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# KUWAIT UNION SEEKS FILIPINO LABOR AMID ETHIOPIAN WAGE DISPUTE

## Domestic worker pay unchanged: PAM

Mol launches Sahel service to curb visa overlaps, rejections

By Fares Ghaleb  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has denied reports circulating in some media outlets and on social media regarding an increase in domestic workers' salaries.**

PAM clarified that no official decision has been issued to date by the relevant government authorities.

It emphasized that the information published on this matter is completely unfounded, stressing that any decisions or procedures related to wages or recruitment contracts are only issued through official channels that are clearly and reliably announced.

PAM urged the public to verify information and avoid spreading or acting on

rumors.

In other news, Head of the Kuwaiti Union of Domestic Labor Offices Khaled Al-Dakhnan affirmed that the union is calling for the opening of new markets and the recruitment of workers from alternative countries to meet the needs of Kuwaiti families and ensure stability in the domestic labor market.

In a press statement, Al-Dakhnan explained that setting the salaries of Ethiopian female domestic workers in Kuwait at KD 110-120 constitutes a clear violation of the agreement signed with the Ethiopian side. The agreement explicitly states that matters related to salaries and commissions are internal affairs and must not be subject to interference by any external party.

These imposed salaries apply only to the Kuwaiti market, while other countries are permitted to recruit Ethiopian domestic workers at salaries not exceeding KD 90. The union has contacted the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) regarding these violations.

Al-Dakhnan stressed the importance of labor-exporting countries adhering to

the terms of signed agreements and not imposing special conditions exclusively on Kuwait.

He emphasized that opening new markets for domestic workers has become an urgent necessity to avoid further shortages and to ensure that the needs of families continue to be met.

Al-Dakhnan also urged Kuwaiti authorities to contact their counterparts in the Philippines to reopen the recruitment of domestic workers who have previously worked in Kuwait, in addition to allowing the recruitment of new workers.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior (MOI) has introduced a new service through the Unified Government Application for E-Services (Sahel) that allows users to check the possibility of recruiting a domestic worker. According to a Thursday press release, this service enables applicants to verify if a visa has already been issued for the same domestic worker before starting the recruitment process, helping to prevent duplicate applications or rejections.

### Kuwait welcomes UN efforts on missing citizens, property

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA):** Kuwait welcomed on Thursday the Security Council Resolution No. 2792 on appointing a high-level representative of the Secretary-General of the UN to support and facilitate efforts related



Al-Bannai

to determining the fate of Kuwaiti prisoners and missing persons and third-country nationals, and recovering their remains, in addition to recovering Kuwaiti property, including the national archives.

In a statement, the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs commended all the efforts made by the member states of the Security Council in this context, which culminated in the unanimous adoption of the resolution.

It also affirmed Kuwait's commitment to supporting the High-Level Representative of the UN to achieve the fullest possible accomplishment of the tasks entrusted to him.

The UN Security Council resolution issued on boosting cooperation between Kuwait and Iraq on the dossier of Kuwaiti prisoners and the missing Kuwaitis aims to address fairly the pending national humanitarian issues and contributes to boosting regional stability, said Kuwait Permanent Representative to the United Nations on Wednesday.

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Ministry of Interior photo  
First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah chairs a meeting with assistant undersecretaries and heads of security sectors.

### Interior Minister orders stronger security presence across Kuwait

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18:** Head of the Traffic and Operations Sector at the Interior Ministry Brigadier Abdullah Al-Atiqi continued his inspection tours in the emergency patrol departments to review the progress of work and the mechanism for implementing the security and traffic plan for the start of the new school year.

Director General of the Emergency Patrols Department Brigadier Rashid Hamoud, his assistant, Brigadier Hamlan Al-Hamlan and a number of security officials warmly welcomed Al-Atiqi in the Emergency Operations Room.

During his visit, Al-Atiqi affirmed the readiness of security personnel to deal with various circumstances, and provide the necessary support to ensure smooth traffic flow and the safety of students and parents.

On Wednesday, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah stressed the importance of coordination among security sectors, increasing presence in streets and raising readiness to ensure rapid response to any emergency.

This came in an expanded meeting he chaired with assistant under-secretaries and heads of security sectors to discuss developments in the security situation in the country, according to a statement by the Ministry of Interior.

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### Kuwait to swelter in 45-47°C temps



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

View from a high-rise window captures Kuwait City basking in Thursday's heat.

#### Meteorology department forecasts gradual nighttime cooling

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA):** The Kuwait Meteorological Department has forecast hot weather during the day and moderate temperatures at night this weekend.

In a statement to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), the acting Director of the department Dhirar Al-Ali said the country is currently influenced by the retreating Indian summer low, which is gradually giving way to a weak extension of a high-pressure system from the northwestern Arabian Peninsula. This system is accompanied by a relatively dry and warm air mass, resulting in a gradual decrease in temperatures, along

with light to moderate northwesterly winds that may become active at times.

On Friday, the weather during daytime will once again be hot to very hot, with light to moderate winds shifting from variable directions to northwesterly, and with speeds ranging from 8 to 30 km/h. Maximum temperatures are expected to range between 45°C and 47°C, with slight to moderate sea conditions and wave heights of one to three feet.

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### Saudi-Pakistan defense pact amid Israel strike on Qatar

## GCC council condemns Israeli attack on Qatar, vows stronger joint defense

**DOHA, Sept 18, (Agencies):** The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Joint Defense Council held an extraordinary session in Doha on Thursday, strongly condemning Israel's military attack on Qatar and deciding to step up intelligence sharing and update joint defense plans.

In a statement, the council said Israel's actions represented "a blatant violation" of Qatar's sovereignty and security, threatening regional stability.

Officials from GCC defense ministries agreed that an attack on Qatar is "an attack on all GCC states," the statement said, stressing that the bloc supports all measures Qatar takes to "confront the aggression, safeguard security, and defend unity and territorial integrity."

The meeting decided to enhance intelligence exchange through the Unified Military Command, ensure real-time transmission of air situation data, accelerate the development of a

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Qatari Ministry of Defense photo  
Kuwaiti Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah is received at the Doha airport by Qatar's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defense Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani.

### Citizenship stripped over fraud

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA):** First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah chaired on Thursday the meeting of the Supreme Committee for Kuwaiti Citizenship Investigation.

In a statement, the committee affirmed decided to strip off Kuwaiti

citizenship from a number of cases, with the matter referred to the cabinet.

Those citizenships were stripped off due to duel citizenships, forgery, fraud, attaining documents via affiliation and conflict with the state's supreme interest, it added.



2 Palestine rhetoric and action

KFH partakes in PAAET student orientation event at 'Kuwait International Fairgrounds'

Chinese cultural series 'A Moonment to Remember' held in Kuwait

#### NewsWatch

**RAMALLAH:** Israeli occupation war machine killed 79 individuals and wounded 228 others in the last 24 hours in **Gaza Strip**, said the Health Authorities in Gaza on Thursday.

The authorities indicated that the latest figures brought the total number of those killed since Oct 7, 2023 to 65,141, while an estimated 165,925 Palestinians were injured due to the ongoing genocide. (KUNA)

**ANKARA:** Türkiye's gendarmerie detained 51 individuals suspected of links to the Islamic State (IS) in a sweeping counterterrorism operation over the past two weeks, the country's Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said Thursday. (Xinhua)

### Four Kuwaitis among Forbes Mideast's 2025 Sustainability Leaders

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18:** The 2025 Sustainability Leaders List of Forbes Middle East includes four leading Kuwaiti executives.

Forbes Middle East published the list on its website, putting the spotlight on 126 renowned individuals who played a vital role in advancing sustainable business practices in major industries throughout the Middle East.

This is the third annual Sustainability Leaders List of Forbes Middle East, honoring influential executives in 15 industries like banking, energy and utilities, telecom, renewable energy, investment, logistics, waste management and others.

According to Forbes Middle East, its methodology starts with the collection of information through questionnaires, sustainability or ESG reports, official disclosures and latest news. It added "the ranking was applied separately for each

sector. Initiatives were horizontally compared and assessed while giving special weight to some sector-specific initiatives."

It indicated that the following factors were taken into consideration in making the list:

■ Sustainability or ESG reporting and the degree of transparency and clarity



From left to right: Isam Al Sager, Dana Nasser Al Sabah, Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi, and Tarek Sultan

in reporting.

■ Green/sustainable financing, especially weighted in the banking, financial services, and investments categories.

■ Trends in greenhouse gas emissions across scopes.

■ Waste handling, water, energy, and other resource consumption.

■ Reliance on or percentage change in

renewable energy and energy-efficient technology.

■ The size of the company in relation to its climate impact using proportional analysis.

■ Sustainability-related initiatives in 2025 led by the leader.

■ Other roles that the leader has or has had.

Kuwaitis on the list are led by Vice Chairman and Group CEO of the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) Isam Al Sager who got the highest sustainability ranking among Kuwaiti executives for the second consecutive year.

He also ranked sixth in the banking and financial services sector in the Middle East, proving his continuous leadership in driving ESG standards in the largest financial institution in Kuwait.

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Prayer Timings			
Fajr .....	04:14	Asr .....	15:11
Sunrise ..	05:34	Maghrib ..	17:50
Zohr .....	11:42	Isha .....	19:08

# Local

## Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Very hot to hot with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.  
**By Night:** Rather hot to mild

## Weather

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

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	46	32
Kuwait Airport	47	26
Abdaly	47	25

Bayan	46	23
Jahra	47	30
Failaka Island	46	26
Salmiyah	44	33
Ahmadi	44	29
Nuwaib	44	29
Wafra	47	28

## Prestigious falconry tournament set for December 4-7

# Kuwait to host first Emirates Falcons Int'l Cup

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA): Kuwait was chosen by the UAE Falconry Federation to host the first Emirates Falcons International Cup on December 4-7.

A statement by the Ministry of Information said that this announcement came during a meeting between Minister of Information and Culture, State Minister of Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi and a delegation from the UAE Falconry Federation headed by Secretary General of the Emirati and international Federation for Falconry Sports and Racing (IFFSR) Rashed bin Markhan Al-Ketbi and board member of the Emirati Federation Abdulaziz Al-Ali.

Present at the meeting was UAE Ambassador to Kuwait, Dr. Matar Al-Neyadi.

Minister Al-Mutairi affirmed that Kuwait was proud of hosting such prestigious event, which not only boosts the status of the sport, but also bolsters cooperation between Kuwait and the UAE.

Top falconers will be present during the event focusing on falconry culture and history, he added.



KUNA photo  
Minister of Information Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi during his meeting with a delegation from the Emirates Falconry Federation on the occasion of their visit to the country, in the presence of the UAE Ambassador to the country, Dr. Matar Al Neyadi.

Ambassador Al-Neyadi, for his part, expressed gratitude to Kuwait for displaying its willingness to host the

event, which will surely contribute to the development of relations.

He commended the important meet-

ing between Minister Al-Mutairi and the UAE's Al-Ketbi, saying it touched on ways to enhance cooperation in the sports of falconry.

Delivering his statement, Rashed Al-Ketbi revealed that discussions were made with the organizing committee of the upcoming tournament, saying that the total prizes worth around KD 40,000.

The tournament will be a grand opportunity for the Kuwaiti side to display its level of organization and competitiveness.

He affirmed that the Emirati and International Federations were keen on holding the tournament at each respective member state within the international federation, saying that such a policy would help elevate the status of falconry worldwide.

The tournament will feature different breeds and categories of falcons, divided into seven stages, Al-Ketbi said.

He revealed that a press conference would be held on October 20 to provide further technical details about the upcoming event.

# Kuwait-China ministerial committee advances key development projects

PM emphasizes timely execution of MoU

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired Thursday, at Bayan Palace, the 27th ministerial committee meeting to follow up on the implementation of agreements and memoranda of understanding signed between Kuwait and China.

The meeting reviewed the latest progress in executing developmental projects included in the MoUs especially cooperation in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, electricity systems, renewable energy, low-carbon recycling, housing, environmental infrastructure, free zones, and economic zones.

The meeting examined the outcomes of Chinese delegations' visits this month, regarding cooperation between Kuwait and Chinese companies in environmental fields, afforestation, combating desertification, and ensuring effective collaboration to implement the agreed development initiatives efficiently and sustainably.

His Highness directed committee members to ensure the strict implementation of signed agreements with major Chinese government companies, emphasizing adherence to strategic plans to achieve the intended results within the specified timeframes, ensuring proper execution of all projects.

Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs, committee member



Prime Minister Diwan photo  
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired a meeting of the Ministerial Committee at Bayan Palace on Thursday to follow up on the implementation status of agreements and memoranda of understanding signed between the governments of the State of Kuwait and the friendly People's Republic of China.

and rapporteur Samih Jawhar Hayat, stated that the meeting discussed major development projects, reviewed upcoming Chinese delegations' agendas, and highlighted that the Chinese state company will begin phases three and four of renewable energy projects, emphasizing Kuwait's commitment to advancing joint initiatives and strengthening bilateral cooperation.

The meeting was attended by Head of the Prime Minister's Office Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel, Minister of Public Works Noura Al-Mashaan, Minister of State for Municipality Affairs and Housing Abdullatif Al-Mishari, Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs Sabeeh Al-

Mukhaizem, Director General of the Direct Investment Promotion Authority Dr. Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Head of Fatwa and Legislation Office Salah Al-Majid, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Abdullah Al-Sabah, and Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs and Member and Rapporteur of the Ministerial Committee Samih Jawhar Hayat.

Crown Prince, PM extend wishes

## Kuwait HH Amir congratulates President of Chile on Nat'l Day

KUWAITCITY, Sept 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent, Thursday, a cable to the President of Chile, Gabriel Boric Font, congratulating him on his country's National Day.

His Highness the Amir wished the president all wellness, and Chile and its people further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent, Thurs-

day, a cable to the President of Chile, Gabriel Boric Font, congratulating him on his country's National Day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished the president all wellness, and Chile and its people further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-sabah sent, Thursday, a cable to the President of Chile, Gabriel Boric Font, congratulating him on his country's National Day.

## Kuwait and UK FMs reaffirm strong bilateral partnership

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA): Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya received a phone call on Thursday from UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister Yvette Cooper.

During the call, they touched on

the historical and strategic bilateral relations between Kuwait and the UK, and ways to strengthen them in various fields to serve the common interests of the two friendly countries.

The two sides also discussed regional and global developments.

## Other Voices

## Palestine rhetoric and action

By Abdulaziz Al-Anjeri

At the recent Doha Summit, Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani delivered a rare moment of candor in Arab diplomacy. He described Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's ambition to reshape the Middle East into an Israeli sphere of influence as a dangerous illusion.

Such bluntness is unusual in Arab statements, which for decades have relied on formulaic condemnations. Yet words alone cannot change the reality.

The paradox is clear. In much of the Arab world, pro-Palestinian demonstrations are restricted or banned. In contrast, citizens in Western capitals march week after week in solidarity with Palestine, often at professional and legal risk. Meanwhile, many in Arab societies are denied the platforms that could carry their voices.

This silence erodes credibility. For seventy years, summit halls across the region have echoed with what many describe as "sound bombs" — fiery declarations that once stirred emotions but now resemble fireworks,

briefly impressive then quickly forgotten. Israel, meanwhile, continues to reshape facts on the ground.

Real influence does not require vast institutions or billions of dollars. It begins with empowering ordinary people. Think of the academic taken to court for speaking out, the youth group struggling to print banners, or the worker unable to afford a train ticket to attend a rally after a long shift. These barriers are modest, and so are the resources needed to overcome them.

Some voices in the Arab world still call for rockets to be launched at Tel Aviv or for wars to be waged against Israel. Such demands may excite crowds but never deliver solutions. The more effective path lies in tactical pressure through civic, legal, and media strategies, especially in democracies where voters can hold politicians accountable for supporting occupation and injustice.

The truth is easier to defend than the elaborate fictions Israel works hard to promote. With modest resources and persistent effort, committed citizens can cut through propaganda and help shape public opinion in powerful ways.

The message is clear. The era of empty condemnations has run its course. The future belongs to practical and sustained action that gives ordinary people the means to speak. With persistence and creativity, small steps can add up to extraordinary change.



Al-Anjeri

# MoCI meets with food companies to monitor strategic stockpile

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Commercial Control, Consumer Protection and Supply departments at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Thursday met with representatives of private companies operating in

the food, poultry, dairy, livestock, water bottling and canned goods sectors to discuss the food stocks in the country.

The meeting was part of the monthly monitoring of the strategic stockpile. Participants agreed to continue holding regular meetings and submitting periodic reports to the Supply Department to review stock movements and

ensure the availability of goods in the local market.

Director of the Commercial Control and Consumer Protection Department Faisal Al-Ansari affirmed that such meetings will be held monthly to ensure the safety of stocks and the availability of basic food items. He stressed the need to increase the companies' stocks and their commitment to provide the ministry with up-

dated reports.

Head of the Support Unit at the Supply Department Kholoud Al-Khalidi said the monthly reports are considered a practical tool for monitoring the situation as it unfolds, allowing intervention whenever necessary to control supply and demand, and maintain market stability.

## Kuwait lauds Kazan Digital Week

MOSCOW, Sept 18, (KUNA): Kuwait extolled on Wednesday the start of the Kazan Digital Week - 2025 International Forum in the Republic of Tatarstan that is featuring 75 countries, including Kuwait.

The praise was made by Kuwait's Ambassador to Russia Dr. Rashed Al-Adwani after being received by President of Republic of Tatarstan Rustam Minnikhanov.

During the reception, Al-Adwani conveyed greetings 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.

Kuwait is partaking in the forum upon the directives of Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi to keep pace with accelerated technology in global digital system, the ambassador said.

He noted that the event is a key opportunity to discuss boosting cooperation with Russia and Tatarstan in advanced technological investments and digital economy.

He affirmed Kuwait's keenness on boosting cooperative ties with Tatarstan in a manner that contributes to achieving more progress and prosperity of the Autonomous



KUNA photo  
The President of the Republic of Tatarstan receives the Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Russian Federation.

Republic.

Meanwhile, Minnikhanov commended relations with Kuwait and stressed readiness to develop collaboration between the two sides in digital, technological and economic fields.

Earlier in the day, Minnikhanov opened the forum and affirmed it has become an outstanding platform to discuss Artificial Intelligence and digital transformation.

The three-day forum includes over 140 activities, strategic sessions, conferences and exhibitions.

# Kuwaiti talent Fawaz Almudhaf tapped to lead external affairs at US-Arab Chamber

WASHINGTON, Sept 18, (KUNA): The National US-Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSACC) has promoted Fawaz Almudhaf, a Kuwaiti national, to lead its external affairs department.

In press statement, NUSACC stated that Almudhaf's promotion reflects its commitment to developing regional talent that advances cooperation across borders, as well as cultivating young leadership that is responsive to the evolving dynamics of US-Arab engagement.

It pointed out that Almudhaf's promotion comes at a moment when global business and diplomacy are being reshaped by shifting alliances, new trade priorities, and rising demand for cross-border cooperation.

In this new capacity, Almudhaf will help to advance NUSACC's external affairs strategy by strengthening the Chamber's engagement with the policymakers, global corpora-



Fawaz Almudhaf

tions and major institutions across the United States and the Arab World.

"I am profoundly grateful for this promotion, which I view as both an honor and a responsibility," Al-

mudhaf said.

"NUSACC has always stood for more than commerce; it serves as a trusted forum for dialogue, mutual respect, and shared opportunity that strengthens ties across borders. I am committed to carrying this mission forward with dedication, and to advancing US - Arab partnerships at a time when international connectivity has never been more important."

For his part, the Chamber's President and CEO David Hamod congratulated Almudhaf on his promotion, describing him as an important NUSACC team member.

"We are very proud of Fawaz who is an important member of Team NUSACC," Hamod stated.

"He is an excellent example of young Kuwaiti talent making an impact on the global stage, and his contributions play an instrumental role in NUSACC's success."

For over 50 years, NUSACC has

been recognized as America's No. 1 commercial gateway to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The Chamber is America's longest serving organization dedicated to US-Arab business and is widely regarded as the voice of American business in the 22 Arab nations.

Representing more than 50,000 members and stakeholders, NUSACC is an independent, membership-driven entity - and the only business organization in the United States that is officially recognized and authorized by the League of Arab States and the Union of Arab Chambers.

Last year, NUSACC received the coveted E Star Award for Export Excellence, conferred by the President of the United States. NUSACC is the only Chamber of its kind to receive this award - not once, but twice - in the 60-year history of the honor.



diwaniya

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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

The concept of education ... the family's role and school's mission

“PARENTS naturally want to see their children succeed. However, true success goes beyond academic degrees or high grades. Success begins at home, where children develop a love for learning, self-confidence, and the ability to navigate life's challenges,” columnist Major General Eng. **Faisal Musaed Al-Jazzaf** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

“Education today is no longer confined to textbooks and notebooks. It is about nurturing critical thinking, curiosity, and problem-solving skills. In a rapidly changing world, jobs and careers keep evolving, and opportunities wait for no one. The family's role is no longer limited to supervising homework, but it involves instilling the habit of lifelong learning into daily life.

“One of the most effective ways to do this is by making reading a daily routine. A child who reads learns to question, explore, and think independently. Encourage your children to try new things, even if they seem simple, like learning a manual skill or exploring a new program. Praise their efforts, not just their successes. The act of trying is valuable in itself. Trial and error is the true path to learning.

“Be a role model. When parents are enthusiastic readers and eager to learn, they send a message stronger than a thousand words of advice. Our children need life skills more than they need memorized information.

“Our children need the ability to think critically, make decisions, and handle crises. These skills begin at home and are strengthened through school and university. Time is not on our side, and we cannot afford to wait. The future of our nations and economies depends on a generation that can innovate and produce, not just one that seeks government jobs. We build this generation by giving our children a safe, loving, and stimulating environment that encourages learning.



Al-Jazzaf

“Education is a national responsibility, yes... but it begins within the family. Let us make our homes beacons of learning. Let us teach our children that a passion for knowledge and strong values is the greatest gift we can offer on their journey to the future.”

“Every person experiences different forms of fear, which is a psychological state in which one feels that something unpleasant may occur in the present or future. At times, this can lead to intense anxiety and even a near-constant state of psychological distress,” Kuwaiti writer Dr. **Khaled Al-Jenfawi** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

“I believe that the more one works to understand the roots of their fear, the more likely they are to overcome it, or at least reduce its negative impact on their life. Among the roots and causes of fear are the following:

- Uncertainty about the present and future - The feeling of uncertainty about what may happen in the present or future is one of the most intense forms of fear in today's turbulent world. The constant unpredictability of life can create an overwhelming sense of anxiety about what lies ahead. One of the most damaging consequences of this fear is its ability to hinder a person's ability to carry out everyday tasks, duties, and responsibilities.
- Fear of abandonment - This type of fear involves the feeling that someone important will leave, leading to emotional deterioration. It often stems from excessive emotional dependence on others, a lack of self-reliance, over-involvement in relationships without a clear understanding of personal boundaries, heightened emotional sensitivity, and sometimes a deep fear of being alone for extended periods.



Al-Jenfawi

■ Excessive fear of death - No human being is immortal... death is an inevitable part of life for all living creatures. It is, in fact, a sign of divine mercy that God has not revealed to His servants the exact time of their death. Those who strive to live a virtuous and meaningful life have no reason to fear death, regardless of when or where it may come.

■ Confronting fear - Fear is a natural human emotion and cannot be completely eliminated. However, it can be managed and reduced through several effective approaches. These include fully accepting God's will and destiny, deeply reflecting on the root causes of fear, talking openly with trusted loved ones, practicing deep abdominal breathing, using self-motivation techniques, and replacing catastrophic thoughts with positive, constructive thinking.”

“The law stipulates that the children of Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis shall be treated as Kuwaiti citizens in the event of a final divorce or the death of the husband. It authorizes the Minister of Interior to issue a decision granting them this status until they reach adulthood, provided they reside in Kuwait. This is in accordance with Article 5, Paragraph 2 of Nationality Law No. 15/1959,” Legal advisor Dr. **Kadhim Bu Abbas** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

“As a result, the children of Kuwaiti women are entitled to the same privileges as citizens, including access to education, healthcare, and other benefits. This reflects a humanitarian approach aimed at preserving family unity.

“Secondly, the Ministry of Interior issued a decision to treat certain individuals whose Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked as Kuwaitis in their dealings with state institutions, as well as with the private sector, banks, and companies.



Abbas

This aims to bridge the gap between the rights and services they previously enjoyed as citizens and their current legal status, which is difficult to regularize, especially in cases where the restoration of their former citizenship is unlikely.

“Thirdly, it is unfortunate that banks have responded cautiously to the decision, even though Kuwaitis were able to conduct their business after obtaining a decision from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to amend their status and receiving a certificate confirming it.

“The Central Bank has not issued clear instructions to banks on how to implement this decision or addressed the potential legal implications. In addition, banks fear future decrees that might revoke the citizenship of those who acquired it through naturalization, leading them to suspend related transactions. This situation has disrupted banking operations, economic and commercial activities of businesses, and has caused social and financial hardship for the affected individuals and their families. It is an unusual and inhumane situation that undermines justice and violates international standards.

“Fourthly, to address this situation, it is insufficient for the Minister of Interior to issue a decision without a clear legal basis or authority, unlike the case of the children of Kuwaiti women, whose rights are firmly grounded in the law.

“Therefore, we propose that the Council of Ministers add a new article to the Nationality Law authorizing the Prime Minister, as the official responsible for overseeing government policy, to take appropriate measures regarding those whose citizenship has been revoked. This would ensure justice and fairness, allowing them to live with dignity.

“Such a step would align with human rights agreements in international conventions to which Kuwait is a party and an active member of the international community.”

