, combinations were sharper and their attack fed on field position provided by superb set pieces.

The Springboks depended on a kicking game last weekend, but this weekend the All Blacks were forced to kick repeatedly as they found themselves trapped in their own



Ox Nche of South Africa runs at the defence during their Rugby Championship test match against the All Blacks in Wellington, New Zealand. (AP)

half and deprived of possession. The 46 tackles missed by New Zealand contributed to South Africa's dominance with ball in hand.

"They put great pressure on us," All Blacks coach Scott Robertson said. "I want to congratulate South Africa and we've got a lot to work on obviously."

Both teams set out to play at a high tempo and to work the ball to the outside channels. The Springboks' combinations were sharp and the backline looked constantly dangerous.

The All Blacks owed their win last week to their fast start: they scored two tries in the first 17 minutes for a 14-0 lead. This week, the Springboks started strongest, repeatedly testing the All Blacks' defense. The All Blacks faded under the constant need to make tackles.

There was a heavy injury toll in the first half. The Springboks lost lock Lood de Jager, replaced by Snyman, flyhalf Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu, replaced by Manie Libbok, and fullback Aphelele Fassi, replaced by Esterhuizen. New Zealand lost scrumhalf Noah Hotham, replaced by Finlay Christie.

The All Blacks tried to move the

ball wide but were hampered by South Africa's rush defense which they cracked only once. In the 18th minute, they produced a sweeping movement that ranged between both touchlines and included loose forwards in the wide channels. Carter took the last pass to score on debut.

Kolbe intercepted Billy Proctor's pass in the 23rd minute and went almost 80 meters for the Springboks' only try of the first half.

At the start of the second half, the All Blacks' scrum gave way. The Springboks won a penalty and Siya Kolisi sliced through the New Zealand defense, setting up Kolbe's second try. Libbok converted and added a penalty for a 17-10 lead.

Then the floodgates opened. A lineup turnover in the 61st gave the Springboks possession five meters from the All Blacks line. After probing with the forwards, the backs attacked and Libbok passed to Willemse who scored.

Smith's try was the best one of the match. Winger Ethan Hooker ignited a counter-attack from deep inside South Africa's half. With the All Blacks retreating, Libbok cross-kicked to Pieter-Steph du Toit whose pass found Smith at pace.

Late tries to Esterhuizen and Sny-

man completed a record victory.

Argentina hangs on to beat Australia 28-26 in Rugby Championship match in Sydney

Argentina took advantage of some early handling errors and indiscipline by the Wallabies for a 19-7 halftime lead and held on to beat Australia 28-26 on Saturday in a Rugby Championship match at a sold-out Sydney Football Stadium.

The Wallabies came into the match on a high after their spirited last-minute 28-24 win last week over Argentina in the north Queensland city of Townsville.

There was a flurry of early scoring, but most of it was to the visitors with the Pumas leading 10-7 after just 10 minutes. After Argentina took the lead in the fifth minute on a penalty goal by Santiago Carreras. Joseph-Aukuso Sua'ali'i barged over to score a converted try two minutes later to give the home side a brief lead, its only of the afternoon.

Argentina claimed the restart but after a knock-on, the Wallabies earned a scrum free kick. But captain Julián Montoya, leading the side in his 50th test, attempted a charge down and scored a try for Argentina.

Carreras converted and kicked a penalty goal three minutes later and Argentina led 13-7 after just 15 minutes. Two more Carreras penalty goals - he had four in the first half - gave the Pumas their 12-point halftime lead.

Carreras stayed perfect early in the second half and kicked his fifth penalty goal in the 44th minute after the Wallabies were called for obstruction to extend Argentina's lead to 22-7 and beyond a two-try margin.

Carreras was on the board again 10 minutes later to extend Argentina's lead to 25-7 and the Wallabies slowly starting seeing the match slip away.

Australia reduced the deficit with late tries but stout defense by the Pumas earned them their second win of the tournament. Argentina is now 2-2, including a first-ever home win over the All Blacks.

Leverkusen claims first season win

BERLIN, Sept 13, (Xinhua): Bayer Leverkusen celebrated its first Bundesliga victory of the 2025-26 campaign with a 3-1 triumph over Eintracht Frankfurt, handing new coach Kasper Hjulmand a perfect debut to kick off the third round.

Despite coming into the encounter with confidence after two opening wins, Frankfurt found themselves behind early. Alejandro Grimaldo opened the scoring in the 10th minute when his free-kick from distance struck the post and bounced off goalkeeper Michael Zetterer into the net. The early goal gave the hosts momentum, even though both teams were forced into quick changes due to injuries.