— **Compiled by Simi K. Kuty**

Kuwait-Malaysia elevate 60-year ties toward strategic partnership

New MoUs to boost cooperation

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Malaysian Ambassador to Kuwait Alauddin Mohammed Nor said the Malaysian-Kuwaiti relations, which span 60 years, are currently witnessing an advanced level of multi-faceted cooperation and opening horizons towards a comprehensive strategic partnership, especially in light of the convergence of ‘Kuwait Vision 2035’ and the ‘13th Malaysian Plan (2026-2030)’.**

The Ambassador made the statement at the event organized by the Embassy of Malaysia on the occasion of the 68th National Day and 62nd Malaysia Day. Present at the event were Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Al-Sabah, and a number of ambassadors and diplomats.

In his speech, the Ambassador revealed that “Malaysia was the first Southeast Asian country to open an embassy in Kuwait in 1974, followed by Kuwait in Kuala Lumpur in 1980, reflecting the strength of the relationship between the two countries.”

He pointed out that bilateral relations have witnessed remarkable development in many fields, including energy, oil and gas, defense, trade, food security, tourism, education and healthcare, along with cultural and popular exchanges.



Malaysian Ambassador to Kuwait Alauddin Mohammed Nor and Minister of Higher Education, Dr. Nader Al-Jalal, cut a commemorative cake during the celebration of Malaysia's 68th National Day and 62nd Malaysia Day.

He confirmed that Malaysia intends to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Kuwait to establish a joint cooperation committee between the foreign ministries of the two countries soon, in addition to negotiating other agreements in the fields of defense, higher education and tourism. He stressed that Kuwait is one of the most prominent partners of Malaysia.

He said Kuwait ranked 44th among the trading partners of his country in 2024, with a total trade exchange of more than \$622 million. He indicated that trade growth between the two countries continued to show positive results in 2025, with 63.02 percent growth through July compared to the same period in the previous year.

He added that Malaysian exports to Kuwait include vital products such as palm oil, processed foods, electrical and electronic products, chemicals and rubber products, while Malaysia imports crude oil, petroleum products and chemicals from

Kuwait.

He also revealed that 11,289 Kuwaiti tourists visited Malaysia in 2024 -- 17.2 percent increase compared to the pre-pandemic period, and that the number was expected to increase by 35.77 percent until mid-2025.

At the same time, he announced the launch of the ‘Visit Malaysia 2026’ campaign under the slogan “Unbelievable Experiences,” with the aim to attract 47 million international visitors and generate tourism revenues of about \$78 billion. He said the campaign will focus on sustainable tourism, culture, nature, innovation and connecting Malaysia to the world.

He added that Malaysia is chairing the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) this year, coinciding with Kuwait's presidency of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which led to the organization of the second ASEAN-GCC summit, as well as a trilateral summit with China. He expressed his country's gratitude for active participation of Kuwait.

In the field of defense, the Ambassador disclosed that Malaysian Minister of Defense Datuk Seri Mohammed Khalid Nordin paid an official visit to Kuwait in October 2024, during which the two countries agreed to accelerate negotiations on the MoU for strengthening defense cooperation and military exchange between the two countries.

He went on to say that his country is also focusing on medical tourism sector, revealing that 2024 witnessed the arrival of 1.6 million medical visitors that generated revenues of \$604.1 million.

He then announced the launch of ‘The Year of Medical Tourism 2026’ with the theme, “Healing Meets Hospitality.” He disclosed that a delegation from the Malaysian Health Tourism Council will participate in the reception, during which a business session will be held with Kuwaiti medical institutions.



Farwaniya Governorate photo  
Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah during a meeting with citizens.

Farwaniya Governor holds citizen dialogue

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received at the Farwaniya Governorate headquarters Thursday morning some residents of Khaitan and Sabah Al-Nasser in two separate meetings to listen to their concerns, suggestions, and demands.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the governor welcomed the citizens and attentively listened to their feedback during the meeting.

He affirmed that all complaints and suggestions will be given serious attention and

followed up accordingly.

Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser reiterated his commitment to removing obstacles and resolving the challenges faced by residents, noting that such meetings reflect the strong relationship and ongoing cooperation between citizens and public officials.

At the end of the meetings, attendees expressed their gratitude to Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser for his warm reception, generous hospitality, and his genuine willingness to listen to their concerns and work toward resolving their issues.



Malaysian Ambassador Alauddin Mohammed Nor poses with Kuwaiti officials and members of the Malaysian delegation during the 68th National Day and 62nd Malaysia Day reception.

9 defendants cleared in Al-Muwaizri case

Court acquits ex-PAS Director General

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Misdemeanor Court acquitted former Director General of the Public Authority for Sports Hamoud Fulaitah of harming public funds.

Attorney Bashar Al-Nassar, lawyer for the accused, stated that this ruling is a confirmation of the strength of his client's legal position. He asserted that the fair Kuwaiti judiciary vindicated his client after a comprehensive review of the case facts and documents, which showed the case file is free of any criminal suspicion.

Al-Nassar added that his client reaffirmed his full confidence in the Kuwaiti judiciary and its integrity, indicating the ruling closed a chapter of baseless allegations.

Meanwhile, the Court of Appeals on Wednesday upheld the ruling of the First Instance Court, which acquitted nine defendants of spreading false news

about the ban on former MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri from entering the country, based on the biometric fingerprint.

These defendants include former MPs and bloggers. Last Sunday, the Court of Appeals upheld the acquittal of other defendants in the same case.

The Criminal Court previously acquitted all defendants of all charges, including spreading false news, harming national interests, and misusing the mobile phone.

It is worth noting that the Public Prosecution released the defendants after an investigation on bail of KD500 and a travel ban in two separate cases.

Also, the Court of Appeals, headed by Justice Hassan Al-Shammari, on Monday ordered the arrest of the chairman and two members of the Board of Directors of a major company in which the Public Authority for Minors Affairs (PAMA) has a stake.

The court scheduled hearing on the case for Sept 28.

KFF closes 14 facilities in Shuwaikh Industrial Area

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) carried out an inspection campaign in Shuwaikh Industrial Area recently, targeting establishments and buildings to uncover violations of fire safety regulations, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.



KFF photo  
Inspection campaign in Shuwaikh Industrial Area.

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# MEWRE ramps up power plant maintenance for next summer

Ministry eyes future plant decommissioning

**By Mohammad Ghanem**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy will start its annual maintenance program for electricity generation units and water distillers next week, in preparation for the next summer season.**

Reliable sources said the ministry will begin removing the first units for maintenance on Sunday, according to the agreed schedule. Sources confirmed the ministry is keen on removing the largest possible number of units before April to ensure they are capable of meeting the country's electricity needs. They said that the ministry laid down a plan to complete the maintenance work smoothly through an agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA) to purchase 900 megawatts during the maintenance period. They affirmed this will enable the removal of the largest

possible number of units for radical and preventive maintenance as planned. Sources added the ministry is relying on the generation units to overcome the challenges in the next summer season by completing maintenance work meticulously to avoid the recurrence of emergency shutdown of some units, particularly those related to the power plants' production units, which were planned for decommissioning years ago due to their age and frequent malfunctions. Sources revealed "the ministry is waiting for the implementation of North Zour (Phases Two and Three, Subiya (Phase Four) and Shaqaya (Phase Three), so that it can decommission the South Shuaiba and East Doha power plants due to the deterioration of units in these plants." Sources explained that the decommissioning of the two aforementioned plants is subject to the implementation of future projects without delay, so that the ministry can meet the country's needs in light of the growing demand for electricity, which is needed by development projects and housing cities that will be implemented in the future. Moreover, sources said the ministry is currently discussing the timetable for the electricity and water needs of Nawaf Al-Ahmad, Sabriya and Khairan residential cities with the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW).

## Kuwait's 10th humanitarian aircraft departs for Gaza

CAIRO, Sept 18, (KUNA): The 10th Kuwaiti plane load of humanitarian supplies for Gaza arrived at Al-Arish airport in northern Sinai on Thursday. The cargo, 40 tons of food supplies, is destined for the Gaza strip. Latifa Al-Mir, board member of Kuwait Red Crescent Society said in remarks to KUNA after the plane touched down at the air strip that the operation was part of "fazaat al-kuwait" campaign carried out in cooperation among the ministries of foreign affairs, defense, social affairs and the KRCS. The aircraft took off from Abdullah Al-Mubarak Air Base carrying around 40 tons of food aid, in preparation for its delivery into the Strip. The relief air bridge was the second that has been launched by the State of Kuwait in implementatin of guidelines by the political leadership, Al-Mir said.



Representatives of the official bodies participating in preparing the tenth plane of the second airlift to aid brothers in the Gaza Strip.



Farwaniya Governor welcomes Josour, Focus International leaders.

### Sheikh Athbi backs inclusion initiatives

## Farwaniya Governor meets with Josour Magazine and Focus Int'l

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received at his office on Wednesday morning in Farwaniya Governorate, Hanan Al-Enezi, Chairperson of Josour International Consulting Services and Founder of Josour/Bridges Magazine, which focuses on people with disabilities, and Nasser Ali Al-Mardi, Chairman of Focus International for Organizing Exhibitions and Conferences and Advisor to the Kuwait Festival Association.

Farwaniya Governorate, the governor was presented during the meeting with a copy of Josour Magazine, which aims to empower and serve people with disabilities. He was briefed on the most important achievements and activities by Josour Magazine and Focus International that highlighted Kuwait's efforts in supporting and serving the disabled community through local and international initiatives. The discussion also covered potential cooperation to organize upcoming initiatives and activities.

## CSC nominates new batch of 1,236 citizens to meet government needs

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has announced the nomination of a new batch of 1,236 citizens registered in the Central Employment System, reports Al-Seyassah daily. It explained that this batch includes many highly qualified individuals and diploma holders, some nominated for the first time, while others had previously declined nomination. Those holding a high school diploma or intermediate stage certificate will be nominated after successfully completing qualifying training courses, in preparation for their appointment to

the relevant employers. This procedure is in implementation of the sovereign decision issued by His Highness the Amir of Kuwait on February 18, 2024, which mandates linking nominations to the actual needs of relevant institutions. CSC noted that it is currently receiving data for the second phase of job requirements for the fiscal year 2025/2026 from government institutions, in preparation for submission to the Civil Service Council. It urged all candidates in the latest batch to apply directly to the designated employers without needing to visit CSC.

New directive takes effect Sept 21

## DGCA bans fingerprints, makes facial ID attendance mandatory

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has once again issued a circular requiring the adoption of facial recognition as the sole method for verifying employee attendance, replacing fingerprints, starting Sept 21. The newspaper obtained a copy of the circular, which mandates all employees to stand in front of the face print device and ensure that the process is completed correctly, as facial recognition will be the primary and sole method of proving attendance at work. The DGCA warned that any employee who fails to use this technology will be subject to legal accountability, confirming that the decision applies to all departments, units and sections. Reliable sources informed the newspaper that

the goal of this measure is to enhance the accuracy of recording attendance and limit errors that may occur in traditional systems. Sources said the adoption of facial recognition is part of the comprehensive digital transformation plan of the DGCA to keep pace with technological developments and instill job discipline. Sources affirmed that this step will contribute to standardizing work procedures and ensuring transparency, especially since the new system has a high capacity to verify user identity. They added that the circular is in line with the commitment of DGCA to develop the work environment and instill administrative discipline, which will positively impact the quality of services offered and guarantee the efficiency of institutional performance. They stated that the DGCA previously issued a similar circular on adopting facial recognition as proof of attendance.

### Other Voices

## I am finally free from all commitments

**By Ahmad alsarraf**

A few days ago, I officially ended my relationship with the world of finance, business, stocks, companies, bonds, contracts, and tenders after more than half a century. Throughout those years, my journey was filled with activity. I worked along with distinguished partners and faced many failures and significant losses. Yet, the ultimate outcome was positive, both financially and psychologically. I concluded my career with a good reputation, one I am proud of. It is enough for me that no one, whether a "jealous and spiteful" individual or a backward religious political party, managed to tarnish my name or condemn me, despite their power, connections, and information. I was never convicted, as they wished, of any violation or dishonorable act. I have successfully navigated all my battles, sometimes alone, sometimes with the financial and moral support of my family, and more often with the backing of the Al-Qabas newspaper management and friends. Despite dozens of lawsuits filed against me by political, religious, quasi-governmental entities, individuals, and companies, I emerged from these "battles" with minimal blemishes and losses. From my experience at Al-Qabas, I learned how to manage challenges, how a writer can be honest with himself, loyal to his readers, and often succeed in expressing his views without compromising the ideals and principles he believes in. This does not mean I am perfect in character or behavior. I don't claim to be flawless, but I can say that I have made a genuine effort to resist many temptations, sometimes at the expense of my partners' interests. When one of them politely raised concerns about these impacts, I told them to accept me as I am, the full package, with all my strengths and weaknesses, both good and bad. I asked them not to expect me to be honest with them in business while being deceitful or corrupt in my writing, or vice versa. My principles required me to



alsarraf

stand against those I believed threatened society, especially those who used religion as a cover to justify corruption and theft. Writing for Al-Qabas has always been an enjoyable and rewarding experience, morally, psychologically, and socially. However, my articles have cost me friendships, which I do not regret, and have caused financial losses when some companies refused to do business with us because I criticized an official who, unfortunately, was part of the family owning a major company we worked with. I will never forget the beautiful moral experience I had when Walid Al-Nisf first became editor-in-chief of Al-Qabas. He politely apologized for publishing one of my articles that included sharp criticism of inappropriate behavior by a hotel in the capital. Interestingly, this criticism could have benefited a competing hotel largely owned by the Al-Nisf family, yet he chose not to exploit the situation for personal gain. I also learned a great deal from the Al-Qabas institution, an organization I sometimes rebelled against, even stopping writing for several days. From Al-Qabas, I gained linguistic, technical, and legal knowledge that helped me accept when they refused to publish many of my articles, despite the significant effort I put into writing them as a businessman rather than a professional columnist. I understood that Al-Qabas' refusal to publish certain articles always came from a desire to protect both me and the newspaper from potential legal consequences. I revisit this point because, over the thirty years I wrote my columns, I was very careful not to use my platform to advance personal or commercial interests. On several occasions, I even wrote advice that went against my own interests. There are too many examples to list. My positions sometimes surprised people, including partners and friends, but that was a reflection of my rebellious nature. Now, I will have more freedom in what I write, and this brings me a psychological relief I find hard to put into words. Anyone who has evidence of my dishonesty or "opportunism" in any government contract, even for a trivial amount, should present it now, or else remain silent forever. email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

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A screenshot from a documentary video presentation shown during the event documenting milestones in the history of Kuwaiti-Emirati relations.



A timeless photo of the late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad and Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan is a testament to a long history of brotherhood and cohesion.



Kuwaiti paintings that embody the features of folklore document the details of daily life with contemporary artistic touches.

## Kuwait Cultural Days highlight dialogue & exchange with UAE

ABU DHABI, Sept 18, (KUNA): Kuwait Cultural Days event in Abu Dhabi is undoubtedly a landmark station, which mirrors the deep-rooted cultural and artistic bonds between Kuwait and the UAE, as part of the celebrations of “Kuwait as the Arab Capital of Culture and Media for 2025”.

The event highlighted a distinguished atmosphere to audience as it carries cultural and artistic contents that shed light on Kuwait’s identity and cemented bonds of communication between the two brotherly nations.

The event is full of multiple programs, which include fine arts exhibi-

tions showing Kuwaiti artists’ innovation and folklore performances on Kuwait’s heritage, along with concerts and seminars about the value of cultural dialogue and expertise exchange.

It gives a clear message confirming that culture is the utmost way to consolidate bonds and humanitarian communication.

Thus, Abu Dhabi turned to be a vibrant gathering, which brings together word, art and picture in one portrait.

This portrait embodies the shared fate and integrated visions between Kuwait and the UAE toward a brighter shared future.



More photos from the event

KUNA photos

## Kuwait’s rich geo heritage rocks Manama exhibition

MANAMA, Sept 18, (KUNA): Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Geosciences Society, Dr. Mubarak Al-Hajeri, affirmed, Thursday, the Society’s keenness to highlight Kuwait’s geological landmarks and their scientific and historical importance, highlighting the relationship between geology and humanity.

In remarks to KUNA, the Society represented the Kuwaiti Geological Society at the Middle East Oil, Gas and Geosciences Conference and Exhibition (MEOS & GEO) under the theme “Energy for a Prosperous Future: Driving a Sustainable Future,” which kicked off last Tuesday and concludes today in Manama.

Al-Hajeri noted that the associa-

tion was keen to display a collection of rare rocks through its pavilion at the exhibition, highlighting Kuwait’s unique geological and natural resources that reflect the diversity of its environment and the authenticity of its components, and contributing to raising awareness of the importance of preserving this natural heritage for future generations.

He pointed out that, on the sidelines of the conference and exhibition, discussions were held with the Middle East Regional Council of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, during which opportunities for cooperation and enhanced coordination within the geological community in the region were discussed.

# Thailand brings ‘world-class’ healing to Kuwait’s doorstep

Medical tourism seen as gateway for economic diversification

By Fares Ghaleb  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The Embassy of the Kingdom of Thailand in Kuwait organized an event titled, “Rediscovering Health and Wellness Tourism in Thailand,” bringing together representatives of leading hospitals in Thailand and Kuwait to strengthen cooperation in the field of health and wellness tourism.**

Thai Chargé d’Affaires to Kuwait Uraiwan Courtaud said “the event aims to explore the future and further strengthen ties between Thailand and Kuwait. Together, Thailand and Kuwait can establish a more streamlined referral system that ensures Kuwaiti patients receive world-class care and enjoy certain benefits. We can also enhance the exchange of medical personnel and joint training to facilitate professional development on both sides. We are confident that this can pave the way for a long-term and strong cooperation that also supports the goals of Kuwait Vision 2035, particularly the transformation of Kuwait into a private sector-led economy.”

Courtaud added “this meeting between representatives of leading Thai private hospitals and their Kuwaiti counterparts aims to explore ways of cooperation and expand treatment options available to citizens seeking healthcare abroad.”

She affirmed that her country is widely known for its advanced medical expertise, with centers of excellence in various medical specializations, making it a preferred treatment destination for patients from Kuwait and the region. She said the goal of this visit is to establish an integrated referral system between the two sides, giving Kuwaiti patients more options when considering traveling to Thailand for treatment.

Regarding coordination with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health, she stated



Thai Chargé d’Affaires to Kuwait Uraiwan Courtaud and Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Rasheed in a group photo with representatives of Thai hospitals and representatives of Kuwait’s health sector.

that the move is in line with the new healthcare policies, confirming their readiness to institutionally cooperate with official authorities in Kuwait as soon as the opportunity arises.

She continued “Thailand has long been known for its global leadership in medical and wellness tourism.” She

indicated that her country catered to more than 3.5 million international patients annually before the COVID-19 pandemic, with more than 62 hospitals accredited by the Joint Commission International, putting Thailand among the top global destinations for healthcare services.



Thai Chargé d’Affaires to Kuwait Uraiwan Courtaud speaking at the event.

Meanwhile, Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Rasheed, representative of the assistant undersecretary for External Affairs at the Ministry of Health, expressed his happiness over participating in the meeting organized by the Thai Embassy to introduce the private hospitals in Thailand. He stressed “we are happy to participate and to encourage everyone to do what is necessary towards the advancement of the country’s healthcare sector, and provide the best medical services to citizens and all those residing in Kuwait.”

Asked whether there are agreements between the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health and its Thai counterpart on treatment abroad, Al-Rashid disclosed “we are in the process of preparing memoranda of understanding with Thai authorities and develop them into health agreements between us. Thailand is known for medical tourism, not only in Kuwait and the Gulf, but also in the United States of America, Britain and Europe.”

Al-Rashid denied sending any Kuwaiti patients for treatment in Thailand, asserting that all these patients travel at their own expense.

## Continued from Page 1

### Four Kuwaitis

His leadership at NBK is known for strong reporting transparency and measurable advances in sustainability practices in line with regional and global climate goals.

Other Kuwaitis on the list are CEO of Kuwait Projects Company Holding (KIPCO) Dana Nasser Al Sabah, Vice Chairman and Group CEO of Zain Telecommunications Group Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi, and Vice Chairman and CEO of Agility Tarek Sultan.

This is an affirmation of the continuous commitment of Kuwait to attain sustainability in the fields of banking, telecommunications, investment and logistics.

Through these leaders, Kuwait is strengthening its position as a vital player in the sustainable transformation of the region.

Meanwhile, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) topped the 2025 List with 67 representatives, followed by Saudi Arabia with 23, and Egypt with 12.

These achievements are manifested in the 62 percent expansion of Masdar’s renewable energy portfolio reaching 51 gigawatts, while Emirates Global Aluminium marked the half-way point in constructing the largest aluminium recycling plant in the UAE, Vodafone Egypt transitioned to renewable on-grid electricity, and Infinity Power made a quantum leap toward the 10 GW renewable energy capacity throughout Africa.

### Interior Minister

The statement added that Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef reviewed with the security chiefs the security situation at the start of the school year and directed that “security presence be intensified around schools and vital areas and that traffic flow be facilitated during peak periods, with a focus on stopping traffic violations that hinder traffic flow and endanger lives.”

He also directed the presence of traffic department leaders in the streets to directly supervise traffic flow and deal with any emergencies as they arise.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef emphasized that “the Ministry of Interior is continuing its mission to maintain security and stability in the country.”

The meeting was attended by Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Major General Ali Al-Adwani, Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security Major General Hamid Al-Dawas, and heads of all security sectors.

### Kuwait to

Friday night will witness mild to moderate temperatures, with northwesterly to variable winds blowing at light to moderate speeds of 8 km/h to 30 km/h. Minimum temperatures are expected to range from 23°C to 25°C, while sea conditions remain slight to moderate with wave heights between

one and three feet.

On Saturday, daytime weather will be hot, with light to moderate winds from north to variable directions, and with speeds ranging from 8 km/h to 32 km/h. Maximum temperatures are expected to range between 41°C and 43°C, with slight to moderate sea conditions and waves between one and four feet.

Saturday night will be mild to moderate, with northwesterly to northerly winds blowing at light to moderate speeds, occasionally gusty in coastal areas, ranging from 10 km/h to 40 km/h. Minimum temperatures are expected to range from 22°C to 24°C, with the sea remaining slight to moderate and occasional wave heights between two and six feet.

### Kuwait welcomes

Ambassador Tareq Al-Bannai made the statement during a speech he delivered before the UNSC to discuss the situation between Kuwait and Iraq, including the dossiers of prisoners, missing persons and the national properties.

Al-Bannai saw that the resolution adopted earlier in the day is a continuation of a long path of relevant UN resolutions since the 1990s that put a legal base to compel Iraq to uncover the fate of the bodies of prisoners and missing Kuwaitis, and return Kuwait’s properties.

The 2024 Resolution 2732 reiterated the necessity of continuing the UN follow-up on these files after the end of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) mandate, he said, adding that move is a main component to resolve them.

Appointing a high-level representative to follow up these files and offer perioral reports to the UNSC ensure objective evaluation and a continued international censorship, he noted.

Completing any dossier is an additional step toward building confidence, and every step in this regard is a cornerstone in international security and peace, he stated.

He cited that the UN effective cooperation through the UNSC was a key factor in making a tangible progress between Kuwait and Iraq, referring to the addressing of the compensation file.

Completing this path requires serious act from all parties, mainly brothers in Iraq, to translate it into deeds and pave the way for completing these dossiers for a brighter phase of cooperation between the two brotherly nations, he pointed out.

Kuwait believes that its ties with Iraq not only positively affect the two brotherly nations, but also have broader implications for the region as a whole, he said.

Building confidence and commitment between the two countries is a cornerstone to expand collaboration between Iraq and the GCC states to achieve the region’s stability, he affirmed.

firmed.

Kuwait will continue supporting Iraq to fulfill its international requirements and obligations before the UNSC regarding the pending dossiers, the representative elaborated.

He highlighted that the success of Iraq is the success of Kuwait and the whole region.

Throughout history, Kuwait has proven that it has neither sought confrontation nor escalation, rather pursues justice and peace, he made clear.

International transparency is the asserted guarantee to make permanent and fair results, he highlighted, thanking all member states for their constructive contributions to crystalizing this step.

Kuwait will remain a committed partner to achieving justice to the families of victims and restoring the national archive as well as addressing these files in a way that restore rights.

Earlier Wednesday, the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2792, asking Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to appoint a high-level representative tasked with enhancing efforts regarding the return of bodies of Kuwaiti missing persons and Kuwaiti property, including the national archives.

### GCC council

regional ballistic missile early warning system, and update defense plans.

It added that the GCC will hold a joint air defense exercise within three months to further strengthen collective defense capabilities.

The Joint Defense Council comprises defense officials from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain.

This comes after an unprecedented Israeli airstrike in Doha last week targeted a building where Hamas officials were meeting to discuss a U.S.-proposed ceasefire. The attack killed five Hamas members and a Qatari security officer, though key negotiators survived.

Kuwaiti Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation arrived in the Qatari capital, Doha, to take part in the emergency session of the Joint Defense Council of the Defense Ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

In a statement Thursday, the Qatari Ministry of Defense said that Qatar’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defense Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani received the Kuwaiti minister at Doha Airport.

Yesterday, the Chief of General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Lieutenant General Khaled Daraj Al-Shuriaan, headed the delegation participating in the urgent meeting of the Supreme Military Committee of the Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states, held in Qatar.

Elsewhere, Saudi Arabia and nucle-

ar-armed Pakistan have signed a mutual defense pact that defines any attack on either nation as an attack on both - a key accord in the wake of Israel’s strike on Qatar last week.

The kingdom has long had close economic, religious and security ties to Pakistan, including reportedly providing funding for Islamabad’s nuclear weapons program as it developed. Analysts - and Pakistani diplomats in at least one case - have suggested over the years that Saudi Arabia could be included under Islamabad’s nuclear umbrella, particularly as tensions have risen over Iran’s atomic program.