As the first half progressed, Leverkusen began to dominate, and their pressure paid off just before the break. Nathan Tella was brought down in the box by Frankfurt captain Robin Koch, allowing Patrik Schick to calmly convert the resulting penalty in stoppage time for a 2-0 halftime lead.

The visitors responded swiftly after the restart. In the 52nd minute, youngster Can Uzun halved the deficit with a deflected effort, which marked his third league goal in a row. Encouraged, Frankfurt pushed forward and struck the crossbar through Nnamdi Collins just moments later, while Uzun narrowly missed the target with another chance.

Leverkusen's situation worsened in the 59th minute when captain Robert Andrich was dismissed for a second yellow card. Reduced to ten men, the hosts had to defend deeper but still threatened on the counterattack.

Frankfurt introduced fresh attacking options in the final stages, but their efforts were repeatedly thwarted by Leverkusen's disciplined backline.

In stoppage time, things looked even more precarious for the Werkself as Exequiel Fernandez also received a second booking, leaving them with nine men on the pitch. Yet, instead of collapsing, Hjulmand's side delivered the knockout punch. Grimaldo stepped up once more in the 98th minute, curling a free-kick over the wall and into the net to secure a 3-1 victory.

Vingegaard closes in on Vuelta title by winning penultimate stage

BOLA DEL MUNDO, Spain, Sept 13, (AP): Jonas Vingegaard is poised to win the Spanish Vuelta cycling race after increasing his lead on Saturday's decisive stage, a mountain trek that was briefly disrupted by another anti-Israel protest.

The Vuelta will be Vingegaard's third Grand Tour title, adding to Dane's pair of Tour de France titles won in 2022 and 2023.

Vingegaard won Saturday's 165-kilometer (102-mile) mountain stage ending atop the beyond-category Bola del Mundo ascent in 3 hours, 56 minutes.

The leader of Visma-Lease a Bike dropped top rival João Almeida and the remainder of the hardest chasers on the final kilometers of the brutal uphill push with gradients of 20%.

Almeida finished fourth, 22 seconds behind. That meant Vingegaard extended his advantage over Almeida to 1 minute, 16 seconds with only Sunday's mostly ceremonial ride into Madrid to go.

Race custom at a Grand Tour dictates that no rider will challenge the leader on the final stage.

Several dozen people briefly disrupted Saturday's stage around 19 kilometers (11.8 miles) from the finish when a crowd rushed onto the road and sat down. Some carried Palestinian flags.

A few people then tried to get in the path of cyclists who sped past, while police managed to keep them back. It took several minutes for all the cyclists and team vehicles to advance.

The race has been impacted by multiple gatherings of people protesting the presence of an Israeli-owned team. Saturday's was the sixth stage of the last 10 to have been disrupted by protests.

Several people were also waving Palestinian flags with the fans lining the sides of the narrow road of the final ascent, but no one interfered with the riders as the churned slowly upwards to the finish.

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NEWS



United States' Ryan Crouser reacts as he competes in the men's shot put final at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo. (AP)

Sports

Salmiya set to host Kazma to conclude opening round

Al-Arabi makes perfect start to Zain Premier League season



Players showed support for teammate Hussein Ashkanani, recovering from a recent cruciate ligament injury.

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Zain Premier League kicked off with strong performances from Al-Arabi and Fahaheel, while the first round concludes today with Salmiya taking on Kazma at Thamer Stadium at 6:20 p.m.

Salmiya, under national coach Nasser Al-Shatti, aims for a positive start. However, the team may be without new foreign signings Hossam Abu Thahab (Jordan) and Mahmoud Al-Aswad (Syria) due to a FIFA-imposed transfer ban over unpaid dues to former players. Tunisian Imad Louati and Brazilian Alex Lima remain eligible to play.

Kazma, coached by Croatian Dragan Tadic, also look for a strong opening. The team has reinforced its squad with Sultan Al-Enezi, and foreign players Idris Shaabi (Algeria), Ali Azaizeh, Youssef Abu Jazar, Anas Al-Awadat (Jordan), and Samson Akinyoola (Benin).

Newly promoted sides Jahra and Shabab suffered defeats on their Premier League debut. Fahaheel overturned a deficit to beat hosts Jahra 3-1 at Mubarak Al-Ayyar Stadium, while Al-Arabi, last season's runner-up,

defeated Shabab 2-0 at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium. Following Al-Arabi's first goal, "Players showed support for teammate Hussein Ashkanani, recovering from a recent cruciate ligament injury..

Fahaheel's Syrian coach, Firas Al-Khatib, acknowledged that starting the league is always challenging, particularly with new players joining the competition. He emphasized that "the victory is not the real measure, as Jahra are facing exceptional circumstances."

Jahra captain Abdullah Massameh admitted his team fell short but praised its effort, while voicing frustration over the club's struggles for the third consecutive season, saying: "The Public Authority for Sport has halted support and salaries. Jahra represents one of Kuwait's largest governorates and deserves attention. Long-standing issues must be resolved for players to perform at their best."

Jahra, led by Croatian coach Rodion Gasanin "Radan," played without new foreign signings Antonio Silva (Angola), Filip Dangovic (Croatia), Oliver Stojmenovski (Macedonia), and Mimola Hysen (Italy). Tunisian Omar Ben Zakri, in his second season with the club, featured in the second half.

Sulaibikhat bounces back as Kuwait Club eyes 2nd straight win at Arab Club Handball Championship

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: Sulai-bikhat Club secured its first victory in Group B of the preliminary round of the 40th Arab Club Handball Championship, narrowly defeating Syrian side Al-Nawaeer 32-31 at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Hall. The tournament continues until September 22.

Today's schedule features four matches: In Group A, Al-Taliaa face Shabab in a "Syrian derby" at 2:00 p.m., while Kuwait Club takes on Naft Al-Basra at 8:00 p.m. In Group B, Al-Nawaeer meet Al-Hashd Al-Iraqi at 4:00 p.m., followed by Egypt's National Bank versus Qatar at 6:00 p.m.

The tournament's opening day saw defending champion Kuwait Club make a strong statement with a commanding 38-19 victory over Al-Taliaa (Syria), with Franks Marzo named Best Player. Kazma also triumphed over Shabab (Syria) 26-21, earning Haider Dashti the Best Player award. Meanwhile, Sulibikhat lost 29-31 to Egypt's National Bank, and



Kuwait Club player goes for a shot during the opening match.

Al-Nawaeer drew 29-29 with Qatar.

Fadel Al-Nimr, President of the Arab Handball Federation, highlighted the special significance of the championship, which brings together Arab nations. He praised the high level of play on the opening day, signaling a competitive and ex-

citing tournament ahead.

Al-Nimr noted that the inclusion of three Syrian teams added extra excitement, especially after Syrian sports endured a long hiatus. He also emphasized the Federation's plan to expand future editions to include more teams, increasing competition

and benefits for all participants.

He extended his gratitude to Kuwait Club for hosting the championship for the second consecutive year; praising Kuwait's sporting legacy and its ability to host major regional tournaments.

Nasser Mnsi, Secretary-General of Sulibikhat Club, thanked Kuwait Club and the Arab Handball Federation for organizing the event. He highlighted the importance of Sulibikhat returning to international competition after 15 years, noting the club's past success in the Arab Championship.

Mnsi acknowledged the challenges of the opening match and expressed confidence that Sulibikhat players would deliver improved performances in upcoming fixtures.

In the Kuwaiti First Division handball league, Khaitan defeated Yarmouk 34-30, Al-Qurain beat Al-Sahel 42-30, and the Youth National Team drew 33-33 with Fahaheel.

Current league standings: Khaitan 4 points, Al-Qurain 2 points, Yarmouk 2 points, Fahaheel 1 point, and Al-Sahel 0 points.

Kuwait Handball Federation concludes coaching course

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 13: The Kuwait Handball Federation, through its Development Committee and in cooperation with the Asian and International Handball Federations, concluded the C-license handball coaching course earlier this week. The program was led by international lecturer Dr. Khaled Al-Shurji.

The closing ceremony was attended by the Federation's Assistant Secretary, Abdullah Al-Dhiab, who presented certificates to the participants and honored Dr. Al-Shurji for his contributions.

Dr. Al-Shurji explained that the course forms part of the International Handball Federation's structured program to train and develop coaches, which consists of four levels: D, C, B, and A.

He highlighted that the Asian Handball Federation adopted this initiative under a work plan introduced in 2023 and launched the following year, with the goal of advancing coaching standards across Asia through intensive training courses.

Kuwait, he noted, has already



Abdullah Al-Dhiab honors Dr. Khaled Al-Shurji.

hosted five such courses in the past year and a half—an achievement he described as highly significant.

Dr. Al-Shurji also expressed his satisfaction with the participation of 30 coaches from Kuwait and other Gulf countries, including four women, pointing out that their commitment to self-development will have a positive impact on youth league teams in the future.



Arsenal's Martin Zubimendi, right, scores during the Premier League soccer match between Arsenal and Nottingham Forest in London. (AP)

Arsenal spoils Ange's debut

Newcastle pips Wolves

LONDON, Sept 13, (AP): Ange Postecoglou got a harsh reintroduction to the Premier League on Saturday. Nick Woltemade's first taste of English soccer couldn't have been sweeter.