But the timing of the pact appeared to be a signal to Israel, long suspected to be the Middle East’s only nuclear-armed state, which has conducted a sprawling military offensive since Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, attack on Israel stretching across Iran, Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, Qatar, Syria and Yemen.

Israel did not respond to requests for comment. The pact marks the first major defense decision by a Gulf Arab country since the Qatar attack. The United States, long the security guarantor for the Gulf Arab states, also did not respond to questions posed to the State Department.

Saudi Arabia’s powerful Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman signed the pact on Wednesday with Pakistan’s Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

While not specifically discussing the bomb, the agreement states “any aggression against either country shall be considered an aggression against both,” according to statements issued by both Pakistan’s Foreign Affairs Ministry and the state-run Saudi Press Agency.

“This agreement ... aims to develop aspects of defense cooperation between the two countries and strengthen joint deterrence against any aggression,” the statement said.

A senior Saudi official, speaking on condition of anonymity to The Financial Times, seemed to suggest that Pakistan’s nuclear protection was a part of the deal, saying it “will utilize all defensive and military means deemed necessary depending on the specific threat.”

Zalmay Khalilzad, a former U.S. diplomat with long experience in Afghanistan and Pakistan, expressed concern over the deal, saying it comes in “dangerous times.”

“Pakistan has nuclear weapons and delivery systems that can hit targets across the Middle East, including Israel. It also is developing systems that can reach targets in the U.S.,” Khalilzad wrote on X.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have a defense relationship stretching back decades, in part due to Islamabad’s willingness to defend the Islamic holy sites of Mecca and Medina in the kingdom. Pakistani troops first traveled to Saudi Arabia in the late 1960s over concerns about Egypt’s war in Yemen at the time.



INTERNATIONAL

America

**Pennsylvania shooting kills 3 officers:** Law enforcement were investigating Thursday after a shooting killed three officers and wounded two more in southern Pennsylvania the day before.

The violence erupted in rural York County as officers followed up on a domestic-related investigation that began on Tuesday. Police killed the shooter.

Hours after the violence, community members held American flags and saluted as police and emergency vehicles formed a procession to the coroner's office.

Gov. Josh Shapiro condemned the violence at a news conference and said it was a tragic loss of life. Attorney General Pamela Bondi called the violence against police "a scourge on our society." (AP)

□ □ □

**Giuliani ordered to pay \$1.36m in legal bills:** It's another blow to Rudy Giuliani's withered wallet: A judge has ordered the former New York City mayor to pay \$1.36 million in legal fees he racked up during investigations into his efforts to overturn President Donald Trump's 2020 election loss.

Judge Arthur Engoron made the ruling Tuesday in a lawsuit brought by lawyer Robert Costello and the law firm Davidoff Hatcher & Citron LLP. In granting summary judgment for Costello and the firm, Engoron rejected Giuliani's claim that he never received any bills for legal fees.

With interest, Giuliani owes nearly \$1.6 million. He must also pay lawyer costs that Costello and the firm incurred in fighting to recoup his unpaid legal fees, the judge ruled.

Engoron, a Democrat, is the same Manhattan judge who last year ordered Trump to pay a massive civil penalty after finding that he had engaged in fraud by exaggerating his wealth for decades. The fine ballooned to more than \$500 million with interest before an appeals



Police officers ride during a procession on Sept 17, in Spring Grove, Pa, after multiple police officers were shot and killed. (AP)

court overturned it last month. Giuliani's spokesperson said the ex-mayor will appeal. (AP)

□ □ □

**S.California judge gets to 35 years to life:** A Southern California judge who shot and killed his wife during an argument over family finances was sentenced Wednesday to 35 years to life in prison. The case roiled the legal community in California's Orange County where many had known or worked with him for decades.

Orange County Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Ferguson, wearing a green jail jumpsuit in court, was sentenced for the second-degree murder of his wife, Sheryl, and felony gun enhancements.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Eleanor J. Hunter, who presided over the case to avoid a conflict of interest in Orange County, said the evidence against Ferguson was "absolutely overwhelming" including a text message he sent to court staff immediately after the shooting saying "I just lost it" and video recordings of him speaking extensively while in custody. (AP)

Buttigieg 'first choice' for 2024 running mate but pairing too risky, says Harris

WASHINGTON, Sept 18, (AP): Former US vice president Kamala Harris says she would have picked Pete Buttigieg as her running mate last year but America wasn't ready for the pairing, according to an excerpt of her new book.

Harris writes in an excerpt of "107 Days" published Wednesday in The Atlantic that former President Joe Biden's transportation secretary was her "first choice," adding that he "would have been an ideal partner - if I were a straight white man."

"But we were already asking a lot of America: to accept a woman, a Black woman, a Black woman married to a Jewish man. Part of me wanted to say, Screw it, let's just do it. But knowing what was at stake, it was too big of a risk," she writes.

Her thoughts on selecting a running mate come as potential 2028 contenders begin traveling the US in the early days of the second Trump administration.

In the book excerpt, she writes about her love of working with Buttigieg and her friendship with him and his husband, but that the two of them on the Democratic ticket would have been too risky.

"And I think Pete also knew that - to our mutual sadness," she writes.



US Vice President Kamala Harris, (right), next to Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, speaks during a plenary session of the US-ASEAN Summit on May 13, 2022, at the State Department in Washington. (AP)

It wasn't immediately clear at what point she decided against Buttigieg, a former South Bend, Indiana, mayor and former intelligence officer in the Navy Reserves. Buttigieg emerged as a national political figure during his 2020 presidential run in which he finished atop the Iowa caucuses.

The Associated Press didn't immediately hear back from a spokesperson for Buttigieg.

After Biden dropped out of the presidential race in July 2024 following a disastrous debate performance, Harris was left to head up the Democratic ticket.

We will sit down and negotiate if they will sit down and negotiate: Schumer

Republican leaders reject Democratic health care demands for bill to avoid shutdown

WASHINGTON, Sept 18, (AP): US Republican leaders in the House and Senate said Wednesday that they will reject Democratic demands for an immediate extension of health care subsidies, challenging Democrats to vote against a stopgap spending bill that doesn't include them but will keep the government open at the end of the month.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., said Democrats "have a choice to make" as the Sept 30 deadline approaches. They can work with Republicans, Thune said, or "they can shut down the government with all that will mean for the American people."

The House could vote as soon as Thursday on a Republican stopgap measure to keep federal agencies funded through Nov. 21, buying lawmakers more time to work out their differences on spending levels. Republicans argue they are providing exactly what Democrats have insisted upon in past government shutdown battles - a clean funding bill free of partisan policy riders.

But Democrats said it wasn't enough, releasing a counterproposal late Wednesday even as Thune and House Speaker Mike Johnson said they wouldn't consider it. The Demo-

cratic proposal would extend subsidies for low- and middle-income individuals who purchase health insurance through the Affordable Care Act and reverse Medicaid cuts that were included in Republicans' "big beautiful bill" enacted earlier this year.

"We will sit down and negotiate if they will sit down and negotiate," said Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. "We don't have a red line, but we know we have to help the American people."

Republicans will need at least seven Democrats to vote with them to pass the short-term measure. Without Democrats, Schumer said, "they're going to end up shutting down the government."

It's a high-stakes game of brinksmanship for the Democrats, in particular, as the party's base urges them to fight harder and many wager that a shutdown would force Republicans to negotiate with them on health care and other issues. If the government does shut down on Oct. 1, most federal agencies will close and millions of federal employees deemed non-essential, including many in the military, won't receive paychecks. And there's no guarantee that the two parties could find agreement on how to end the



US Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., joined at right by Majority Whip Tom Emmer, R-Minn., talks to reporters about the killing of conservative activist Charlie Kirk and defended employers who take action against their workers whose comments go too far, at the Capitol in Washington on Sept 16. (AP)

standoff.

Democrats on both sides of the Capitol are watching Schumer closely after his last-minute decision in March to vote with Republicans to keep the

government open. Schumer argued then that a shutdown would be damaging and would give President Donald Trump and his White House freedom to make more government cuts. Many

on the left revolted, with some advocates calling for his resignation.

The vote in the spring also caused a temporary schism with House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries, who opposed the GOP spending bill and said he would not be "complicit" with Schumer's vote.

The two Democratic leaders now say they are united, and Schumer says that things have changed since March. The public is more wary of Trump and Republicans, Schumer says, after the passage of Medicaid cuts.

Democrats' top demand has been an extension of the health care tax credits that expire at the end of the year. Thune and House Speaker Mike Johnson have indicated that they are open to extending the subsidies, which made health insurance more affordable for millions of people since the COVID-19 pandemic. But many Republicans would like to see changes that Democrats are likely to oppose, and both Thune and Johnson have made clear that they need more time to work on the issue.

"They're trying to insert unrelated matters into the middle of a clean government extension. And I don't think that's going to work," House Speaker Mike Johnson said on CNBC Wednesday morning.

day morning.

The GOP bill would generally fund agencies at current levels, with a few limited exceptions, including an extra \$88 million to increase security for lawmakers, the Supreme Court and members of the executive branch. The proposed boost comes as lawmakers face an increasing number of personal threats, with their concerns heightened by last week's assassination of conservative activist Charlie Kirk.

The Democratic alternative introduced by Schumer on Wednesday would include more than \$180 million for congressional security and another \$140 million for the Supreme Court and other federal courts.

Trump, so far, has been dismissive of the Democrats' threats of a shutdown, saying last week to not "even bother" negotiating with them.

"If you gave them every dream, they would not vote for it," Trump said.

Democrats have tried to use those words against him and insist the president would take the blame if the government shuts down.

"Unless he's forgotten that you need a supermajority to pass a budget in the Senate, that's obviously his signal he wants a shutdown," said Wisconsin Sen. Tammy Baldwin, a Democrat.



Demonstrators march during a protest called by major trade unions to oppose budget cuts, in Nantes, western France on Sept 18. (AP)

Strikes and protests roil France, pitting streets against Macron and new premier

PARIS, Sept 18, (AP): Protesters hit France with transport strikes, notably targeting the Paris Metro, blockades and demonstrations Thursday, pitting the power of the streets against President Emmanuel Macron's government and its plans to cut funding for public services that underpin the French way of life.

The first scuffles between police and protesters came before the break of day, in Paris. Demonstrations were planned nationwide, from France's biggest cities to small towns.

Major trade unions that called strikes are pushing for the abandonment of proposed budget cuts, social welfare freezes and other belt-tightening that opponents contend will further erode the purchasing power of low-

paid and middle-class workers and which triggered the collapse of successive governments that sought to push them through.

The planned day of upheaval - with strikes also impacting schools, industry and other sectors of the European Union's second-largest economy - aimed to turn up the heat on new Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu. Macron appointed him last week, tasking Lecornu with the job of building support in Parliament for proposed budget cuts that brought down his immediate predecessors but which the government insists are needed to rein in France's massive deficit and debt.

Unions have decried the budget proposals as brutal and punitive for workers, retirees and others who are vulner-

able. They also continue to denounce Macron's wildly unpopular pension reform that raised the minimum retirement age from 62 to 64.

The government said it was deploying police in exceptionally large numbers - about 80,000 in all - to keep order on Thursday.

French national rail company SNCF said "a few disruptions" were expected on high-speed trains to France and Europe, but most will run.

Regional rail lines, as well as the Paris Metro and commuter trains, will be more severely impacted.

In airports, only few disruptions are anticipated as the main air traffic controllers union decided to postpone its call for a strike pending the appointment of a new Cabinet.

of state is largely ceremonial, was speaking in a year when politicians in the ruling coalition were repeatedly at loggerheads. (AP)

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**Police make arrests for spying:** British, Lithuanian and Latvian authorities have detained people on suspicion of carrying out intelligence-related activities on behalf of Russia in the latest of a string of incidents to be linked to Moscow by Western officials.

The Metropolitan Police said Thursday they arrested three people just east of London on suspicion of spying for Russia. On Wednesday, Lithuanian prosecutors said they uncovered and detained a Russia-linked network of suspects who are alleged to have planned and organized arson attacks in various European countries. Meanwhile, Latvia's security service said it detained a man suspected of passing intelligence about the military to Russia.

British police said they arrested two men, aged 41 and 46, and a 35-year-old woman in the county of Essex. They searched two addresses and later released the suspects on bail. (AP)

Europe

**Dutch king calls for compromise:** King Willem-Alexander appealed for the return of a Dutch culture of compromise as the increasingly polarized Netherlands heads to the polls next month for its fourth general elections in less than nine years.

The king's speech to a joint sitting in a Hague theater of both houses of parliament marks the formal opening of the political year and came against a backdrop of political turmoil and the looming Oct. 29 elections.

"Unfortunately, people in the Netherlands seem increasingly to be at loggerheads - on the street, online, at our universities, and not least in The Hague," the king said in his "speech from the throne," that is written by the government. "They have entrenched opinions for or against, black or white. As if one person being right automatically makes another wrong, while in reality the situation is almost always far more complex than that."

Willem-Alexander, whose role as monarch and head

Trump and Starmer sign tech deal before holding talks on tariffs, war

AYLESBURY, England, Sept 18, (AP): US President Donald Trump on Thursday signed what he called a historic agreement on science and technology with Britain as United Kingdom officials who have gone all out to impress him with royal pageantry during his state visit now try to deliver key trade and business deals that can further their country's interests.

Trump and Prime Minister Keir Starmer held a roundtable with business leaders as they signed the deal. They also had private meetings where the wars in Ukraine and Gaza and tariff rates the U.S. may set on steel imported from Britain were expected to be discussed. At a subsequent joint news conference, Starmer said, "While we shape this bond for a new era, the fundamentals have not changed."

Trump said he was "tremendously thankful" for the hospitality during his visit and that King Charles III and Queen Camilla are "two fantastic people."

At the earlier signing ceremony for an agreement meant to promote tech investment in both nations, Starmer referred to the American president as "my friend, our friend" and spoke of "leaders who respect each other and leaders who genuinely like each other." The event took place at Chequers, a 16th-century manor house northwest of London that serves as a rural retreat



US President Donald Trump meets Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer at Chequers near Aylesbury, England on Sept 18. (AP)

for British leaders.

The British charm offensive continued after the king and queen had feted Trump and first lady Melania Trump at Windsor Castle, on Wednesday. The royals used the first of the Trump's two-day state visit to offer all the pomp the monarchy can muster: gold-trimmed carriages, scarlet-clad soldiers, artillery salutes, a glittering banquet in a grand ceremonial hall and the biggest military honor guard ever

assembled for such a state visit.

Trump has seemed grateful for all the attention - so much so that he has largely stuck to script and offered little of his typical off-the-cuff criticism of hosts.

Still, he had his moments. Trump joked with his treasury secretary, Scott Bessent, and commerce secretary, Howard Lutnick, as he signed the tech deal. "Should I sign this Howard? Scott? If the deal's no good I'm blaming you."

Warsaw turns to Ukraine for drone warfare expertise

KYIV, Ukraine, Sept 18, (AP): Poland's defense chief traveled to Kyiv on Thursday in search of Ukrainian help in developing his country's drone warfare capabilities, just over a week after Russian drones entered Polish airspace and exposed NATO's vulnerability to drone warfare.

Drones used for defense and attack have taken a central battlefield role in the more than three years since Russia invaded Ukraine, transforming how wars are waged, and countries are keen to master the new and quickly developing battlefield technology.

"We will be signing an agreement concerning cooperation between the (defense) ministries, but also acquiring capabilities when it comes to operating drones," Polish Defense Minister Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz said in comments published on the website of the Polish Ministry of Defense.

Last week's Russian incursion, which caused NATO to send fighter jets to shoot down the drones, heightened tensions in eastern Europe. The war between Russia and Ukraine has continued despite months of U.S. efforts to stop it, including a US-Russia summit meeting in Alaska.

The incursion deepened concerns that the war could spread beyond Ukraine.

NATO announced it was strengthening its defensive posture on its eastern flank bordering Belarus, Russia and Ukraine.

Moscow, meanwhile, showcased its conventional and nuclear military power in long-planned exercises with Belarus that fueled Western concerns about Russia's intentions.

Ukraine's air defenses shot down or jammed 48 out of 75 Russian drones launched at the country overnight, the air force said Thursday.



A worker carries part of a combat drone at Fire Point's secret factory in Ukraine on Aug 14. (AP)

Rail infrastructure was again hit, part of a recent pattern of strikes.

Also:

**KYIV, Ukraine:** Ukraine expects there will be around \$3.5 billion by next month in a fund to buy weapons from the United States and help sustain its more than three-year fight against Russia's all-out invasion, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Wednesday.

The financial arrangement known as the Prioritized Ukraine Requirements List, or PURL, pools contributions from NATO members, except the United States, to purchase American weapons, munitions and equipment.



No deaths reported

## Thai security forces use rubber bullets, tear gas in border melee with Cambodian protesters

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, Sept 18, (AP): Thai security forces clashed with protesters from Cambodia on Wednesday in a disputed border area , threatening a fragile truce reached in July after five days of armed combat.

Official statements from Cambodia said 28 people were injured over the course of several hours near what they called Prey Chan village in Banteay Meanchey province. Thai authorities referred to the same area as Ban Nong Ya Kaeo in Thailand’s Sa Kaeo province.

No deaths were reported. Thai security forces used non-lethal weapons while Cambodian protesters, who appeared to be civilians, threw rocks and other objects.

Thai Army spokesperson Maj. Gen. Winthai Suvaree described the situation as a Cambodian mob encroaching on Thai territory, obstructing operations and destroying official property. He said Thai authorities regarded the incident as a provocation and an intentional violation of the ceasefire agreement.

In late July, the two countries engaged in five days of combat that killed dozens of people and displaced more than 260,000. The two countries agreed on a ceasefire only after mediation fostered by Malaysia’s Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and pressure from US President Donald Trump, who threatened to withhold trade privileges unless they agreed on a truce.

Tensions remain high after the ceasefire, especially since Thai soldiers have been wounded by land mines while patrolling the no-man’s land between the two countries. Thailand charges that the mines are newly planted in violation of the ceasefire, an accusation vehemently denied by Cambodia.

Thai security forces “used tear gas against Cambodian civilians in an attempt to surround land that Cambodians have long lived on and cultivated,” said a Cambo-



In this photo released by Agence Kampuchea Press (AKP), Thai soldiers place barbed wire in Prey Chan village, along the disputed border with Thailand on Sept 17. (AP)

dian government statement issued Wednesday.

It said local Cambodians gathered to remove barbed wire that Thais were laying down, and that “Thai authorities fired live ammunition, rubber bullets, and smoke

bombs at them, while also deploying high-frequency sound devices that can damage the eardrum and brain.” The statement further asserted that other “violent measures” were used, resulting in at least 28 people, including monks, fainting and sustaining serious and minor injuries.

A Thai army statement posted online said approximately 200 people came from the Cambodian side “to protest the Thai side’s actions during the deployment of barriers and concertina wire to enhance security along the Thai-Cambodian border.”

It said Thai officials explained to the crowd what they were doing, but a melee broke out and they had to use tear gas and rubber bullets to restore order, with the tear gas temporarily causing both sides to step back.

When the Thai authorities resumed setting up their barrier, violence broke out again and security forces employed tear gas, rubber bullets, and LRADs -- long-range acoustic devices that emit painfully loud high-pitched sounds -- to quell the unrest, they said.

After 5 p.m., the Cambodians began to retreat, shouting at the Thai forces and causing injuries by throwing rocks and sticks and shooting slingshots, said the Thai army statement, adding that five Thai soldiers were injured.

Thai Army spokesperson Winthai said the incident followed a similar confrontation on Tuesday, when another large crowd of Cambodians, many wielding wooden sticks and slingshots, also sought to pull down barbed wire and were restrained by the use of tear gas and rubber bullets.

The two nations’ competing territorial claims stem largely from a 1907 map drawn when Cambodia was under French colonial rule, which Thailand has argued is inaccurate.

## Indonesia’s president picks retired general as new security minister

JAKARTA, Indonesia, Sept 18, (AP): Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto on Wednesday appointed a former rival as the new security minister following deadly protests that have been viewed as one of the toughest tests for his presidency.

Subianto, a wealthy ex-general, designated retired Gen Djamari Chaniago, 77, as the coordinating minister of politics and security to replace Budi Gunawan, who was removed from Subianto’s Cabinet earlier this month without a successor, ending days of speculation about a replacement.

Gunawan was removed after violent protests swept across Indonesia and left 10 people dead in late August.

Public outrage flared in the world’s third-largest democracy after reports that all 580 members of the House of Representatives received a monthly housing allowance of 50 million rupiah (\$3,075) in addition to their salaries. The allowance was nearly 10 times the minimum wage in Jakarta.

The protests spread and became more violent following the death of ride-hailing driver Affan Kurniawan, who was hit by a police vehicle.

Five ministers lost their jobs, including Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati, a technocrat who had served



Indonesia’s newly-appointed Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs Djamari Chaniago talks to journalists after swearing-in ceremony at the presidential palace in Jakarta, Indonesia on Sept 17. (AP)

as the executive director of the International Monetary Fund and managing director of the World Bank.

Subianto didn’t explain the reason for removing the five ministers, but analysts and local media speculated that Gunawan’s dismissal was attributed to his failure to promptly coordinate with other officials including military and police when the unrest broke out. He

also was absent from meetings. The issue of his declining health also played a part.

Subianto’s decision to install Chaniago as senior security minister signals the start of his bid to reconsolidate power by replacing underperforming ministers in key positions.

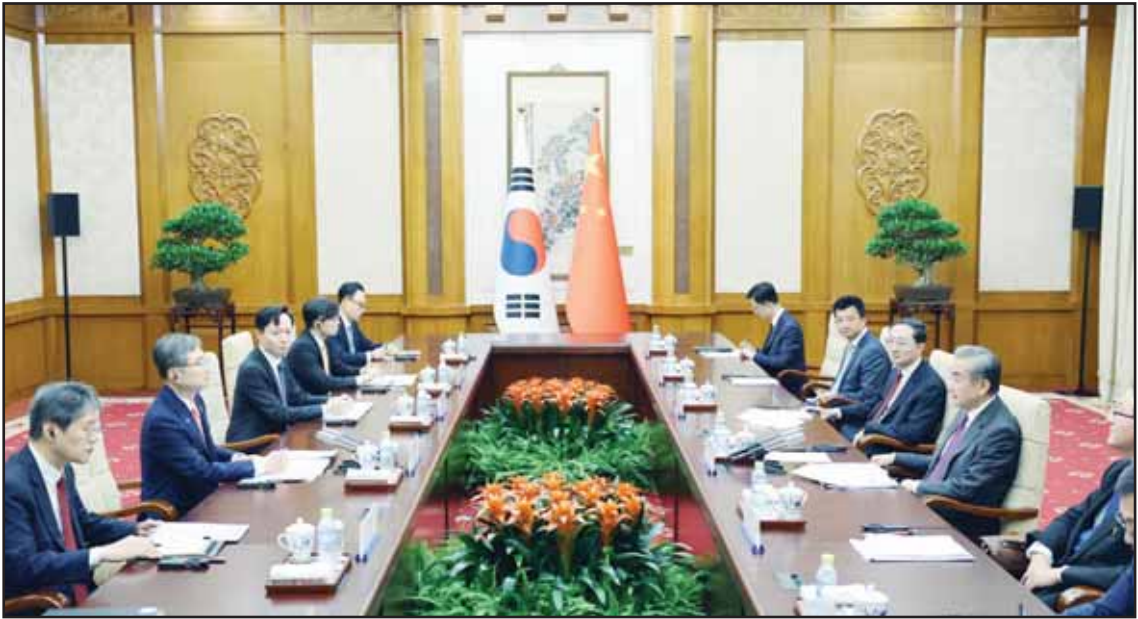
Chaniago was one of seven generals who were members of the Officers Council of Honor, which was set up in 1998 amid an investigation into the kidnapping of activists opposed to then President Suharto during the final days of his rule.

Subianto was a general at the time. The council’s investigation found Subianto guilty of “misinterpreting the orders” of his superiors.

Subianto, the commander of the army’s elite force, Kopassus, was dishonorably discharged in 1998, after its soldiers kidnapped and tortured political opponents of Suharto. Of 22 activists kidnapped that year, 13 remain missing. Several of his men were tried and convicted, but Subianto never faced trial.

He never commented on these accusations, but went into self-imposed exile in Jordan in 1998.

Chaniago replaced Subianto at the time as commander of the Army Strategic Reserve Command in May 1998 in an extremely tense political moment after the fall of Suharto.



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, holds talks with Cho Hyun, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Korea (ROK), in Beijing, capital of China on Sept. 17. (Xinhua)

### Top Chinese diplomat holds talks with ROK foreign minister

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks with Cho Hyun, foreign minister of the Republic of Korea (ROK) in Beijing on Wednesday.

Wang, who is also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, called on the two countries to stick to the direction of good-neighborliness and be genuine strategic partners.

China’s policy towards the ROK remains stable and consistent, Wang said, encouraging both sides

to engage sincerely, strengthen mutual trust, deepen cooperation, and achieve win-win results, while properly managing sensitive issues.

As beneficiaries of economic globalization, both countries should jointly oppose trade protectionism and uphold the international free trade system, he said.

He said China is willing to work with the international community, including the ROK, to defend the

UN-centered international system and the outcomes of victory in World War II.

Noting that the ROK values the momentum in improving bilateral relations, Cho said the ROK is willing to further strengthen high-level exchanges with China, deepen cooperation in trade, culture, and other areas, and accelerate negotiations on the ROK-China and ROK-China-Japan free trade agreements. (Xinhua)

## Doctors for Brazil’s ex-prez Bolsonaro say early-stage cancer detected in skin lesions

RIO DE JANEIRO, Sept 18, (AP): Doctors for former president Jair Bolsonaro said Wednesday that they detected early-stage cancer in skin lesions removed from the 70-year-old politician following his conviction last week on attempted coup charges.