A trip to Arsenal was among the hardest possible starts for Postecoglou following his hiring by Nottingham Forest this week and the former Tottenham manager saw his new team get brushed aside 3-0 at Emirates Stadium.

Arsenal's new signings did the damage, with defensive midfielder Martin Zubimendi scoring twice and Viktor Gyokeres - a prolific striker expected to transform the team's fortunes - delivering exactly what is expected of him with a close-range finish. It was a third win in four matches for Arsenal, one of the top title contenders.

It was also a day when a slew of the Premier League's late-summer signings made their debuts and one of them was Woltemade, who headed home Newcastle's goal in a 1-0 win over Wolverhampton.

Woltemade is a lanky Germany international who joined Newcastle for a reported club-record fee of 69 million pounds (\$93 million) to replace Alexander Isak. The 6-foot-6 (1.98 meters) striker became an immediate favorite at St. James' Park by leaping at the far post to plant home a powerful header.

In other results, Fulham was gifted an own-goal in stoppage time to beat Leeds 1-0, Antoine Semenyo's penalty secured Bournemouth a 2-1 win over Brighton, Aston Villa was still without a goal this season after a 0-0 draw at Everton, and Crystal Palace and Sunderland also played out a goalless draw.

Crouser joins Werner Günthör with three consecutive shot put world titles

TOKYO, Sept 13, (AP): America's two big-name sprinters, Sha'Carri Richardson and Noah Lyles, both walked off the track Saturday with reason to think they might have found what's been missing over a less-than-perfect 2025.

What a place to find it - at the world championships in Tokyo, a metropolis that's been waiting four long years for a chance to cheer on the world's fastest stars.

Both defending world champions won their preliminary heats in the 100 meters. Those results should surprise nobody but they still brought bursts of joy - both from the runners and from the loud sellout crowd that was absent four years ago, when Japan National Stadium was the centerpiece of a COVID-tainted Olympics.

"Last one, I could hear my own thoughts echoing off the wall," Lyles said of the Tokyo Games. "So, completely different."

Lyles won his heat in 9.95 seconds - the same time posted by Jamaica's Kishane Thompson, who only ran hard for

about the first 60 meters of his race.

Lyles beat Thompson by .005 seconds at the Paris Olympics last year, and though the American comes in as an underdog this time, he feels he unlocked something in practice over the last week.

The semifinals and finals for both 100s are set for Sunday, with all the top contenders - including U.S. champ Melissa Jefferson-Wooden, Olympic champ Julien Alfred, Lyles' frenemy Kenny Bednarek and Jamaica's Oblique Seville - still in the mix.

Also advancing to the final - this one for long jump - was Olympic champion Tara Davis-Woodhall, who only needed one jump to move through. She finished sixth here four years ago in front of empty seats. On this trip, she noticed that when she waved to the fans, they didn't hoot and holler, but simply waved back.

"It's like silent applause," she said. "The fans are amaz-

ing."

America's Ryan Crouser made it three world championships in a row to go with his three straight Olympic golds. This one, though, was a surprise.

All of Crouser's six official throws of 2025 came Saturday night - one in qualifying and five in finals. He has been nursing an elbow injury all season and hadn't competed in a global or national event all year.

His throw of 22.34 meters (73 feet, 3 1/2 inches) was good for the most unlikely gold medal of his remarkable career. He joins Switzerland's Werner Günthör as the second man to win three straight shot put titles.

There might not have been a bigger favorite in a race over the entire meet than Beatrice Chebet in the women's 10,000. The world-record holder and Olympic champion came through, as expected, bursting past defending champion Gudaf Tsegay with about a half-lap left, then fending off a game challenge from Italy's Nadia Battocletti down the stretch. Chebet's time of 30 minutes, 37.61 seconds

was pedestrian by her standards, but the gold medal will look just as good. Last year, she became the first woman to crack 29 minutes over the 25-lap race.

There's a possibility of a tantalizing showdown in the 5,000 next weekend between Chebet and Faith Kipyegon, the 1,500-meter world-record holder who advanced easily through her 1,500 heat.

The American 4x400 mixed relay team built a lead that not even comeback artist Femke Bol of the Netherlands could overcome.

Bol, who has rallied her relay teams to amazing wins in 2023 and 2024, couldn't close a massive gap on the anchor lap in this one.

Alexis Holmes crossed the line 1.16 seconds ahead of Bol to give the U.S. the gold. Bol still gets credit from moving from fifth to second over her final lap. She'll be the favorite in the 400 hurdles next week and will likely get another shot at the relay in the women's 4x400.