Bolsonaro, under house arrest in Brasilia until his sentence is finalized, has been to hospital twice since Thursday’s court verdict. He went to the DF Star hospital Sunday to have eight lesions removed for testing, and again on Tuesday because of vomiting and low blood pressure before being released Wednesday.

Results showed early-stage skin cancer in two of the lesions, doctors said in a statement Wednesday, adding that Bolsonaro will need clinical monitoring and regular reevaluation.

“My father has already fought tougher battles and won. This one won’t be any different,” Bolsonaro’s eldest son Flávio said on a post on X. “You can be sure that this is the result of the relentless persecution ever since Jair Bolsonaro dared to challenge the system head-on and fight for Brazil.”

A panel of Supreme Court justices on Thursday found the ex-leader guilty of attempting a coup to illegally hang onto power despite his 2022 electoral defeat to current President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. They sentenced him to 27 years and three months in prison.

The sentence doesn’t immediately send Bolsonaro to prison. The court



Brazil’s former president Jair Bolsonaro, accompanied by his wife Michelle Bolsonaro, departs a hospital where he received medical treatment as he returns home where he is under house arrest in Brasilia, Brazil on Sept 17. (AP)

panel has up to 60 days to publish the ruling after the decision. Once it does, Bolsonaro’s lawyers have five days to file motions for clarification.

Bolsonaro has denied wrongdoing and said he is the victim of political persecution. U.S. President Donald Trump has agreed and called the trial a “witch hunt,” and in July he imposed tariffs of 50% on Brazilian goods, citing the case against Bolsonaro, among other issues.

The former president since early

August has been under house arrest imposed by the justice overseeing the case, Alexandre de Moraes, who said Bolsonaro had violated precautionary measures imposed on him in context of the trial.

Bolsonaro already had been wearing an ankle monitor, a measure enforced after Federal Police said that he and his lawmaker son Eduardo had been working with U.S. authorities to obtain sanctions against Brazilian public officials due to alleged persecution.

## Afghan government suspends fiber optic internet in multiple provinces

KABUL, Sept 18, (Agencies): The Afghan government has suspended fiber optic services across multiple provinces to curb “immoral activities,” local media outlet TOLNews reported late Wednesday.

The measure, first implemented in Balkh province on Tuesday, now extends to Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar, and Badakhshan in the north, with additional suspensions reported in eastern Laghman, and southern Kandahar and Helmand provinces.

The Kunduz and Balkh local officials confirmed the shutdown follows a decree from the Afghan government’s supreme leader, Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada, stating that cable-based internet services in the above-mentioned provinces have been “completely stopped” to prevent immorality.

Afghan Telecom, the state-owned company that provides more than 60 percent of the country’s fiber optic services, has been directly affected.

It’s the first time a ban of this kind has been imposed since the Taliban seized power in August 2021, and leaves government offic-

es, the private sector, public institutions, and homes without Wi-Fi internet. Mobile internet remains functional, however. Officials say alternatives are being found “for necessities.”

On Thursday, officials in the east and north said internet access was cut off in the provinces of Baghlan, Badakhshan, Kunduz, Nangarhar, and Takhar.

Siddiqullah Quraishi, from the Nangarhar Culture Directorate, confirmed the shutdown to The Associated Press. The governor’s office in Kunduz shared a message in an official WhatsApp group.

The Afghanistan Media Support Organization condemned the ban and expressed its concern.



In this Feb 10, 2016 photo, Afghanis access social media websites at a private internet cafe in Kabul, Afghanistan. (AP)

## Modi and Putin discuss bilateral ties in phone call

MOSCOW, Sept 18, (Xinhua): Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed bilateral ties and the situation surrounding Ukraine in a telephone call with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday, according to the Kremlin.

Putin said relations between Russia and India have been friendly throughout modern history based on shared national support in both countries.

Both leaders expressed satisfaction with the current successful development of the Russia-India ties.

“The leaders discussed preparations for the Russian President’s visit to India in December this year and also touched on a range of international issues, including the situation surrounding Ukraine,” the Kremlin said.

Following the call, Modi wrote on X that India is committed to further strengthening ties with Russia and is ready to “make all possible contributions towards a peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict.”

**Also:**

**KAMPALA:** Uganda Airlines announced a strategic interline partnership with India’s flagship carrier, Air India, to strengthen travel links between Africa and the Indian subcontinent.

In a joint statement issued Wednesday, the Ugandan national carrier said

the agreement, which took effect recently on Aug. 25, allows passengers to book single tickets from Uganda’s Entebbe International Airport to more than 25 cities across India and key international hubs through Air India’s gateway in Mumbai.

The collaboration will also broaden Uganda Airlines’ international reach, with destinations under the deal including London, Singapore, Bangkok,

Dhaka, and Colombo.

“This interline agreement is a significant step in our strategy to connect Uganda to Africa and beyond. It provides our customers with a smooth, single-ticket travel experience to dozens of new destinations, strengthening economic and cultural ties between our regions,” Jenifer Bamuturaki, chief executive officer of Uganda Airlines, said in the statement.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, (left), along with Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma releases a commemorative coin of Rs 100 (USD 1.13) to honour the legendary singer and a biography of the maestro titled Bharat Ratna Bhupen Hazarika during his birth centenary celebration in Guwahati on Sept 13. (AP)

### Africa

**UN armored vehicle crashes in CAR, 5 dead:** A United Nations armored personnel carrier in the Central African Republic (CAR) crashed and rolled into a river outside the capital of Bangui, killing five U.N. police officers, a spokesperson for the MINUSCA peacekeeping mission said Wednesday.

The vehicle that was part of a five-car MINUSCA convoy plunged into the Ombella M’poko River before crossing a bridge, according to MINUSCA spokesperson Florence Marshall. The convoy was returning to another town after gathering supplies in Bangui.


All five officers killed in Tuesday’s crash were from the Republic of the Congo. (AP)

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**US deportees sue Ghanaian authorities:** At least 11 of the 14 immigrants deported by the US to Ghana are still being held in the West African nation, the deportees and their lawyers told The Associated Press on Wednesday, contradicting claims from Ghanaian authorities that the deportees have been sent to their home countries.

Three of the deportees spoke to AP of the “terrible” conditions under which they are being held at the Bundase military camp on the outskirts of the capital, Accra. They said the 11 deportees still in Ghana include four Nigerians, three Togolese, two Malians and one each from Gambia and Liberia. The 11 deportees, meanwhile, have sued the Ghanaian government, alleging that their detention is against their human rights and Ghana’s laws, according to court documents seen by AP on Thursday. (AP)

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United Nations peacekeepers stand in the market in Bouar, Central African Republic on March 8, 2024. (AP)

**Nigeria lifts emergency rule in Rivers State:** Nigeria’s president lifted emergency rule and removed the suspension of a state governor and lawmakers in oil-rich Rivers State on Wednesday after six months of emergency rule in response to a protracted political crisis and oil pipeline vandalism, according to a statement on social media.

The choice to impose emergency rule was meant “to arrest the drift toward anarchy in Rivers State,” said President Bola Tinubu in a statement defending the choice.

“This is undoubtedly a welcome development for me and a remarkable achievement for us. I therefore do not see why the state of emergency should exist a day longer than the six months I had pronounced at the beginning of it,” he said. (AP)



## Kuwait crude oil rises to \$72.99 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil edged 53 cents higher during Wednesday's trading to reach USD 72.99 per barrel compared with USD 72.46 pb the day

before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Thursday. Brent futures lo 52 cents to USD 68.22 pb and West Texas Intermediate dropped 47 cents to USD 64.05 pb.

# Business

Reinforcing leadership in supporting education and youth

## KFH partakes in PAAET student orientation event at 'Kuwait International Fairgrounds'



Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam at the bank's pavilion



Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam and officials from the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training listen to Abdullah Al-Saif.



KFH booth

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: As part of its ongoing commitment to social responsibility and its pioneering role in supporting education and youth empowerment, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) participated in the orientation event for new students at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET). The event was held over two days in the Kuwait International Fairgrounds, with the presence of PAAET Director General Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam and officials from both sides.

KFH's participation reflects its dedication to engaging with students and supporting educational

initiatives that contribute to their academic and personal development.

During the event, KFH introduced students to its tailored banking products and services designed specifically for youth, including the "Hesabi" account, which offers a range of benefits to meet the financial needs of students throughout their academic journey. The KFH booth attracted significant interest, with a specialized team on hand to answer questions and provide detailed information about the bank's youth-focused offerings.

KFH remains keen on actively participating in such initiatives that aim to support students at the

start of their academic paths and equip them with the financial knowledge and tools they need.

As one of the leading and earliest supporters of students and education in Kuwait, KFH continues to organize and sponsor various events that highlight student achievements, scientific innovations, graduation projects, and creative talents. The bank also maintains strategic partnerships with universities and colleges, and consistently supports graduation projects, academic seminars, research workshops, and lectures that contribute to the advancement of academic and professional performance.

Enhancing customer experience through strategic partnership with Mogahwi Stationery

## Warba Bank launches Back to School campaign, reinforcing innovation and social responsibility

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: As part of its ongoing commitment to providing exceptional customer banking services, Warba Bank launched its "Back to School" campaign designed to enrich the customer experience and provide value-added services tailored to the needs of customers. The Bank partnered with Mogahwi Stationery, a leading provider of office and school supplies, in the campaign to deliver practical solutions and exclusive offers that benefit customers in their daily lives.

This partnership comes within Warba Bank's broader strategy to advance customer service and strengthen community engagement. Through this initiative, the Bank reiterates its active role in organizing corporate events and community-focused programs that address seasonal and specialized customer needs, while offering real value beyond traditional banking services.

Commenting on the launch, **Mr. Ahmad Faisal Al-Qatami**, Chief Retail Banking Officer at Warba Bank, said: "Customer service lies at the heart of Warba Bank's approach. We believe what makes us different is our ability to understand our customers' needs and provide innovative solutions that enrich their banking experience and exceed expectations. This partnership with Mogahwi Stationery reflects our commitment to delivering exclusive offers that align with our customers' lifestyles and support their needs during important seasons such as back to school."

Al-Qatami added: "We are focused on building bridges with our community through purposeful initiatives that reflect our social responsibility and dedication to our customers. Our partnership with Mogahwi Stationery is not just a commercial collaboration; it translates our vision of supporting national enterprises and highlights our commitment to working with Kuwaiti brands that play a significant role in the local economy. It also represents an investment in enhancing customer experiences and delivering real value that touches their daily lives, ensuring their comfort and satisfaction."

As part of this campaign, Warba Bank custom-



Ahmad Faisal Al-Qatami, Chief Retail Banking Officer

ers will be able to enjoy exclusive shopping vouchers for the backtoschool season, easily accessible through the Marketplace section of Warba Bank's mobile app. This reflects the Bank's ongoing effort to enhance its digital services and create a comprehensive platform that meets customer needs, while offering a seamless shopping experience through strategic partnerships with leading local brands.

Al-Qatami also stressed the Bank's dedication to continuously improving its customer service by listening to customers' feedback and suggestions, stating: "We believe that outstanding customer service requires a deep understanding of customer needs and expectations. That's why we constantly develop innovative initiatives that add genuine value to their banking experience. Partnerships like this one are a model of how banking can evolve into a holistic experience that addresses customers' daily needs, adapts to their lifestyles,

and turns creative ideas into tangible solutions that enrich their lives."

Through such partnerships and services, Warba Bank continues to strengthen its relationship with customers, building long-lasting connections founded on trust and mutual understanding. This reinforces its position as a leading Islamic financial institution that places the customer at the core of its strategy.

The Marketplace on Warba Bank's mobile app is distinguished by its flexibility and adaptability, offering a comprehensive platform that brings together a wide variety of offers and services to meet the needs of all customer segments. This diversity reflects the Bank's commitment to providing a holistic service that goes beyond traditional banking, extending into different aspects of customers' everyday lives.

Al-Qatami affirmed that Warba Bank continues to invest in developing its digital platforms and e-services to ensure an exceptional customer experience that keeps pace with modern technological advancements.

He said: "We believe the future lies in advanced fintech solutions that make it easier for customers to access the services they need. That is why we are consistently enhancing our digital platforms to become more interactive and user-friendly, while always working to achieve our vision, 'Let's Own Tomorrow.' This vision is centered on building a sustainable financial future that serves our customers and our community, through innovative initiatives that improve quality of life and provide practical solutions for everyday needs."

Warba Bank has achieved significant success in a short period, establishing itself as a pioneer in Islamic digital banking services. It is also among the local banks with the largest number of shareholders, bringing it closer to all segments of society. This achievement further reaffirms the Bank's position as a trusted financial partner that combines innovation with social responsibility in delivering best-in-class services and products.

'Higher oil demand after US rate cut'

## Kuwait launches commercial production at 'Mitribah field'

By Najeh Bilal  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Minister of Oil Tariq Al-Roumi confirmed that the Kuwaiti oil sector is pressing ahead with the plan to conclude new agreements with international oil companies to increase the oil production of the country.

In a statement to the press on the sidelines of the celebration marking the start of commercial production in Mitribah field, which is located in the northwestern part of Kuwait, Al-Roumi predicted an increase in demand for oil following the US interest rate cut, especially since Asian demand is the main driver of Gulf oil exports.

Al-Roumi said that Mitribah is one of the challenging fields, considering that work in the field started about 20 years ago. He pointed out this is a confirmation that the local oil sector has the ability to overcome challenges, asserting this field is one of the most difficult to extract oil. He added he expects a positive impact on oil prices if new sanctions are imposed on Russia.

On the other hand, CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Sheikh Nawaf Al-Saud Al-Sabah revealed that the discovery of the Mitribah field has opened new horizons for promising exploration in the northwest region, taking into consideration that this is the first oil exploration since the beginning of oil production in the country 90 years ago.

He asserted that Mitribah field reflects the exploration innovations of Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), as it is considered one of the most difficult fields due to its sulfur content, in addition to the difficulty of extracting oil from it. He said KOC has enlisted the help of international companies to develop the field, affirming that these explorations are part of the strategy of KPC to increase production to four million barrels of oil by 2035, along with sustainably until 2040.

He added that Kuwait is continuing its offshore explorations, following the 'Nokhda' and 'Julai'a' explorations, stressing that efforts are ongoing to stabilize and develop the Kuwaiti oil sector.

In a related development, CEO of KOC Ahmad Al-Eidan affirmed that Mitribah field will be a new addition to modern oil and gas explorations. He disclosed this field will produce around 80,000 to 120,000 barrels per day, which will help increase the production of the country, indicating that the current production capacity is around three million.

He explained that efforts are focused on reaching a production of 3,650,000 barrels of oil per day, reiterating that Mitribah field is one of the most difficult oil fields in the world with a toxicity rate of around 35 to 40 percent.

He affirmed the field is special for him, as his initial explorations began when he was a geologist and director of explorations. He stressed that the efforts of Kuwaiti teams succeeded in exploring the field.

He pointed out that the new explorations are beneficial, considering their contributions to the ongoing efforts to increase production, while compensating for losses from some aging fields. He asserted that KOC is moving towards the right direction, thanks to its national personnel.

He stressed that the company worked hard to accelerate the operation of Mitribah field, which joined the currently producing fields in the State of Kuwait, contributing to meeting the needs of the State and the global market, especially since it produces light oil with specifications that are highly desirable in the global market.

It is worth noting that commercial production from the Mitribah field officially began on June 15, 2025, following the completion of the connection of some wells to the production facilities. The field is located in an undeveloped, infrastructure-poor area in Northwest Kuwait. It extends over 230 square kilometers, outside the scope of the existing assets of the company. Commercially viable light oil was first discovered in the field in 2009. Due to the presence of high concentrations of hydrogen sulfide gas -- about 40 percent, this was one of the most significant challenges that delayed the start of production from the field.



KUNA photo  
Kuwait Oil Company presents commemorative gifts to the Minister of Oil.

Main Market leads gains

## Boursa Kuwait closes higher as All Share Index edges up 0.05%

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Thursday's session on a positive note, with the All Share Index adding 4.12 points, or 0.05 percent, to close at 8,820.82 points. Trading activity totaled 477.5 million shares, executed through 24,989 transactions, with a turnover of KD 124.9 million (USD 379.6 million).

The Main Market Index recorded the strongest performance of the day, climbing 39.27 points, or 0.49 percent, to settle at 8,101.92 points. This came on the back of 259 million shares changing hands through

14,424 trades, valued at KD 44.5 million (USD 135.2 million).

In contrast, the Premier Market Index slipped 4.45 points, or 0.05 percent, to stand at 9,435.98 points. Around 218.5 million shares were traded on this front through 10,565 transactions, worth KD 80.3 million (USD 244 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index advanced by 53.34 points, or 0.65 percent, closing at 8,300.20 points. A total of 198.13 million shares were traded within 9,528 deals, with a value of KD 34.7 million (USD 105.4 million).

Resident deposits grow 4.2% annually

## CBK closely monitors global & local economic developments

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: The CBK explained that the decision was based on the need for adaptive policies that align with evolving developments, while also taking into account the specific characteristics of Kuwait's economy.

According to the statement, macroeconomic data indicates a notable slowdown in inflation, easing from 3.00 percent in July 2024 to 2.39 percent in July 2025. The bank also highlighted the continued relative stability of the Kuwaiti dinar against major currencies.

On the monetary front, CBK reported that resident deposits in the banking system grew by 4.2 percent year-on-year as of July 2025. Private

sector deposits in Kuwaiti dinars accounted for 94.3 percent of total private sector deposits.

The CBK reaffirmed its commitment to a prudent and balanced monetary policy in order to preserve both financial and monetary stability. It emphasized its ongoing close monitoring of domestic and international economic, monetary, and banking developments, including interest rate trends on major currencies.

The bank further stressed its readiness to act using appropriate policy tools and measures to safeguard confidence in the Kuwaiti dinar while continuing to foster an economic environment supportive of sustainable growth and long-term stability.

## Dollar stable at KD 0.304, euro decline

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18, (KUNA): The US dollar remained steady against the Kuwaiti dinar on Thursday at KD 0.304, according to the Central Bank of Kuwait's daily bulletin.

The euro slipped 0.31 percent to KD 0.359, while the British pound declined 0.15 percent to KD 0.414. The Swiss franc also edged down

0.30 percent to KD 0.385. Meanwhile, the Japanese yen held unchanged at KD 0.002.

The CBK noted that the announced exchange rates represent the daily average rates and do not necessarily reflect actual market buying and selling prices.



Promoting social responsibility & solidarity

Al Habtoor pledges AED 10 mln for Syrian community initiatives

DAMASCUS, Sept 18: Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor, Founding Chairman of Al Habtoor Group, has unveiled a comprehensive package of community initiatives worth AED 10 million, following his three-day official visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. The initiatives underline his long-term commitment to fostering development and humanitarian partnerships with the Syrian people, beyond direct commercial gain.

The programme focuses on two main pillars: supporting the Grand Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, a cultural and spiritual landmark of global significance, and backing vulnerable groups in society through cooperation with the Syrian Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.

1.Supporting the Umayyad Mosque

- Funding restoration works and upgrading infrastructure to safeguard the mosque's standing as one of the most iconic religious and historical sites in the Islamic world.
- Providing support for the imams, scholars and administrators working at the mosque in recognition of their role in preserving its spiritual and cultural values.

2.Initiatives in Partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour

- Supporting a centre for people with disabilities by enhancing rehabilitation and skills development services to promote their inclusion in society.
- Backing programmes aimed at assisting beggars through reintegration and empowerment measures, reflecting a commitment to restoring dignity and opportunities for society's most disadvantaged groups.

The initiatives were signed during an official ceremony led by Abdul Salam Al Marzooqi, Assistant to the Chairman – MENA Expansions, UAE Affairs & Community Relations at Al Habtoor Group, alongside Reema Zakaria, Director of the Office of the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, and attended by senior ministry officials – underscoring the depth of public-private sector cooperation in serving national development priorities.

Speaking during his visit, Khalaf Al Habtoor said: "Our support today is not simply a financial pledge, but a clear message of solidarity with Syria and its people. The Umayyad Mosque is a civilisational and human treasure, and supporting its development and those who serve it is a duty for all who believe in culture and identity. At the same time, our support for the centre for people with special needs and for beggars' reintegration programmes reflects our values of empowerment and dignity for the less fortunate. We hope these initiatives will serve as the foundation for a genuine partnership and

a shared future worthy of Syria's rich history and its people".

On this occasion, the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, Ms. Hind Qabbout, stated: "The generous support provided by Mr. Khalaf Al Habtoor, son of the sisterly United Arab Emirates – and this is by no means his first such initiative – directly responds to the needs of a large segment representing more than 27% of Syrians with disabilities and war-related injuries. Its services extend to all Syrians across the country, encompassing diverse communities and regions. This support is not merely a financial contribution, but a profound humanitarian message that embodies the values of solidarity and authenticity and opens a door of hope for a wide segment of our people affected by the war."

She added: "The initiative includes the rehabilitation and equipping of the Multi-Disability Centre, which serves more than 30,000 beneficiaries annually. The project will see the full refurbishment of the building, interior refurbishment, and the provision of medical and electrical equipment across all nine floors, in addition to establishing a comprehensive educational centre for people with disabilities, a specialised floor for vocational training to enable them to secure income opportunities suited to their abilities, and a fully equipped physiotherapy centre. The initiative also encompasses the establishment of an educational centre for the rehabilitation of child beggars, offering a safe environment for learning, psychological counselling, and medical support, thereby contributing to their protection and reintegration into society."

She concluded by saying: "This noble humanitarian step will have a direct and lasting impact on the lives of tens of thousands of beneficiaries, and it is a source of pride and deep appreciation for all of us."

These initiatives are designed not merely as direct financial contributions, but as long-term investments in social and cultural impact – safeguarding historical and religious identity while empowering marginalised communities. The partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour reflects a genuine spirit of cooperation between government and private institutions in building sustainable solutions.

Through this step, Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor reinforces his standing as a business leader who embraces social responsibility both within and beyond the UAE. Guided by values of solidarity and compassion, he affirms that investing in people and culture is the surest path to building a more stable and prosperous future for Syria and the wider region.



Signing with the Syrian Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.



Signing with the Syrian Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf).

BoE voices inflation concerns as it holds main UK interest rate at 4%

LONDON, Sept 18, (AP): The Bank of England held its main interest rate at 4% on Thursday as U.K. inflation concerns weigh on policymakers. The decision was widely anticipated, as was the split of votes on the nine-member Monetary Policy Committee. Seven of the panel backed the decision, while two voted for a quarter-point reduction to 3.75%.

The minutes of the meeting showed that the majority were concerned about the path for inflation, which remains stubbornly high. Figures on Wednesday showed inflation held steady at 3.8% in the year to August, double the bank's 2% target.

"Although we expect inflation to return to our 2% target, we're not out of the woods yet, so any future cuts will need to be made gradually and carefully," Governor Andrew Bailey said. All eyes now turn to the next rate-setting meeting in November. If the bank carries on cutting interest rates once every three months, as it has since August 2024, then it will make a further cut at the next policy meeting in November. It last reduced interest rates in August.

The bank has been cutting interest rates at a gradual pace following the unwinding of the previous spike in inflation in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

However, economists remain split as to whether another cut will be forthcoming since inflation has proven to be stickier than anticipated, partly because of relatively high wage increases.

It's a difficult balancing act for the bank as the wider economy could do with further interest rate reductions given growth remains fairly tepid.

Some economists think that ongoing inflation concerns and uncertainty over the government's upcoming budget will mean there won't be a reduction in November.

The Labour government, which is languishing in opinion polls despite winning a landslide election victory last year, needs the economy to start picking up steam. It will be hoping that further interest rate reductions will be delivered in the coming year to bolster growth and ease the cost of living by reducing mortgage rates.

However, Treasury chief Rachel Reeves is widely expected to increase taxes again in the budget, which will be another headwind for the British economy.

Continuing its support for Egypt's transition of Orman Hospitals to renewable energy

NBK-Egypt signs fourth protocol with Al Orman Association to fund solar power plant in Luxor



NBK-Egypt funds the fourth stage of the solar power plant at the 'Shefaa' Al Orman' hospitals.

CAIRO, Sept 18: As part of its Corporate Social Responsibility and in support of Egypt's efforts to create a sustainable ecosystem that depends on renewable energy as one of the most important sources of energy, NBK-Egypt signed the fourth protocol with Al Orman Association to fund the fourth stage of the solar power plant that provides electricity to "Shefaa' Al Orman" hospitals in Luxor, which provides premium services for upper Egypt's cancer patients.

The protocol was signed by Mr. Walid El-Seyoufi, Deputy Managing Director on behalf of the bank, while Mr. Ahmed El Gendy, Chairman of the Board of Al Orman Association, signed on behalf of the Association, in the presence of Mr. Yasser Al-Tayeb, Vice Chairman, CEO and Managing Director of NBK-Egypt, Eng. Hossam Al-Qabbani, Al Orman Association founder and Honorary President for Life. Moreover, attending the signing ceremony from the bank were Mr. Karim Kamal, Head of Supporting Functions and Sustainability & Sustainable Finance Division, Ms. Hanan Thabet, Head of Human Resources, Eng. Youssef El Assal, Head of Administration & Engineering Affairs, and Ms. Noran Abdel Rahman, Manager of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Unit.

This protocol comes in line with the sustainable development goals of Egypt's 2030 Vision and Egypt's Energy Strategy 2040, and a continuation

■ The bank is very keen on supporting the sustainable development objectives of Egypt's Vision 2030 and its 2040 Energy Strategy.

of the bank's previous initiatives, during which it solely financed the first three phases of the solar power plant.

With this protocol, the bank's total contributions to the development of all phases of the power plant will amount to approximately EGP 59 million by 2029. The plant, in all its phases, is expected to provide approximately 40% of the hospitals' electricity needs, contributing to cost reduction and the creation of a safe and healthy environment for the patients.

It is worth noting that NBK is constantly keen on supporting all sustainable projects and initiatives in every country it operates, and it has truly made significant progress in the field of ESG, making sustainability a pillar in all its operations, business models, and corporate culture, and further leading the way to a low-carbon and sustainable economy.

US jobless claims drop to 231,000

Unemployment aid applications fall after surge

WASHINGTON, Sept 18, (AP): The number of Americans applying for jobless aid last week retreated significantly after surging to a nearly four-year high a week earlier.

U.S. filings for unemployment benefits for the week ending Sept. 13 fell by 33,000 to 231,000, the Labor Department reported Thursday. That's less than the 241,000 analysts surveyed by the data firm FactSet had forecast.

The previous week, applications surged to 264,000, their highest level since the week of Oct. 23, 2021. Last week's figure was revised up by 1,000.

Concerns about the health of the American labor market led the Federal Reserve to cut its key interest rate by a quarter-point on Wednesday as many expected.

The rate cut is a sign that the central bank's focus has shifted quickly from inflation to jobs as hiring has groundened nearly to a halt in recent months. Lower interest rates could reduce borrowing costs for mortgages, car loans, and business loans, and boost growth and hiring. The problem is that it can also exacerbate inflation, which remains above the Fed's

2% target.

Last week, the Bureau of Labor Statistics issued a massive preliminary revision of U.S. job gains for the 12 months ending in March, further evidence that the labor market has not been as strong as previously thought.

The BLS's revised figures showed that U.S. employers added 911,000 fewer jobs than originally reported in the year ending in March 2025, The report showed that job gains were tapering long before President Donald Trump rolled out his far-reaching tariffs on U.S. trading partners in April.

The department issues the revisions every year, intending to better account for new businesses and ones that had gone out of business. Final revisions will come out in February 2026.

The updated figures came after the agency reported earlier this month that the economy generated just 22,000 jobs in August, well below the 80,000 economists were expecting.

Earlier this month, the government reported that U.S. employers advertised 7.2 million job openings at the end of July, the first time since April of 2021 that there were more unemployed Americans than job postings.

The July employment report, which showed job

gains of just 73,000 and included huge downward revisions for June and May, sent financial markets spiraling and prompted Trump to fire the head of the agency that compiles the monthly data.

The various labor market reports have bolstered fears that Trump's erratic economic policies, including the unpredictable taxes on imports, have created so much uncertainty that businesses are reluctant to hire.

Broader U.S. economic growth has weakened so far this year as many companies have pulled back on expansion projects amid the uncertainty surrounding the impacts of the tariffs. Growth slowed to about a 1.3% annual rate in the first half of the year, down from 2.5% in 2024.

Thursday's unemployment benefits report showed that the four-week average of claims, which evened out some of the week-to-week volatility, fell by 750 to 240,000.

The total number of Americans collecting unemployment benefits for the previous week of Sept. 6 fell by 7,000 to 1.92 million.

Weekly applications for jobless benefits are considered representative of layoffs and have mostly settled in a historically low range between 200,000 and 250,000 since the U.S. began to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic nearly four years ago.

Pioneering AI-driven mobile experiences through cloud-device integration

HONOR and Alibaba announce strategic AI collaboration

HANGZHOU, Sept 18: HONOR and Alibaba officially cemented a landmark strategic cooperation agreement in Hangzhou, China. James Li, CEO of HONOR Device Co., Ltd. and Eddie Wu, CEO of Alibaba Group, jointly witnessed the signing.

This pivotal strategic cooperation agreement is built upon a shared vision for growth and strategic imperatives. The two industry leaders are embarking on a comprehensive, multi-faceted, and systematic collaboration, focusing on critical strategic areas including AI ecosystems, AI models and capabilities, and intelligent services. Together, we aim to cultivate a thriving AI ecosystem, seizing the immense opportunities presented by AI-driven industrial transformation and the convergence of intelligent device ecosystems.

In the realm of AI agent ecosystems, HONOR and Alibaba will leverage their distinct technological and ecological strengths in AI agents, large AI models, intelligent services, and innovative application experiences. This will translate into comprehensive and deep cooperation across a multitude of core service scenarios, including travel navigation, tourism services, lifestyle, mobile office, e-commerce, and entertainment. The partnership will foster technical exchanges and resource sharing across different fields, jointly exploring new groundbreaking features and interaction paradigms for mobile devices.

For AI models and capabilities, the collaboration will center on joint development based on the Qwen open-source model. This includes vertical application models for on-device AI, AI agents, and multimodal understanding and generation. The ultimate goal is to co-create a globally leading "cloud-device integrated" intelligent device experience, seamlessly merging the power of the Qwen large model with HONOR's cutting-edge hardware, operating systems, and diverse scenarios.

This joint effort will accelerate the evolution of large model technology which focuses on scenario-specific and on-device improvements, delivering more intelligent, personalized, secure, and fluid AI services and experiences to HONOR MagicOS users.



James Li (left), and Eddie Wu, Alibaba Group and HONOR deepen strategic cooperation to drive the next generation of intelligent interaction through AI.

Furthermore, the two powerhouses will double down on their collaboration on MaaS (Model-as-a-Service) AI capabilities. This involves continuous optimization of performance and integration of capabilities across text, multimodal, image, video, and voice scenarios.

We will jointly explore training, fine-tuning, and inference processes for both on-device and cloud AI models, whether based on the Qwen open-source model or developed collaboratively. The ambition is to forge advanced on-device models that achieve State-of-the-Art (SOTA) capabilities.

Looking ahead, this deep cooperation will continue to expand. Leveraging Alibaba's extensive commercial service ecosystem and through the MCP (Multi-Cloud Platform) protocol, a series of vertical intelligent agents, such as Ele.me (food delivery), Damai (ticketing), and Taopiaopiao (movie ticketing), will be progressively integrated. This will extend the Agent ecosystem to a wider array of vertical scenarios, including food delivery, entertainment, office collaboration, and e-commerce, providing users with even more convenient and efficient life services.

This initiative will embed AI technology more deeply into daily life. HONOR's upcoming HONORMagic8Series, poised to define the most powerful self-evolving AI native smartphone, will also bring users a wealth of AI usage scenarios and services jointly developed by HONOR and Alibaba in China.



# What's On

## SPOTLIGHT



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Over 1,000 attend Chinese Cultural Gala

## 'A Moonmoment to Remember • Blossoms of Chengdu' dazzles in Kuwait



Photos during the event.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: A major cultural event titled "A Moonmoment to Remember • Blossoms of Chengdu" was held in Kuwait on September 16-17 to showcase an array of Chinese artistic performances and exhibitions for local audiences.

According to a press release issued by the China Cultural Center, the event was organized under the guidance of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, and the Chinese Embassy in Kuwait. It was jointly hosted by the China Cultural Center in Kuwait and the Chengdu Municipal Bureau of Culture, Broadcast-TV, and Tourism, and organized by the Chengdu International Cultural Exchange Center.

The initiative aimed to enhance cultural exchanges between China and Kuwait, promote mutual understanding, and highlight the beauty of traditional Chinese culture as well as the vibrancy of modern China.

A spectacular flash performance brings Chinese and Kuwaiti hearts closer. On the evening of September 16, The Avenues Mall, which is Kuwait's iconic shopping destination, was transformed into a vibrant stage for a captivating half-hour flash performance. Shoppers and visitors gathered to witness a lively cultural showcase featuring a variety of traditional and contemporary Chinese art forms.

The performance included the poetic dance "Happy Rain on a Spring Night", a fusion of modern folk music and martial arts "Changquan", Sichuan opera's renowned face-changing act, the acrobatic display "Bronze Secrets", and traditional "Dao" martial arts techniques.

Delivered by talented artists from Chengdu, the immersive performances capti-

vated the audience and received enthusiastic applause.

Themed performance showcasing the splendor and diversity of Chinese culture. The highlight of the cultural series was the themed performance "A Moonmoment to Remember • Blossoms of Chengdu", which was held on September 17 before an audience of over 1,000 attendees.

The show brought together a rich fusion of traditional and modern Chinese art forms, including dance, folk music, acrobatics, martial arts, Sichuan opera, and traditional Chinese magic.

Highlights of the evening included "Happy Rain on a Spring Night", a dance capturing the gentle beauty of Chengdu's spring scenery, a musical fusion of modernized folk pieces "A Moonlit Night on the Spring River" and "New Ambush on All Sides" accompanied by martial arts "Changquan", and "Bronze Secrets", an acrobatic performance infused with cultural symbols from Sichuan.

Other standout acts included "Chinese Monal", which conveyed the harmony and coexistence among all living beings, "Dao" martial arts techniques, which reflected strength and boldness, the foot juggling act "Foot Drumming" that demonstrated the skill and elegance of folk artistry, and the iconic Sichuan opera "Face Changing" that revealed the thoughts and emotional depth of its characters. Traditional Chinese magic, with centuries of heritage, showcased the ingenuity and wisdom of folk art.

The evening concluded with a heartfelt dance performance "Home of Giant Pandas" which celebrated love as a spiritual bond between humans and nature.

This themed performance not only celebrated the richness and diversity of Chi-

nese culture but also introduced audiences to the charm of Chengdu, highlighting its scenic beauty, deep cultural roots, and modern vibrancy.

Exhibitions boost cultural exchange between China and Kuwait

Along with the live performances, two major exhibitions - "Chengdu: More Than Giant Pandas" and the "Chengdu Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition" - were launched as part of the cultural series.

Held at the China Cultural Center in Kuwait, the "Chengdu: More Than Giant Pandas" exhibition features panda-themed sculptures, paintings, photography, VR experiences, and interactive displays. It presents Chengdu as the "hometown of the giant panda" through multiple dimensions, and highlights the city's rich cultural, tourism, and heritage resources. The exhibition will remain open to the public from September 18 to October 17.

The intangible heritage section offered live demonstrations by master artisans showcasing traditional Chinese crafts such as palm weaving, decorative knotting, dough figurine making, paper-cutting, and sugar painting. Visitors were invited to observe the process, interact with the artists, and even try their hand at the crafts, offering a rare, hands-on introduction to China's intangible cultural heritage.

This two-day event not only offered the people of Kuwait a vibrant and high-quality cultural experience but also served to strengthen cultural, artistic, and tourism exchanges between China and Kuwait, providing new momentum for deepening bilateral cooperation.

President expresses gratitude to members

## AMUOBA Kuwait hosts Annual Sports Meet '25

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: While the thrill of competition is at the heart of Sports Day, it fosters values that go beyond the games. Not only children but adults also learn to accept victories with humility and defeats with grace. They experience the power of teamwork, discipline, and determination.

AMU Old Boys' Association Kuwait organized Annual Sports Meet 2025, in the Sports Academy, Abu Halifa (Elazz) playing yard on 4th Sept and Ismah Academy on 5th September 2025.

The event was for two days so that everyone could enjoy and play all the games while utilizing their full time. Day 1 featured Race and Football, while Day 2 included Badminton, Carrom, and Chess.

The President, Vice President, General Secretary, EC members, and the Advisory Committee members, along with other senior members, awarded medals, certificates, and trophies on the spot to the winners and runners-up. A rolling trophy was awarded to the winner and runner-up teams of football, recognizing their hard work and performance.

The event was for the alumni and their family members; the elderly among us joined the celebration, cheering on participants and adding to the festive atmosphere.

Many organizations like Al Mulla

Exchange, Al-Bandoukia Gen. Trad. & Cont. Co., KDD and KITCO, supported AMUOBA to organize the event. Certificate of appreciation was given by the President, Mr. Aslam Parvez as a token of thanks to the sponsor's representatives available.

Stalls offering refreshments quenched thirst with juices and water, ice cream, and chips were also distributed.

Khan Star Restaurant served very refreshing lassi, tea, snacks, and dinner after the event. The service provided by Khan restaurant was flavorful, every bite was a delight, and everyone enjoyed it.

It was a very well-organized event, starting from the planning stage to the execution led by the President, Aslam Parvez with separate coordinators for each game.

Mr. Adil Sareer, the main coordinator of the sports day meet, supported by other respective group coordinators from the Executive Council: Ms. Shazia Mansoor (GS), Mr. M. Khurshid Anwar (JS), Mr. Shahid Ali, Mr. Tauqir Ahmad, Mr. Shah Nawaz Siddiqui, Mr. Masood Alam, Mr. Asim Khan, Mr. Yousuf Abdullah (OSD), Mr. Talat Fatma (Dy. OSD), & Mr. Maqsood Habib Khan. There was great support from VP, Mr. Tariq Wassem overall, to organize the logistics & execute the event.



Photos during the event.

Distinguished guests grace IMAWIS annual event

## IMA Weekend Islamic School (IMAWIS) successfully hosts Annual Day and Felicitation Ceremony 2025

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Indian Muslim Association (IMA), under the patronage of Ministry of Awqaf & Islamic Affairs (Foreign Relations Department), successfully organized the Annual Day & Felicitation Ceremony 2025 of its IMA Weekend Islamic School (IMAWIS) on Friday, 12th September 2025, at the Awqaf Auditorium, Reggae. The Grand Event witnessed the whole-hearted participation of Students, Parents, Dignitaries, and Community Members, making it a memorable and inspiring Evening.

The Program commenced with a soulful recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah by young student Afiah Jawwad Khan with translation by Yahya Hamdan, setting a spiritual tone for the Gathering, followed by the Welcome Address by IMAWIS Principal, Mr. Nisar Ahmad, who highlighted the Vision and Achievements of the School in nurturing Children with Islamic Values alongside Academic Excellence.

The Evening was graced by the presence of Distinguished Guests, including Mr. Jamal Abdul Khaliq Abdullah Al Nouri, Chairman of Sheikh Abdullah Al Nouri Charity Society and Mr. Aslam Parvez, President-Aligarh Muslim University Old Boys' Association (AMUOBA), who delivered Insightful and Motivating Speeches. Their thought-provoking Discourses emphasized the Importance of Knowledge, Unity, and Values in shaping Future Generations, leaving a lasting impact on the audience.

Adding further prestige to the gathering, Mr. Mohammed Ali, Chief Coordinator Ministry of Awqaf & Islamic Affairs, attended the program as a Special Guest. His presence reflected the continued encouragement and support of the Ministry for IMA's Educational and Community Initiatives.

The Cultural Program showcased the Immense Talents of IMAWIS Students through Nasheeds, Skits, and Speeches.

A Melodious Nasheed in Urdu presented by Mr. Jawwad Khan and Young Students Group filled the auditorium with Uplifting Spirit.



Photo during the event.

• Drama Performances, including "The Value of Ilm (Knowledge)" and "We Are One Ummah", delivered powerful moral messages and were highly appreciated by the audience.

• Students Ridha Fayyaz Bhandarkar and Muhammad Ahmed Hanif impressed everyone with their well-prepared Speeches on "The Character of an Ideal Muslim" and "Obedience to Parents" respectively.

IMA Ex-President, Mr. Shamveel Parvez, in his Presidential Address, praised the dedication of the Students, Teachers, and Parents, and reaffirmed IMA's commitment to fostering Education that combines learning with values and Community Service.

The Program concluded with the much-awaited Awards & Felicitation Ceremony, where Outstanding Students were recognized for their Achievements in Academics, Islamic Studies, and Extracurricular Activities. The Felicitation, conducted by the Organizers alongside the Dignitaries, was a moment of pride and encouragement for all.

The Event was well conducted by Mr. Faiyaz Ahmed & ended with a heartfelt Vote of Thanks delivered by Mr. Tayyab Bawazir, followed by refreshments.

IMA Weekend Islamic School (IMAWIS) is an Online School in Kuwait by the Indian Muslim Association (IMA) for Boys and Girls aged 5-14, offering Classes in Islamic Studies, Hifdh, Seerah, Duas, and Arabic. The Program features Holistic Learning with Online Interac-

tive Tools and Experienced Teachers, with classes held on Saturdays from 9 AM to 12 PM.

For More Information, you can contact on below through the website, email or by calling the School Admin Team for the enrollment of your children.

[www.imawis.org](http://www.imawis.org)  
[imawiskw@gmail.com](mailto:imawiskw@gmail.com)  
Mr. Yunus at 50908108

IMA Kuwait gratefully acknowledged the generous support of Al Faysal Bakery for sponsoring Children Snacks Boxes & Malabar Gold for providing Water Bottles.

IMA Kuwait, an Indian socio-religious organization, operates under the patronage of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs Kuwait. It focuses on providing a platform for the spiritual and social enhancement of expatriates living in Kuwait through various programs and social gatherings. It looks forward to organizing more beneficial programs in the future, catering to the needs of the expatriate community, especially the Indian diaspora.

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## Joy John Thuruthikara wins Best Entrepreneur Award 2025

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Joy John Thuruthikara, Founder of J&A Business Group, has been honored with the "Best Entrepreneur Award 2025 for service industry" by Business Insight Magazine for his outstanding achievements.

A visionary leader with over 25 years of business excellence, he has previously received several prestigious recognitions for his contributions to entrepreneurship and Social Service.

Beyond his remarkable business journey, Mr. Joy is deeply committed to social responsibilities through his active involvement in charitable initiatives and community development programs. As a writer and speaker, he continues to inspire aspiring entrepreneurs with his insights and experiences. His well-deserved recognition not only reflects his entrepreneurial success but also highlights his dedication to social responsibility, making him a role model in both business and society. Representing him at the Elite Kerala Business Summit held at Gokulam Park Hotel, Ms. Renjitha Menon (Study Abroad Manager, J&A Business Group) and Ms. Sheena (Training Manager, J&A Business Group) proudly received the award.



Joy John Thuruthikara



Best Entrepreneur Award 2025



## Panahi's film draws on his prison experience

## France sends Iranian drama 'It Was Just an Accident' to Oscars

NEW YORK, Sept 18, (AP): France announced Wednesday that it has selected the Iranian director Jafar Panahi's Palme d'Or-winning drama "It Was Just an Accident" as its submission to the Academy Awards.

The selection gives an Oscar pathway to a film that Iran was certain not to select itself. Panahi, who has spent much of the last 15 years either under house arrest, banned from travel or incarcerated, made "It Was Just an Accident," like his previous films, in his native Iran without government permission.

Only countries can make submissions for the Academy Awards best international category, a process that has drawn criticism for allowing authoritarian regimes to dictate which films are eligible for one of the most contested Oscars. A year ago, Germany submitted "The Seed of the Sacred Fig" by Panahi's friend and countryman, Mohammad Rasoulof. In April, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences tweaked its rules to allow filmmakers with refugee or asylum status to be represented by a country not their own.

"It Was Just an Accident" is Panahi's first film since he was released from jail two years ago, following a hunger strike. He edited the film in France, co-financed it with a French company and, for the first time in more than a decade, traveled out of Iran to premiere the film in May at the Cannes Film Festival. There, it won the festival's top award and was



This image released by Neon shows, (from left), Mohamad Ali Elyasmehr as Hamid, Majid Panahi as Ali, Hadis Pakbaten as Goli, in a scene from 'It Was Just An Accident.' (AP)

acquired by Neon, which is planning an awards campaign.

"Let us join forces," Panahi said when accepting the Palme d'Or. "No

one should dare tell us what kind of clothes we should wear, what we should do or what we should not do. The cinema is a society. Nobody is entitled to tell what we should or refrain from doing."

"It Was Just an Accident" is a revenge drama in which a group of former prisoners find the man they think could have been their torturer in prison. But because they were blindfolded while jailed, they struggle to be sure. Panahi drew from his own experience imprisoned in Tehran. "It was the experience of all these people I met in prison, mixed with my own perception and experience," Panahi said in an interview in Cannes. "The fact of never seeing the face of your interrogator is everyone's experience."

France selected Panahi's film over several shortlisted films including Richard Linklater's French-language ode to the New Wave, "Nouvelle Vague," Rebecca Zlotowski's "A Private Life" and the animated feature "Arco." In recent years, France has sometimes been slammed for its choices. It passed over Justine Triet's "Anatomy of a Fall" in 2023, though it was nominated for best picture, and skipped Céline Sciamma's acclaimed 2019 drama "Portrait of a Lady on Fire."

Despite having one of the most robust and respected film industries, France hasn't won the international Oscar since 1993 with "Indochine."

The 98th Academy Awards will be presented on March 15, 2026, in Los Angeles.

## Film

'The Lost Bus' based on 2018 Camp Fire

## McConaughey steers gripping wildfire drama

LOS ANGELES, Sept 18, (AP): On Nov. 8, 2018, the day one of the deadliest wildfires in US history burned the town of Paradise, California, and killed 85 people, a school bus driver was sent to pick up 22 elementary school students to take them to safety.

The Camp Fire was quickly spreading, communications were down and what was supposed to be a straightforward mission turned into a harrowing five-hour ordeal.

It's these events that are dramatized in "The Lost Bus," which opens in select theaters Friday before streaming on Apple TV+ on Oct. 3. Turning a recent, real-life tragedy (even the heartwarming stories that emerge from the ashes) into Hollywood entertainment requires a deft touch. Lean too far into the melodrama, and it risks resembling a made-for-TV movie. Keep it too clinical and it becomes a news segment.

But filmmaker Paul Greengrass, who has thrilled audiences with his Jason Bourne movies, taken them inside the Maersk Alabama hijacking and United flight 93, effectively toes that line. In "The Lost Bus," he and co-screenwriter Brad Ingelsby have made an old-fashioned disaster movie that is captivating, frightening and startlingly moving.

Matthew McConaughey plays that bus driver, Kevin, who is having a very bad day already. His dog is terminal, he's got bills he can't pay, he's taking care of his elderly mother in the months after his estranged father died and he's just had an awful fight with his teenage son (a small, but effective performance from McConaughey's actual son Levi).

Kevin just can't seem to catch a break and is feeling sorry for himself, dealing with his boss, annoyed calls from his ex-wife and a teenager who woke up with a bad fever. Then he starts noticing the plumes of smoke in the distance. He's on his way to deliver medicine to his son when the call comes in over the radio: Is any bus driver in the area available to deliver 22 children to a safe location? You can feel the agony, and slight annoyance, as Kevin waits for a beat hoping in vain that someone else



This image released by Apple TV+ shows filmmaker Paul Greengrass, center, during the filming of 'The Lost Bus.' (AP)



This image released by Apple TV+ shows America Ferrara, (left), and Matthew McConaughey in a scene from 'The Lost Bus.' (AP)

is available.

Greengrass and Ingelsby smartly interweave Kevin's lousy morning with the beginnings of the fire, showing the methodology of the competent first responders attempting to manage a situation that is quickly spiraling out of control.

Greengrass sustains a feeling of dread for the duration of the film, a white-knuckle experience that only gets more stressful when the children are added to the equation.

When Kevin gets to the school, he's not in any mood to gently walk the scared kids through this situation gently, insisting that a teacher, Mary (America Ferrara) come along for the ride to handle them. Kevin is not a likely hero. He's barely even a reluctant one. He's simply a down-on-his-luck guy who showed up and, ultimately, did something extraordinary.

This isn't a superhero story, however he is treated with more empathy than, say, Tom Cruise's bad dad in "War of the Worlds." There is an interesting thread woven into the story about absentee dads and regret, that extends even beyond Kevin, his late father and his son.

Watching Ferrara and McConaughey drive this school bus through the flames and collapsing power cables sometimes brings "Speed" to mind. Occasionally, it veers a bit too far into spectacle and you start to question just

how much the action has been upped for audience excitement. Perhaps these things really did unfold as they're presented, but at times it feels like you're suddenly on the Universal Studio Tour.

Still, it's impossible to take your eyes off the screen, away from the inferno and the sense of our own smallness and helplessness to "battle it," whatever that is supposed to mean.

There is certainly a version of this story, adapted from Lizzie Johnson's novel "Paradise: One Town's Struggle to Survive an American Wildfire," that could have focused on the firefighters. They do get a spotlight here, and the fire chief gets to say that these burns are only getting worse every year. But if you're looking for that movie, perhaps you should turn to Joseph Kosinski's "Only the Brave."

"The Lost Bus" is about a few ordinary people in an impossible situation just trying to survive. While it's not hard to wring emotion out of an audience watching kids in peril, it also, in some ways, gets right to the very heart of the matter.

"The Lost Bus," an Apple Original Films release in select theaters Sept. 19 and streaming on Apple TV+ on Oct. 3, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for "language." Running time: 129 minutes. Three stars out of four.

## 'This is a very special award'

## Robert Caro receives NY Historical's Historian's Laureate Medal

NEW YORK, Sept 18, (AP): Receiving an award from one of Manhattan's oldest cultural institutions, The New York Historical, had Robert Caro thinking about childhood.

"It (New York Historical) has been a very integral element of my life since I was a little boy," Caro said Wednesday night during his brief remarks as he accepted the first-ever Historians' Laureate Medal in the organization's 221-year-old existence.

A native New Yorker who grew up near what was then called the New-York Historical Society and still lives just blocks away, Caro remembered many visits growing up as he walked around the neighborhood with a favorite aunt.

"Among the various honors I've been lucky enough to receive, this is an award that is very special," added Caro, whose awards range from the Pulitzer Prize for his epic biography of municipal builder, Robert Moses, "The Power Broker," to a National Book Award for the third volume of his celebrated Lyndon Johnson series, "Master of the Senate."

"And in a way, as I stand here before you tonight, I have this wonderful feeling that my life has come full circle, in a wonderful circle," he said, speaking to hundreds gathered for The New York Historical's "History Makers Gala."

Caro, who turns 90 next month and is still working on



Robert Caro poses for a portrait, Sept. 11, 2024, in New York. (AP)

the long-awaited fifth Johnson book, has for years been the unofficial laureate of The New York Historical. His career is the subject of a permanent exhibition, his archives are stored

victimhood, but finds it difficult to discuss the atrocities committed by Japan during wartime.

"If we completely forget the history of perpetrators, there can be no true friendship between Japan and China. We must never forget that history. Only in this way can the two countries truly move forward together," Kanzaki said.

Japanese military journalist and former Self-Defense Force member Makoto Konishi said he felt pain after watching the film, noting the pain stemmed not only from learning the truth about the Nanjing Massacre, but also from the difficulty of openly writing about such facts in Japan today. He expressed strong concern about Japan's current efforts to intensify military deployments in specific areas. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

**BEIJING:** A new film depicting the atrocities of Japan's notorious Unit 731 during World War II opened in theaters across China on Thursday, coinciding with a significant anniversary in the nation's wartime history.

The release of "Evil Unbound" fell on Sept. 18, the 94th anniversary of the September 18 Incident that marked the start of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. This year also marks the 80th anniversary of the victory in China's war of resistance and the World Anti-Fascist War.

In many Chinese cities, theaters scheduled the first screenings of the film for exactly 9:18 a.m. -- a symbolic nod to the date of the September 18 Incident. The movie also opened Thursday in Australia and New Zealand, and is set to reach North American theaters on Friday. (Xinhua)



Jimmy Kimmel poses in the press room with the award for host for a game show for 'Who Wants to Be a Millionaire' during night two of the Creative Arts Emmy Awards on Sunday, Sept. 7, at the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles. (AP)

## Kirk comment fallout

## ABC pulls Kimmel's show 'indefinitely'

NEW YORK, Sept 18, (AP): ABC suspended Jimmy Kimmel's late-night show indefinitely beginning Wednesday after comments that he made about Charlie Kirk's killing led a group of ABC-affiliated stations to say it would not air the show and provoked some ominous comments from a top federal regulator.

The veteran late-night comic, made several remarks about the reaction to the conservative activist's assassination last week on "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" Monday and Tuesday nights, including that "many in MAGA land are working very hard to capitalize on the murder of Charlie Kirk."

ABC, which has aired Kimmel's late-night show since 2003, moved swiftly after Nexstar Communications Group said it would pull the show starting Wednesday.

Kimmel's comments about Kirk's death "are offensive and insensitive at a critical time in our national political discourse," said Andrew Alford, president of Nexstar's broadcasting division. Nexstar operates 23 ABC affiliates.

There was no immediate comment from Kimmel, whose contract is up in May 2026. ABC's statement did not cite a reason for why his show was preempted.

President Donald Trump celebrated ABC's move on the social media site Truth Social, writing: "Congratulations to ABC for finally having the courage to do what had to be done."

Earlier in the day, FCC Chairman Brendan Carr called Kimmel's comments "truly sick" and said his agency has a strong case for holding Kimmel, ABC and network parent Walt Disney Co. accountable for spreading misinformation. He said the comic appeared to be making an intentional effort to mislead the public that Kirk's assassin was a right-wing Trump supporter.

## Monologue

During his Monday evening monologue, Kimmel suggested Kirk's alleged killer, Tyler Robinson, might have been a pro-Trump Republican. "The MAGA Gang (is) desperately trying to characterize this kid who murdered Charlie Kirk as anything other than one of them and doing everything they can to score political points from it," Kimmel said. "In between the finger-pointing, there was grieving."

"This is a very, very serious issue right now for Disney," Carr said on the Benny Johnson podcast. "We can do this the easy way or the hard way. These companies can find ways to take action on Kimmel or there is going to be additional work for the FCC ahead."

Authorities say the 22-year-old grew up in a conservative household in southern Utah but was enmeshed in "leftist ideology." His parents told investigators he had turned politically left and pro-LGBTQ rights in the last year. His voter status is inactive, meaning he did not vote in two regular general elections. He told his transgender partner that he targeted Kirk because he "had enough of his hatred."

Both Disney and Nexstar have FCC business ahead of them. Disney is seeking regulatory approval for ESPN's acquisition of the NFL Network and Nexstar needs the Trump administration go-ahead to complete its \$6.2 billion purchase of broadcast rival Tegna.

For both companies, reinstating Kimmel after a suspension would risk the ire of Trump, who has already claimed that the show has been canceled.

While CBS said this past summer that it was canceling Colbert's show next May for financial reasons, some critics have wondered if his stance on Trump played a role.

Both Colbert and Kimmel have made the president the frequent target of his jokes. Soon after the Colbert cancellation, the FCC approved CBS parent company Paramount's long-pending deal with Skydance.

## Variety

**TOKYO:** A screening of a Chinese historical film titled "Dead to Rights," which depicts the 1937 Nanjing Massacre, has left a strong impression on Chinese and Japanese viewers here, sparking reflections on the brutality of war and its lessons for today.

The event, hosted on Wednesday by the Chinese Embassy in Japan, drew an audience of about 150 people from both Chinese and Japanese communities, who called on the people of both countries to learn from history and look to the future.

Tamiko Kanzaki, a former translator for Japan's national broadcaster NHK, said the content of "Dead to Rights" is heavyhearted. Japanese society is often willing to talk about



Classic games, 90s tech toys and outdoor favorites up for induction

Furbies and snow: Which toys will make the 2025 Hall of Fame?

NEW YORK, Sept 18, (AP): Later this year, the National Toy Hall of Fame could induct snow - yes, the cold, white stuff that falls from the sky. But only if it ices out enough of the competition - a group that features hugely popular board games, outdoor favorites and giggling plushies.

The Hall of Fame announced its 12 finalists for the Class of 2025 Wednesday and opened voting to the public and a panel of judges who will choose which few will be honored in November.

Along with snow, the contenders include tabletop favorites Battleship, Catan, Connect Four, Spirograph and Trivial Pursuit, as well as crowd-pleasers - scooters, slime and cornhole. The “Star Wars” lightsaber, Furby and Tickle Me Elmo round out the finalists chosen from among the thousands of nominees the Toy Hall of Fame receives each year.

“This year’s contenders present some playful matchups,” said Christopher Bensch, vice president for collections and chief curator.

Along with a slate of board games and tactile materials like snow and

slime, he said, “There’s also Tickle Me Elmo and Furby - two technological icons of the 90s toy world - battling it out.”

“I’m always excited to see where the judges and public come out in their votes,” Bensch said. “At the end of the day, the playful debates just go to show how much personal and cultural relevance these toys have for us all.”

The public has a week, until Sept. 24, to vote for their favorites. The three top vote-getters will make up a “Player’s Choice” ballot to be counted alongside 22 other ballots from a panel of historians, educators and other experts. The winners will be announced in November by The Strong National Museum of Play in Rochester, New York, where the Hall of Fame is located.

While anyone can nominate a toy, the ones that make it into the hall have to be considered icons, have engaged multiple generations, fostered creativity, or profoundly changed play or toy design.

Last year, My Little Pony, Transformers action figures and the Phase 10 card game were honored, bringing to 87



The Strong’s National Toy Hall of Fame in Rochester, N.Y., on Sept. 17, 2025, announced the 12 finalists in the running for induction later this year: Battleship, Catan, Connect Four, cornhole, Furby, scooter, slime, snow, Spirograph, Star Wars Light Saber, Tickle Me Elmo, and Trivial Pursuit. (AP)

the number of toys inducted since the Hall of Fame was established in 1998.

■ Battleship: Milton Bradley has sold

more than 100 million copies of the strategy game since introducing its plastic warships and pegboard version in 1967.

Originally a pencil-and-paper game, Battleship was among the first board games to be computerized in 1979.

■ Catan: Known earlier as Settlers of Catan, the game first published by Kosmos in Germany was one of the first German-style board games to achieve popularity outside of Europe. More than 45 million copies in 40 languages have sold since it was introduced in 1995. It has inspired dozens of spinoffs and new editions, including electronic versions, and even a cookbook.

■ Connect Four: Players drop discs into a grid in hopes of being the first to get four in a row. Spoiler alert: The game has been mathematically solved, meaning the first player can always win with the right moves.

■ Cornhole challenges players to throw bean bags through a hole in a slanted wooden board to score points. The nominee stands out for a simplicity that has made it a staple at picnics, on bar patios and while tailgating.

■ Furby debuted in 1998 and within the first three years, 40 million of the drowsy-eyed robotic creatures were sold. An enhanced version was reintroduced

to a new generation of kids in 2023.

■ The scooter has provided riders with low-tech, two-wheeled transportation for generations, evolving along the way to incorporate lightweight materials and innovative technology.

■ Slime, whether commercially produced or homemade, is on the list for its ability to encourage messy and experimental play. Since it’s commercial introduction in 1976, it has become an element of other playthings and a featured player on television shows.

■ Snow is recognized for its versatility, allowing children and adults to make snowballs and sculpt the cold, wintry stuff into forts and figures, while also serving as a base for sledding, skiing and snowboarding. The nominee would join the ranks of other back-to-basic inductees like the stick, sand and cardboard box.

■ Spirograph, with its plastic gears, rings, triangles and bars, has entertained and educated the masses for 60 years. Users place the tip of pen into a hole of a gear and rotate it around or within other gears to create intricate, geometric drawings.

Music

Stage



Mexican singer Natalia Lafourcade performs at the Concha Acustica of Bello Monte in Caracas, Venezuela on Aug. 22, 2023. (AP)

Lafourcade up for album of the year award

Bunny leads 2025 Latin Grammy noms

NEW YORK, Sept 18, (AP): It’s Bad Bunny’s world once again. The Puerto Rican superstar leads the 2025 Latin Grammy nominations this year.

His 12 nominations mean that he’s dethroned producer and songwriter Edgar Barrera - known for his work with Bad Bunny as well as Madonna, Karol G, Peso Pluma, Shakira, Grupo Frontera and beyond - who previously topped the list in 2023 and 2024 with 13 and 9 nominations, respectively. Don’t cry for him, though: Barrera is tied with Argentinian hip-hop duo CA7RIEL & Paco Amoroso for the second most nominations. They have 10 each.

The Latin Recording Academy announced this year’s nominees in a livestream Wednesday.

Bad Bunny is nominated for album of the year and urban music album of the year for his groundbreaking 2025 full-length, “Debi

Tirar Más Fotos.” He’s also up for urban/urban fusion performance, reggaeton performance, roots song and short form music video. He is nominated twice in the record and song of the year categories for “DTMF” and “Baile Inolvidable.” He’s also nominated twice in the best urban song category, for “La Mudanza” and “DTMF.”

In addition to Bad Bunny, CA7RIEL & Paco Amoroso are also nominated in the album of the year category, which is rounded out by Rauw Alejandro, Gloria Estefan, Vicente García, Joaquina, Natalia Lafourcade, Carín León, Liniker, Elena Rose and Alejandro Sanz.

Both Bad Bunny and CA7RIEL & Paco Amoroso are nominated twice in the record of the year category, which also features artists Lafourcade, Sanz, Jorge Drexler & Conociendo Rusia, Zoe Gotusso, Karol G and Liniker.

The best new artist category

nominees are Alleh, Annasofia, Yeraí Cortés, Juliane Gamboa, Camila Guevara, Isadora, Alex Luna, Paloma Morphy, Sued Nunes and Ruzzi.

“The impact of Latin music continues to grow on a global level, and all of the nominated artists encompass its diversity and richness while continuing to preserve the iconic sounds that make our music unique,” Manuel Abud, CEO of the Latin Recording Academy, wrote in a statement.

The 26th Annual Latin Grammy Awards will take place Nov. 13 at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas.

There is a new field in 2025, for visual media, and two new categories: music for visual media and roots song.

The Latin Grammys will broadcast live on TelevisaUnivision’s US platforms beginning at 8 p.m. Eastern. An hourlong pre-show will begin at 7 p.m. Eastern.

‘A renaissance in Philly opera’

Anthony Roth Costanzo brings opera with a difference to Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA, Sept 18, (AP): Anthony Roth Costanzo, the man who brought \$11 opera tickets to Philadelphia, hopes to keep surprising audiences during the company’s new season.

“It is very much opera. It’s dramatic, it’s cathartic, it’s collaborative in interdisciplinary ways,” Costanzo said of Opera Philadelphia’s 50th anniversary season - the first he’s been able to plan since taking charge of the financially teetering company last year. “But it’s different from what your perception of opera might be.”

He slated a work by Rossini to kick things off, with opening night set for Friday. But instead of choosing a repertory staple, Costanzo picked the less-familiar “Il viaggio a Reims.” And the production will be anything but traditional: Director Damiano Michieletto has changed the original setting from an inn to an art gallery where the portraits come alive and sing.

After that the offerings become even more adventurous. There’s a multimedia piece by playwright Sarah Ruhl set to music by Vivaldi - including “The Seasons” - and starring Costanzo, who maintains a flourishing performing career as a counter-tenor. Then comes a world premiere with libretto by Pulitzer-winner Michael R. Jackson and a score by 10 different composers. Another new opera follows, by Gregory Spears, in which the chorus has the starring role. Finally, bass-baritone Davone Tines performs a “vaudevilian rendering” of a poem by Langston Hughes.

“As I put all of the pieces together, I thought, how can I encapsulate this in just a few simple words,” Costanzo said. “And what occurred to me was: ‘Opera, but different.’ And that is the slogan of the season.”

His pride in the lineup is understandable, especially given that when he took over it wasn’t certain there would even be a 2025-26 season.

The company was nearing bankruptcy and needed to quickly raise \$4 million, he recalled.

Almost immediately he instituted a “pick your price” policy under which people could buy tickets to any seat in the house starting at \$11. (The website



This image released by Opera Philadelphia shows Anthony Roth Costanzo, general director and president of Opera Philadelphia, (left), singing an aria by Handel, (left), as Elizabeth Braden conducts the orchestra and pipe organ, during an event on Sept. 7, 2025 in Philadelphia, to preview the company’s new season. (AP)

gives buyers a range of higher options and invites them to make a donation on top of the purchase. Season subscriptions at higher prices are also still available.)

“I said OK, I have to think like a venture capitalist,” Costanzo said. “We’re going to have to spend money to make money. Besides, he said, the old pricing system was projected to bring in only 8% of the revenue the company needed, so little was at risk from the new policy.”

The publicity and good will generated by the move helped the company quickly raise \$7 million in donations, more than enough to retire the debt. When tickets went on sale for 2024-25, all three operas sold out within three weeks, and the season ended with a surplus of \$2.4 million.

Corrado Rovaris, the company’s longtime music director, was on the podium for the season-opening performance last fall of Missy Mazzoli’s “The Listeners,” a recent work having its U.S. premiere.

“It was amazing to see the reaction in the house,” he recalled. “Beautiful to see a full house but also to see such an enthusiastic house. Beautiful and very moving.”

Helen Little of New York City is one opera lover who was inspired by Costanzo’s pricing initiative to help the company financially.

“It’s a brilliant idea,” she said. “Because the tickets only cover a fraction of the cost of an opera. But the whole point is to spread good will, bring in new people, bring in young people, people who have never been to an opera. And good will is priceless.”

In a good portent for the growth of the company’s audience, two-thirds of those who chose the “pick your price option” had never bought tickets to Opera Philadelphia before, and most were under 45 years old. This year a similar percentage are either first-timers or repeats from last season.

As a result of the brighter financial outlook, the new season offers twice as many performances as last, though the budget is still substantially lower than it was in 2017, when the company launched an adventurous festival format that had several different works in performance over a period of two weeks.

Just how did Costanzo settle on that \$11 figure?

Widower seeks \$1M in damages, emotional distress

Puerto Rican homeowner sues Bad Bunny over iconic house use in video

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, Sept 18, (AP): An 84-year-old man whose home in southeast Puerto Rico served as inspiration for the house that became an iconic symbol at Bad Bunny’s residency this summer sued the superstar on Wednesday.

Román Carrasco Delgado, an unemployed widower, is seeking at least \$1 million in damages and emotional distress. The lawsuit alleges that “a large number of people” visit his home daily in the coastal town of Humacao to take pictures and videos, stripping him of his privacy.

“La Casita has been the subject of dozens or hundreds of social media posts and product sales featuring his property, from which he generally receives no benefit,” the lawsuit states. “On the contrary, Don Román is the subject of malicious comments and insinuations that did not occur prior to the publication of the aforementioned video.”

The salmon-colored home with yellow trim and a wraparound porch was featured in Bad Bunny’s short film that launched his “Debi Tirar Más Fotos” album in January. It also served as the model for a real-size home nicknamed “la casita” that was featured at the singer’s 30 concerts where celebrities and musicians ranging from LeBron James and Penélope Cruz to Residente and Belinda hung out and sang alongside the rap star.

“There’s no doubt that La Casita has been the main stage for Bad Bunny concerts, where a host of world-class artists have performed,” the lawsuit states.

The lawsuit also accuses Bad Bunny and three companies - Rimas Entertain-



Bad Bunny performs during his first show of his 30-date concert residency at the Coliseo de Puerto Rico José Miguel Agrelot, in San Juan, Puerto Rico, July 11, 2025. (AP)

ment LLC; Move Concerts PR INC; and A1 Productions, LLC - of illicit enrichment.

Representatives for Bad Bunny did not immediately return a message seeking comment.

Carrasco told The Associated Press by phone that he came up with the design of the house after his wife said she wanted to return to her hometown of Humacao. He had never built a home, but he got help from his father and his brother, both carpenters.

“I saw her in my mind...and my brother began to doodle,” he said.

The home has three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a wide, wrap-around porch.

“A house without a porch is not feasible,” he said, adding that it’s the perfect place to visit with friends and tell them, “pull up a chair, sit down and let’s talk here.”

Carrasco said a porch is most comfortable if it’s hot and there’s a small hammock hanging nearby.

It took him and his family about four or five years to build.

“We went block by block. That takes time,” he said.

When asked if it was a surprise for his wife, he laughed: “She was helping.”

The lawsuit notes that Carrasco authorized a scout to use the house in the video, “although he had no detailed knowledge of the form and manner in which the Casita would be used.”

It also says that Carrasco never received a formal or informal proposal from the scout nor details about the video.

The lawsuit states that Carrasco doesn’t know how to read or write but is able to sign his name and accused officials of asking him to sign a white screen on a cell phone.

“These officials fraudulently digitally transferred the aforementioned signature to two different contracts. Initially, these contracts were not delivered to Don Román, nor were their contents explained to him or read to him. The plaintiff was also unable to read them because he lacks such ability,” the lawsuit states, alleging that as result, it voids the contracts.

Variety

NEW YORK: Cardi B is pregnant with her fourth child. It will be her first with boyfriend Stefon Diggs, the New England Patriots’ wide receiver.

The Grammy Award-winning rapper revealed the news Wednesday in an interview with Gayle King on “CBS Mornings.”

“I’m excited, I’m happy,” she told King. “I feel like I’m in a good space. I feel very strong. I feel very powerful that I’m doing all this work. But I’m doing all this work while I’m creating a baby, me and my man, we’re very supportive of each other.”

She added that she and Diggs are in similar positions because they’re both ambitious and are some of “the greatest” in their respective fields.

Cardi B also said that Diggs makes her feel safe. “I mean, like, two weeks ago I was literally having a panic attack. I was, like, crying and crying and crying, just because I was just getting really nervous with you know, the whole album rollout,” she said, referring to her forthcoming sophomore album, “Am I the Drama?”, out Friday. “People were coming at me very hard. You know, sometimes people love you, people hate you. And people was just saying very mean things about me.”

“He makes me feel very confident,” she added. “Feeling safe is feeling confident.”

Cardi B has three children from her previous marriage with the rapper Offset: daughters Blossom, 1, and Kulture, 7, and son Wave, 4. Diggs also has a daughter from a previous relationship, Nova, who was born in 2016.

In 2024, Cardi B announced that she filed for divorce from Offset. (AP)



Cardi B

OKLAHOMA CITY: Oklahoma County’s top prosecutor said Wednesday she declined to file criminal charges after two Board of Education members said they saw images of naked women on a television in the office of state School Superintendent Ryan Walters.

District Attorney Vicki Behenna released a statement saying there was “insufficient evidence” to support criminal charges.

Board members Becky Carson and Ryan Deatherage told the online news outlet NonDoc they saw the images on a

television in Walters’ office during an executive session in July. Walters has denied any wrongdoing.

Oklahoma County Sheriff Tommie Johnson III, whose office launched an investigation into the allegations, said Wednesday his investigators determined the television in Walters’ office was tuned to a movie channel that was running the 1985 film “The Protector,” starring Jackie Chan. That movie includes a scene in which naked women enter a warehouse to package drugs. (AP)

ORLANDO, Fla.: Is Steamboat Willie “For the people?”

That’s a question that one of the largest personal injury law firms in the United States is asking a federal court in central Florida to decide.

The law firm Morgan & Morgan, known for its tagline, “For the people,” in its ubiquitous television commercials, sued Disney on Wednesday in an effort to get a ruling that would allow it to use “Steamboat Willie” in advertisements. “Steamboat Willie” was a groundbreaking 1928 animated short film directed by Walt Disney in which Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse made their first public appearances.

The law firm said that the US copyright expired last year for “Steamboat Willie,” which was a lodestar for US film animation at the time, and that it had reached out to Disney to make sure the entertainment company wouldn’t sue them if they used images from the animated film for their TV and online ads. Disney’s lawyers responded by saying they didn’t offer legal advice to third parties, according to the lawsuit.

Morgan & Morgan said it was filing the lawsuit to get a decision because it otherwise feared being sued by Disney for trademark infringement if it used “Steamboat Willie.” (AP)

NEW YORK: Fashion-forward Jaden Smith has been hired as men’s creative director by Christian Louboutin and is moving to Paris, according to a report.

In a lengthy story with Louboutin and Smith confirming the news, Women’s Wear Daily said the founder of the red-sole shoe brand will continue to oversee his men’s division while the 27-year-old Smith will be in charge on the creative side of shoes, leather goods and accessories, along with developing campaigns, events and immersive experiences.

Smith will present his first designs in Paris in January during men’s fashion week. He’ll oversee four collections a year.

“This is the one of the biggest honors of my life, and I feel a lot of pressure to be able to live up to everything that Christian has done for the house, and also stepping into such a serious role,” said the actor and rapper who is the son of Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith. (AP)



Consumer groups call FDA action ‘empty gesture’

US FDA proposes ban on Orange B, a food dye not used for decades

NEW YORK, Sept 18, (AP): Federal regulators are proposing to remove another artificial dye from the US food supply - Orange B, a synthetic color that hasn't been used in the US for decades.

The US Food and Drug Administration said Wednesday that it would seek to repeal the regulation allowing use of the dye approved in 1966 to color sausage casings and frankfurters. No batches of the dye have been certified, or asked to be used, since 1978, FDA officials said.

"Its use has been abandoned by industry," the agency said in a statement. "The color additive regulation is outdated and

unnecessary."

But consumer advocates who have called for tougher FDA regulation of food dyes and other additives for decades have suggested it was an empty gesture.

"It says they are currently willing to take mandatory steps only where it has no impact," said Sarah Sorscher, who directs regulatory affairs for the Center for Science in the Public Interest, an advocacy group.

The move follows the FDA's decision in January to ban Red No. 3 because of potential cancer risk. That dye has been used far more widely in candies, snack foods and medicines.

The Orange B proposal is separate from a successful push by the Trump administration this year to pressure top food manufacturers to voluntarily remove artificial food dyes from products ranging from cereals and yogurt to sodas. After a brief public comment period, it would take effect within 45 days.

US Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and FDA Commissioner Marty Makary have pledged to remove petroleum-based dyes from US foods, citing concerns about children's health.

Mixed studies have indicated that exposure to food dyes can cause behavioral problems in some children, including

hyperactivity and attention issues. However, the FDA has maintained that approved dyes are safe and that "the totality of scientific evidence shows that most children have no adverse effects when consuming foods containing color additives."

Recently, the FDA included six food dyes widely used in the U.S. - Green No. 3, Red No. 40, Yellow No. 5, Yellow No. 6, Blue No. 1 and Blue No. 2 - on a list of chemicals under agency review. Another approved dye, Citrus Red No. 2, is rarely used and found in small amounts in the skin of some citrus products.

‘New vaccine policies risk return of deadly diseases’

Fired CDC chief Monarez warns that RFK Jr. is endangering public health

WASHINGTON, Sept 18, (AP): The US public health system is headed to a "very dangerous place" with Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and his team of anti-vaccine advisers in charge, fired Centers for Disease Control and Prevention chief Susan Monarez warned senators on Wednesday.

Describing extraordinary turmoil inside the nation's health agencies, Monarez and former CDC Chief Medical Officer Chief Debra Houry said Kennedy, a longtime vaccine skeptic, and his political advisers repeatedly rebuffed data supporting the safety and efficacy of vaccines.

Monarez's revelations to senators raised serious questions, even among some Republicans, about Kennedy's self-professed commitment to employ "gold-standard science" for developing public health guidance, including around the nation's vaccination schedule. Her testimony was given to the Senate's health committee just a day before a vaccine panel is set to consider major changes to the routine vaccinations recommended for the nation's children.



Former Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Susan Monarez testifies before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions hearing to examine reviewing recent events at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and implications for children's health on Capitol Hill, in Washington, Wednesday, Sept. 17. (AP)

to be released later this week by the CDC's advisory vaccine panel, which Kennedy has stocked with some medical professionals who are vaccine skeptics. She said that when she asked for data or science to back up Kennedy's request to change the childhood vaccination schedule, he offered none.

She added that Kennedy told her "he spoke to the president every day about changing the childhood vaccination schedule."

Republican Sen. Bill Cassidy, a physician who chairs the powerful health committee, listened intently as Monarez and Houry described conversations with Kennedy and his advisers.

"To be clear, he said there was not science or data, but he still expected you to change the schedule?" Cassidy asked.

Monarez also claimed that Kennedy prohibited her from speaking to the CDC's career staff - many of them scientists and researchers - and instructed

her not to speak directly with U.S. senators. Monarez reached out to Cassidy's office after Kennedy fired her, a move that Republican Sen. Ashley Moody faintly criticized on Wednesday.

"It is entirely appropriate for someone with oversight concerns to contact my office, or me, or frankly any of us," Cassidy said.

Cassidy, who is up for reelection next year, carefully praised President Donald Trump for his commitment to promoting health policies but made it clear he was concerned about the circumstances surrounding Monarez's removal.

Houry, meanwhile, described similar exchanges with Kennedy's political staff, who she said took an unprecedented role in preparing materials for meetings of the CDC's advisory vaccine panel.

Houry said that she asked a political adviser about providing data around the hepatitis B vaccine for the CDC's advisory panel to look at. The panel is expected to consider on Thursday whether newborns should receive hepatitis B shots. The shot is given to newborns to prevent the spread of the deadly disease from the mother.

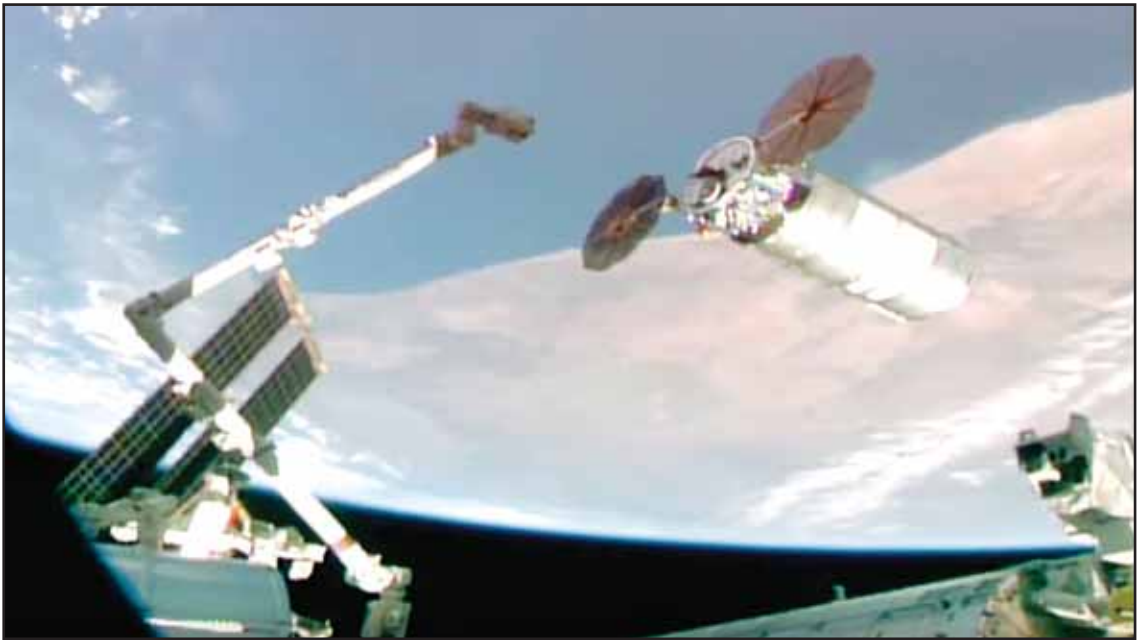
Kennedy's political adviser, however, dismissed the data as biased because it might support keeping the shots on the schedule, Houry alleged.

"You're suggesting that they wanted to move away from the birth dose, but they were afraid that your data would say that they should retain it?" Cassidy asked.

Democrats, all of whom opposed Monarez's nomination, questioned Kennedy's motives for firing his supposed handpicked director after she was unanimously approved by Republicans mere weeks ago.

"Frankly, she stood up for protecting the well-being of the American people, and for that reason she was fired," said Sen. Bernie Sanders, an independent from Vermont who caucuses with Democrats.

Monarez said it was both her refusal to sign off on new vaccination recommendations without scientific evidence and her unwillingness to remove high-ranking career CDC officials without cause that led to her ousting.



This image provided by NASA shows Northrop Grumman's newly arrived cargo capsule at the International Space Station on Thursday, Sept. 18. (AP)

Cargo ship reaches the ISS a day late after engine issue

A supply ship arrived at the International Space Station on Thursday after a day's delay due to a premature engine shutdown.

Astronauts used the space station's robot arm to pluck Northrop Grumman's Cygnus capsule from orbit as they soared over Africa.

The 11,000-pound (5,000-kilogram) shipment should have reached the space station Wednesday,

day, three days after blasting off from Florida. But when the capsule tried to climb higher, its main engine shut down too soon. Engineers traced the problem to an overly conservative software setting.

This is the first flight of the extra-large version of the Cygnus, which is packed with food, science experiments and equipment for the space station's toilet and other

systems. NASA holds contracts with Northrop Grumman as well as SpaceX to keep the orbiting lab well stocked. Russia also sends supplies, and Japan is about to resume deliveries as well.

Northrop Grumman named its latest capsule the S.S. Willie McCool after the pilot of the doomed 2003 flight of space shuttle Columbia. (AP)

CBT offers tools for workplace confidence

When self-doubt creeps in at work, these reframing techniques can help

NEW YORK, Sept 18, (AP): When we make mistakes at work, it can lead to a cycle of negative thinking.

The damaging thoughts swirl: "I'm an impostor." "I'm not smart enough." "I'm failing at my job."

Feeling like an impostor - doubting one's own abilities despite a track record of success - is common, especially among women and members of marginalized groups. Even on days when everything's going right, it can be hard to shift out of a cycle of self-doubt.

But there are ways to interrupt that downward spiral.

Many people have found cognitive behavioral therapy, a form of talk therapy, helpful to examine internal monologues such as "I'm going to say the wrong thing" or "I'm not good enough" - and replace them with neutral or positive mantras.

"What we do in cognitive behavior therapy is help people identify these negative thoughts, and then we teach them to evaluate those thoughts and see how accurate they are," said Judith Beck, president of the Beck Institute for Cognitive Behavior Therapy, based in Pennsylvania.

"If they're not accurate, we discuss what's a more realistic perspective on this," she said.

To reach students with social, emotional and behavioral challenges, Randolph Public Schools, a district outside of Boston, held a recent seminar about helping children reframe their negative feelings using cognitive behavioral therapy, or CBT.

"We want our students... to really have the mindset that they can do things confidently," said Alpha Sanford, chief of development and student services, who started the initiative.

During the training, Christin Brink, an assistant principal for special education, thought to herself, "Wow, I need this just as much as the kids do."

"Being a younger administrator in this role, it's something new to me," Brink added. "A lot of times I'll have impostor syndrome, and I'll make a choice that I later regret."

**Why we might focus on the negative**

If you find yourself having negative thoughts frequently, you're not alone. There are evolutionary reasons for it.

"When we were cavemen, it was very important for us to be alert for danger," Beck said. Preparing for the worst possible outcome helped people stay alive. Some worries - such as "I don't have enough time to complete this project" - can motivate people to get things done, she said.

But lingering on what's going wrong can be unhealthy. We sometimes filter out positive reinforcement, downplaying recognition we've received and overemphasizing mistakes, said Kristene Doyle, director of the Albert Ellis Institute, a psychotherapy training organization based in New York.

Practicing your positive beliefs by saying them to yourself with force, vigor and frequency can help you build a healthier thinking muscle, she said.

**Hold that thought. Is it really true?**

One of the first steps to reframing unhelpful thoughts is to identify those that are recurring in your mind. Examine whether they have any validity. What evidence is there to support them?

"Telling myself 'I'm not good enough to be here' is only going to lead me down a path of a self-fulfilling prophecy, and you make that worst-case scenario happen," Doyle said. "What makes somebody good enough to be in the room? What makes somebody good enough to have a job?"

When someone is thinking they're an impostor, "look

for reasons why they're not an impostor. What are their strengths? Why were they hired?" Doyle asked.

For example, when high school teacher Catherine Mason of New York was asked to reexamine a section of her lesson plan, she had some damaging self-doubt.

"I just heard, 'You're a terrible teacher. You're so bad at this. Why can't you just get it?' And that was all internal," Mason said. Acting out of fear, she rewrote the entire lesson plan, when she only needed to make minor changes.

Now, instead of jumping to the worst conclusion, she pauses to examine the thought. "What did they actually say to you?" she asks herself. "Did they say the actual words, 'You're terrible'? Did they actually say, 'You have to throw out the whole lesson'?"

People who are thinking "I'm not good enough" can challenge that thought by asking, "What does 'good enough' actually mean?" Doyle suggested.

**Throw it under a microscope**

Some therapists get creative when working with clients to identify negative feelings or beliefs. Avigail Lev, a psychologist with the Bay Area CBT Center in San Francisco, has clients write down the phrases, such as "They don't value the work that I'm doing" or "I haven't done enough to get a raise."

After that, she leads clients through exercises to diffuse the strength of those thoughts, such as reading the sentences backward, counting the words in the statement, or writing the phrases on a cloud.

It can take time and practice to successfully reframe negative thoughts that have been replaying in our mind for years. When Renee Baker was studying architecture in college, professors and instructors frequently tore into her work. The critiques were designed to thicken her skin. But they had a lasting impact.

"There's the self-doubt that comes with being told, literally, 'You're not good enough. Your ideas aren't good enough. Your work isn't good enough,'" said Baker, who's now director of project management at Inform Studio, a design firm. "At the heart of a lot of my self-doubt is feeling like my voice, and what I think, what I believe, what I am passionate about, isn't as important as the next person's."

So Baker worked with a therapist to challenge her damaging core beliefs, exchanging them for more neutral thoughts. At work, she practiced speaking up even when her throat felt tight with anxiety. Over time, she became less anxious and more comfortable sharing her ideas.

**Find a replacement thought**

You can get specific when you're searching for alternative, healthier mantras.

"When we look at this sentence, 'They don't value the work that I'm doing,' do you have any examples of when you felt your work was valued? Do you have examples of when people appreciated your work?" Lev asked.

You can also reframe your thoughts about other people who are part of your workday.

Eleanor Forbes, a social worker in Randolph Public Schools, helps teachers and administrators learn to apply CBT techniques. When staff members complain that a young person is being manipulative, she helps them reframe the thought. "How about we just say that this young person is just using survival skills?" she said.

Brink, the assistant principal, learned to reframe her own negative thoughts, saying to herself: "I made a lot of great choices today," or "This was what went well," and "Tomorrow we can try again with x, y and z."

Infectious traveler prompts measles alert in Sydney

SYDNEY, Sept 18, (Xinhua): Australian health authorities have issued a measles alert for Sydney Airport after being notified of a confirmed case who was infectious while traveling.

The Department of Health in the east coast state of New South Wales (NSW) said in an alert issued on Wednesday night that the confirmed case recently returned from Western Australia (WA), where there is an active outbreak of measles, and visited several locations in the state's north while infectious.

Passengers and crew who were on board Virgin Australia flight VA572 from WA's capital of Perth to Sydney on Sept. 12, as well as passengers and crew on flight VA505 from Sydney to Gold Coast Airport on the same day, have been advised to monitor for the development of symptoms.

Additionally, anyone who was in T2 at Sydney Airport

between 6:30 a.m. and 7 a.m. on Sept. 12 or the main baggage and arrival area at Gold Coast Airport, which straddles the border between NSW and the northeast state of Queensland, between 8:30 and 9:20 a.m., has been told to watch for symptoms.

The confirmed case visited the emergency department at the Tweed Valley Hospital, 660 km northeast of Sydney near NSW's border with Queensland, on Sept. 15.

NSW's North Coast Population and Public Health Director Valerie Delpech said anyone who might have come into contact with the case at those locations should watch out for symptoms including fever, sore eyes, and a cough, followed days later by a rash that spreads from the face to the rest of the body.

What parents should know

Age isn't everything when deciding if a child is ready to be home alone

NEW YORK, Sept 18, (AP): School is back in session, bringing new routines - and new milestones for students.

For some, this is the year they are allowed to go home to an empty house instead of an after-school program or day care. It's a decision faced by many parents whose work or other obligations keep them from coming home until long past school release time.

With after-school care often expensive and hard to find, parents have reason to encourage independence. But how can they be sure their child is ready to navigate home on their own, even if only for an hour or two?

A handful of states have set age minimums. Maryland law, for example, makes it a crime to leave a child younger than 8 years old unattended.

But most states leave it up to parents and guardians. Experts say between 11 and 13 years old can be a good starting point, but stress there's more to the equation than age. And they say what's right for one child may not be for another, even within a family.



Kids from Ossie Wera Mitchell Middle School exit the bus in Birmingham, Ala. on Jan 20, 2009. (AP)

a parent, guardian or other emergency contact. They should also know how to reach that person, experts advise.

Other things to consider are whether a child can follow rules, handle routines and keep themselves occupied with homework, toys or electronic devices.

Can they dial the phone? Fix themselves a snack? Do they know where the bandages are if they need one? What if there's a tornado warning, if they smell something burning or if a carbon monoxide detector goes off? Do they know how and when to dial 911?

Even having all that knowledge doesn't mean a child is ready to get off the school bus at an unoccupied house, experts said. At a time of high anxiety for American children, there is also emotional readiness to consider.

"Oftentimes as parents, because it's convenient - we're busy, we have things that we have to do - we just kind of leave them alone," Quarrels said. "But we need to consider how the child feels. Are they confident? Can they handle loneliness, fear or boredom?"

Communication is key, Tessmer said.

"It's a great opportunity to explain to the child that this is a milestone that we're coming up to as a family, and

we're exploring this opportunity because we do feel like you are getting to a point where you're ready for this type of trust. We have confidence in you," he said.

A child home alone should have no doubts about what they're allowed to do, and even more importantly, not allowed to do, experts said.

Stoves and ovens should be off limits, as well as matches, candles and lighters. Children should be instructed to stay inside, not open the door to anyone unless they've been told in advance, and to never reveal that they're alone on social media, gaming apps or to callers.

"Make sure your house rules are visible and reviewed frequently," said Quarrels, who recommended having prepackaged snacks or meals handy.

To further reduce anxiety, Quarrels recommends role-playing scenarios like handling a doorbell and dialing 911.

And start small, she said. Parents can test the waters by leaving a child inside while they're in the backyard or taking a walk around the block, she said.

Smartphones and the availability of home security systems that enable real-time monitoring and communication can also put children, and parents, at ease.



Mercury evens series with Liberty

# Top-seeded Lynx edges Valkyries after huge playoff comeback to advance

SAN JOSE, Calif., Sept 18, (AP): Napheesa Collier made a go-ahead 18-footer with 1:24 left on the way to 24 points, and the top-seeded Minnesota Lynx rallied from a 17-point, third-quarter deficit to beat the Golden State Valkyries 75-74 and move on in the WNBA playoffs.

Collier shot 10 for 16 and followed up her 20-point performance in Game 1 with a 14-point second half to bring her team back - and give the Lynx another chance to keep chasing that championship they just missed last year.

The Valkyries had one final chance with four seconds remaining following a shot-clock violation, and Cecilia Zandalasini couldn't convert a jumper.

Kayla McBride made a go-ahead scoop shot for Minnesota with 2:48 to go after DiJonai Carrington connected on a 3-pointer from the left corner with 3:18 remaining to pull Minnesota within 70-69. McBride wound up with 18 points

Veronica Burton had 13 points, nine assists, six rebounds, and four steals as the expansion Valkyries nearly extended their special season. Monique Billings scored 15 points off the bench.

Carrington banked in a 3-pointer with 8:30 left that got the Lynx within 63-56, and McBride's jumper made it a five-point game at the 7:19 mark before Golden State called a timeout. The Valkyries immediately committed a shot-clock violation, and McBride scored again.

The Valkyries, cheered by their raucous sellout crowd of 18,543, were in control for much of the game - unlike their 101-72 Game 1 defeat Sunday.

Billings rebounded her own miss just before the third-quarter buzzer, scored and converted a three-point play to put Golden State ahead 63-49 going into the final 10 minutes. But Minnesota kept creeping back.

After the final buzzer, fans chanted "GSV!" to celebrate a season in which Golden State made WNBA history by becoming the first expansion franchise to reach the playoffs in its inaugural season.

And the Valkyries were unfazed, playing in an unfamiliar venue for their first postseason home game. That "Balhalla" home-court advantage had to relocate nearly 50 miles south to the NHL San Jose Sharks' SAP Center because the Laver



Golden State Valkyries guard Veronica Burton, left, moves the ball while defended by Minnesota Lynx guard Natisha Hiedeman during the second half of Game 2 in the first round of the WNBA basketball playoffs in San Jose, Calif. (AP)

Cup tennis showcase had booked Chase Center before Golden State had even been granted an expansion team.

Warriors guard Brandin Podziemski was one of the biggest supporters, sitting courtside with owner Joe Lacob and Warriors President Brandon Schneider.

Golden State lost all four regular-season meetings, three by double figures, so

this one will both sting and show these women how close they are. Starting center Temi Fagbenle was a late scratch on Wednesday because of right knee pain.

Valkyries coach Natalie Nakase was recognized before the game as WNBA Coach of the Year, and Burton was the league's most improved player.

**Mercury 86, Liberty 60**

In New York, Satou Sabally and Alyssa Thomas each scored 15 points to help the Phoenix Mercury beat the New York Liberty , evening the best-of-three play-off series.

The decisive Game 3 will be Friday night in Phoenix.

Sabally was coming off one of the worst shooting games of her career when she was 2 for 17 in Game 1, but said in practice Tuesday that she was confident she'd bounce back. Kahleah Copper and DeWanna Bonner each had 14.

New York had a huge emotional lift before the game with Breanna Stewart able to play after spraining the MCL in her left knee in overtime of Game 1 on Sunday. She was in her customary starting spot, but was mostly ineffective with just six points in 20 minutes. The boost from Stewart playing didn't last long.

After the 75-69 Game 1 loss, Phoenix players felt they missed a lot of shots they normally hit. Those shots were falling on Wednesday night.

Phoenix led by 14 at the half and scored the first six points of the third quarter to take a 20-point lead. The Mercury held the Liberty without a basket in the third until Emma Meesseman scored with 1:35 left in the period. New York missed its first 12 shots before that.

Meesseman had 11 points to lead the Liberty, who only got 32 points out of their starting group.

Phoenix took control of the game in the second quarter behind Sabally and Thomas. The Mercury led 36-30 before going on a 13-0 run to extend the advantage to 19 with just under 3 minutes left in the half.

New York got within 51-37 at the half as Natasha Cloud hit a 3-pointer from the corner with 1.8 seconds left that brought the sellout crowd which included Spike Lee, Tracee Ellis Ross and Sue Bird to its feet.

# Pakistan knocks UAE out of Asia Cup



Pakistan's wicketkeeper Mohammad Haris plays a shot during the Asia Cup cricket match between Pakistan and United Arab Emirates at Dubai International Cricket Stadium, United Arab Emirates. (AP)

## Referee apologizes for handshake incident

**DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Sept 18, (AP):** Pakistan set aside its handshake dispute with archrival rival India and thumped the United Arab Emirates by 41 runs to qualify for Super 4 of the Asia Cup.

The Group A game was delayed by an hour before Pakistan proceeded when it claimed match referee Andy Pycroft had apologized for the "miscommunication" which saw Indian players refusing to shake hands with Pakistani players both at the toss and after the game last Sunday.

The UAE seemed to have made the right call and fielded first after winning the toss as Pakistan batters struggled before Shaheen Afridi's rapid unbeaten 29 off 14 balls took them to 146-9.

UAE batters got squeezed against Pakistan spinners Abrar Ahmed (2-13) and Saim Ayub (1-18), who earlier got his third successive zero in the tournament, before eventually got bowled out for 105 in 17.4 overs and



United Arab Emirates's Rahul Chopra runs out Pakistan's Haris Rauf during the Asia Cup cricket match between Pakistan and United Arab Emirates at Dubai International Cricket Stadium, United Arab Emirates. (AP)

got knocked out of the tournament.

India is now scheduled to meet Pakistan again in a Super 4 game Sunday.

Afridi bowled Alishan Sharafu (12) through a big inside edge in his second over and captain Muhammad Waseem was spectacularly caught by

ners. With the run-rate soaring above 10 an over, power-hitter Asif Khan also perished for zero off four balls when he was clean bowled by Abrar's quicker ball that didn't spin much before Afridi and Haris Rauf (2-19) wrapped up the innings quickly.

Earlier, fast bowler Junaid Siddique grabbed 4-18 and left-arm spinner Simranjeet Singh got 3-26 to give UAE hope of an upset in a must-win game.

Ayub top-edged Siddique to deep third off the second ball he faced and Sahibzada Farhan reversed an on-field lbw decision through television referral before he too top-edged the fast bowler to long leg as Pakistan slumped to 9-2 in only the third over.

Fakhar Zaman (50) and captain Salman Ali Agha (20) steadied the innings with their 61-run stand off 51 balls with the former smashing Parashar for three sixes before reaching a 35-ball half century.

But Simranjeet grabbed two wickets in one over when he had Zaman caught at cover off the next ball he faced after reaching his fifty and Hasan Nawaz was trapped plumb lbw by the spinner.

## Federer thrilled with support for Laver Cup

# US reaches Billie Jean King Cup semis after beating Kazakhstan

SHENZHEN, China, Sept 18, (AP): Jessica Pegula and Taylor Townsend sent the United States into the Billie Jean King Cup semifinals for the first time since 2021 after beating Kazakhstan 2-1 on Thursday.

Pegula and Townsend topped Yulia Putintseva and Elena Rybakina 6-2, 7-6 (1) in the deciding doubles.

In singles, Emma Navarro defeated Putintseva 7-5, 2-6, 7-6 (6) and Rybakina evened the quarterfinal by dispatching Pegula 6-4, 6-1.

Townsend, a two-time major doubles champion, created some controversy this week in comments about Chinese food.

The U.S. will play Japan or Britain in the semifinals on Saturday.

In the other half of the draw, Ukraine faces defending champion Italy in the semifinals on Friday. Marta Kostyuk and Elina Svitolina won singles matches over Jessica Bouzas Maneiro and Paula Badosa, respectively, to put Ukraine through to the final four. Italy beat host China.

The BJK Cup was formerly known as the Fed Cup, and the United States is the most successful team as an 18-time winner, but not since 2017.

Roger Federer threw in a few trick serves and several between-the-legs shots to dazzle some young players who were giddy to get a few minutes hitting with the 20-time Grand Slam champion.

In town for the Laver Cup this weekend at Chase Center that he supports and promotes, Federer took part in an unveiling of six renovated courts at John McLaren Park in southeastern San Francisco for the event's Community Legacy Project that's done at each stop.

He grunted and grinned while strategizing alongside Yannick Noah, who will be captain of Team Europe for the tennis showcase.

Federer had a blast rallying with the kids Tuesday afternoon and part of him wants to be playing here, in a city he wishes he'd visited more during his career. Federer signed autographs and obliged fans with selfies. He even hit a few balls with San Francisco Mayor Daniel Lurie.

"Coming out to a public park like this and spending time with kids and inspire them and talk tennis and see what good we've done with the Laver Cup coming here," the 44-year-old Swiss star said. "So I'm very happy that we're finally here and that I'm back. I had a great time last time in March, you guys were super friendly to me. So I'm happy to be here again."

Federer, who retired three years ago



Jessica Pegula, of the United States returns a backhand shot to Elena Rybakina, of Kazakhstan during the Billie Jean King Cup quarterfinals tennis match, at the Shenzhen Bay Sports Center Arena, in Shenzhen, China's Guangdong province. (AP)

at age 41, caught his first glimpse of the unique black court at the Golden State Warriors' arena and was itching to get out there.

"I looked really special," Federer said. "I feel very, sad is not the word, but I'm missing out that I can't play, because this is a venue I would have loved to play. And I had a chat with Tim Henman at the hotel later on and said, 'This would be an amazing place to play tennis.' So I will miss that, but I will enjoy it as a fan."

While Casper Ruud and others have already trained on the court, a formal practice day to give fans their first glimpse of the greats is scheduled for Thursday.

Patrick Rafter can't wait to see the support in an arena where Stephen Curry of the Golden State Warriors is typically the main attraction. Rafter is an assistant captain for Team World, working with captain Andre Agassi.

"They're massive names around the world, and Stephen Curry being one of the main men," Rafter said. "So, yeah, hopefully we'll get to meet them all, hang out or something. Here we are in this amazing venue. I didn't realize it sat that many people - 18,000 people, it's massive. Being in here and playing tennis, it's going to be great to sit back and watch them do it all. Just watching some of the guys warm up, it's a pretty awesome setting."

## New York City tops Crew

# Son records 1st MLS hat trick as LAFC routs Real Salt Lake

SANDY, Utah, Sept 18, (AP): Son Heung-min secured his first MLS hat trick on a sliding finish in the 82nd minute and Los Angeles FC beat Real Salt Lake 4-1.

Los Angeles (13-7-8) was coming off a 4-2 victory over San Jose on Saturday when Denis Bouanga recorded his third career hat trick and Heung-min added the other goal in the opening minute.

Salt Lake (10-15-4) has lost four of its last five matches.

Heung-min, who joining LAFC a month ago from the English Premier League, scored on a breakaway in the third minute for a 1-0 lead. He was left wide open in the middle of the field in the 16th and scored from distance to make it 2-0.

Heung-min ran with Bouanga from midfield on a 2-on-1 breakaway and scored an easy tap-in for a 3-1 advantage. Bouanga scored six minutes later on another breakaway to break a tie with league legend Carlos Vela for the most goals in club history with 94.

RSL missed a penalty kick in the 45th when Rwan Cruz's attempt hit off the right post and went across the goal line to goalkeeper Hugo Lloris, who had gone the other way.

Teenager Zavier Gozo scored on a beautiful bicycle click for RSL in the 76th.

Hannes Wolf scored twice, Julián Fernández had the game-winning goal in stoppage time and New York City FC beat the Columbus Crew 3-2 for its sixth win in eight matches.

New York City (15-9-5) beat Columbus (13-7-10) for the first time since May 2022. New York City is tied with Nashville for fourth place in the Eastern Conference standings with 50 points.

Agustín Ojeda started the late sequence by dribbling it from New York City's side of the field and leaving it for Fernández at the corner of the 18-yard box for a bending shot into the far corner of the net.

It was New York City's 10th win at home this season.

Wolf scored in a game for the first time since July 3 against Toronto.

Wolf tied it at 1-all in first-half stoppage time. Justin Haak sent a pass across the goal that Patrick Schulte got a hand on, but it landed at the feet of Wolf in front of goal.

Wolf had a one-touch finish at the back post in the 73rd to tie it at 2-all. It was his fourth multi-goal game of the season.

Dániel Gazdag opened the scoring for Columbus on a penalty kick in the 40th. He sent goalkeeper Matt Freese the wrong way for his third goal for the Crew and fifth this season.

# Violence 'concerns' prompt earlier kickoff for Rome derby; San Siro sale moves along

ROME, Sept 18, (AP): Roma is unexpectedly struggling to score under attack-minded coach Gian Piero Gasperini.

Lazio looks confused under returning coach Maurizio Sarri, who abandoned the stadium immediately after a Serie A loss at Sassuolo last weekend.

And both sides are facing financial fair play issues that have limited their ability to maneuver on the transfer market.

So while it's shaping up as an underwhelming Rome derby on Sunday, there's always spice when Roma meets Lazio.

The capital clubs have extra motivation following disappointing results in the previous round.

Roma was beaten at home by Torino 1-0 and has produced only two goals in three matches since Gasperini was hired to replace the retiring Claudio Ranieri after nine high-scoring seasons at Atalanta.

Making matters more complicated for Roma is that talented playmaker Paulo Dybala will miss the derby with



Roma's Gianluca Mancini, left, and Torino's Giovanni Simeone fight for the ball during the Serie A soccer match between AS Roma and Torino FC at the Rome's Olympic stadium, Italy. (AP)

an injured left thigh.

Roma will rely on newly signed Ireland center forward Evan Ferguson for goals, while Lazio will turn to Senegal forward Boulaye Dia.

The match will start at 12:30 p.m. local time in a move to discourage fan violence after the previous derby in

April was likened to 'urban warfare' after 24 police officers were injured.

Here's what else to know about this weekend's action in Serie A:

Juventus has produced eight goals in two matches: A 4-3 win over Inter Milan last weekend and a 4-4 draw with Borussia Dortmund in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Juventus and defending champion Napoli are the only clubs still perfect through three rounds. But coach Igor Tudor is eager to shore up the Bianconeri's defense during a visit to Hellas Verona on Saturday.

Napoli, which was visiting Manchester City in the Champions League on Thursday, hosts promoted Pisa on Monday.

AC Milan visits undefeated Udinese on Saturday.

Inter has lost two of its opening three Serie A matches but will have hoped to have gained some momentum when Marcus Thuram connected on two headers in a 2-0 win at Ajax on Wednesday. The Nerazzurri host Sassuolo on Sunday.



# Late drama as Liverpool edges Atletico

PSG, Bayern, Inter start strong

**LONDON, Sept 18, (AP): Title holder Paris Saint-Germain roared to victory in the Champions League, and Liverpool found yet another late winning goal in its stunning start to the season.**

Liverpool captain Virgil van Dijk soared to score with a header in the second minute of stoppage time to seal a 3-2 win over Atletico Madrid when it seemed his team was going to waste a two-goal lead seized after just six minutes.

Bayern Munich and Inter Milan both won rematches of past finals - against Chelsea and Ajax, respectively - to start their eight-game league-phase programs, and newcomers Bodo/Glimt and Pafos impressed with hard-earned draws on the road.

PSG cruised to a 4-0 win at home over Atalanta and had the luxury of a penalty miss by Bradley Barcola not mattering much in the end.

"It's a joy to see such a performance. I think our fans can be happy," PSG coach Luis Enrique said.

Liverpool seemed to be sailing with early goals from Andy Robertson and a typically fine strike

by Mohamed Salah, but was pegged back by Marcos Llorente's goals in first-half stoppage time and the 81st.

Llorente also scored twice at Anfield in 2020 when Atletico eliminated the then-defending champion in the round of 16.

Bayern held off Chelsea 3-1 with two goals from Harry Kane, whose England teammate Cole Palmer scored an impressive goal for the visitors. It was a very belated revenge for Bayern losing the 2012 final to Chelsea in its home stadium.

Inter got two powerful headed goals from Marcus Thuram in its 2-0 win at Ajax, which beat the Italians in the 1972 European Cup final.

Norway's champion Bodo/Glimt had a second-half penalty kick saved and trailed by two goals late at Slavia Prague, before rallying to level at 2-2 in the 90th.

Pafos grinded out a 0-0 draw at Olympiakos after playing with 10 men from the 26th minute.

Journeymen Brazilian midfielder Bruno Felipe was sent off for a second yellow-card foul.

Russian-owned Pafos is the first Cypriot team in the Champions League main phase since 2017, and Bodo/Glimt ended Norway's 18-year absence.

The Ballon d'Or trophy is surely staying in Paris after the annual awards ceremony in the city on

Monday.

PSG has campaigned for its currently injured striker Ousmane Dembélé to get the prize for his standout season, though full-backs Nuno Mendes and Achraf Hakimi also would be worthy winners.

Both were attacking threats against Atalanta, which is adapting to life without inspirational coach Gian Piero Gasperini, now at Roma, and Mendes scored in the 51st to make the score 3-0.

The standout goal was Khvicha Kvaratskhelia's rising shot after a dancing run minutes before halftime.

Liverpool has won all four of its Premier League games this season with winning goals after the 80th minute, and twice in the last minute of stoppage time.

So when Atletico Madrid leveled late at Anfield, there was ample time for coach Arne Slot's team to find the goal it needed.

Dominik Szoboszlai swung in a corner from the right, and Virgil van Dijk wrestled away from his marker and steered a strong header back inside the near post.

Slot acknowledged "we should have made it easier for ourselves."

The new kids on the Champions League block are fast learners.

Three of the four debutants - an unusually high number this season - have played so far, all on the road,



Liverpool's Cody Gakpo, right, challenges for the ball with Atletico Madrid's Marcos Llorente during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Liverpool and Atletico Madrid at Anfield stadium in Liverpool, England. (AP)

and all are unbeaten.

Bodo/Glimt and Pafos did not panic when events went against them.

The champion of Norway trailed by two goals at Slavia Prague, having had Kasper Høgh's 54th-minute

penalty kick saved, before cutting the deficit in the 78th.

A stunning volley in the 90th by substitute Sondre Brunstad Fet rattled the crossbar and bounced down over the goalline to earn a point preserved by goalkeeper Nikita

Haikin's smart save deep in stoppage time.

Pafos lost both of its Brazilian veterans before halftime, with 38-year-old David Luiz lasting just 33 minutes before going off injured in his first start for the club.

## Al-Nassr starts Asian campaign in style

## Roshn Clasico promises thrills as Al-Ahli hosts Al-Hilal

**RIYADH, Sept 18, (Agencies):** Al-Ahli welcomes Al-Hilal today in the first Roshn Saudi League Clasico of the season at Al-Enma Stadium. Both sides enter the match after draws in the previous round: Al-Ahli held Al-Ettifaq 0-0 away, while Al-Hilal drew 2-2 at home against Al-Qadsiah, leaving each team with 4 points, two behind the leaders.

In other matches today, Al-Qadsiah hosts Al-Khaleej, with Qadsiah sitting fourth on 4 points and Al-Khaleej chasing a perfect start with 6 points. Meanwhile, Al-Fayha takes on Al-Shabab, seeking to recover from last round's loss, while Shabab looks to build on its recent victory over Al-Hazem.

Al-Ahli aims to replicate a rare feat achieved nearly a decade ago, when the club won two consecutive league matches against Al-Hilal in the 2015-2016 season,



Al-Hilal player attempts a shot on goal as Al-Ahli players rush to defend.

also ending a long losing streak with a 3-2 triumph. Al-Hilal has won its last two away matches at Al-Ahli 2-1 but has never managed three consecutive wins there. Al-Ahli's last home win over Al-

Cristiano Ronaldo was rested, but Saudi Arabia's Al-Nassr kicked off its Asian campaign with a 5-0 victory over Istiklol of Tajikistan.

Former Liverpool star Sadio Mane completed the thrashing in Riyadh after earlier goals from Kingsley Coman and Abdulrahman Ghareeb, as well as Brazilians Wesley and Angelo.

The Saudi Arabian club is the favorite in the Asian Champions League Two, Asia's second-tier competition.

In the Asian Champions League Elite, all three Chinese clubs in action on Wednesday lost their opening games.

Shanghai Port crashed to a 3-0 defeat at home to Japan's Vissel Kobe while Chengdu Rongcheng and Shanghai Shenhua lost against South Korean opposition, Ulsan Hyundai and Gangwon FC, respectively.

## Kuwait Club routs Al-Jahra as players protest financial crisis

**By Khaled Al-Enezi**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18:** Al-Jahra players staged a protest during their Zain Premier League clash with Kuwait Club, highlighting years of financial and administrative struggles. The squad cited unpaid partial professionalism bonuses from the past two seasons and delayed salaries as key issues affecting their focus and motivation.

Veteran player Fahad Ayed directly appealed to Acting Director of the Public Authority for Sports, Bashar Abdullah, noting: "Four years have passed without receiving our dues or salaries. How long will this continue?"

Despite the turmoil, Kuwait dominated the match with a 4-1 victory at Mubarak Al-Ayar Stadium. Goals came from Faisal Zayed, Mohammed Marhoon, Taha Khenissi (penalty), and Youssef Nasser, while Abdulrahman Al-Oseimah netted for Al-Jahra. The win lifted Kuwait to six points at the top of the table, leaving Al-Jahra still without a point.

In another Round 2 fixture, Al-Arabi defeated Fahaheel 3-0 at Thamer Stadium. Fadiga, Wangué, and Ali Aziz were on target as Al-Arabi also climbed to six points, sitting second on goal difference behind Kuwait Club. Fahaheel remain on three points in fifth place.



In this file photo, a player attempts a shot on goal while an opponent tries to block the attempt.

## Kuwait U-17 eyes WCup spot in Asian qualifiers

**By Khaled Al-Enezi**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18:** Kuwait's U-17 kicks off the main round of the Asian qualifiers for the inaugural U-17 Handball World Cup today at 3:00 PM in Jordan, facing Iran. The team will meet Qatar tomorrow at 7:00 PM and conclude the group stage on Sunday against host nation Jordan.

The team advanced from the preliminary round after a 48-21 win over Hong Kong and a narrow 30-31 loss to Bahrain, securing a place in the main round to compete for a spot in the Morocco World Cup, scheduled from October 24 to November 2.

The Kuwaiti delegation includes head coach Ivan Dragic, assistant Khaled Al-Mulla, goalkeeper coach Marwan Maqayez, physiotherapist Hani Al-Dawas, and 18 players, under the supervision of Handball Federation

Secretary Khaled Taleb.

The 40th Arab Handball Clubs Championship for league and cup winners reaches the semifinals tomorrow at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex. The quarterfinals saw Al-Ahly Bank (Egypt) advance with a 42-17 win over Al-Shabab Syria, while Kuwait Club, Kazma, Al-Sulaibikhat, and Naft Al-Basra also moved through to the semis.

The preliminary round produced 1,148 goals, with a 59.5% shooting rate.

Former Handball Federation President Ahmed Al-Shahoumi praised the participation of three Kuwaiti clubs as a vital opportunity for experience and exposure, expressing hope that at least two Kuwaiti teams reach the podium.

He also acknowledged Fadel Al-Nimr and Khaled Al-Ghanem for hosting the championship, which marked the return of Syrian clubs - Al-Shabab, Al-Talia'a, and Al-Nawaacer - after a long absence from international competitions.



Al-Jahra player fires a shot on goal as an Al-Kuwait defender races to block.

## Lanus takes crucial lead

## Palmeiras holds edge over River Plate

**BUENOS AIRES, Sept 18, (Xinhua):** Gustavo Gomez and Vitor Roque scored first-half goals as Palmeiras clinched a 2-1 away win over River Plate in the first leg of their Copa Libertadores quarterfinal on Wednesday.

Paraguay international defender Gomez opened the scoring by heading home at the far post after Andreas Pereira's corner.

The Brazilian side doubled its lead through Roque, who ran onto Jose Lopez's clever through ball and calmly slotted his shot into the far corner.

The Argentine club pulled a goal back when Lucas Martinez Quarta's 25-yard drive beat goalkeeper Weverton after taking a deflection.

"This was the result we wanted," Palmeiras manager Abel Ferreira told a post-match news conference.

"To leave here with a good



Lucas Martinez Quarta of Argentina's River Plate celebrates scoring his side's first goal against Brazil's Palmeiras during a Copa Libertadores quarterfinal soccer match at the Monumental stadium in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (AP)

result, knowing that we'll be at home in the second leg was our goal. We had to defend well in the second half, which is what you'd expect when you're up

against River Plate at home."

The return leg will be played at Allianz Parque in Sao Paulo next Wednesday, with Palmeiras needing only a draw to reach

the semifinals.

In Buenos Aires, Marcelino Moreno struck late as Argentina's Lanus edged to a 1-0 home win over Brazilian side Fluminense in the first leg of their Copa Sudamericana quarterfinal.

Moreno put the hosts ahead in the 89th minute by lashing a first-time shot into the far corner after Eduardo Salvio's cross from the left wing.

Despite controlling a greater share of possession than Lanus, Fluminense managed only one attempt on target at La Fortaleza.

The return leg will be played at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana stadium next Tuesday, with Lanus needing only a draw to progress.

The Copa Sudamericana is the South American equivalent of the UEFA Europa League and the winner will earn an automatic berth in next year's Copa Libertadores.

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Cuba's Leyanis Perez Hernandez poses after winning the gold medal in the women's triple jump final at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo. (AP)

# Sports

## Kuwait to open Asian Futsal Cup qualifiers against India



A file photo of Kuwaiti player fighting for the ball.

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Kuwait will kick off its AFC Futsal Asian Cup qualifiers tomorrow against India at 8:00 PM at Al-Nasr Club Hall. The match marks the start of Group A, which Kuwait is hosting from September 20 to 24. Earlier, Australia will take on Mongolia at 4:00 PM at the same venue. Spanish coach Bruno Garcia has finalized a 14-player squad: Khaled Anwar, Fahad Al-Khawari, Salman Al-Baijan, Mohammed Al-Ajmi, Abdullah Al-Mousawi, Najeeb Adel, Mohammed Al-Mansour, Saleh

Al-Fadel, Abdulaziz Bourashed, Nasser Al-Alban, Mohammed Al-Suwailem, Ali Salmeen, Abdul Latif Al-Abbasi, and Abdulaziz Al-Sarraj.

The eight participating groups will see the winners qualify directly, along with the seven best second-placed teams, to join host Indonesia in the finals scheduled for January 2026.

Futsal National Teams Director Habib expressed confidence in the team, praising its young talents as key to Kuwait's future in the sport. He noted that the coaching staff's preparation program aims not only for success in the Asian Cup but also as a stepping stone toward the 2028 Futsal World Cup.

## Kuwait to take on Iraq as Gulf Cup gets underway



Players preparing for the opening match against Iraq.

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Kuwait's U-17 soccer team will kick off its Under -17 Gulf Cup campaign on Saturday, against Iraq at 6:00 PM at Hamad Al-Kabeer Stadium. Later the same day, Saudi Arabia will face Bahrain at 8:00 PM at Suhaim Bin Hamad Stadium in Group B.

In Group A, Qatar will host Yemen, while the UAE will play Oman on Sunday.

Al-Azraq prepared for the tournament with a training camp in Belgrade, Serbia, before returning to Kuwait for daily sessions at the secondary pitch of Jaber Stadium under national coach Tarek Khalifi.

Kuwait will take on Saudi Arabia next Tuesday in the second round and close the group stage against Bahrain on September 26.

Looking ahead, the team will compete in the U-17 Asian Cup qualifiers in November, drawn in Group F alongside Turkmenistan, Mongolia, the Maldives, and host Thailand, with matches scheduled from November 22 to 30.

## Club seeks permanent replacement

### Salmiya coach Al-Shatti resigns

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

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 18: Salmiya's head coach, Nasser Al-Shatti, and his assistant staff have submitted their resignation to the club's board after leading the team in only one Premier League match – a 0-1 loss to Kazma, club president Sheikh Turki Al-Yousuf confirmed.

Al-Shatti cited the club's inability to register new players as the main reason, saying it prevented him from implementing his strategies and raised concerns about poor performances. Despite extensive discussions, the coach insisted on stepping down, a decision the club has respected.

Sheikh Turki Al-Yousuf confirmed that Salmiya is now actively searching for a permanent coach for the remainder of the season, negotiating exclusively with foreign candidates.

The club has recently resolved financial issues, paying all player dues and fines, including the full sanction related to former Austrian player Serdjan Spiridonovic, which



Sheikh Turki Al-Yousef

had blocked player registrations for two transfer windows. The summer window closes on September 20, leaving the team ready to register new players.

The current squad features 24 players, including Syrian Amro Midani, Gambian Sang Pierre Mendy, Tunisian Imad Loutati, and Brazilian Alex Lima. The club President stressed that he would not have released Libyan Sanousi Al-Hadi had he known the registration ban would not be lifted.

# Botswana celebrates double podium finish

## McLaughlin-Levrone cracks 48 seconds in historically fast 400m

TOKYO, Sept 18, (Agencies): Botswana's Busang Collen Kebinatshipi stormed to victory in the men's 400 meter final at the World Athletics Championships here on Thursday.

The 21-year-old, who helped Botswana to a silver medal in the 4x400m relay at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, delivered a powerful finish to secure his first individual world title.

Jerem Richards of Trinidad and Tobago claimed silver in 43.72 seconds, setting a new national record.

Bayapo Ndori, also from Botswana, finished third in a season's best 44.20 seconds to secure the bronze medal. Hernandez stuns Rojas to take women's triple jump gold at athletics worlds

Keshorn Walcott was the Olympic gold medalist in the javelin 13 years ago in London, and a bronze medalist four years later in the Rio de Janeiro Games.

But it's been been a struggle ever since for him to shine again on the big stage - until Thursday.

Walcott, from Trinidad and Tobago, won the world championship in Tokyo with a throw of 88.16 meters, his best of the season.

Anderson Peters of Grenada - a two-time world champion - took silver (87.38) and Curtis Peterson of the United States the bronze (86.67).

Walcott laughed when asked about his absence from major podiums.

"Where have I been? I've been trying. That's where I've been," he said. "I've been trying to attain this medal for 13 years. I've been here man. It's been a long 13 years. And tonight is finally my night once again."

He said the medal completed his collection alongside the Olympic gold.

"I've been so persistent and finally I've come back and now attained that medal that I've been missing for all these years."

The final was expected to be a show-



South Africa's Zakithi Nene, Jamaica's Rusheen McDonald, Botswana's Busang Collen Kebinatshipi, Botswana's Lee Bhekempilo Eppie, United States' Jacory Patterson compete in the men's 400 meters final at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo. (AP)

down between 2021 Tokyo Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra of India and Paris Olympic champion Arshad Nadeem of Pakistan.

Chopra finished eighth and Nadeem was 10th.

"I don't know what happened," Chopra said. "I had a back issue two weeks ago and I didn't tell anybody. I was thinking I could still throw far - but no."

Walcott, who was seventh in last year's Paris Games, hired a new coach late last year - German Klaus Bartonietz. Bartonietz coached Chopra previously, and Walcott said he might be the difference.

"That's maybe the reason I'm here

today," he said.

Walcott ran through a list of injuries. He tore an Achilles warming up in the worlds two years ago - five minutes before the final. He added various ankle injuries.

"It's javelin. You're always going to have something," he said. "You're not going to be on the top every day. It's been a long journey with world championships. Tonight was the night that everything came together and it happened."

Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone became the first woman in nearly 40 years to crack 48 seconds in the 400 meters Thursday, running 47.78 in an historically fast one-lap race at the

world championships.

Pushed by second-place finisher Marileidy Paulino, who clocked a 47.98 of her own on the rain-slickened track in Tokyo, McLaughlin-Levrone captured her first global title in the 400 flat after dominating the hurdles for the last four years.

The second and third-fastest times in history in this race trail only the 47.60 by East Germany's Marita Koch, set Oct. 6, 1985 - one of the last remaining vestiges in track from an Eastern Bloc doping system that was exposed years after it ended.

Third-place finisher Salwa Eid Nisar clocked 48.19, a time that would have won the last two world champi-

onships. Nobody had come within a half-second of Koch's mark until this race.

"You don't run something like that without amazing women pushing you to it," McLaughlin-Levrone said.

When she crossed the line, McLaughlin-Levrone looked over to the clock then put her hands on her head in apparent shock.

In the lead-up to the worlds, she insisted the women needed to think about breaking 48 before they go after what was once thought to be an unapproachable world record.

Now, that record is on shaky footing. A lot will depend on what America's most accomplished one-lap sprinter

decides to do over the next few years. She has broken the 400 hurdles world record six times, most recently at last year's Olympics where she lowered it to 50.37 seconds.

This record came on the same track where McLaughlin-Levrone set her second hurdles world record at the 2021 Olympics. It was a much different scene this time - with fans in the stands, screaming as she rounded the oval, then headed into the home stretch in a tight battle with Paulino that wasn't in the bag until the last 30 meters.

It was McLaughlin-Levrone's 19th straight victory in a one-lap race - hurdles and flat - dating to June 2023.

"I knew it was going to be a battle down the home stretch and it was just really about focusing on my lane and kind of trying to stay as relaxed as possible," she said.

Paulino, the reigning Olympic champion, said she felt like anything but a loser.

"I'm thankful for having the opportunity to break 48," she said. "I still feel like a winner. I've spent five years every day training for this."

The enormity of what happened on Day 6 at these worlds wasn't lost on any of the eight women in the final.

"It's just amazing what the 400 has become the last couple years," said Britain's Amber Anning, who finished fifth in 49.36. "I love it, it makes me want to step up my game. To see it done, it gives hope to us that anything's possible in the 4."

Cuba's Leyanis Perez Hernandez produced the performance of her life on Thursday night, leaping 14.94 meters to secure the women's triple jump crown at the World Athletics Championships and dethrone four-time world champion Yulimar Rojas of Venezuela.

Hernandez, 22, made her world-leading leap on her third attempt. The silver medal went to Thea Lafond of Dominica, who jumped 14.89m.

Despite a late surge, Rojas, who won Olympic gold at the same Tokyo stadium four years ago, could only manage 14.76m for the bronze.

## Spain overtakes Argentina to lead FIFA rankings

ZURICH, Sept 18, (Agencies): Spain and Lamine Yamal took top spot from Argentina and Lionel Messi in the FIFA men's rankings published on Thursday, and lead for the first time since being dethroned as world champion in June 2014.

Spain's two-win start to a 2026 World Cup qualifying group this month - against Turkey and Bulgaria - lifted the European champion up from second place behind 2022 World Cup winner Argentina, which fell to third.

Argentina's loss in a World Cup qualifier in Ecuador also let France rise one place to No. 2.

England stayed at No. 4, and Portugal climbed one place to No. 5 in a swap with Brazil, which lost a game at Bolivia.

Morocco at No. 11 was the best of the African nations and Japan led Asia at No. 19. Both have already qualified for the World Cup.

Mexico and the United States were Nos. 14 and 16 respectively as the World Cup co-hosts both fell one place. Canada, the third co-host next year, rose two to No. 26.

The rankings are updated in October and again in November when the standings are more significant.

The November rankings should decide seedings for the 48-team World Cup tournament draw being held on Dec. 5 in Washington, plus draws for playoffs in Europe and the intercontinental brackets. Those games are scheduled in March.

The World Cup draw will have 42



Spain's Ferran Torres, bottom, is congratulated by Lamine Yamal after scoring. (AP)

confirmed entries and six placeholders for the eventual playoff winners.

Those placeholders all must come from the lowest-ranked teams in seeding pot 4 and could include Italy.

qqq Xinhua) -- Mexico will meet Paraguay in a November friendly as both teams prepare for next year's FIFA World Cup, the Mexican Football Federation (FMF) said.

The match will be played at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas of the United States on November 18, three days after Mexico's home friendly against Uruguay in Torreon.

Mexico will also face Colombia in Dallas and Ecuador in Guadalajara during October's FIFA international window. El Tri automatically qualified for the 2026 World Cup as the tournament co-hosts alongside the United States and Canada.

## Messi and Inter Miami near deal to extend contract through at least '26

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., Sept 18, (AP): Lionel Messi and Inter Miami are reviewing the final details of a contract extension that would keep the Argentine soccer great with the club into at least 2026 and possibly beyond, a person with knowledge of the matter said Thursday.

The talks on what will be structured as a multi-year deal have been ongoing for months, the person said.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because neither Messi nor the team has revealed details.

Inter Miami did not respond to a request for comment. ESPN and USA Today both reported Wednesday that the deal was close to being finalized.

Inter Miami has been pushing for Messi to re-sign for some time for countless reasons, but one is that the team desperately wants him to still be on the roster when its new stadium near Miami International Airport is supposed to be opened next year. The team has been selling ticket packages and taking deposits on seats in the new park for more than a year, and it's reasonable to think that demand for such seats would be lower if Messi was no longer on the team.

The 38-year-old Messi has 20 goals - second-most in the league - and 11 assists in Major League Soccer play this season. He joined Inter Miami in July 2023 on a 2½-year contract, one that was worth an estimated \$150 million at the time.